CHAPTER-II

SHAPING OF NEW EDUCATION POLICY

The year 1882 is a momentous landmark in the development of education in India in general and in the Punjab in particular. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Despatch had enunciated a grand utopia of education which if carried out in letter and spirit, properly and honestly, might have probably succeeded in founding a fairly good system of education. But that was not to be. It is a matter of regret that some of the most important recommendations of the Despatch were not carried out for a long time; some were given effect to, in a mutilated form, while some more had yet to be acted upon. The principle of general education of the common people, for whom the Despatch was specially designed, was disregarded for the sake of higher education. The government did not change its policy even when it was reminded of its pledge in 1858 by a man like Duff. The encouragement of Indian languages which it promised remained a pious wish for a long time to come and the languages spoken and understood by the masses continued to languish. No scheme of vocational education was built up. The state did not withdraw itself in the field of higher education, the policy of grant-in-aid had been observed more in breach than in observance. Technical education could also not get a place in the Despatch.

One is pained to find that the Despatch could only think of India as the supplier of raw materials for British Industries and the consumer of finished products of England.\(^1\) This was a position which any self-respecting Indian would hardly accept either from the economic or educational point of view. Lord Ellenborough’s Despatch of 1858 also

---

heaped all responsibility of ‘Mutiny’ on the Despatch of 1854. It is, therefore, evident that the noble sentiments of the Despatch remained only on paper.

Obviously, though there were a few strides in the field of education, they were slow and unsatisfactory. After some years, government realized the urgency of taking further measures for the growth of education. Sir Richard Garth, the Chief Justice of Bengal in a public speech, lamented at the plight of education in India and observed, “Boys go to schools and colleges in England to be made men of, to learn habits of obedience and self-control. They are made fit to fight their own battles and make their own way in the world and these are requirements which, I fear, your present system here will never provide you with”. Fortunately by this time, Lord Ripon who was a liberal of the Gladstonian brand became the Viceroy. He devoted due attention to the development of education in India. Ripon accepted the comprehensive educational policy outlined in 1854, as a guide to action. He agreed that the education of the people of India was a duty of the state. While the higher and richer portion of the population should be left to provide mainly for their own education, the state should devote its attention to the spread of education among the masses. The extension of elementary education in England had been for many years an object of special interest to Ripon, and it could not be less so in India. He was determined to restore the bias of educational development formulated in 1854. Ripon stood for liberal education in the country which is clear from what he said to a deputation of the senate of the Punjab University College.

---

2 The Tribune, 23 August, 1881.
There are two theories of education, the one I may call the despotic theory— that it is the business of the state to lay down an iron rule of education and to try to force everybody into one groove and to make submissive and obedient subjects of the state, without individual character. There is another theory of education, which I call free theory - which adapts its methods to the necessities of the different positions of the population, to the tastes of individuals, to the varieties of religious opinion and to the qualities of races. I say frankly, gentlemen that I am an advocate of the latter theory.¹

He also clarified the new educational policy of the British Government while speaking to an audience in the Durbar held at Lahore on November 15, 1880, where he declared:

I trust that the real aim of education will be kept steadily in view and that it will be directed, not to separate classes by difference of culture or by an under desire to introduce foreign ideas and habits of thought, but to throw open to all a common ground for intellectual development and to preserve and improve whatever is good in the indigenous literature of the country.²

It is not surprising that Ripon achieved so little in this respect, what is really surprising is that despite massive official inertia, he managed to attain so much. Lord Ripon passed a Resolution No. 1/60 dated 3 January, 1882, appointing a commission under the presidency of Sir William Hunter (a member of Viceroy’s executive) with a panel of twenty other members to assist him.³ This was the first Indian Education

---

² Ibid., p. 48.
Commission - the largest and the most influential commission that had ever sat in India. The members of the commission assembled at Calcutta. Mr. Parson, Inspector of Schools of the Ambala Circle, and Haji Ghulam Hussain of Amritsar, were nominated by the Lt. Governor to represent the Punjab in the sitting of the commission.

The commission was appointed to review the working of the system inaugurated in 1854 and to propose ways of extending elementary education without checking the higher education. To quote the original words, “The commission was appointed to enquire particularly into the manner in which effect has to be given to the principles of the dispatch of 1854 and to suggest such measures as it may think desirable in order to further carrying out the policy therein laid down”. In 1883, the commission submitted its voluminous report of more than 600 folio pages and 222 resolutions.

The commission recommended that the government should not only curtail the activities of its own educational institutions but should also withdraw from direct enterprise. It stressed the need for organizing a proper system of grant-in-aid, so that private enterprise might get enough room to expand. In the field of primary education, it suggested that the government should handover all the state schools to local boards while for the college and secondary schools, the commission recommended gradual transfer to efficient private bodies on certain conditions. It was felt that the government schools should be only ‘Model Schools’ “Thus the commission showed the possibility of organizing a system based on the happy blending of private and public

---

7 S. Gopal, op.cit., p. 173.
8 Report on the Administration of the Punjab and its Dependencies for the year 1883-84, p. 249.
10 S.N. Mukherji, History of Education in India, Baroda, 1955, p. 158.
efforts right from the primary to the university stage.\textsuperscript{11} Some prominent officials of the department and native men argued strongly against any withdrawal as it would mean practically handing over the institutions to the missionaries, these being the only non-official agency in the field. The commission therefore, observed, “We think it well to put on record our unanimous opinion that withdrawal of direct departmental agency should not take place in favour of missionary bodies and the departmental institutions of the higher order should not be transferred to missionary management”. It was made clear that” institutions be transferred to bodies of native gentlemen who will undertake to manage them satisfactorily as aided institutions”.\textsuperscript{12} The commission thus concluded that missionary educational enterprise can only occupy a secondary place in Indian education. The missionaries therefore adopted the policy of restricting their educational activities and abandoned their earlier dreams of commanding the whole educational field in India.

