

**A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL
CHANGE :**

**THE IDEAS OF SOME LIBERAL THINKERS OF
NINETEENTH CENTURY MAHARASHTRA AND
THEIR RELEVANCE TO MODERNIZATION.**

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

INTRODUCTION.

The emergence of the Indian nation as a Republic in 1950 marked the beginning of a general plan to reconstruct Indian Society. The nature and form of the social change to be brought about was clearly envisaged by the Indian Constitution and it was a form that was chosen by the nation through an act of deliberate choice. The Constitution incorporated articles of faith that were a recognition of man's dignity as man, of the moral worth and absolute value of the human personality. They also were the foundations upon which a modern society was to be built, a society in which there would be secured for all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social economic and political;
Liberty of thought, expression, belief and
worship;
Equality of status and opportunity; and
promotion among all its citizens of
Fraternity assuring the dignity of the
individual and the unity of the Nation.

Characteristic of modern Western democracies, the articles of faith reflect the fundamental postulates of liberal philosophy. The sights are now set on the abolition of discriminatory or invidious distinctions between groups and the securing to the individual an equality of status and opportunity. Individuals are

to have the widest personal freedom, which is in accord with the public good and the widest freedom of association.

Nehru's reading of the Constitution's aim was in these words:

"After all, the whole purpose of the Constitution, as proclaimed in the directive principles, is to move forward towards what I may call a casteless and classless society. It may not have been said precisely in that way; but what is, I take it, its purpose, and anything that perpetuates the present social and economic inequalities is bad."¹

The seemingly dramatic suddenness with which the independent nation made its appearance and the aura surrounding the events immediately preceding this event, tend to obscure the fact that a people's desire to change its traditional style of life and its mode of thinking and value system to suit the requirements of modern society, does not come about of its own accord, and is no sudden occurrence. A long period of development, of gestation, antedates the determination of a people to make these changes. The changes themselves are preceded by great changes in social and intellectual tendencies, all of which combine

1. Quoted in D.E. Smith, India as a Secular State, (Princeton, New Jersey, 1963), p. 310.

into a set of forces that predispose a society to receive change, so that a full movement can be initiated.

It is to the nineteenth century that one turns to find the beginnings of the modernization process in India, because no hundred years in its history ever hurried it along so fast and so far over new paths as did events and ideas of this century. The making of a modern society as an ideal to be achieved through conscious effort was first seen in the minds of men, in their ideas and aspirations, which taking hold of their thinking gave it new dimensions for the assessment of the state of society, and new perspectives for the charting of the future course of the nation.

A roster of the names of men fired by the new zeal is to be found in the group associated with the Indian National Congress in its early years. Not a few of these men lived in Maharashtra. Some of them attained an all-India status and were known beyond the boundaries of their own province. Others, especially those who preferred to spread their gospel through the medium of their mother-tongue, were perhaps less well-known outside but were as concerned

as the others about the future, and shared their vision of the great heights to which the nation could rise, to take her rightful and proud place on a basis of equality, with other nations of the world.

Radhakrishnan, writing of the twentieth century, characterised it by its "sudden widening of intellectual perspectives", and its rapid dissolution of accepted values" which he said were "preparing men's hearts and minds for a new conception of human solidarity based on equal rights of all human beings, whatever their caste or class, colour or community, race or religion." In the Indian context, it was necessary to create a climate for social change, for the widening of horizons and assessment of traditional notions, and the task became the function of the men who dominated the scene in the nineteenth century, particularly in Bengal and in Maharashtra.

The era in which they lived has been given different appellations- the Indian Renaissance, the Indian Resurgence, the Indian Awakening. Its most characteristic feature was its forward looking stance. The thinkers of that time were "no longer content

with adoring the wisdom of our vedic ancestors... were (not) sighing for the golden age of the far off past" but had their gaze fixed forward, to the Glory that can be Ind. A spirit of progress, an outlook that was rational, a measure of individualism and an attitude that did not hesitate to be critical, are all discernible in this era. Other concomitants were "that perennial desire for reform", a revolt against the "tyranny of dogma and custom" and "an eternal discontent" with the state of things as they were. Taken together, they formed the antecedents that were needed to usher in the modern age.

From times immemorial some sort of contact with the outside world had existed, through the hordes of settlers and invaders and traders that came to India, some through the north-western mountain passes, some to the eastern and western sea-boards and yet fewer braving the natural barriers of the north-eastern regions. As Sarkar described it, "India became the home of a living growing people with a continuity running through all the ages each generation using, expanding or modifying what its long line of predecessors had left to it". Nor was this manner of cultural impact only a one-sided

phenomenon. By the end of the Gupta period, the ancient culture of India had deeply affected the civilization of South-East Asia, a fact testified to by Angkor Vat and Angkor Thom, to name only one of the evidences amidst a whole myriad² of them that tell their own tale of grandeur and magnificence.

The impact of the coming of the British, however, was of a different order than anything that had gone before. The influence it brought upon the life and thought of the country was comparable only to the ancient Aryan stimulus, in its intensity and all-pervasive character.

Pax Brittanica was only one of its dimensions. The comparative isolation of earlier centuries was now broken. Ideas and events shaping the cultures of the Western hemisphere opened up a whole new world of perspectives and values for those who came in contact with them, shaping their thinking and setting it on paths hitherto untrodden. "Having admitted us to the rest of the world and admitted the rest of the world to us", said Sarkar, India was "switched on to the main currents of the great moving world outside and made to vibrate with every

2. H. G. Rawlinson, "India in European Literature and Thought" The Legacy of India, G. T. Garrat (ed), (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1937), pp. 1-37.

economic and cultural change there.

W.E.H. Lecky observed that in Europe every change of belief was preceded by a great change in its intellectual condition and that the success of any opinion depended much less upon the force of its arguments or upon the ability of its advocates, than upon the predisposition of the society to receive it. Thus in Europe long before the Reformation took place, the tendencies of the movement were manifest. Lecky continued with the observation that "the pressures of the general intellectual influences of the time determine the predispositions which ultimately regulate the details of belief", though it is to be expected that all men do not yield to that pressure with the same facility. A change in belief, Lecky maintains "reflect a change of the habits of thought and mind...which in turn is created by a combination of all the intellectual and even social tendencies of that age³."

3. W.E.H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, (London, 1865, reprint 1913), p.viii.

The immediate manifestation of the intellectual influence and tendencies created by the combination of forces that entered the Indian scene with the advent of British rule was a new spirit among the people, which was rational and humanitarian. A new sensitivity to many forms of ailments in the society, generated a mood of intolerance towards them and provided the very stuff of which crusades are made. A relentless battle in the name of "social reform" was waged, fought through the press and the public platform. Maharashtra of the nineteenth century resounds with echoes of this battle in which progressive and orthodox forces were ranged against each other, evidence of the fact that social reform constituted a major area of intellectual endeavour in this century.

The word Sudharak became a common designation for liberal-minded men involved in this endeavour and it was a term used in a commendatory sense, though an occasional derogatory use was not excluded. But the use of the terms, social reformer or sudharak, to describe these men is a limiting one, because it conveys the impression that the men so

named only fought for isolated or specific reforms. It is a description that is contrary to fact. For one thing, their involvement in the reform movement was only one among many of their pursuits in the public life of the time. For another, their desire for reform emanated from deep convictions, a carefully reasoned and well-thought out philosophy of life and a firm view of the state of society and the ultimate value system that must be accepted in that society. They were laying the groundwork for the building of a modern society. To give them their rightful place in the history of Indian thought and to see their real impact on the nation's thinking, one must look beyond the fact of their social reform activities. The social reform issues per se, in this broader context, assume minor significance and need to be considered only for the basis they provide for an understanding of the thought of the men spearheading the reform movements.

The function of a philosophical study is to provide an analysis of the thought of an era or an individual, in a way that will state the essential nature of the thought, giving expression to the fundamental principles and ideas of its content, and

providing a clarification of conceptual confusion, should such confusions be found to exist therein. The philosophy of social change of the liberal leaders of nineteenth century Maharashtra is considerably intertwined with the social issues of their day, and therefore in considering their thinking, consideration of certain aspects of social history become unavoidable. Cowling, in his study of John Stuart Mill, has suggested that in a critical exposition of ideas of any serious writer on social and moral questions, it is necessary not only to understand the doctrine itself, but the circumstances to which the doctrine was a response. It is understood, of course, that the doctrine most likely will have universal validity, so that its applicability or its intrinsic worth, extends beyond the particular circumstances to which it was a response.

It is a moot question, whether the men at the forefront of all this public activity, and providing a collective leadership of a kind unknown in the annals of the country before this century, were really aware of their pivotal role. Röpke maintains that not even the wisest men of a generation can characterise accurately the period of change in

which he is living. Lorenzo Medici, as Röpke pointed out, could not have stopped Botticelli in the streets of Florence and confided to him that they were then living in the period of the Renaissance.

Certainly, there is to be found in the Maharashtra leaders "a sense of a historic mission" which induced in them in earnestness of manner deriving from the consciousness of the obligation to propogate what each conceived to be opinions and beliefs suitable to the times in which they lived and the point in history at which they had arrived. Whether they were also aware that what they were setting in motion was a direction in which a whole people would move in the next century is another matter altogether. It is not suggested that this forward-going movement was an uninterrupted one, without its oppositions and hurdles. Neither can it be said that the path ahead was always clear and without its own inner entanglements and confusions. Many issues arose to occupy the full attention of the people to the exclusion of others. Some of them were of momentous significance such as the national movement per se. Other were of the variety of side tracks, clouding the vision with the immediate and the trivial

and obscuring at times the ultimate ideals on which the sights had been set.

Wolpert⁴ has suggested that "In good measure the genius of Gandhi and Nehru lay in their ability to syncretize and effectively popularize the rich legacy bequeathed to them by their predecessors". Seen in such a perspective, the whole movement starting with the middle nineteenth century can be viewed as continuous till 1950 and the years beyond that, excepting for the early years of the twentieth century when the liberal movement was eclipsed for a time and preoccupations of the people were of a different matter.

