CHAPTER I

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Reddern’s oft quoted definition of education reads like this. “Education is the deliberate and systematic influence, exerted by the mature person, upon the immature through instruction, discipline, and harmonious development of physical, intellectual aesthetic, social and spiritual powers of the human beings according to individual and social needs and directed towards the union of the educated with his creator as the final end.” In short education is a life long process.

The aim of education is the complete development of the child, a development in which moral development occupies, an important place. Good thoughts lead to a sound determination, and this in turn, puts the man on the path to good life, and he is filled with strength of soul which inspire him, to adhere to his path.

History of humanity has been shaped by sages and saints, thinkers and scientists, as well as scholars, and teachers. Christian religion is a new way of life, it was a call to a radical way of living, deliverance to the captives, sight to the blind, liberty to the oppressed (physical) and gospel to the poor, catering to the total person, physical and spiritual.

The Portuguese missionaries, who came first, opened a few educational institutions in different places. The missionary stations had elementary schools
where Portuguese and Latin were taught. There were also orphanages for Indian children, who were given instruction in the rudiments of knowledge and were also taught agricultural and industrial work. The missionaries started Jesuit Colleges, for higher studies and also founded seminaries for training priests.¹

Among the earliest missionaries, Francis Xavier, and Robert de Nobili did remarkable work in education also. After Xavier the work continued in the pearl fishery coast of Tuticorin, where a number of elementary schools were in existence. French Missionaries started schools in their settlement and provided incentives in the form of free food, clothes and books. The Protestant Christian Missionary involvement brought about significant impact on the educational history of India.²

Missionary education was carried on in the midst of several difficulties. The missionaries laid an essential foundation, for the educational development and they managed to combine their own Christian commitment with more objective attitude towards other religions. They helped to awaken Hinduism re-opening old springs with in- it and giving it a new vigour.

Hindu religion suffered from untold superstitions. Female infanticide, child marriage polygamy, polyandry, Sati, Widowhood etc. were the untold miseries of women.³ These phenomenon in course of time, were recognised as the laws of social custom, and usage and religious sanction was given to them.
Under the Muslim rule the ignorance of Womenfolk, further widened, and they were physically covered by 'purdah' and forced to live in a secluded place.

The Christian Missions alone were trying to give education to the masses, education to women and Mission schools for girls were set up.

With the help of enlightened people like Raja Ram Mohanroy, the Britishers gained the public opinion and introduced legislations against all the social evils. When Lord Bentinck (1828-1835) introduced certain legislations, such as child marriage, Sati and human sacrifice, Raja Ram Mohanroy stood behind him. By this he had broken the non-intervention policy of the Britishers in the socio religious matters of Indians.

From the time of Montague-Chelmsford reforms (1919), efforts were made and the first victory was achieved by the passing of child marriage Restraint Act popularly known as the Sarda Act of 1929. According to this act marriageable age of Bride and Bridegrooms, was raised to fourteen and eighteen respectively. Resolutions and Acts were passed in the Central and State legislatures. Resolution of 1921, on Enfranchisement of women, The Age of consent (Amendment) Act 1925, The Hindu inheritance, (Removal) of Disabilities Act and Indian Succession Act 1928, The Sarda Act 1929, Child Marriage Restraint Act, and Hindu Inheritance (Amendment) Act 1929, Abolition of Devadasi system 1930, The suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women – 1930, Hindu Women’s right of property Act – 1937.
The untouchable castes of Tamilnadu were degraded and despised in the Tamil society from the very beginning. After Aryanisation of Tamilnadu and the introduction of Varna system, on the already existing castes, those who could not be identified, with any one of the four Varnas, were called Avarnas and degraded as untouchables and enslaved by super castes. Henceforth, the untouchables were never raised to their original position. During the course of time, the caste Hindus imposed on them all sorts of social disabilities, such as untouchability, unapproachability etc. He was called ‘Janma Chandala’ (Untouchable by birth).

The term ‘Depressed class’ was in practice between 1915 and 1935. Depressed classes were forced to live in slums and always undernourished, ill clad eaten up with leprosy, or other horrible diseases hunted like pigs, untaught, uncared, and unpitied.

The children of depressed classes were denied the privilege of education. Only after the arrival of the Christian Missionaries, their clutches were removed, by means of education, social legislation and conversion.

The missionary institutions were in some ways, the leaders and models, setting the pace and the standard. They came to be valued, trusted and loved. The teachers held together, by their love of God, and man, earned for their students, with affection and concern. The boarding schools and hostels provided ample opportunities for the development of personality and character. They also trained students in the art of self-government.
The Mission schools in South India developed a strong religious bent in the early years of their efforts. The Missionaries did not view their schools merely as agencies for evangelism, but regarded a purely secular education as incomplete in itself, without the religious content. As a result a blend of religious and secular learning developed in Mission Schools, the evangelistic motives of educators, in South India resulted in a wider and more liberal education. The aim was to educate that is, to draw out and develop the latent potentialities of their students, inorder that the additional knowledge could be correlated with the previous knowledge.