The commission also recommended improvements in the Department of Public Instruction. It held that the native gentlemen of approved qualifications be employed as Inspectors of Schools; in every province a code be drawn up for the guidance of inspecting staff; voluntary inspections by officers of government and private persons be encouraged, in addition to the regular inspection.\textsuperscript{13}

The subject of the primary education figured prominently in the deliberations of the commission and as many as thirty six recommendations were made in the field. It was recommended that “While every branch of education may justly claim the fostering care of the state, it is desirable in the present circumstances of the country to declare the elementary education of the masses, its provision, extension

\textsuperscript{11} A. Samuel Raj, India’s Educational Policy, Delhi, 1984, p. 50.
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 592-93.
and improvement to be that part of the education system to which the strenuous efforts of the state should be directed in a still larger measure than here to fore”.\textsuperscript{14} Thus special attention was paid to the promotion of primary education, its aim was instruction of masses and not instruction leading to higher education classes should be conducted in the vernacular. Primary education was to be extended to backward tribes and aboriginal races by liberal grants-in-aid. The curriculum was not to be uniform throughout India. Every municipal board was asked to keep a separate fund for primary education, with the government assisting local bodies with grants-in-aid. Special emphasis was laid on training of teachers.\textsuperscript{15} About the working and the timings of the primary schools also the commission was in favour of flexibility. It held, “that as much elasticity as possible be permitted both as regards the hours of the day and the seasons of the year during which the attendance of the scholars is required especially in agricultural villages and in the backward districts”\textsuperscript{16}.

Towards the close of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the indigenous schools had almost disappeared from the surface of the country at a time when the demand for education was growing but hardly met with. It was stressed that all indigenous schools should be recognized and encouraged if they served any purpose of secular education whatsoever. “Admitting however, the comparative inferiority of indigenous institutions, we consider that efforts should now be made to encourage them. They have survived a severe competition and have thus proved that they possess vitality and popularity”.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 587-589.
\textsuperscript{17} B.D. Bhatt and J.C. Aggarwal, \textit{Educational Documents in India, 1813-1968}, New Delhi, 1969, p. 15.
The commission was also alive to the need of spreading secondary education. The demand for the English education was gaining considerable strength because of the fact that capacity to speak, read and write English opened the door to lucrative employment under government. It adopted a policy of gradual withdrawal of the government from direct enterprise leaving the secondary schools to private agencies, with the exception of one in each district to be maintained by the government as a "Model" School. The commission recommended that the high and middle schools be united in returns under one single term 'Secondary Schools', and it may be divided into primary, middle and upper sections. In the high schools, there should be two divisions—one leading to the Entrance Examination of the Universities, the other of more practical character, intended to fit the youth for commercial or other non-literacy pursuits.\(^\text{18}\)

The commission was not oblivious to the education of the women folk of the country. It recommended that female education should receive special encouragement. The standard of instruction was to be simpler than that for boys. The girls should be taught those subjects which might prove an asset in their later life. Additional normal schools were to be established. *Zenana* teaching arranged by Missionary Societies was to be aided. Above all, female inspecting agency was regarded as essential to the proper development of the female education.

College and university education was not within the purview of the commission. The government resolution appointing the commission clearly stated that it would "not be necessary for the commission to enquire into the general working of the Indian universities which are controlled by corporations, comprising representatives of all classes

---

interested in collegiate education. The commission could not therefore, study the problem of collegiate education in a comprehensive manner and hence its recommendations on the subject were not so important as those on secondary or primary education.

Naik and Nurullah write “The commission was also precluded from studying professional colleges because that would expand unduly the task before it. No special attention was paid towards this most significant field of education. The nationalist writers attribute this attitude of the government to the fact that the British Government was not interested in the technical education of the Indians as most of the raw materials were taken from India to England and it was feared that a technically advanced India would not allow it. Vocational and technical education are such costly affairs that no tangible progress is possible unless government takes a bold stand and accepts all the financial and administrative liabilities involved in the programme. The Government of India was not prepared to shoulder such a heavy responsibility as a consequence of which technical and professional education languished considerably.

Nevertheless, it goes without saying that the recommendations of the Indians Education Commission of 1882 were many - sided and contributed much to the development of education which took place during the following two decades. The grant-in-aid system was placed on sound principles. In matters of status, private institutions were given equality with the government institutions. The educational system was placed on a wider footing by adopting the doctrine of withdrawal and thereby encouraging the private enterprise in secondary and collegiate education. The importance of indigenous schools was fully recognized.

\[19\] Ibid., p. 623.
Instruction of the masses was to be accelerated. All the same it cannot be denied that recommendations were not without faults and omissions.

In accordance to the doctrine of state withdrawal, the department followed a policy of ‘laissez-faire’ towards private enterprise. This emancipated the government from the responsibilities of national education. This lenient attitude led, of course, to the existence of many inefficient institutions. “There was extensive rather than an intensive growth of education”. Primary education was entrusted to the local bodies which were not only poor but also in their infancy. The instruction did not aim at the formation of the character of children, nor did it suit the needs of the country but it was in accordance with the wishes of the government and the taste of the upper classes people to whom it was draw bridge for lucrative government jobs. O’Malley observes, “Constantly in India, attempts have been made to realize western dreams on an eastern budget”. Consequently, the disparity between expectation and performance had resulted in disappointment and opened the way to criticism. The Indian modern languages, though promised a bright future more than once, were disregarded and neglected in the blind pursuit of English.

