CHAPTER VI

MISSIONARY EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE
The first social and philosophical inter course between the missionaries and the Kashmiri society of the late nineteenth century, was a conflict and later assimilation of values. "When starting a school where the opposition is strong there are two courses open. The first is in all ways to try to conform to the wishes of the public, so as to induce them to send their sons to the School. The second course is to run the school in accordance with public opinion", writes Eric Tyndale Biscoe. But the missionaries who knew their objectives well, preferred to ignore public opinion and chose to reform the customs that had enslaved Kashmiri society for centuries. The now aims and structure of the school made few concessions to the local customs and the essential model of the mission school was that of a good secondary school in nineteenth century England. Education was conceived as a process affecting the body, mind and soul of the

1. Tyndale Biscoe, E.D. 'Fifty Years Against the Stream', p. 9.
pupil. The work of the school was thus directed to instilling some accurate information for producing healthy bodies and to building characters based on the Christian virtues of modesty, charity and service.

These basic principles and thrusts through educational institutions established by the missionaries posed a challenge to the customs and superstitions of the Kashmiri society, with the result that a number of diplomatic and other efforts were made to set rid of the missionaries. The preceding chapters explain the particular problems which threatened the educational work of the missionaries because they related the educational pursuits to the social needs of the society and this were considered as a direct interference in the religious and cultural life of the people.

Canon Tyndale Biscoe instituted a regular system of social service which was laughed at and jeered at first only to be highly appreciated and commanded later. This met with remarkable success and induced a spirit of helpfulness among the school boys and staff. They did commendable work during floods."

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3. Ibid., Brian Holm (Ed.), p. 159.
fire and out breaks of cholera and other epidemics. The sanitation corps was formed with much great criticism and oppositions from the society that this matter was reported to Mrs. Annie Besseant in the words, 'Mr. Biscoe makes his Brahman boys drag dead dogs through the streets of Srinagar.' Canon Tyndale Biscoe preferred to face this crisis which almost ruined his school rather than bow down to public opinion against sanitation. But his efforts are highly appreciated by Sir Henry Sharp who remarks:

Under the management of Rev. C.S. Tyndale Biscoe the School has developed a remarkable 'esprit du corps', and the utmost care is devoted to physical instructions, to encouragement of manliness and to the cultivation of civic virtues. With its record of life-saving and other public benefits, the school is an important asset to Srinagar and holds a unique position.

Social service programmes helped a great deal in emancipating the Kashmiri women. Ishaq Khan.

writes, "Through the activities of the Mission, the quality of family life was considerably improved. It is a recognised fact that to a certain extent, social change hinges for its success on the participation in social affairs of enlightened women with opportunity and responsibility. The missionaries recognised this and left no stone unturned for attracting to the girls to their school.

The modern education imparted by the missionaries initiated certain cultural changes which have been intensive and extensive. The students were exposed to camp life and out-door activities and this changed their life styles, eating-habits and modes of entertainment which changed from traditional story-telling or singing folk songs to walks and excursions. The influence of new ideas mostly displayed at weddings, which otherwise were celebrated in the traditional manner, indicates the assimilation of new types of behaviour, which was a result of Mission School education. The life styles and artifacts in a Kashmiri household also went through a change.

9. Ibid., p. 137.
10. Ibid., p. 205.
Evolution of the New Pattern of Education:

The contemporary historians of the early twentieth century agree that modern education was first imparted in Kashmir by the CMS missionaries who started with well defined and spelled-out programme of education. This programme of education gave birth to a reform movement in Kashmir. As a result of Christian Mission activities and its social implication, a number of 'Anjumans' and 'Sabbas' came into being. These societies opened a number of schools. The Muslim educational movement, the result of this private enterprise, was started in the eighteen-nineties. It was initiated by Mir Waiz Moulvi Hasool Shah, to safeguard the Muslims who were drawn towards Christianity because of the Mission Schools. The Hindu community also set up a number of educational institutions after 1930 when Canon Diceoe succeeded in getting a Brahman widow remarried. But in spite of this early start of modern education in Kashmir, the Government involvement and response to this movement was slow till Sir Henry Sharp was appointed to report on education in Kashmir.