Christian education in the past was given with special divine concern and care, for the oppressed and the underprivileged.⁸ Therefore the opening of schools for the illiterate, hospitals for the sick social services for the economically poor community etc.

One of the important motives of Christian education is to bring transformation in society, in which God has placed by permeating it with Christian values. A person who was useless in community was/is transformed to be useful by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For the past many years only secular education was given and now India is passing through a crisis of character engendered by progressive erosion of values and decline of standards of moral behaviour of people, in all walks of life at all levels. There are also many people who take to extremist politics of terrorists to realise their narrow political ambitions. This crisis is
also reflected in the dearth of leaders, who like freedom fighters are inspired by a high soaring idealism and commitment to moral and spiritual values in their public as well as in private life. Further there are serious problems due to the entry of criminals in politics, politicisation of religion, unprincipled political defections, for monetary consideration. Electoral malpractice such as impersonation rigging, booth capturing and extravagant use of money power, and muscle power provide ample testimony to the widespread corruption and bankrupt of spiritual and Moral values in the democratic politics of the nation.

The aim of education is transformation, understanding, tolerance, compassion, brotherhood, national pride, going beyond religion and communal barriers, in producing a better human being. For this particular ‘transformation aspect’ and the development of a well balanced personality Christian schools are sought after even now. The growth of education in India is synonymous with the growth of Christian education, and the Missionary movement in India. William Carey, John Anderson, William Miller, Ziegenbalg and other great missionaries first established schools and opened the minds of the people to education. Some established Hospitals to cater to the needs of the body. The care of the body and the mind led to the care of the spirit.

The Christian missionaries who came to India were responsible for the development in education, Women’s education, Higher education, Medical and Health care and socio-economic development. The education they gave was a value based one, as Religious education was made compulsory. The
introduction of Religious education has many objectives. The main ones are Moral development, Refinement of human values, Socialization, Development of democratic values, cultural development, sense of respect for proper attitude.

There is a wrong notion that Missionaries established educational institutions only for converting Indians to Christianity. It should be remembered that the major reforms for the abolition of evil practices, in the society have taken place because of Missionary education. Transformation in India in the 19th century is through the English education. In addition through English education, many Missionary agencies in India, initiated a religious reformation. At the beginning of the 19th century educational institutions were giving mainly religious instructions. But the Britishers were much concerned about their trade, and they did not interfere in the religious attitudes of people. Religious instruction was given much importance than moral instruction particularly in Mission schools as it was felt that moral instruction was incomplete without the Religious instruction. This went unquestioned for sometime. When few students started being baptized in the Mission schools, the public started looking at religious instruction as a dangerous weapon, in the hands of missionaries. When the grant in aid system was introduced, people started raising the question of religious neutrality. They argued that as public funds were given to missionary institutions, these institution should not insist on compulsory religious instructions for its students, and the missionaries felt
that the parents could take their children from mission schools, and put them in Government or in any one of the private schools where Bible instruction was not given. The primary responsibility of the educational institutions was thought of as to build the character of the students.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore it was felt that moral principles should be taught with great care. True education should be the combination of knowledge and character. \textit{“The imagination and thought of one’s heart are prone to evil from his youth”}. (Gen 8:21) (Mathew 16.26) Holy Bible.

The role of missionaries in the development of modern Indian Education was significant. \textit{With the help of enlightened Indians who were influenced by Christian Missionary education}, the British gained the public opinion and introduced legislations\textsuperscript{14} against many social evils in the Indian Society like child marriage, Sati and human sacrifice. The missionary education helped to build character. Christian educators served the community by encouraging equipping, and empowering the children, through public and private education, and to proclaim God’s word, as the source of wisdom and knowledge. It is to respect God given ministry, to promote educational excellence as an expression of Christian commitment and values through education. They offered a prophetic, biblically charged witness against unjust social orders and a vision for a more rightly ordered society and government.

The Mission schools saw the need, the commission and the responsibility reposed by God, upon them to teach the children the right way,
not merely the knowledge of the world, but the knowledge of God. If they fail to teach Christian principles of love and compassion of God, a whole generation of children will be destroyed and allow them to go out of the portals of our schools, a generation of aimless, Godless wanderers, not knowing where to go or who to find. The material world is ready to gobble them up. They need to be helped to accomplish and experience success and they need to be guided into purposes of life.

Need and Significance of the Study

The liberation of women and depressed class, the social transformation of the society through education, given by Christian Missionaries over the years and mass upliftment and enlightenments in the past and present, inculcation of values through religious education form the main theme of the study.