Similarly, some of recommendations of the commission remained ineffective, others were partially carried out. For instance, in 1886, the Public Service Commission discontinued the graded service which encouraged the appointment of the Indians for higher posts. But in 1896, the famous Indian Education Service Act was introduced, which called upon the persons from England to fill up all its posts. This resulted in the monopoly of the English in all the higher posts and was denounced by the Indian intelligentsia.

In spite of it all, the commission overhauled the whole machinery of education in the country. We should judge its importance not by what it omitted but by what it committed, not by what it did not or could not achieve but by what it achieved.

The recommendations of the commission were received well in all the provinces. In the Punjab, the Government gave them careful consideration and measures were soon adopted to make them effective. In accordance with the broad lines shown by the commission, a Punjab Provincial Committee was established to see how far these recommendations could be carried out under the prevailing circumstances in the province. The provincial committee included persons of high acumen like C. Parson, secretary of the commission and Gulam Hussain, a member of the commission. They, with the assistance of K.C. Chatterjee, Mrs. Chatterjee and Dr. G.W. Leitner examined as many as fifty three witnesses, including representatives of literary societies. Several statements were also received from persons interested in education. Consequently, the committee gave a comprehensive report considering pros and cons of the recommendations of the commission.

Various methods were proposed by the provincial committee for extending primary education to the masses in the Punjab. Many witnesses advocated the aiding of indigenous schools as the only way of bringing education to the masses. Department witnesses on the other hand generally held that existing education was founded on a sound basis and needed to be encouraged. On Cross examination, most of these witnesses said that the administration as well as the mode of teaching in these schools were satisfactory. The three R’s, reading, writing and arithmetic were what they considered primary education. They would teach merely this and would not mind whether that education could be
of any use to the professional life of the students. Thus it was felt that practical subjects such as native methods of arithmetic, the elements of natural and physical science and their application to agriculture, health and industries were, therefore, to be included in the scheme. As it was generally from these schools that the students went up for secondary and higher education, it was desired that such a course should be selected for the primary schools which might form a stepping stone for the studies to be followed.

It was regretted that the education of the agriculturists who paid educational cess was entirely unfit for their future life. Haji Ghulam Hussain, member of the Education Commission, wrote in his address, “It is quite useless to give people a smattering of Persian and Urdu as it would turn them quite incompetent to carry on their ancestral occupations”. The existing education made them hate their profession and when they went in search of employment they could hardly get any. It was held that the present system of education in Punjab had created a good class of ‘munshis’ and clerks only. All the government or non-government offices were generally filled up by the sons of non-agriculturists and hardly any of the sons of Zamindars was found holding such office. Thus it was evident that agriculturists, who formed the bulk of the population of the Punjab, got no advantage from the education imparted to them.

Lewis A. Men Das also expressed similar views, when he said “In a few large villages, education is appreciated but the rural population do

---

21 Education Commission Report by the Punjab Provincial Committee with evidence taken before the Committee and Memorials addressed to the Education Commission, Calcutta, 1884, p. 78.


23 An address of Haji Ghulam Hussain to the President of the Education Commission, 1882, p. 95.
not appreciate education and the majority of their leaders are positively hostile to it, as being contrary to their interests". It was also felt that the educational cess of 1% collected from Zamindars in the Punjab was being indiscriminately spent on the non-agriculturists which was considered unfair and unjust. It was therefore, suggested by the committees that the amount thus realized from the cultivators should be appropriated for their education and welfare alone.

Hunter’s Commission lay down that the schools should be opened where there was a desire for it. In this respect, most of the departmental witnesses examined were of the opinion that the desire for education was generally felt among the people of the province. Mr. Sime in his evidence stated,

As it seems to me, primary education has come to be very generally sought by the people of the Punjab-by the merchants and shopkeepers the most....let us suppose that this education is sought chiefly for employment, but would this lead us to decide that there is no desire? On the contrary, it proves and leads us to decide that there is a desire for education among the people. Let the aim of the people be what they like, it is beyond our power to control their motives. As people do desire education, therefore, we must give it. Assuming for an instance that no desire for education exists at all, I beg to ask whether it is not our duty to create it. Was any desire for education felt among the people when we established, the education department to impart education to them? Certainly not. Has not the number of schools and students been increasing every year? Yes, because we have

---


created since then a good deal of desire for education. Such being the case, why should we now abandon the same principle, the pursuance of which has resulted in such a good and satisfactory results?²⁶

Mr. Sime also referred to the uneven distribution of the schools with regard to the population of the different districts and held that the establishment of the schools was to be governed in a great measure by local requirements. He further said that such demands in a backward province like Punjab had to be created and strongly recommended that greater attention should be paid to those districts which were unfavorably suited to this respect.

Continuing, Mr. Sime expressed, “I think it is our duty to try as much as we can to make the existing indigenous schools an instrument for imparting education, and where such schools may be flourishing, the departmental schools should be at once closed”.²⁷ Influenced by such arguments the government laid special attention on primary education in the Punjab and many important decisions were taken in this connection. Increased efforts were made in favour of the extension of primary education consistently with the cardinal principle that ‘primary education was that part of the educational system, which possessed an exclusive claim on provincial revenues’.