The origin and growth of liberal and rational thinking in Maharashtra belong to a host of men who dominated the public arena in one way or another from the third decade of the nineteenth century. To this early period belong the names of Bal Shastri Jambhekar (1812-1846), D.B. Tarkhadkar also known as Dadoba Pandurang (1814-1882), G.H. Deshmukh who was better known as Lokahitwadi (1823-1892) and Jyotirao Phule (1827-1890).

4. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1962, pp.vii-viii.

None of these men were basically a product of the formal English educational system and yet they all came under the influence brought in by the new rule. The ideas they propagated through their writings and speeches and through the organised efforts they promoted, lay the foundation for generating an awareness of the tenets of social justice and of the need for change.

The establishment of institutions imparting English education and the founding of the Bombay University brought into existence another group of thinkers, who coming under the direct influence of liberal thinking in the West, blazed greater trails than their predecessors by creating a keener intellectual climate for change and identifying dimensions along which change must come. Among this group must be named M.G.Ranade (1842-1901), G. G. Agarkar (1856-1895) and K.T.Talank (1850-1895), V.N. Mandlik presents an example of that rare occurrence of reformer turned anti-reformer. Ramashastri Ramkrishna Bhagwat (1851-1908) merits greater recognition for his views than has been accorded to him B.M.Malbari and Pandita Ramabai have a claim to be counted among these liberal leaders of wide impact,

if for nothing else, only ^{for} the reason that they were instrumental in establishing a firm precedent that the origin or source of ideas of change and reform must know no bounds, that restrictions cannot be put on such ideas or their communication, simply because they emanate from sources which do not fall within certain narrow lines. Once this vital principle was established, the way was clear for the introduction of an important maxim of the modernization process, that no matter where a thing or an idea originates, it is to be received, if it is good and has value. Quibbling about in-acceptable origins or origins that are "alien" are thus excluded from this process.

The nature of the liberal thinking in the West which exercised such a profound influence upon Maharashtra leaders of the nineteenth century was not so much a body of doctrines or dogmas, as it was an outlook on life, a habit or temper of the mind.

In the West itself, such a mode of thinking, or philosophy of life had not made its appearance all of a sudden but had been in the making for centuries, and had drawn upon many varied sources in different ages. Its Greco-Roman origins are all too manifest. From the Greeks came that tremendous

heritage which has been described as "the taming of man and nature through reason."

It was Socrates who gave prominence to liberalism as an attitude to life which was sceptical, experimental, rational and free. His life and death bore eloquent testimony to his belief in the freedom of inquiry and of expression. Virtue comes from knowledge, he contended, and knowledge comes from insistent examination of one's belief.

In the Middle Ages, Peter Abelard (1079-1142) was a theologian who questioned the authority of the Church Fathers and in doing so emphasized the power of reason and introduced an element of doubt into religious beliefs.

With the dawning of the Modern Age, the role of Descartes "Discourse on Method", and Milton's Areopagitica in claiming the sovereignty of reason in human affairs and in demanding unhindered freedom to publish were epoch-making.

Liberalism gained further dimensions in the Renaissance, in the Protestant Reformation and in the Scientific Revolution. The spirit of the Renaissance was secular and had the effect of shifting human interest from the next world to life upon earth.

Protestantism promoted individualism in religion, through its fundamental doctrine of private judgement in interpreting the Bible. With the Protestant Reformation, the death knell of authoritarianism was sounded because of its assertion that belief and non-belief are matters for one's own conscience. With the establishment of the principle that faith is "an act and expression of freedom" and cannot be imposed by force, a beginning of individualism was made which was increasingly reflected in the philosophy of Europe from the seventeenth century onwards.

Locke was the first great European liberal of modern times, who made individual liberty the basis of his political teachings and toleration of diversity the basis of religion. In the nineteenth century it was Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) who was the philosopher of extreme individualism.

The rise of science aided the development of rationalism because it generated an infinite faith in man's capacity to know more about himself and the universe, where such knowledge was based on sound fact and an appeal to his reason.

The American Declaration of Independence of 1776 makes one of the earliest statements of liberalism:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed with by their creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

The French Revolution's legacy lay in the concepts of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."

The definition of Liberalism comes from two Latin words "generos" and "liber". In its first sense, liberalism has come to connote "a generosity of mind, a readiness to recognise and uphold the just rights of other men", "to do unto others as you would have them do unto you". When translated into practice, liberalism gave impetus to many social changes, to the righting of many wrongs. In its second sense, the accent is on freedom. The liberal person desires that every human being, and every group shall be free to make the most and best of his own life, in his own way, so far as it is compatible with the same freedom in others.

Thus it is the conviction of the supreme value of men as an individual that is the ultimate basis of the new social philosophy. Kant's view that every man is in an end in himself and must be treated as such expressed the conviction in one way. The Biblical saying "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man

for the Sabbath" states it in a different way, Man claims for himself the inalienable right to think for himself, to recognise no "arbitrary prohibition or barriers" to his thinking, no "territory on which he may not tread", not will he surrender his thinking to" any authority, whose credentials have not been examined or approved".

With emancipation as the keynote, man claims the right to live a life freed from the tyranny of any predetermined notion of his station and its duties. Thus his destiny in this world ceases to be determined by an accident of birth, creed, group or race, or by tradition or customary usage. Men's rights and relationships are now to be determined by reason and justice alone. The positive implication of the liberal standpoint is that each man should have the fullest and freest opportunity for self-development within the framework of law and a respect for the same freedom in others. Implicit also is the belief that progress and happiness are things to be achieved here and now, and not in some mythical here-after. As a living faith, the liberal philosophy recognises the need to be redefined again and again to suit the changing demands of Society

and the problems of each new age.

Rapid political and social changes inspired by this philosophy were, for the greater part, achieved through persuasion and assent among men. The whole system of law was reconstructed to give men a larger measure of personal and religious freedom and the process has not ended yet. Law itself, became amenable to enlightened public opinion. Freedom of speech and thought and association, and a greater measure of tolerance, a secular approach to many social and political issues—all these became visible signs of liberalism as practiced.

Thus the new pattern of life and thought that became a model for liberal thinkers everywhere incorporated the following dimensions:

1. Nature: A rediscovery of nature in which the world was seen as governed beneficently by impersonal natural laws.
2. Reason: Reason, and not faith, was regarded as the only true instrument of knowledge and of guiding men and societies, so that happiness could be obtained in this world.
3. Goodness of Man. Belief in goodness of man was proclaimed by Rousseau and was contrary to the Christian belief in the doctrine of original sin. Man's nature was corrupted by prejudice and ignorance and the establishment of a natural social order which was in harmony with man's natural goodness was essential.

4. Progress. The new faith in man and the new passion for change was inspired by the idea of progress, a new vision of man's "perfectibility" and future happiness.
5. Secularism. Belief in the idea of progress promoted a this-worldly attitude of mind, and the attitude made evident by the Biblical saying, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the thing that are God's".
6. Toleration: A freedom was claimed for all kinds of beliefs and disbeliefs.
7. Intellectual Freedom in which man had the freedom of thought and expression.
8. Education. Locke's philosophy of the mind as a "tabula rasa" gave an interest in education as the most important of all institutions to shape the human mind.
9. The Rights of man. The rights were claimed by men to be treated with equality, implying an equality of status and opportunity.
10. Social Liberalism. The legacy of the Judeo-Christian tradition permeated every aspect of the liberal philosophy, giving rise among other ideas to a concept of social ethics that has been the guiding light of almost every people in this country.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

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The impact of liberal ideas on thinking Indians in the nineteenth century was to give rise to a new mood of introspection and concern regarding the state of Indian society, and to the development of a rationalist and humanist view-point from which to judge it. A certain fervour for social reorganisation was generated so that more men could live fuller and richer lives. A philosophy, incorporating within itself dimensions drawn from many sources, and forming an amalgam of the best in many cultures arose.

The study attempts to analyse the thinking of some of these liberal stalwarts who lived in Maharashtra. The analysis will identify and isolate those rational and liberal ideas which inspired them and which must find a place in any philosophy of modernization for India.

There have been studies of the rise of liberalism in India. There has been even a larger number of studies on the social reform movement or what has been called the Indian Renaissance. However, the attempt to relate these movements and the ideas behind them to the modernization process and to find relevance of the

ideas of this period, for a philosophy for present times has not been made.

The study begins with, an analysis of the concepts of social change and modernization. It traces briefly the development of theories of social change and it analyses the dimensions of modernization. An increasing concern has been shown in the years since World War II about the modernization of traditional societies. The study illustrates how these concerns have been translated into empirical studies in the social sciences and cites recent literature in the fields of economics, history and sociology. By contrast studies of the conceptual problems involved in the modernization of tradition are found to have been neglected, though relatively speaking, an increasing number of commentators show awareness of the problems involved in creating a new philosophy for new times from the legacy of traditional Indian philosophy. A discussion of what dimensions must be included therein follows.

Three major sources through which influences were exerted in the nineteenth century to bring about a desire for change and for a reconstruction or regeneration of society are identified:

1. The introduction of a new system of education, has generally been acknowledged to be one of the most significant of all changes that took place in the country, that spurred on and hastened the desire for modernization. The early beginnings of English education in Bombay Presidency, the establishment of institutions of higher learning and the history of certain educational controversies have all been considered. Particular attention has been paid to the nature and content of the curriculum at the higher education level, especially as they have had the most profound effect in changing old ideas and bringing in new perspectives. In this connection, the views of Ranade, Gokhale, Bhandarkar and Telang are pertinent and have merited consideration.

2. Modern Marathi Literature, reflecting new forms, new styles of writing as well new themes, became an important medium of communicating new perspectives to a considerable section of the population and therefore contributing to the creation of a climate of receptivity for change and modernization. A brief section is devoted to a history of the growth of modern Marathi Literature.

3. The coming of the Christian missionaries and the nature of their 'mission' evoked considerable public debate, some of it quite acrimonious, carried on through the columns of the vernacular press, first in Bengal and then in Maharashtra. The stimulus given by missionaries to rethinking on pertinent social and religious issues came both through their pioneering work in many fields, and also through the mood of introspection and self-criticism that they stimulated, by the very nature of their mission.