in 1916. While appreciating and commending the Mission School education programme, Sharp made strong remarks on the backwardness of education among the Muslims and suggested ways and means to improve and modernise the pattern of education in the State Schools. Later the Educational Reorganisation Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. K.G. Saiyidain was appointed to reorganise the system of primary and secondary education in the State in June 1935. The Committee advocated a diversification of the secondary course and the introduction of more practical work. The reason put forward for this proposal was that the secondary schools would otherwise be hopelessly out of touch with the socio-economic situation and needs of the people unless this principle of diversification was introduced. This experiment was very well tested and found fruitful in the Mission Schools in Kashmir. This was the direct and strong impact of the Mission School movement on the policy statement and programmes advocated by the Saiyidain Committee.

The succession of missionaries in both the medical and educational fields encouraged them to take up the cause of women's education in Kashmir. Mr. Bisce remarked on women's education, "The education of girls is progressing much faster than that of boys did at its commencement, and I believe that the atmosphere of the city will be changed beyond all conception, when the mothers of this rising generation have been educated, for it is they and the priests who are the greatest stumbling blocks on the road to light and truth at present." The girls Mission School was the forerunner of women's education and once the ice was broken, the other private educational societies joined in opening new schools for girls in Kashmir.

With the advent of Christian educators in Srinagar, the indigenous educational institutions i.e., 'Haktao' and 'Pathanala', gradually began to fade into oblivion. Therefore, educational reform did not keep pace with the efforts of the fundamentalist who were not prepared to change easily. The traditional social and religious matrix was loosened only

after modern education, initiated by the missionaries of the Church missionary society began to make itself felt, resulting in simultaneously introducing changes in educational systems by the Government agencies.

**Emergence of an Emancipated Class:**

The introduction of the Mission School education resulted in changed behaviour in Jammu society and laid the foundation of a new era in education. A new class of people was created. Members of this new class chiefly resided in Srinagar and had a good knowledge of English and Western customs and modes of behaviour. This geared up the Government and other services where the efficiency and a sense of one's duty was infused through this transformation of society. A large majority of this class of people were the old boys and girls of Mission Schools. The schools produced leaders in diverse fields for the State and a number of old students became leading teachers, lawyers, doctors and engineers. Commenting on the impact of Mission School education, Ihsan Khan, writes, "The greatest impact of the mission schools was on social mobility. It reformed the mission and non-mission school boys alike, although the former were often at an advantage because of good schooling."
An English education helped to raise the status of all those who could benefit from it". 16

Appreciating the great service that Canon Lyndale Biscoe and his missionary colleagues rendered to the people of Kashmir, the late Sheikh S.M. Abdullah the then Prime Minister of Kashmir writes, "Canon Biscoe patiently and persistently tried to instil in our youth the spirit of self help, 'esprit de-corps' and social service. The institutions with which he was connected were places where young Kashmiris not only were taught high and noble ideals, but were imbued with enthusiasm to strive for them.... Those who have been under his care as students feel joy and pride to be known as Canon Biscoe's boys. He breathed his own idealism, purity of thought and action, and love of service into all his students, and made them models of uprightness, honesty and good character." 17

Major General, L.S. Dunsterville makes the following observation on the students and teachers

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who come out of mission schools. He writes, "Although it is not the case that a large proportion of his pupils have definitely decided to accept Christ, it is nevertheless beyond doubt that the majority of his staff and boys leave the School having learnt to lead lives more nearly following the teaching of Christ than those of many professing Christians."

With the contact of a foreign culture, mainly English, there was a great shifting of values in the older and new modes of thinking and behaviour. Social change was not merely cumulative but integrative and synthetic. Srinagar, which for a long time stood as a separate cultural area, grew sensitive to change which is very much in evidence even today. The interaction of the two forces, the Mission and the Orthodox found a via media in programming life on modern lines, wherein education played its desired role.