As regards the secondary education, English and Vernacular schools of the province appeared to meet adequately the requirements of the classes which needed education to earn their living. The courses of study, especially in the English Schools, led up to the University Entrance Examination. But this examination by many was regarded as

²⁷ Ibid., p. 97.
the final examination and no general complaint was made that the scheme of study was unsuitable for those who did not get beyond it. The people of the province, therefore, were most unwilling to see the number of English middle and high schools reduced. The *Koh-i-noor* (Lahore), 28 December, 1882 held,

*English education in the province is going to be nipped in the bud. A foreigner is endeavoring to inaugurate a change in educational policy that will check all intellectual and social progress and again plunge the province into the state of ignorance from which it had emerged. The people should hold meetings at all towns in the province and send deputations to the Viceroy, exhorting His Excellency not to sanction the contemplated change.*

But the provincial committee made it clear that secondary education was to be rendered more practical by bifurcation of studies in the upper classes of high schools. The establishment of secondary schools by Indians would, it was believed, lead to a degree of freedom and variety of education essential in any sound and complete education system. It was distinctly declared by the Indian Education Commission that it was expedient on the part of the state to provide secondary education only where adequate local co-operation was forthcoming. But the witnesses felt that except for the missionary societies, there were few private organizations able to relieve the government of the burden of supporting secondary education. And “to make over to them all our educational machinery would be quite contrary to the wishes of the people; for proselytism is believed to be the only object of mission

---

The committee therefore considered it desirable that with the object of rendering assistance to schools in the form best suited to the circumstances of each province and thus to call forth the largest amount of local co-operation, the grant-in-aid rules be revised by local governments in concert with the managers of the schools. The vernacular schools were, however, already nominally under the direction of District Boards and Municipal Committees. These committees were expected to take an effective part in the management of these schools.

During the year 1883-84, there were 225 schools for secondary education. Of these, 102 were English schools and 123 vernacular schools. Out of them 188 were run by the government and 37 were aided. It was therefore decided that secondary English schools should in future be established by the state on the footing of the grant-in-aid system.

The committee also realized that the control over these schools was far from satisfactory. The management was entrusted to persons who themselves had hardly realized the boons of education. It was therefore, recommended:

*The present municipal committees in the Punjab generally consist of men of little or no education and the management of any educational institution by such persons can lead to no particular good. Unless, therefore, a large element of educated men is introduced in our municipal committees, no class of schools can be safely entrusted to their management.*

With regard to high education it was felt by the provincial committee that Punjab being a new province, high education was in a

---

31 Ibid., p. 101.
32 Ibid., p. 114.
very backward state. The withdrawal of the government as had been suggested by the Education Commission would create a general dissatisfaction among the people. It was therefore; felt that there was no ground in the Punjab to check high education in any way. Government’s contention that ‘high education makes the people disloyal to the government and increases discontent among the public’ was not based on sound thinking. For example Mr. Leithbridge said, “We are told that the tendency of our higher education is to make the youth of India irreligious or at least skeptical, to make them disloyal or at least discontented, and to make them disrespectful to the age and rank. But these evils if though in a broader outlook are not due to high education but due to the neglect of high education”.  

The committee further stressed that it was the duty of the paternal government to give free and liberal education to their children. It was stated that the object of the 9th paragraph of the Government Resolution dated 3rd February 1882, though based on sound principles, could hardly suit the present state of the country and especially of the Punjab. All the witnesses examined unanimously agreed that it was the duty of the government to educate those whose destinies had been committed to their trust. Mr. Haji Ghulam Hussain strongly supported the idea and said, “when the people of the province are competent and willing and government is sure that they would be able to take the management of education into their own hands, in such cases it can handover its colleges to them and withdraw. This might be possible to some extent in


\[34\] It emphasized that rich people of the country should provide higher education to the masses. *Indian Education Commission Report*, 1883, para. ix, Resolution No. 1-60.
Bengal or Madras but the Punjab, being very backward when compared even with the advanced provinces, the slightest hint of withdrawal of the government would prove fatal to the cause of high education here. It was argued that the rich men of India should bear the cost of higher education. But rich men must first be educated themselves”. It was calculated that only one twenty-sixth of the whole amount spent on education was devoted to higher education. The native newspapers carried columns after columns fearing that the government was trying to restrict the spread of higher education by withdrawing from the field. “The natives, who have received English education, strongly agitate for the grievances of their countrymen, freely criticize the acts of the government and are able to make them heard in England. As the rulers now find themselves unable to quietly drain the country of its wealth owing to the opposition of educated natives, they have determined to put a stop to English education. Encouragement of elementary education should not be at the expense of higher education. If it wishes that the natives should make their arrangements for the education of their sons, it is mistaken. The higher classes are quite indifferent to education. It is the middle classes that seek education, but cannot afford to establish their own colleges”.

At that time the Lahore Government College was the only institution for imparting higher education to the people. The London Times observed, “Is it not disgraceful that there should only be one government college in a province. The Punjab whose area is several

---

35 We are not guilty of the least exaggeration when we say Bengal is fifty years in advance of Punjab. The Tribune, 12 March, 1881.
38 Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, Punjab, 1882, p. 61.
times that of England and that only two men should be able to take the B.A. degree in one year out of a population of two millions as has been the case this year. If the number of students in the college is small, it behaves the government to adopt measures to attract more students to the colleges than to abolish the colleges”. But it was expected that in due course higher education would catch considerable attention of both the government and the people. Within a few years, new colleges sprang up in the province. The committee also looked into the financial aspects of education in the province and suggested different ways and methods for the smooth running of the educational institutions. In the first instance, it held that government should avoid unnecessary wars and senseless costly pageants and let the fabulous salaries of the high officials be reduced to reasonable and moderate sums and there would be no lack of funds for education. Secondly, about the money from the Imperial revenues to meet the needs of the country, it was proposed that government would have either to levy an educational tax or increase fees. But it was felt that under the prevailing circumstances in the province, any sort of taxation would never be approved. The increase in fees in primary schools would be injurious to its immediate progress and extension. But in middle schools, if it be necessary the fees for non-agriculturists might be increased half as much as then in force. Further, it was suggested that in the Punjab under the Act XX of 1870, besides the 1% educational cess, more than 8% on revenue was realized from agriculturists at a local rate. This money was at the disposal of the Lt. Governor of the Punjab who under section VII of the said Act was at liberty to spend it. The committee held that this amount should entirely

39 Ibid., p. 178.
be spent on education. Moreover, there was a License-tax which was levied only for famine purposes. It was proposed that whole or at least half of it should be appropriated to education. The education cess of 1% was sanctioned by the supreme government on the condition that it would entirely be spent on the education of the agriculturists. It was desired that this principle should strictly be adhered to and the education department be asked to keep a separate account of this cess money. All this, it was hoped, would fairly cover all the educational expenses.