The nineteenth century saw the growth of organisational efforts, a feature hitherto unknown, to promote certain well-defined aims and purposes. Not a few of these organizations were politically oriented. Some, such as the Indian National Social Conference, were concerned primarily with social change. Others served a dual purpose, that of bringing about awareness of the need for both social and political reform. To this last category belong the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and the Deccan Sabha. The Servants of India Society was concerned with 'national service' which included social reform too. The Students' Literary and Scientific Society aimed at promoting all manners of reform and the creation of a state of consciousness about many issues, other

than political ones. The Hemant Vyakhyan Mala provided a public platform for lectures and debates. Each organization has been considered from the point of view of its contribution to social change.

The greater part of the study was centred around the writings and utterances of a small group of liberals of this period. The five men chosen for a deeper analytical study, had each in a different way, made a distinctive response to the challenges of social change. In the absence of a centrally organized ecclesiastical body that could initiate change or bring about reforms in the country on any extensive scale, or even had the responsibility to do so, it was the individual reformer and thinker who had to become the advocate of a new and challenging way of life. It was he who had to set the pace and the direction for change. And the study of individual thinkers and their modes of thinking take an additional significance for this very reason.

O.E. Black has made a distinction between functional and structural changes in society. Functional changes depend upon the new ideas and perspectives introduced by a few men, who might be described as the functional elite. Functional changes are more easily and quickly achieved, than structural

changes which depend upon the many , are slower and need painful and long drawn-out efforts. Black sees the task of charismatic leaders as being one of mediating between function and structure, between new knowledge and the new social system and the older beliefs and customs. Such is the task that fell to the liberal elite of the nineteenth century.

It is the contention of this study that the ideas expressed by these nineteenth century leaders have value and relevance beyond their own times. Thus, while what they said and did is seen in the context of the specific issues around which their ideas and actions centred, an attempt is also made to analyse those principles and springboards of action in their thinking that have application even today. More important is the contention made that they add up to a philosophy for modernization or contain perspectives that could be incorporated into such a philosophy. In that sense this study does not concern itself with social reform per se and when the term is used, it is intended that it should have the widest possible connotation.

The point has often been made that advance and progress cannot be a matter of imitation or wholesale

importation from an alien culture and that its stimulus must be rooted in one's own culture. Here is an additional reason why ideas must be sought that are of Indian vintage. These ideas would command general acceptance. Society has become acclimatized to them in the hundred years since they were propounded and so seem ready to respond to them. In a limited sense, these ideas have become "internalized to form the unconsciously accepted ways of doing things".

A detailed study of the ideas of Ranade, Bhandarkar, Telang, Gokhale and Agarkar, reveal varied emphases and concerns, none incompatible with the other, and all of great significance. Ranade, a deeply religious and consecrated man, saw that any desire to bring about change and progress, along liberal lines, would have to be a matter of deep spiritual and personal commitment. Bhandarkar, very outspoken, unambiguous and without hesitation pointed out how the critical frame of mind was of the very essence of progress and advancement. Telang, was a controversial figure even in his own times and epitomizes the dilemma and conflict faced by many in a transitory period when the lure of the new vies with the stranglehold of the old. Gokhale, equally

at home in two cultures, put great faith in the educative process, which to him meant Western style education. Agarkar, agnostic and scathing critic of his times and of the state of society, was a rationalist who did not despair for the future. His order of priorities for the reconstruction of society, unpalatable as it was to his contemporaries, had the merit of putting first things first. His philosophical standpoint which has earned the name of radical liberalism, can be better comprehended in the twentieth century than it was in the nineteenth.

The distinctive standpoints and modes of viewing the whole problem of change that emerge from this analytical study reveal that these liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century had insights which transcended their immediate times, when measured along the dimensions of their significance for today. Although the insights have great potential for meeting our needs of today, the purpose for which they are being used by many present-day intellectuals is quite different. These intellectuals show every sign of having been lulled into a state of complacency and self-satisfaction because they hold that all that needs to be said or to be done in connection with

the modernization process has already been achieved. Roy and Ranade and the whole galaxy of men down to the more recent views of Gandhi and Nehru are all cited as evidence of India's achievement in this realm. What they fail to see is that society really never exploited to the full the legacy of liberalism and rationalism that they received from these early leaders. What is needed today is a rediscovery of the truths they preached, for the path to modernization is still long and hard and far away into the distance.

Part I : SOCIAL CHANGE AND MODERNIZATION

Chapter I : Social Change

- I : What is Social Change
- II : Social Change and Modernization
- III : Motivations for Modernization
- IV : Five Broad Aspects of
Modernization.

I - WHAT IS SOCIAL CHANGE ?Introduction.

The problem of change as seen from the conceptual point of view, and in abstract and general terms, has exercised a peculiar fascination for the philosopher, over the ages. Change constitutes one of the most conspicuous and pervasive aspects of human experience and the development of metaphysical enquiry has proceeded along two different lines. On the one hand there has been a search for the changeless and immutable amid the ever-present fact of change and diversity. On the other, Becoming and change themselves have been given a higher place with the denial of the existence of an unchanging substratum. In the history of Western philosophy, from Parmenides and Heraclitus down to Hegel and Bergson, the apparent antinomy of Being and Becoming has dominated the scene.

Social Change- Some Implications of the term.

When the term "social change" is used, one has already passed from thinking of change at a conceptual level to considering it as applying to societies. The term "social change" itself has come into vogue in

in the contemporary literature of the social sciences in preference to the earlier "social evolution" and "social progress" both of which were the basis of theories of social change in the nineteenth century.

In what sense can change be spoken of as being applicable to societies and social phenomena? When we use the word "change", in ordinary language, it is clear that there is no form of change which does not take place in time. Again persistence in time implies stability, so that in its most comprehensive sense, the term "social change" can be used in connection with any fact, event, action, structure or institution in so far as they are correlates of societies. Social change can be differentiated from social stability. The differentiation most likely will be one of quality, form and time, but that of space or quantity may not be excluded from it.

Again change and identity, or occurent and continuant, as W.E.Johnson¹ would call it, are closely related phenomena. It is always in the context of the "something" namely, that which changes, that one talks about change, so that if change becomes a topic for

1. W.E.Johnson, Logic, Vol.3 (Cambridge, 1924), p.66.

closure inspection, then both the background of the continuum of identity and the nature and manner of the change itself must be discussed. The manner of change in the social context itself may admit of varying degrees and kinds. Changes which are imperceptible may be contrasted with those which are sudden and dramatic. Again, there are changes which are sought voluntarily and changes which are inevitable, whether or not voluntarily sought. The discussion of modes and reasons for resistance to change, also assume relevance when social change is discussed.

The term "social" itself is also not without its difficulties of delineation since there is a larger and narrower sense in which the term is used. We may restrict that aspect of human behaviour and action which is designated "social", using dimensions pointed out by Daya Krishna, to mean that which is "inter-personal" and concerns the relation of man to man, whether this be of the direct face to face type or the indirect one mediated through other people or institutions. The relation itself may be person-to-person or person-to-group, or group-to-person or group-to-group.²

2. Daya Krishna, Considerations Towards a Theory of Social Change, (Bombay, 1965), p.22.

Value Judgements Implied.

On the first page of his Wirtschaft and Gesellschaft Max Weber defined sociology as " a science which aims to understand clearly social behaviour and thus give a causal explanation of its course and results". He claimed that science must be value-free and his contribution to methodology was to distinguish between the scientific approach to social data and the value-judgement approach. He insisted that the two approaches must not be allowed to mix in studying human relations. Weber's attitude of humility before values was seized upon by anthropologists and philosophical positivists who for different reasons questioned the validity of values.

Talcott Parsons held that interpersonal or "social" relationships do imply a reference to values and norms. In the context of social change, and the nature of human relations considered in this study, the conclusion is inescapable that value-judgements are involved. Take the case of "social reform" itself. The explicit reference to values is plain. The custom or traditional mode of behaviour is judged to fall short of a social norm and therefore necessitates a

reform to be made in it.

The same reference to norms and values is implicit when the arrangement of groups and individuals in a human society is considered. No one denies that human society consists of some such arrangement and the arrangement itself is based on norms and values which are considered right, proper and desirable, when this arrangement is considered to be satisfactory. If, as in the case of the inequalities implicit in the caste system, the arrangement is considered to be wrong or unjust or as violating the basic worth of human beings, then a change may be sought to give greater equality to members of that hierarchical society. The desire or need for change and the basis on which the change is to be made both imply a reference to values.

A Definition of Social Change.

W.E. Moore has defined social change as:

...the significant alteration of social structure (that is, of patterns of social action and interactions), including consequences and manifestations of such structures embodied in norms (rules of conduct), values and cultural products and symbols.³

3. Wilbert E. Moore, "Social Change" International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 14.

The definition is conceived as being broad enough to encompass not only social change, that is, change that refers to actual human behaviour, but also cultural changes which include changes in culturally meaningful symbols produced by human beings. Such cultural symbols will include not only language and art forms but extend to cover even philosophical and theological systems. The cultural dimension must be stressed for the individual human being and the group live in both the natural physical world and in a socio-cultural world. As far as the latter is concerned an individual or group may belong not to a single cultural system but to many smaller such systems.

Social change as a "significant alteration" may be brought about by a "new" element which may be an element that disturbs, in that it involves a violation of the social and cultural status quo. The "new" element may have the capacity to create major changes in styles of behaviour and life and in perspectives and values. Such, for instance, was the impact of the invention of the steam engine in annihilating time and space. In our own times, man's reaching the moon has given him a new perspective of nature and a new understanding of the capacity of the human mind to turn

science fantasy and fiction into reality.