Until the end of the 19th century, most education was delivered through Christian institutions. After the secularisation of current education, has been launched, the values of righteousness, truth morality, love, purity, honour and family, have been disappearing in the amoral espousal of a secular neutrality, which tends to accept, that everything is good for all. It was the scripture education (Teachings from the Bible) given by the Missionaries that inculcated values like righteousness, truth, morality, love, purity etc. and uplifted people from the age-old superstition and transformed the society specially in the 19th century. The teaching of the Bible had a sound moral influence on the life of students of Christian schools. The services of the Christian Missionaries in
India resulted in Mass upliftment and Mass enlightenment of the people. Their contribution to education is value based. Hence the topic “The contribution of the Christian missionaries to value based education” was selected.

III. Operational Definitions

Mission, Missionary.

The root of this word is the Latin mitto, which means I send. Mission simply means the sending of someone. A missionary is someone who is sent.

The word ‘missionary’ has not been properly understood by most people in India. The false notion has been that a missionary is a Christian preacher, from a foreign country who has come here in order to convert people of other religions to Christianity. Hence particularly of late there has been a campaign of hatred against missionaries in spite of the noble work that the missionaries had been doing in this country for the benefit of all people, particularly the poor.

It is good to have a clear understanding of the exact nature of the mission of Jesus Christ, as well as the mission of the disciples.

Quoting the words of Prophet Isaiah, about Jesus “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring the good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. To let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour. Isaiah 61: 1-2 Luke 4:18-19.
"Go and tell John what you have seen and heard, the blind receive sight the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised the poor have good news brought to them, Luke (7:18-23). "Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem, You are witnesses to these things. (Luke 24:47-48). The church down the ages, has faithfully carried out the program of mission inaugurated by Jesus and entrusted to his disciples. The world has certainly become a better place, thanks to the Christian values, that have been preached and the Christian action of love, charity and justice that have taken firm roots all through the length and breadth of this globe. In the history of Christian mission, what has been quite prominent was the persecution suffered by Christians, and Christian missionaries. Suffering and shedding of blood seem to have been an integral part of Christian mission. Even Jesus himself the very founder of Christianity suffered and died on the Cross in order to affirm this mission of love. Suffering and Christian mission always went hand in hand.

Value Based Education

The growth of Education in India is synonymous with the growth of Christian education and the Missionary movement in India. The aim of education is transformation, understanding, tolerance, compassion brotherhood, national pride, going beyond religion and communal barriers in producing a better human being.
Similarly the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ emphasises all these and more, to bring about transformation as well. For this ‘transformation aspect’ and the development of a well-balanced personality, Christian schools are sought after even now. Christian schools were able to give excellence in education, produce men and women of character, honesty, integrity and truthfulness. The Christian Schools in India have a Divine call, an obligation to teach our children and all the children under our care about God.

The Mission Schools, saw the need, the commission and the responsibility reposed by God, upon them to teach the children the right way, the right values not merely the knowledge of the world but the knowledge of God. If they fail to teach Christian principles, the love and compassion of God, a whole generation of children will be destroyed and allow them to go out of the portals of our Schools, a generation of aimless godless wanderers, not knowing where to go or who to find. The material world is ready to gobble them up. They need to be helped to accomplish and experience success and they need to be guided into purposes of life.

Value Based Education means teaching different subjects in the curriculum focussing on their value content.

Contribution of missionaries to education was value based. It refers to mission oriented learning with value system.
Objectives

The objectives of this study can be stated as follows:

To Study and Compare

1. The condition of people before the advent of the Christian missionaries and after the introduction of education by them.

2. The condition of women before and after the introduction of education by the Christian missionaries.

3. The condition of the depressed class before and after the introduction of education by Christian missionaries.

4. To study the extent to which the educational institutions set up by the Christian missionaries led to the Transformation of Indian Society.

5. To study the extent to which the education with Christian scriptures imparted by Missionaries inculcated values.

Area of the Study

The Area covered in this study is the present state of Tamil Nadu. Importance has been given to Tamil speaking areas, where Christian women and the Missionary activities paid their wonderful services where Mission schools and other educational institutions were set up.

Period of the Study

The period chosen for the study is a span of 300 years starting from 1706 A.D the year in which the Danish Mission came to India and 2000 A.D which is the Millennium year.
END NOTES

1. David L. Edwards' Christianity The First Two Thousand Years, p.568.
2. Ibid., p.569.
3. P. Thomas' Indian Women through the Ages, p.306.
5. P. Thomas Indian women through the ages, p.278.
7. Dr. Ambrose Jeyasekaran. Educational Policies of Protestant Christian Missions, p.82.
10. Mahajan History of Modern India, p.265.
12. David L. Edwards, Christianity The First Two Thousand Years, p.570.
13. Ibid., 571.