The language issue was the most controversial subject before the provincial committee. The people of the province were divided into two groups. Hindu community was desirous of having Hindi in Devnagri script as the medium of instruction and the Mohammedans generally were in favour of Urdu in the Persian character.

Unfortunately, the prejudices of both the parties turned this language question into a religious one. A large number of memorials from different parts of the province were collected. On the basis of these memorials it was felt that three teachers may be appointed in a primary school, one for Urdu, one for Hindi and one for Gurmukhi. But the difficulty in carrying out this plan was that it would triple or at least double the expense of primary schools. After careful consideration the committee arrived at the conclusion that instruction in all department schools ought to be imparted through the medium of the court language which was generally preferred by the people to get instruction in. To make things easier, the Lt. Governor of the Punjab, in his answer to the address of the Guru Singh Sabha Lahore, declared that Urdu would remain the court language of the Punjab. Obviously, it was decided by the committee that instruction be given in Urdu in all the departmental
At the same time liberal grants could be sought to encourage Hindi and Gurmukhi language. This step, if taken, would extend primary education among the masses and would also meet, to some extent, the wishes of those who were in favour of Hindi and Gurmukhi.

Female education was also encouraged, but tangible results could not be attained in the beginning. "We have at our schools only one out of 199 girls of an age to be at school and appears to be more backward in this respect than any other province except North-Western Province, Central Provinces and Assam". Still Zenana teaching was arranged by the missionaries. Above all female inspecting agency was regarded as essential to the full development of female education. Accordingly, a lady was appointed in 1883-84, for the inspection of the Indian girls schools.

For the improvement of the inspecting staff a scheme was considered whereby the number of Assistant Inspectors was to be raised to seven in every district except Simla. Lastly, conferences of managers of aided schools and departmental officers were also to be held every year in May. In spite of the labours of the provincial committee, momentous results, however, did not appear. The main achievement of the period under consideration was that a standard to be aimed at, for mass as well higher education had been set. A beginning in the attainment of that standard had been made to some extent. But nevertheless, much still remains to be done. It was estimated that 14,21,989 boys between five and ten years of age would attend primary schools in 1883-84. But only 1,96,901 boys, or one in 13.3 attended such

---

41 Ibid., p. 106.
schools in the province. This means that although the education imparted in these schools was sound and useful, not much had yet been achieved in the direction of that crying need of modern times-the spread of literacy among the masses.

The replacement of indigenous schools by new schools did not mean any real extension of education among masses. Only pupils formerly reading in the indigenous schools were now transferred to the new schools established since 1856. It was, therefore, only the quality of instruction which had improved, while the quantity in terms of scholars under instruction remained practically unchanged.

Another cause of the very limited growth of mass education lay in the eagerness of the upper classes for English education which would fit them for posts under the government. The result was that sufficient funds were not devoted to the mass education by the government, indeed the expenditure for that education was entirely met from local source and the contribution from provincial revenues. Thus the problem of the mass education had not yet been squarely faced.

Professional and technical education, so essential for the industrial development of the country, had not yet received the attention it deserved. But the fault probably lay more with the people, who did not realize the dignity of labour and were adverse to manual work and considered it an occupation fit only for the Surdas.

But subsequent years saw a new vitality and a fresh impetus injected into the educational field especially because of the Punjab University which assured due attention also to ancient learning and oriental culture in the province.

---

The year 1882 is a landmark in the development of education in the Punjab. In this significant year, was incorporated the university of the undivided Punjab at Lahore. The earnest and untiring efforts of the people of the Punjab through deliberations in committee meetings, councils and assemblies, ultimately led to the foundation of the university.

The Punjab University was the fourth among the universities of India. The first three, had been established at the Presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857. But the Punjab University differed from the earlier universities in two very important respects. Firstly, while the earlier three Universities were sponsored by the government and established through official efforts, the Punjab University was largely a product of the initiative and efforts of the people of the Punjab. Secondly, while earlier universities were established merely as bodies for conducting examinations, the Punjab University was set up not only as an examining body, but also as an institution at once for teaching and for higher literary pursuits particularly in the field of oriental learning and for imparting education in the higher branches of European knowledge and sciences.\(^{45}\) The Punjab University gradually and steadily developed the latter aspect of its activities, so that by 1947 when India achieved independence, the university had become one of the most important seats of higher education and research in the country.