The disturbing of the status quo may also come about through ideas, through the discovery or re-discovery of principles which have universal validity. Thus there may be a rediscovery of the ideals of truth, justice and equality, and humanitarian ideals in general. Scientific advancement may hasten the progress of innovation within a religion so that it is forced constantly to seek ways and means of maintaining relevance in a changing environment and changing times. The rate at which a culture or a religion or a philosophy undergoes modification to suit the requirements of a changing society, so that its meaningfulness and relevance are maintained must, of necessity, be slow and dependent upon the apprehension of the need for this change.

The experience of change has already been described as the most conspicuous and pervasive aspects of human experience. From a psychological point of view, change may be awareness at the perceptual level or at the introspectional level. Change at both these levels concerns the immediate and is apprehended as a contrast to a state that has gone before. Again the thing or act which is changing

and the awareness of its changing state are two different things. The latter, that is awareness of a changing state, may be obscured by familiarity with the situation, in which case change may not be noticed at all. If a process of adaptation sets in, then again the object or situation will not be apprehended as changing.

We move to a different dimension of perceiving change when we consider apprehension of a need to change things. Here the perceiver accepts an active role in as much as apprehension of this need may create in him a sense of responsibility to do something about change, though all men need not be motivated in this way. The awareness of the need to change is itself the result of a value judgement. The bringing about of changes in group behaviour or in a society is generally the function of a minority, and changes will be determined by the form and manner and content that is given to them by this minority group. Two observations seem to have relevance here. Firstly, the majority by virtue of its sheer quantitative magnitude is forced to be represented by a smaller group, and in a democracy, at least, is held to represent the will of the people. But perhaps it is more important to stress the fact that it is always a small group of people, who become leaders

and pace-setters or even are considered to be a "thinking cell" for the majority. In an ideal situation, this elite group may^{be} constituted by those whose education or intellectual insights or expertise qualify them to be pace-setters. But power, personal considerations, wealth and caste have often been the basis on which such minority group leadership has emerged.

Theories of Social Change.

It was not till the end of the eighteenth century that social change per se came to be looked upon as something desirable, a result of the legacy of French intellectualism. Till that time, the recorded history of man shows that social stability was considered to be the ideal and social change as such undesirable. In fact, it was considered vital for a society to maintain its stability and continuity and the whole burden of doing so fell to its folklore, customs, theological beliefs and ethical standards, which in seemingly unchanged form, were passed from one generation to the next. In essence this constitutes the meaning of tradition- a social heritage, received from an immediately preceding generation- the process continuing over a period of time, in which the heritage itself can be traced back to a point in time in the

remote past. The heritage is deemed to be valuable and acceptable for the reason that it is so derived.

In Western thought, Bacon and Descartes must be credited with first asking the questions about the nature of attitudes that must be taken towards all accepted forms of thought and conduct. By affirming the two positive axioms, that of the supremacy of reason and the invariability of the laws of nature, and by creating the new instrument of rigorous analytical method which was equally applicable to the world of history and ideas as that of physical knowledge, Cartesianism struck a blow at traditionalism and paved the way for a theory of Progress. Bury described the impact in these words:

The immutability of the processes of nature collided with the theory of an active Providence. The supremacy of reason shook the thrones from which authority and tradition had tyrannised over the brains of men. Cartesianism was equivalent to a declaration of the Independence of Man.

4

The Idea of Social Progress.

The emergence of the idea of social progress can be traced to congeries of circumstances in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe such as economic affluence, social mobility, an increase of

4. J.B.Bury, The Idea of Progress(London, 1928), p.65.

scientific knowledge and an increasing measure of power over nature, made possible through inventions. It was Condorcet who advocated the view that the method of and spirit of science could be applied to the improvement of society as it had been to material technology. Condorcet's Esquisse d'un Tableau historique des progres de l'esprit humain (1793) was epoch-making because it set a new direction for human endeavour, that of discovering the laws of social life through scientific study with the goal of bringing about social improvement in a deliberately planned manner. The old medieval notion that there was something inviolable about the social system because it had divine sanction and that men were condemned to a life of wretchedness was displaced, and instead there grew the idea that man as a rational being could through the exercise of his reason exercise control over his destiny. Condorcet and others like Locke and Saint-Simon with their new teachings about social progress created an ideological climate in which men could begin to look at social matters with a different perspective altogether. Since society was a ^{creation} certain of man, it was also within his power and capacity to change it to suit his needs. In fact the idea grew that only those societies which are capable of

changing have the capacity to survive. There were many correlates of the idea of progress itself in the political and economic spheres, and there was even the notion of moral progress propounded.

The twentieth century theories have seen many changes, though at the base a faith in progress still persists, but with more realistic and modest claims made for it. In this century the idea of progress has become a "regulative moral ideal", not a belief about history. It has become a directing principle of intellectual and social action, instructing men to regard all social arrangements with a critical eye, to reject the claim that any human problem has been finally solved or must remain unsolved". If such an idea is incorporated into the moral code of a social system, then it means that social system contains within itself the principle of free inquiry as a self-regulating mechanism. It implies that nothing in the social system is so sacrosanct that it cannot be examined critically. It may even imply an obligation to periodical re-examination and critical appraisal so that so much dead wood may be discarded or relegated to that area which is only of historical significance.

Evolutionary Theories.

Nineteenth century social philosophers who were

inheritors of the idea that social change could be deliberately brought about added a new dimension by propounding the theory of stages of development. The idea of progress by itself maintained that men could make progress, but whether in point of fact they would do so or what improvements they would actually chose, remained an open question. It was Auguste Comte (1798-1857) who was the most notable of these men with his theory that a society must progress through three stages- the theological, the metaphysical and the scientific- and that when the last is reached, it becomes possible for the affairs of men to be controlled by reason. With this intellectual progress, there was also, according to Comte, a moral development in which egoism was superseded by altruism, with social institutions reflecting this change. Education was given a high place by him, for it was the acquisition of knowledge that lessened differences between the privileged and under-privileged classes. With the discovery of the laws of social life, it would be possible thought Comte, to achieve a good society.

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) believed that every society goes through a series of fixed and unchangeable stages of development, irrespective of whether the society wills it or not, but as part of a great cosmic

design, over which man has no control. Influenced by Darwin's On the Origin of the Species the theory of inevitable evolutionary development replaced the idea of social progress through human effort. The impact of this teaching was an acceptance of constant social change as good, if for nothing else but ^{for} the reason that it could not be escaped. For the intellectuals who were inclined to ponder over the extensive changes taking place in their societies, Spencer's theory offered an explanation of these phenomena. Emphasis on the inevitability of reform and change in Indian society was found to be a recurring theme in the thinking of the liberals of nineteenth century Maharashtra.

The twentieth century neo-evolutionary theories accepted social change as normal and inevitable. The idea that society was proceeding from varying degrees of imperfection to social perfection was characteristic of thinking in America, France and England at the turn of the century, though varying theories developed under this theme. Ward in America emphasised the role of education, especially public school education as the means to attain social progress. Weber's theory of the role of the Protestant ethic in the emergence

of the capitalistic society, did not belong to the evolutionary way of thinking as such, but provided a hypothesis for the understanding of a specific historical occurrence. In England Graham Wallas, Hobhouse and Ginsberg, all stressed the inevitability of social change and believed that the direction of social change was from simple, forms of social organization such as the tribe or family to larger highly differentiated integrated forms of social organizations which were characteristic of a modern society.

Another turn given to the evolutionary theory in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries by its adherents was to combine it with the earlier idea of social progress through deliberate human endeavour to support reform programs. In other words, the unfolding of a natural law of development was not to be left to itself, but aided through reform programs because there were vested interests who stood to profit by a maintenance of the status quo and interfered with social change. There is evidence of adherence to this mode of thinking too in nineteenth century Maharashtra.

Socialistic Theories of Social Change.

Karl Marx's theory was a variant form of evolutionism. He, too, saw society moving through

sequential stages or phases, predetermined by "historical imperatives". The nineteenth century phase was that of capitalism, which brought a solution through the development of technology to free men from bondage to nature, also, brought in its wake problems connected with the exploitation of the classes, the workers or creators of the goods, by those who were called capitalists, the holders of the tools of production. Marx was an advocate of political revolution as the solution to the problem which arose because capitalists controlled the government for their own good. The exploitative class would disappear and the government run by the workers would bring in an economic system where "from each according to his abilities to each according to his need" would be the basic principle. This again was conceived by Marx as a transitional phase, for once the workers learned the advantages of living together in peace and harmony, the phase of the classless society, stable and self-maintaining would be established. To the extent that Marx conceived of hastening the evolutionary process through political action, he might be termed a social reformer, but with a connotation utterly at variance with the way the term is

used Indian literature of the nineteenth century.

Fabian Socialism.

A classless society, as visualized by Marx, with the tutorial role of government and temporary phase of political control does not find the support of historical fact. It was perhaps the Fabian socialists who came closer to predicting the path of social change of Western societies in the twentieth century. Rejecting the solution of upheaval and revolution and distressed about the more obvious shortcomings of the capitalist system, they predicted that the transition from capitalism to socialism would come from rational convictions. Once convinced about the basic worth of the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number, there would emerge socialistic institutions and patterns of life that were concerned with the welfare of all groups and while there would be a curbing to some extent of personal rights of an individual there would also be a widening of his social rights.

Social Change as a Cyclical Process.

Not all theories had conceived of social change in terms of social evolution or as change which was a process towards attainment of greater perfection of a society. The evidence of recorded history was to the

contrary, since whole civilizations and specific peoples were known to have reached a zenith and then passed into oblivion. The analogy from the life cycle of an individual who is born, grows to maturity and then to old age and death has been extended to cover the rise and growth of civilizations, and their ultimate fall, and has resulted in theories of history which regarded the course of change as cyclical. Ancient Indian thinkers also held a cyclical view of history conceived of in terms of yugas. But here each cycle encompassed large stretches of time, which was speculative in nature since there is no recorded history of them. The eighteenth century document, Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, took a cyclical view of history and since World War I three major theories of cyclical change had been advocated. Spengler in his Decline of the West (1918) analysing eight civilizations in human history showed that there had been a period of growth to maturity and then a decline and was pessimistic about the future of Western society.

Toyanbee analysed twenty-one cultures, in which he saw the same pattern of growth and decline. Societies like physical organism grow larger and stronger but at maturity develop an organizational rigidity. They may

continue in this state till they encounter a major crisis, which constitutes a "challenge" and a society may respond to this challenge of imminent destruction, by becoming revitalized and reborn. If it does not respond to the challenge, it sinks into decay and oblivion. Toynbee was more optimistic of the future of Western society and believed the time of crisis had now come.

Sorokin saw the course of history, not in terms of rise and fall, but in terms of a continuous fluctuation between two basic kinds of cultures- the Sensate and the Ideational, the former being conceived as bad and the latter as good. In the former, societies are guided by self-interest. In the latter the social good is of greater significance and this society is idealistic in outlook. Within a society there may not be movement in one or other direction and most societies are of the mixed type. To Sorokin the culture of the Middle Ages was ideational in type and though Western society after that moved in the direction of the sensate, it is showing signs again, of being revitalized and moving towards the ideational state.

Conclusion.

The evolutionary theories of social change propounded in the nineteenth century and even those of the twentieth century have been structured around the assumption that societies carry within themselves the capacity to make changes. A society has in it some inherent means or process that would cause modifications in it. Analogies to biological organisms have their limitations because societies unlike individual organisms can revitalize themselves so that decay or decline is not a necessary or foregone conclusion. The capacity of a society to respond to the needs of the age in which it lives will determine how it must change. A society may show an amazing capacity for resilience, as perhaps is witnessed by societies in this century that had to rebuilt after the devastation of war. The earlier idea of social progress had the merit of putting faith in reason and man's ^{capacity} to control his destiny. This aspect of attaining progress must always be counted high in any consideration of how social changes come about. By virtue of the possession of reason, man has an inherent moral obligation to himself and others to use it for the betterment of mankind.

In all discussions of social change it must also be recognized that there are inherently present in society certain aspects which make it resistant to change. Part of this resistance stems from a conscious and unconscious desire for self-maintenance. A continuum or identity must be maintained if a society is not to change out of all recognition with its former self. Moreover, such a continuum or identity gives men a feeling of security amid the changes which may feel like ever so much quicksand. The resistance to change may come from emotional factors or even rational factors.

We are concerned with a more fundamental matter concerning social change. When changes do come, they are really not a product of that society but are really a social in nature.

And such changes are the work of a few individuals acting in "deviant" ways either through their own actual actions or through the advocacy of modes of thought and behaviour that do not fall within the common or normal pattern of a society. In this sense the changes that are sought are conceived as a departure from existing modes of thought and behaviour. They are sponsored as such by the individuals who

advocate them. They are seen as a disturbance of the status quo and a preferred way of life.

A pertinent question that arises in the consideration of the new changes that are to be introduced concerns the sources of these asocial processes of thought and behaviour. From where do they emanate? Both external and internal sources may be found for them which may be distinguished but are interacting forces. They come as a result of the diffusion of new ideas, and new forms of institutions derived from another culture. Diffusionism has been offered as a theory of social change in which social change is seen as a product of one such single variable. Here the notion of diffusion is offered one of the many sources through which ideas of social change suggest themselves and are given formulation. Diffusion may affect a few key individuals or a whole group. What is more is that their being so affected may create a whole new mood for change.

Another source of change is cultural borrowing. The extent to which this process is a vital and extensive source of social change is borne out by even a casual glance at one's culture and environment, whether this be the rising skyline of a city

itself or the mode of architectural designs, or changing food habits and styles of clothing. Mechanical and linguistic examples of such borrowing abound and consciously or unconsciously, it is a process that will continue as long as communication between cultures obtains and free borrowing is a permissible way of effecting change. To find a truly indigenous product may take some doing. What obtains in a closed society or a totalitarian system is for practical or visibly apparent purposes a different matter. Thus, modes of organizations, tools, techniques and ideas all show evidence of borrowing.

Lastly, the source of change may be an inner conviction that change is needed in a society. The conviction itself may be consequent upon the perception of a problem involving some specific behaviour pattern of the society. It may be a conviction that sees the need to incorporate into a society more humanistic and more liberal principles. The social perception of the problem does not ensure that things will change. There may be many who are conscious of the problem but find that the situation defies solution or feel their own incompetence to find one. Moreover, there may exist inhibitive social conditions or states of mind that

prevents change.

The innovative process is, at best a hard thing, and will be facilitated in those societies that seem to be more amenable to changes. This is true of societies that are ^{of} recent origin.

In a traditional society the members have been reared in an accepted way of life which is considered of worth inherently. To explore creatively, ways and means of introducing changes means going contrary in one sense or another to this training. It implies an ability for objectivity on the part of the men who are to set a social trends of behaviour and thinking which necessitates getting away from that very rearing that is now being subjected to change. Historical evidence shows that the leaders and innovators of change in a society seem so much a part of their age and environment for this reason.

LaPiere points out that "the power of established beliefs, preconceptions and ways of thinking to constrain the minds of men and so deter them from venturing in new directions is seldom realized until some ingenious individual breaks the barriers⁵..." This type of break-through can be as characteristic

5. Richard T. LaPiere, Social Change (New York, 1965) pp. 120.

of scientific phenomena as it can of sociological phenomena or philosophical thought. LaPiere continues:

Society in general and in all its organizational aspects circumscribes the minds of its members even as it inducts them into particular forms of action. It prescribes the proper and permissible channels of behaviour, over and mental, and establishes sentiments, superstitions and otherwise, to restrain the individual who is tempted to stray into the unexplored and so to protest the social system its disorganizing effects of change. As long as a particular system is in a state of relatively stable congruence, the inhibiting effect of mental circumscription may be functionally desirable; but when a social system is already in a state of incongruence, social constraints upon independent thought operate only to perpetuate dysfunctioning".

6

The leader, the innovator of change, must arise when such a state of incongruence is reached by a society.

II. Modernization- Its Relation to Social Change.

The term modernization came into greater vogue in the post World War II period as a term to describe the characteristics of the achievements of the societies that had developed highly industrialized, sophisticated economies and life styles. There were certain similarities in these societies, whether North American European, Russian or Japanese and the term referred to these similarities as well as indicated the similarities in the aspirations in the same direction

6. LaPiere, op.cit., pp. 120-121.

of those countries which have euphemistically been called the developing countries.

Modernization is a new name for the old process of social change. It implies those processes that are involved whereby non-industrialized countries may acquire the characteristics of the more advanced countries. As Karl Marx put it, "the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future."

It is wrong to think that, over the ages, societies have undergone no form of social change. What is unique about modernization as a form of social change is that it disturbs the very root structure of a society, and unlike any previous social change, is of a more radical and fundamental nature. Its very magnitude is staggering because it reaches into every aspect of the life of a society, demanding to use the words of Daniel Lerner, "an ultimate reshaping and resharing of all social values, such as power, respect, rectitude, affection, well-being, skill and enlightenment." It is a process truly cataclysmic in character. Black has described it as being of "the same order of magnitude as that from prehuman to human life and from primitive to civilized societies; it is the most

dynamic of the great revolutionary transformations in the conduct of human affairs.⁷

It was the unprecedented increase in man's knowledge, which gave him greater control over his environment and brought him new insights and new perspectives that gave rise to the process of modernization. The scientific revolution began to transform society and did so in such a manner that no aspect was left untouched. First of all it must be stressed that modernism which is the core of the modernization process is, as W. Cantwell Smith has pointed out, "not a commodity, something that can be bought and paid for... is not to adopt but to participate in; not to have but to do and to be. And not even to be, but to keep becoming- a process, an orientation, a dynamic."⁸

Secondly, the process of modernization implies change in many directions at once. A society cannot hope to enjoy the benefits of technological advance and yet retain modes of behaviour and thought that were relevant to its pre-industrialised state. It is dangerous to think that a society can make such a

7. C.E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization, (New York, 1967), p.4.

8. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Modernization of the Traditional Society, (Bombay, 1965), p.18.

comprise. Not only will old behaviour and thought patterns and values be meaningless and irrelevant or even inadequate in the new context, but they may actually inhibit the very process of modernization itself. A society that is modern may produce and consume a lot of goods, but this economic modernization is but one measure of its modernity. It is also socially, intellectually, medically, politically, educationally, artistically, morally and religiously different from a society that is not modern.⁹

Thirdly, it is important to emphasize that modernization cannot be treated as a terminal process by any society. As a process of social change, it is, as Black points out, a part of an infinite continuum from the earliest times to an indefinite future.¹⁰

The ever-widening frontiers of human knowledge about the universe and man's behaviour itself will create the need to be ever-adaptive and innovative, whether with reference to social institutions, the political system, the value system and belief system of a society or its modes of thought, or all of them. Thus, even in the most advanced countries, innovation and adaptation

9. Ibid.

10. Black, op.cit., p.54.

continue as ways and means are continually being explored to relate increasing knowledge to the needs of man and betterment of mankind.

III. Motivations for Modernization.

1. As Being Intrinsically Valuable.

Implicit in almost all contemporary discussions of the concept of modernization, especially vis à vis traditional societies, is the assumption that it is in modernization alone that the future happiness and well-being of these societies lie. It is tantamount to saying that if there is a belief in progress, or in perfecting one's society or in bringing happiness to the greatest number possible, then the need to modernize necessarily follows because they are all linked together. Implicit also in the concept of modernization is the assumption that it is something inherently good and desirable and from this assumption it is one further step to the belief that societies should set in motion the processes that will enable them to modernize.