The setting up of the English schools and colleges in the Punjab led to a storm of indignation among the people of the province, on account of their attachment to the Universities of Calcutta. The objections were based not only upon their distance from Calcutta but

also upon the unsuitability of the curriculum and methods of that university. All instruction in these schools was conducted exclusively in English. Only a limited series of text books were prescribed in each course. The superficial and ill-digested knowledge was the inevitable result of all this while the students became divorced from their own vernacular tongue and from the literature of their own classical languages. As a result, some Indian and European schools combined to work out a practical scheme for the promotion and dissemination of oriental learning. It was for these reasons that Dr. Leitner founded the Anjuman-i-Punjab on 21st January, 1865 with the object of reviving the study of Ancient Oriental learning and of diffusing useful knowledge through the medium of the vernaculars. He put no mask on his dislike of English education and urged that the national feeling and the requirements of the country had been completely ignored under the system of state education that prevailed and that indigenous educational seminaries had perished. “A strong personality, a great capacity for winning over weak and indolent men to his view of things, unceasing industry and application to the cause which he had embraced, Dr. Leitner combined great influence with the executive authorities”.

From the very outset, the society started a movement to get the colleges of the Punjab disassociated from the University of Calcutta. Dr. Leitner summoned a meeting of chiefs, Raises, notables and general public in 1865, and placed before them a proposal for the institution of an ‘Oriental University’ at Lahore for promoting the study of Oriental languages and learning and the encouragement of vernacular literature.

---

48 Indian Universities Commission, University of the Punjab, Part III. Written statement presented by persons who did not appear as witnesses, Simla, 1902, p. 61.
The movement was actively supported by Mr. Brandreth, Commissioner of Lahore, Mr. C.U. Aitchison, Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Alexander, and the Inspector of schools and Mr. Lepel Griffin. Sir Donald Mcleod, then Lt. Governor, extended his hearty sympathy to the movement. The society resolved that the best and the surest remedy for the defects of the existing system was the establishment of an Oriental University.

The Lt. Governor expressed his general approval for the scheme. At the same time, he consulted Major Hussan Lees, Principal of the Madrassa College, Calcutta, who advised him to proceed with ‘caution’. "You have on the one hand" he wrote, "to care that this institution should not become purely oriental in the sense hitherto attached to this word in India and on the other hand, to guard against the errors of the English system which is adopted all over this country. The purely oriental system does not much prevail now, and is rapidly dying out in India. The other system has taught much to the people of India, but being foreign it has not taken deep root in the country and has made no lasting impression upon the people of India. Major Lees, therefore, while plainly conveyed his view that it should find a compromise between the traditional and western systems. Thus the government thought it better to let the matter rest a while, to see if the enthusiasm for educational reform would continue or die out. The Lt. Governor expressed an earnest desire for the production of vigorous, original, copious vernacular literature, which should not merely be imitative but

49 Extracts from Appendix-A, Punjab University College Calendar, 1874-75, p. 113. See Indian University Commission University of the Punjab, Vol. 1, Abstract of Evidence, p. 1.


51 Extracts from the Punjab University College Calendar, 1874-75, Introduction, pp. xix-xx.

52 Ibid.
racy of the soil of India, and at the same time, should also absorb and transmit the best elements of western culture and science.\textsuperscript{53}

In another address, the Lt. Governor made a request that the title of the proposed institution, ‘Oriental University’ may be altered to Lahore University. Explaining the reasons for the change, he said, “The use of the term Oriental did not commend itself to my judgment, as I deemed it certain that without a large infusion of European Literature and Science the object in view could not possibly be attained."\textsuperscript{54} And after some discussion that designation was given up. Ultimately, the proposal was submitted to the Government of India. The Governor General, Lord Lawrence, placed the proposal of the Punjab Government before the members of his Council and other experts for consideration and received from them valuable and practical criticism. In his reply, dated 12 November, 1868, the Lt. Governor regretted that the refusal of the Government of India to grant the proposal would almost certainly quash the educational movement in the Punjab, which had been supported by leading members of the aristocracy and gentry, who would withdraw their subscription.\textsuperscript{55}

After further correspondence the Government of India at last sanctioned the establishment of the proposed institution with certain modifications and conditions.\textsuperscript{56} The Punjab University College in the notification, dated 8 December, 1869, was styled ‘Lahore University

\textsuperscript{53} Gazetteer of the Punjab, Provincial Volume, 1888-89, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{54} Proceedings of the first meeting of senate of Lahore University College, 1870 see Proceedings of the Punjab Government, Home Department (Education) No. 51, dated 14 April, 1886.

\textsuperscript{55} J.F. Bruce, A History of the University of the Punjab, Lahore, 1933, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{56} The Sanction was given vide letter No. 262, Simla, 22 May, 1869. From E.C. Bayley, Secretary to the Government of India to the Secretary of the Government, Punjab.
College’, but at the request of the senate, the Lieutenant Governor, on 27 June, 1870 approved the change of the title to ‘Panjab University College’. The sanction was confirmed by the Secretary of the State for India. It was decided that the governing body was to be a senate which should have power to grant fellowships, scholarships and Certificates of Proficiency and not degrees; to mark the fact that the arrangement was temporary and intended only as preliminary to the possible establishment at some future date, of a university in the Punjab. The first meeting of the senate of the University College was held on Tuesday, 11 January, 1870, with the Lt. Governor, Sir Donald McLeod as its Chairman. The University College was to perform three fold functions: it was to be a teaching body, an examining body and a learned society. The special objects of the college were stated to be:

i) to promote the diffusion of European sciences, as far as possible, through the medium of the vernacular languages of the Punjab, and the improvement and extension of vernacular literature generally;

ii) to afford encouragement to the enlightened study of Eastern classical languages and literature; and

iii) to associate the learned and influential classes of the province with the officers of the government in the promotion and supervision of popular education.