Both these assumptions indicate that the concept of modernization involves a value judgement and is not neutral or value-free as some scholars would have it.

it.¹¹ If one believes that there is something intrinsically valuable about modernization, then the motivation for it is contained within that very belief. When one considers the tremendous transformation that has taken place in societies that have achieved a high level of modernization- not only through the harnessing of nature's resources for the well-being of men, but also through the development of institutions and ideas and art and culture forms that give, at least ideally speaking, an opportunity for each individual to live a fuller, richer and more meaningful life- then the need to find a justification or an explicit motivation for the modernization process seems superfluous, if not downright pointless. From this point of view a nation or a society

11. Sibnarayan Ray feels that modernization is a "very neutral concept; it is really describing what has happened to the world since the Industrial Revolution." Report on the International Conference on the Problems of Modernization of Asia(Korea, 1965) p.36; S.P.Aiyar thinks that from the political point of view it is a neutral process "which cuts across political ideologies and cultures." S.P. Aiyar, Modernization of Traditional Society and Other Essays, (Madras, 1973), p.16; W.Cantwell Smith and M.N.Srinivas consider the concept to involve a value judgement.

may desire modernization simply because "it is there", because it represents the highest of man's achievements.

Of course, to the sceptics of this world all this talk of modernization carrying within itself its own justification sounds most unconvincing. There are those who feel doubtful about man's capacity to find progress and perfection. There are others who are likely to dwell on the many evils that came in the wake of modernization, and for this point of view, modes of modern warfare serve as evidence. There are yet others who see positively no good in the modernization process because it is a process that disturbs the status quo, and they yearn for the restitution of a legendary golden age of the ancient past.

"He who hath no eyes to see, seeth not" and to the hardened sceptic there can be no convincing that modernization is intrinsically valuable. Again it has never been claimed that modernization is an unmixed blessing. Some point to the evils that have resulted from modernization, so that men now have the power to blow up the very planet on which they live or to pollute the very air they breathe. To them the answer is that there is still a choice in the matter and that men and nations must work together for peace, harmony.

and the happiness of all. A tool or technique or for that matter, an institution or an idea can be used rightly or wrongly or can be corrupted, and this is not true of modern techniques or institutions alone. Rational and humanitarian considerations must ultimately prevail, whether they concern traditional or modern societies.

2. Economic Motivation.

Motivation for modernization is provided by yet another perspective. It must be apparent that as a process, modernization is really a world-wide phenomenon and that nations small and big have for the greater part set themselves on this path. One of the reasons for doing so has come from a consciousness of the backwardness of a nation seen, at least, from a technological and industrial aspect. Swamped by the problems of growing populations and substandard living conditions, nations have sought rapid modernization, particularly in its economics aspects. These nations are attempting to achieve in the briefest period of time what in the more advanced countries took much longer. For this reason, motivation enters into another realm because it involves consideration of the question of how a populace may be motivated to utilize to its best and quickest advantages all the

benefits of modern technology and industrial know-how.

3. A Spiritual Motive.

In the ultimate analysis there will have to be a motivation that comes from the very depth of the being of an individual and a society. This may be called the spiritual motive. It implies a deep-seated urge or concern and a psychological willingness to view one's traditions, value system and patterns of belief and behaviour in the light of how they serve the purposes and needs of the age we live in. It implies a willingness to effect any transformation in them that may appear to be needed, so that they gain greater meaningfulness and relevance.¹²

This is a motive that must originate within the self, whether in the individual or the nation. It cannot be imposed from without. It must be self-originate and it must also be a motive that is self-enduring.

12. Examples of this continuing search for meaningfulness is seen in the concerns shown by scholars of South East Asia. Tang Chun-i considers "The Reconstruction of Confucianism and the modernization of Asian Countries." Report, International Conference, op.cit., pp.101-113; Similarly. Rhi Ki-yong discusses the "Buddhist Point of View on Modernization." Ibid., pp.71-76.

The fountain of sustenance for modernization may be expected to come from the process itself. As societies begin to modernize, they may feel stimulated to keep on with the process, because they experience the tremendous advantages that come with it.

In this context the purpose of the modernization process will be two-fold. It will infuse into a society's cultural, moral and religious life a pattern of integration and relevance, so that a matrix is provided within which that society can live, move and have its being, in the new and changed circumstances in which the world finds itself today.

The other purpose will be to create those patterns of thought and perspectives that make a society aware of the need to be continually looking for relevance and meaningfulness. The development of these perspectives will make modernization a self-enduring process in that society.

IV-Five Broad Aspects of Modernization.

Lucien Pye has defined the process of modernization as "the process by which one handles one's traditional values in terms of social changes." If Pye's definition is taken as a starting point, then the very first aspect of the modernization process emerges.

1. Psychological. This aspect concerns the perception that individual human beings have of their own society and the state of their awareness about matters of social change. Clearly without an awareness of the need to change, a society does not accept changes. Change involves a deliberate act of choice on the part of a society. As to the nature of the actual changes to be made, a different matter is involved, because there are as Pye again points out, "as many versions of modernization as there are people who are impressed with visions of utopia or visions of how societies may be changed."

The role of the charismatic leader in a society assumes importance because it may be left to him to fix the order of priorities of changes to be brought about, or to determine which of the many choices is to be accepted. But, as Elack points out, it may take "many tons of charisma...to move a society an inch." It may be a long time before the teachings of such leaders are accepted and acceptance again is a psychological phenomenon, an indication of open-mindedness.

2. Intellectual. Modernism, it has already been pointed out is something to participate in. It is also an attitude of mind, upon which is conditional

how well or how poorly the process of modernization will take root in a society. First of all, the intellectual aspect implies that with the spread of scientific knowledge and the use of the critical and rational method of thinking, individuals will increasingly be receptive to knowledge which is verifiable and supported by facts. Such an attitude of mind plays havoc with superstition and dogmatic beliefs and modes of behaviour which have the sanctity of tradition but not the support of reason.

Secondly, the intellectual aspect of the modernization process implies that choices and decisions themselves will be made on rational and secular considerations. If something is chosen as worth doing, this choice will be made, independently, on grounds that are not narrow, parochial or emotional.

Thirdly, the intellectual aspect of modernization involves the creating of a new weltanschauung for that society, in which a cultural identity will be preserved and yet new dimensions added that make Modernization meaningful for that society. Each society that seeks to modernize will have to create a new metaphysics to support its efforts. One feels that this aspect of modernization is of the greatest significance because

without it, neither the political nor economic efforts to modernize can really take root in a society.

A more detailed treatment of the intellectual aspect of modernization in the specific Indian context will be found in a later section.

3. Social. This aspect of modernization is built around the values that obtain in a liberal society. In a modern society the people will be differentiated according to the functions they perform in that society and the lines of demarcation will be quite different than those that obtained in the pre-modern state. Thus distinctions of caste, region, language and other evidences of a traditional society disappear and with a greater understanding ^{of} the inherent dignity and growth of every human being a new society makes its appearance. Merit and achievement become the yardstick for recognition, not birth. There is a greater freedom to choose one's occupation, and a greater freedom of expression and freedom to choose one's life style than hitherto. Greater opportunities are available to everyone and education becomes a necessity for the building of an enlightened public.

In such a society, the freedom of expression and right to think out matters for oneself implies

that 'independent and critical thought' is a prerequisite of a modern society. S.P.Aiyar¹³ in an attempt to preserve neutrality for the concept of modernization, has not recognised "independent and critical thought in all spheres" as a prerequisite of modernization, because obviously it has a different status in democratic and totalitarian system.

4. Economic. To most people the process of modernization has meant its economic aspect. It has meant that a static state of technology which has perhaps existed for centuries is now disturbed and new methods of production, the use of new forms of energy and a manufacture of wide spectrum of goods are all part of this economic aspect among a whole new economic and distribution structure.

What is increasingly being realized is that economic factors have an interaction with non-economic factors and that these latter count in determining how effective economic modernization will be. Thus the attitude to change and innovation, the societal structure and the value system have a potential to inhibit or facilitate economic modernization.

13. S.P.Aiyar, Modernization of Traditional Society,
(Bombay, 1973), p. 16.

5. Political. Equality has been described as the "ethos of modernity." It covers political rights and legal rights. It makes for a process of differentiation as far as roles and institutions and occupations are concerned which is different from these determined by kinship, group or domestic considerations. Another aspect is the degree to which there is popular participation. Individuals are not docile subjects who can be manipulated at will but now demand a share in the system, claiming the right to actively participate as citizens. One of the problems connected with this mass mobilization is the means by which a responsible citizen can be created, who is dedicated to the new goals of advancement and works for them disinterestedly.

CONCLUSION- Dimensions of Modernization.

In summing up, it would be in order to abstract from the foregoing discussion what might be termed the dimensions of modernization.

1. The Dimension of Effectiveness. Whatever be the area of operation or the context in which it is being implemented or attempted, one must conclude that modernization does imply the seeking of greater effectiveness, so that relevance, meaningfulness and goal-oriented achievement is constantly being sought.

2. The Dimension of Innovation and Change.

In modern societies the idea of change and innovation is considered to be a normal component of life, implying a "high expectation of obsolescence." When one takes for granted that new knowledge and new techniques will be replacing old ones, and that the search for a breakthrough will be ever a concern in any given field of enquiry and action, it becomes clear that this involves fundamental attitude to change. Apter described as a minimum condition for modernization, "...a social system that can constantly innovate without falling apart, including in innovation beliefs about the acceptibility of change and, as well, social structures so differentiated as not to be inflexible..."

3. The Dimension of Rationality. The diffusion of rational and secular norms in the society or culture become a major task of the modernization process. Thus not only do superstition, blind faith and ridiculous ritualism lose out in the battle with rationality, but the "truths of utility, calculation and science take precedence over the emotions, the sacred and the non-rational" and "mastery rather than fatalism orient attitudes towards the material and human environment."

Here again is affirmed the right of every individual to think for himself, and to be concerned with things of this world.

4. The Dimension of Democratization. Modernization does imply a greater public participation, a greater voice of the people in policy making. "Liberty, equality and fraternity" have been the classic way of describing this dimension, which creates a whole new set of human relationships and values.

In the process of the modernization of traditional societies, the ultimate question will be how committed the leadership of these societies is and with what sense of urgency, to goal-attainment and to the activities and dimensions that lead to it. If adequate thought is not given to the latter, goal-attainment becomes an exercise in futility.

Chapter II: THE GROWTH OF RECENT LIBERATURE IN
PROBLEMS OF MODERNIZATION IN SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN INDIA.