The people of the province became very critical of Anjuman-i-Punjab and its leader. The Koh-i-noor, the oldest paper along with four other vernacular newspapers, led a vociferous attack on the imparting of

---

58 Ibid., p. 695.
60 Indian University Commission, University of the Punjab, Part I, Abstract of Evidence, Simla, 1902, p. 3.
high education by the Lahore University College in the vernacular nay vernaculars of the province. Their argument was that since the vernaculars were not advanced enough to be made an agency for imparting higher education, "the policy is calculated to keep the natives of our country ignorant and uncivilized for ever."\(^6^2\)

*The Paisa Akhbar* wrote, "If the Punjab University College has made the study of English optional in its highest curricula, it is because the government does not want to confer on us the benefits of a liberal education".\(^6^3\)

The people were not opposed to the acquisition of Eastern learning, rather wished its progress. They felt that the study of English will help in its advancement, as was in the case of Bengal. "Improvement of the vernaculars is the legitimate consequence of high English education. Let it be imparted on a wider scale and vigorous vernacular literature will in the natural course of things, develop itself".\(^6^4\) It was thus provided that encouragement should be afforded to the study of the English language and literature and that in all subjects which could not be completely taught in the vernacular, the English language be regarded as the medium of instruction and examination.

The next six years 1870-76 were devoted to the growth of the Punjab University College. Persistent efforts for the establishment of a full fledged university continued unabated. But here came some practical difficulties which necessitated the functioning of a university in the province. Firstly, there was no adequate building for the college to work. Its affairs were conducted in a room in Government College,

\(^6^1\) *We never heard of a country where a number of languages were the Vernacular of the people*, *The Tribune*, 14 May, 1887.


\(^6^3\) *Ibid.*

\(^6^4\) *The Tribune*, 12 March, 1881.
Lahore. Secondly, students preferred to present themselves for examinations held by Calcutta University over being examined by the Punjab University College. The simple reason for this was that the University College lacked the authority to confer degrees and for the students to get degree was the only aim to pass any examination. It was not possible to overcome this flaw till a university with powers to confer degree was established in the province. Also, the examinations that were conducted by the Punjab University College were not named like those held by the other universities. “Instead of being called the F.A., the B.A. and the M.A., they were known as the Proficiency in Arts, the High Proficiency in Arts and the Honours in Proficiency in Arts Examinations.65

The Punjab University College fought hard to remedy its defects. It had to struggle hand and foot to raise itself to a level of equality with the Universities at the Presidency towns. The first application to make it a complete university was submitted under the regime of Lord Lawrence. But he refused to accept the suggestion. This led to a storm of indignation among the people of the Punjab. The Tribune dated 9 February, 1881 observed:

Lord Lawrence, though better acquainted with the wishes of the people of the Punjab than any European then or since living, declined to sanction it. There must have been a deep meaning in the refusal. Applications to the same effect have since been submitted to the Council. But why one may feel inclined to ask, has there been so much hesitation on the part of the wisest and best informed to sanction a measure, which at the first sight, appears so conducive to the well-being and advancement of the people.66

65 The Tribune, 2 February, 1881.
66 The Tribune, 9 February, 1881.
On the first day of year 1877 a great Durbar was held at Delhi, in which Queen Victoria was proclaimed, Kaisar-i-Hind. On the occasion, favours were bestowed lavishly. The senate took full advantage of the occasion and promptly submitted a memorial to the Governor-General asking that on this historic day, larger powers should be given to the Punjab University College, raising it to the status of a University and thus enabling it to confer degrees. Consequently, the Governor-General Lord Lytton pledged to introduce a bill as soon as possible, into the Legislative Council for the purpose of giving to this institution the status of a university. He promised that this pledge would be fulfilled as soon as the necessary formalities were completed. During the next five years the torch of the university movement was kept burning by the people of the Punjab under the guidance of Dr. Leitner. Letters were exchanged between the State Government and the Government of India on the hand and between the Government of India and the Secretary of the State on the other.

At the end the year 1879, the aim of fifteen years persistent efforts seemed within sight. The Secretary of State for India at last sanctioned the preparation of a bill to convert Punjab University College into a complete University. But the mist of uncertainty once again loomed large.

The representatives of the Meerut Association sent a memorandum to His Excellency Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council, against the raising of the Punjab University College to the status of a University. The four page memorandum held that the time was not ripe in the province for such an action as the vernaculars of the province were not much developed and

---

at the same time it was difficult to form a senate competent to discharge its duties with intelligence, efficiency and proper regard for the educational interests of the province. It concluded:

We, your Excellency’s Memorialists, have learnt with feelings of deepest despondency and concern that your Excellency is in favour of the scheme of raising the Punjab University College to the status of a University and that Her Majesty’s Secretary of State for India has accorded sanction to the proposal. We can only venture to express the hope that your Excellency will be pleased to reconsider the decision and postpone the raising of the Punjab University College to the status of a University, till the time when the Punjab will have a vernacular language, at least as advanced as that of Bengal, and a body of educated natives large enough to guard and promote the educational interests of their province as members of the senate.

It cannot be assessed how much effect it had over the government, but it certainly delayed the foundation of a university in the province. Three years of further efforts of the people of the Punjab were needed to realize it. On September 1, 1881, Government of India informed the Government of Punjab that the Secretary of State for India had by a telegram, dated 23 August sanctioned the proposed legislation for raising the Punjab University College to the status of a University. Accordingly, the Punjab University Act No. XIX of 1882 was published

---

68 Proceedings of the Government of India, Home Department, (Education), February, Nos. 3-4, p. 2.
69 Ibid., p. 3.
70 Proceedings of the Government of India, Home Department, (Education), June, 1881, No. 6, p. 2.
in the Gazette of India, dated 7 October, 1882.\textsuperscript{71} The Punjab University was formally inaugurated on 14 October, 1882 by a notification issued by Sir Charles Aitchison, Lt. Governor of the Punjab in pursuance of the provisions of the Act of Incorporation.\textsuperscript{72}

But it was distinctly laid that “the proposed institution should not for the present assume the full character of a University, and that it should not grant degrees but certificates only."\textsuperscript{73} The reason assigned for this restriction of power and privileges was that owing to the less advanced character and extent of education, the degree conferred by the Punjab University must necessarily be of an inferior character. His Excellency considered that such a result would tend materially to degrade the character and lesson the value of an Indian University degree. It might therefore, operate injuriously on the spread of the higher branches of learning in India.