Introduction

Some General Perspectives in Studying the
Problems of Modernization.

New Approaches and Changed Perspectives in
Specialized Fields.

1. New Ideas in History
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THE GROWTH OF RECENT LITERATURE IN PROBLEMS OF
MODERNIZATION IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN INDIA.

Introduction.

The nineteen sixties were marked by a tremendous output of literature in the social sciences on modernization problems. The challenge of understanding the nature of modernization problems as faced by traditional societies, in itself, is stimulating. But when two interrelated but distinct dimensions are added to these problems, the challenge to understand them becomes an overpowering, all-absorbing one.

That the fundamental concern of developing countries of the world since the Second World War has been that of effecting a transformation of their traditional societies and of adapting them to the process of modernization is a fact too well known to be reiterated. Political problems dominated the scene for a time, but they were also part of the modernization process. In these countries large-scale and long term planning for modernization was undertaken so extensively as to be almost unparalleled in the history of civilization. Moreover the élan and enthusiasm with which they were embarked upon bespoke

a high degree of motivation on the part of whole societies.

However, the fact that planning in this highly organized manner all too often failed to yield the expected results gave social scientists one reason to ponder anew the real implications of the modernization process when related to societies with traditions that have lasted for centuries.

Obviously the insights to be derived from the European or Western models had their limitations. The West had four hundred years in which to develop a philosophy to undergird the industrial and scientific revolutions that were taking place. The Protestant ethic was able to provide a value system and attitudes of mind that were in harmony with the needs of the new society. Traditional societies were now being required to effect in a matter of decades transformations that took the West centuries to achieve.

To say that the task is a stupendous one is to make an understatement. Social scientists have been stimulated to study problems of modernization with two dimensions in mind. The first concerns an identification of those aspects of tradition that interfere with or inhibit the modernization process. This

implied that there must be a clear idea of what is meant by tradition itself and what are the implications of the modernization process. Studies of the conceptual aspects of both tradition and modernization were increasingly undertaken. Holistic approaches to problems of definition were preferred as the realization grew that both were immensely complex phenomena with many interrelated aspects. Many empirical and normative studies of the interdependence of the various aspects of the modernization process were undertaken. An interdisciplinary approach became imperative and philosophers joined with sociologists and economists in these pursuits.

The second concern of the social scientist and the philosopher has been to find breakthroughs in their studies of societies. There was a need to get away from stereotypes and uncritical assumptions regarding social phenomena. New insights were derived from comparative studies of societies, and these needed to be used so that a greater understanding could be reached about the nature and functioning of a particular society. New perspectives have also come from interdisciplinary cooperation.

The growing literature in the social sciences

on modernization problems, particularly as related to Indian society will be briefly reviewed in an attempt to discover what particular aspects of the problem have been of interest to scholars to the exclusion of others, and what have been the major areas of breakthrough.

Some Major Studies and Debates on Modernization.

Lerner dealing with the West Asia model considers physical, social and psychical mobility to be the three vital components that underlie the dynamics of modernization there. "Psychic mobility" is seen as a process of "liberating a man from his native self", so that he may "shape for himself a different personality from that with which he was born." Describing social mobility, Lerner says, "A mobile society has to encourage rationality¹ for the calculus of choice shapes individual behaviour and conditions its rewards. People come to see the social future as manipulable rather than ordained and their personal prospects in terms of achievement rather than heritage."²

1. D.Lerner, The Passing of a Traditional Society, (New York, 1964).

2. Ibid., p.48.

Reischauer and others³ studying modernization in China, Japan and other neighbouring countries point out that the major impact on them has been one of science and technology and that modernization will take place within the traditional context, particularly as it relates to cultural patterns, the value system and fundamental ideals. They saw no reason to suppose that there would be "merely a reflection of the modernized West" as modernization became established in these countries.

In like manner problems of modernization of other areas came in for study. For instance W.C. Smith considered Islam in a modern context (1961) and African problems came in for consideration by Malinowski, Hodgkin and others. Conference themes in the sixties in both Asia and the West reflected a growing concern for the need to debate issues connected with these problems. The impetus to do so came from the universities and research

3. Fairbank, Reischauer and Craig, East Asia: The Modern Transformation, (Boston, 1965).

institutes.⁴

Some General Perspectives in Studying Problems
of Modernization:

1. Persistent Myths and Questions of Universal
Validity.

We have lived too long with overworked clichés, glib generalizations and facile contrasts regarding Eastern and Western thought, values, and even people. One of the most familiar of these has been that of

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4. Cultural Motivations to Progress in South and Southeast Asia", Manila, July 3-8, 1963 under auspices of the Congress of Cultural Freedom and the University of the Philippines; International Conference on the Problems of Modernization in Asia, June 28 - July 7, 1965, Seoul, Korea, sponsored by the University of Korea; Conference on Social Structure and Social Change in India, June 3-5, 1965, held at the University of Chicago and sponsored by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research; seminar on "Secularism? Its Implications for Law and Life in India", November, 1965, New Delhi, Sponsored the Indian Law Institute; Seminar on "Ideas Motivating Social and Religious Movements and Political and Economic Policies during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries in India", Delhi University, 1964; Conference on "Religion in South Asia", University of Calif. at Berkeley, August, 1961; Seminar on "Tradition and Modernity in India", sponsored by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom and the Office for Asian Affairs of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, New Delhi, November, 1961.

"Western materialism" and "Eastern spiritualism."

Another area in which such myths have persisted concern the supposedly "unchanging" nature of individuals and their "unchanging" nature has traditional societies.

The cooperation among scholars drawn from many disciplines has had the immediate result of yielding new perspectives so that some of these myths could be explored to discover their real worth. No one will deny that a comparison of ⁵ thinking and life styles of different cultures will reveal significant differences. It is the course of their development that has shaped them and their so-called uniqueness derives from that fact, since historically speaking, two courses of development are not paralleled in quite the same way. But it will still be valid to pursue the theme that one society is more unchanging than

5. Raghavan Iyer, ed., The Glass Curtain Between Asia and Europe, (London, 1965) reflects this new perspective as scholars from many disciplines explored the myths and the uniqueness of Asian and European cultures; Hu Chiu-yuan analysed the fallacy of the bifurcation of Chinese and Western cultures into feudal and modern, in "On the Conception of Modernity", Report of the International Conference of the Problems of Modernization in Asia, Korea, pp. 181-188.

another or more materialistic than another or even more given to a love of liberty than another. It may not be valid to divide them into sharply different kinds.

Shils⁶ pursued somewhat the same theme when he pointed out that in studying the new states certain cautions need to be taken such as not applying the measuring rod of Western democracy. Elder⁷, in like manner came up with a study of the limitations of the use of survey techniques in India.

But Shils thinks that, despite this difficulty, when we concern ourselves with questions of growth of individuality and creativity, the institutionalization or the reasonable criticism of authority or with institutionalized forms of respect for ordinary human beings, or with loyalty, amity and affection among human beings, there is a universal validity which covers them all. Black⁸

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6. Edward Shils, "On the Comparative Study of the New States", in Clifford Geertz, ed. Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa, (New York, 1963), pp. 1-26.
 7. Joseph W. Elder, "Caste and World View- The Application of Survey Research Methods" in Singer and Cohn, eds., Structure and Change in Indian Society (Chicago, 1968), pp. 173-188.
 8. Black, Dynamics of Modernization, op.cit. pp. 39-46.

thinks that the challenge to formulate generalizations about the whole of mankind in modern times, must be accepted despite the limitations of the comparative method. It does seem that societies, new and old, can be viewed sub specie aeternitatis.

2. The Characteristics and Role of the Elite in Developing Societies.

Characteristics.

The study of modernization problems has given prominence to the characteristics of elite groups and their role in developing societies as themes for analytical studies.

The term "elite" lends itself to many interpretations. It certainly carries the minimum connotation of those who exercise "influence" but the area of influence itself may be widely varied. Thus it may refer to a specialized sector of society such as trade unionists or teachers. Or there may be political elites, referring to a group that yields political power. Social elites are drawn from a narrow social class. The meaning of the term here is taken to refer to the intellectual class whose area of influence may be a whole society, as

far as its modes of thinking and philosophy of life are concerned.

Bottomore discussed the characteristics of elite groups and their role in society in a general context⁹ and also in the more specific context of the Indian situation.¹⁰ The function of elite groups in the transition period when rapid social changes are taking place in a society- when large sections of the population are moving into new occupations, acquiring new skills and establishing new social relationships- consists of providing effective leadership which limits the disturbing effects of social change and yet accelerates its pace by formulating clearly and vigorously the aims to be pursued and the rules of social behaviour that are appropriate in the emerging social order. Such a function was performed in nineteenth century in Western Europe and North America by the bourgeoisie who brought into existence the capitalist form of industrial society.

9. T.B.Bottomore, Elites and Society, (London, 1964)

10. T.B.Bottomore, "Modern Elites in India" in T.K.N. Unnithan, Indra Deva and Yogendra Singh, Towards a Sociology of Culture in India (New Delhi, 1965); also "Cohesion and Division in Indian Elites" in Philip Mason (ed.) India and Ceylon: Unity and Diversity, (London, 1967), pp. 244-259.

The modern middle class in India¹¹, Bottomore thinks, has not been able to provide a formidable force of social change in India for many reasons. For one thing, a truly powerful intellectual class has not appeared that could create a genuinely new and modern culture. Clashes between regional cultures and vestiges of caste consciousness reanimated through social customs and religious rites even among groups most influenced by modern ideas, interfere with consolidation of elites on an entirely new basis. They would among other things soften that intolerance of traditional ways which is an essential ingredient in social change.