It was felt by the promoters of the University that this action on the part of government would shatter the faith of the people in its activities. Dr. Leitner while giving evidence before the Education Commission held,

\textit{Our present Lt. Governor himself prophesied that the delay in granting the full powers of a University on the principles advocated would throw educational enterprise back for many years, and I warn those ‘di lettani’ in education and politics, who will not bear the responsibility and expense of their own proposals, that unless perfect faith is kept with the founders and donors of the Punjab University College and its oriental features receive the fullest recognition, that the source of future supplies of

\textsuperscript{71} Gazette of India, Part IV, 7 October, 1882, p. 1311.
\textsuperscript{72} J.F. Bruce, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{73} The Tribune, 5 March, 1881, p. 8.
the bequests to a national institution will be stopped and that the province will be handed over to demagogues, who have neither the means nor the desire to pay for the English education which they profess to value, whilst the University itself will collapse as being an unnecessary second edition to the Calcutta sister institution.\footnote{Proceedings of the Government of India, Home Department, (Education), July, 1882, Nos. 12-14, pp. 19-20.}

Finally, the University was empowered to confer degrees on its own. Paying a glowing tribute to the magnanimity of Lord Ripon, Lala Lajpat Rai said:

*Fortunately for the Punjab, the formal legislative incorporation of the University happened to be undertaken in the time of a liberal Viceroy like Lord Ripon with an equally liberal Lt. Governor like Sir Charles Atichison and the Punjab was saved from what would have been nothing short of a disaster to the educational progress of the province.*\footnote{Vijay Chander Joshi, *Lala Lajpat Rai: Writings and Speeches*, Volume I, 1888-1919, Delhi, 1966, p. 119.}

About the constitution of the new university, it was decided that there would be a Chancellor, who was to be the Lt. Governor of the Punjab for the time being, a Vice-Chancellor and a body of fellows. The fellows were to be of three classes.

(a) Ex-officio members.

(b) Persons appointed by the Chancellor, as being eminent benefactors of the Punjab University or persons distinguished for attainments in literature, science or arts by zeal in the cause of education;

(c) The independent native chiefs nominated by the Lt. Governor.
The senate was provisionally empowered to appoint and remove all examiners, officers and servants of the university and to confer the degrees of the Bachelor of Law, Licentiate of Medicine, Bachelor or Master of Civil Engineering. But it was essential to get the official consent of the Governor General in regard to each of these respectively. There was a temporary provision also, enabling the senate to confer the appropriate degrees in the case of persons who might have passed during May in that year, such examinations of the Punjab University College as might correspond to the degree examination of the Punjab University. Finally the senate was empowered to confer honors causal degrees in certain cases, to levy fees and to make bylaws in all matters regarding the university. The Punjab University had no rules of affiliation. Colleges and private students were accepted without any discrimination for all its examinations.

The new constitution of the university fulfilled the long cherished wishes of the donors, subscribers and promoters of the institution. The university was a unique synthesis of the oriental and western systems of education. It was designed to give special encouragement to oriental studies and impart education in the higher branches of European knowledge and science through the medium of modern Indian Languages. The governing body of the university i.e., senate, was largely representative in character and possessed the right to represent its views to the government and enjoyed the privilege of being consulted—a rare position not enjoyed by any of the earliest Universities of India.

The university held its inaugural convocation on 18th November, 1882. Lord Ripon, the patron, delivered an important speech in course of which he lauded the contribution of the people of the Punjab in the making of this university. He said, “I hail with the greatest satisfaction

76 J.F. Bruce, op. cit., p. 74.
77 Progress of Education in India, 1897-98, 1901-02, p. 55.
the circumstances that this university has been established by the contributions of the Native princes and gentlemen of the province. Because by this means many a useful and practical lesson of self-help and self-reliance will be afforded and a valuable training in the management of their own affairs will be given.\textsuperscript{78} The Viceroy concluded his speech saying:

\begin{quote}
I earnestly hope and wish that upon these foundations there may rise for future generations a beautiful structure of fair proportions, which may help to bind together western and eastern learning, the English race and the oriental races and if that aim should be realized, and if before I die, it should be given to me to see some commencement of so noble a work, I shall indeed esteem myself fortunate in having been able today to take a prominent part in the inauguration of the Punjab University.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

The first meeting of the Senate of the Punjab University was held at Barnes Court, Simla, in 1882. The Chancellor, Sir Charles Aitchison, on the occasion moved that Dr. Leitner was by reason of eminent position and attainments, a fit and proper person to receive from this University, the honorary degree of Doctor of Oriental Learning. In a memorandum which he read after proposing the resolution, the Chancellor explained that the honour was proposed, not only on account of Dr. Leitner’s services to the University as a principal founder, promoter and officer but also because of his linguistic attainments and published writings and the enthusiasm for education, which he had evoked in the Punjab. “Without the help, advocacy and originating power of Dr. Leitner, the Punjab, in all probability would have had no University of its own for many years to come”.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{78} Speeches of the Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy and Governor-General of India, 1880-82, Vol. I, Speech delivered at the Inaugural Convocation of the Punjab University, p. 323.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid. p. 327.

\textsuperscript{80} J.F. Bruce, op.cit., p. 81.