Redfield and Singer¹² developed the notion of "cultural brokers" to denote the indigenous intelligentsia, the professional intellectual who stands astride the boundaries of cultural encounter, mediating alien cultural influences to the natives and indigenous culture to the foreigner. Kopf¹³ found that nineteenth century Bengalis responded

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11. B.B.Misra, The Indian Middle Classes, (1961) is an excellent study of this newly emerged group.
 12. Milton Singer, ed. Traditional India: Structure and Change (Philadelphia, 1959), p.141.
 13. David Kopf, British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Modernization 1773-1835 (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969) p.280.

well to alien customs when introduced by sympathetic Europeans (Orientalists) who were highly responsive to the Hindu way of life and so long as they viewed modernization as cosmopolitan rather than parochial in nature. When modernization took on the guise of Macaulayism the older response patterns collapsed and the cultural barricades of nationalism were rapidly erected. Broomfield¹⁴ discussed the question that loomed large in Bengal in nineteenth century debates as to whether the elite or bhadralok class should be a closed or an open elite, dominated by caste considerations and drawing its authority from tradition or a class to which there would be free access for able individuals of all classes through an expansion of utilitarian institutions that had been developed in contact with Europeans.

The Wider Dimensions of the Role of the Elite Group.

In any developing society, the need for an elite group as a trend-setting group is well-established. Beteille has described such a group

14. J.H. Broomfield, Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal (Bombay, 1968) p. 14.

as a "sober task-oriented professionally responsible stratum of the population" and the indispensability of such a group in a developing society is readily seen from the very description of it. Such a group is dedicated to a well-defined task, and exhibits a high degree of responsibility as far as the execution of the task is concerned.

The question, however, is whether this forms the limit of the function of such an elite group. Beteille thinks not and spells out what he considers to be the further function of the group. It itself must be enthusiastic, but must also be able to communicate this enthusiasm to others and to infect them with it. In the final analysis, Beteille feels that it may be necessary to distinguish between modernity and modernism, and correspondingly between modernizing and modernistic elites. He says that "to the extent that an elite has acquired merely the symbols and styles of life, or even the skills of highly status groups in more advanced societies, it is modernistic. It becomes modernizing only when it succeeds in utilizing these skills in a socially significant way..." 15

15. André Beteille, "Elites, Status Groups and Caste in Modern India" in Philip Mason, ed. Unity and Diversity, op.cit., p.242.

Receptivity to Change- The Elites' Ambivalent
Response.

A curious phenomenon has been observed in transitional societies, particularly among elite groups that concerns their receptivity to change and has been the subject of many sociological studies.

The far-reaching changes that Indian society has undergone in the last two hundred years are commonplace knowledge. Resistance to change is a psychological phenomenon that can be explained in terms of the preference of the human being for what is familiar. From this preference comes the acceptability of custom and the value that it derives therefrom. Customary practices are known to have a halo all their own. But receptivity to change and modernity which involves a fair measure of actual changes of behaviour patterns, of which a concomitant is a tenacious hold on the old, especially in the same matrix as the former, has given rise to a curious ambivalence in the thinking and behaviour patterns of Indian intellectuals. It has seemed that they lack a certain sense of contradiction or

inconsistency. Many examples of such contradictions have been cited by M.N.Srinivas¹⁶. Shils has made a detailed analysis of the phenomenon.¹⁷

What explanations have been offered of the phenomenon? Keddie¹⁸ has suggested that the ambivalence of Asian intellectual reaction to the West is partly a response to the contradictory role of the West in Asia. The Western impact created the possibility and desire for fundamental social change but as an oppressor discouraged that very change, so that the role of borrowing became complicated. Also an ambivalence results from the attraction to values and achievements of Western society and a repugnance of the role the West has played in Asia. Within this dichotomy, Keddie

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16. M.N.Srinivas, "Modernization: A Few Queries" in A.R.Desai, ed. Essays on Modernization of Underdeveloped Societies, Vol.I. (Bombay, 1971) pp.154-56.
17. Edward Shils, The Intellectual Between Tradition and Modernity: The Indian Situation (The Hague, 1961); also, for a continuing debate on Shil's position, see QUEST Nos.24,25,26,28 and 34.
18. Nikkie R.Keddie, "Western Rulers versus Western Values: Suggestions for a Study of Asian Intellectual History", Diogenes, No.26, Summer, 1959, pp.71-96.

further sees a basic split, a need to accommodate tradition to modern ideas, since a complete break with the cultural past is impossible.

Venkatachar¹⁹ thinks that it is "internal stresses" rather than external, political or economic pressures that are causing Asian intellectuals to be ambivalent. Their response to the radiating effects of the intrusive, alien civilization of Europe is still dominated by the question of their national status in the modern world. They will not get over their present uneasiness of mind unless they are creative and not reproductive of Western thought and until they can create true images of their own authentic culture. The resolution of the ambivalence will come when there is a self-sustaining intellectual independence, an assessment of the heritage taken over from the colonial period and reassessment of the baffling elements of the past and present.

M.N.Srinivas²⁰ offers a tentative explanation of the phenomenon. He says that in a caste

19. C.S.Venkatachar in The Glass Curtain, op.cit., p.50

20. M.N.Srinivas, "Modernization: A few Queries", op.cit., pp. 157-8.

society diverse styles of life, codes of conduct and belief systems can co-exist, because caste, which is fundamental to Indian society, implies acceptance of pluralism in culture. The acceptance results in a cultural and ethical relativism. The relativism itself i.e. the various systems, may be subsumed in a hierarchy. It also makes for a certain "tolerance" since there is no desire to impose one's style life on others. A pantheistic philosophy and various theological concepts help to ignore the contradictions.

Institutionalized contradictions, may be transient phenomena and may in time be replaced by "the compulsion to be consistent." The way a culture regards contradiction in behaviour, Srinivas assumes, has consequences for the mental health of its population. He is concerned that there is not greater awareness among Indian intellectuals of the conflict which in reality is a long-term conflict between Sanskritization and Westernization. The conflict is bound to become sharper as industrialization and Westernization increase and education is extended to all classes. Ultimately, Srinivas feels, a conflict will have to be postulated between the Sanskritic

world-view and the Western world-view, between the religious world-view and the scientific or rational world-view.²¹

3. The Place of Communication in Modernization.

The infinite number of ways in which men have the capacity to, intentionally or unintentionally, receive and send messages indicates that communication has a very close connection with social behaviour. Communication has been described as "the web of society" by Pye who says "that the structure of a communication system with its more or less well-defined channels is in a sense the skeleton of the social body which it envelops."

Modern communication media have greatly intensified this function of communication within a society, making it more pervasive an aspect of society than it ever was before. Its potential for the creating of a modern society is tremendous, and when one considers the power of persuasion that the press, radio and journalism or even the popular arts have in respect of whole societies. New dimensions of thought and behaviour, all manner of knowledge and information that can provide a basis for modernization, are communicable through mass

21. M.N.Srinivas, "Changing Institutions and Values in Modern India" in Unnithan et.al., op.cit.p.437.

media. Many aspects of communication in the developing societies have come in for attention from scholars from many disciplines. Pye²² has compared models of traditional transitional and modern communication systems. Passin²³ has analysed the role of the writer and the journalist in the transitional society. Singer²⁴ has pointed out how mass media can be made to serve the purpose, not of secularizing traditional culture, but of democratizing it by making it more accessible to the common man. John Gumperz has made a similar observation.²⁵

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22. Lucian W. Pye ed. Communications and Political Development (Princeton, 1963), 71.
23. Herbert Passin, "Writer and Journalist in the Transitional Society, Ibid.,
24. Milton Singer, "The Great Tradition in a Metropolitan Center: Madras" in Milton Singer, ed. Traditional India: Structure and Change, op.cit., p.173.
25. John J. Gumperz, "Religion and Social Communication in Village North India" in Edward Harper ed., Religion in South Asia (Seattle, 1964), pp.89-98.

New Approaches and Changed Perspectives in
Specialized Fields.

1. New Ideas in History.

That contemporary historians recognize that the reading of historical facts and events can be vitiated by commonly accepted stereotypes and images is indicated by the manner in which they have set about to create a body of independent historical writings. For the modernization process this recognition has a vital significance. Old stereotypes and images have had an inhibiting effect on an objective viewing of facts, which is being made possible through new evidence and new perspectives of our changing times.

One such image assuming particular relevance for modernization concerns an idealization of the ancient past. The image is one of an idyllic society, devoid of social tensions, a society in which complete harmony prevailed, with happiness and needs of the present in the past and to advocate a "return to the past".

In retrospect it is plain to see how these images came about. Recognition of the richness of

the ancient heritage came first from early European Indologists. Romila Thapar has seen in the idealization of the past an attempt to find a utopia outside Europe. She has offered explanation of the phenomenon in terms of "gratitude towards those who said flattering things about Indian culture" and "glorification of the past as a compensation for the humiliation of the present."

Now, in changed times a more objective viewing of historical facts and a different reinterpretation of them is possible. Romila Thapar considers both the theme of the idealization of the past and the image of the Sanskritic culture of this past. She says:

In the conventional study of our past it was tended to be assumed that the theoretical aspect was the reality. Consequently, we have frequently misunderstood our past, or, what is worse, treated it either as a fossil, or as a perfect cast whose mould has been broken. The supposed perfection of the past has hampered our understanding not only of the social processes but also of our own cultural identity.... The cultural identity which we have forged in recent times has been that of a Sanskritic upper caste, or else its equivalent in a Persian upper caste. Yet, these identities are as elitist as

the English speaking identity of contemporary Indians...26

Non-Sanskritic traditions, as reflected in the local cults were predominant, and the reading of Indian tradition in Sanskritic terms, she points out, were given in the nineteenth century, when it reflected the social needs of that time and the necessity to react to Christianity and western concepts. The needs of an independent India in the latter half of the twentieth century are quite removed from those of the nineteenth century. Romila Thapar continues:

An analysis of the totality of Indian society today has to account for a variety of transitions taking place and involving tribal groups, peasant groups and, at the most articulate level, the change to industrialization. The nature of these changes will often involve a basic change of total social values. The confrontation can no longer be evaded as it once was by recourse to the theory that our concern has always been with things spiritual, or by an escape into the past. But the process can be facilitated by an awareness of the past, deriving from a realistic assessment.²⁷

Bisheshwar Prasad²⁸ has suggested that

26. Romila Thapar, The Past and Prejudice, The Sardar Patel Memorial Lectures, All India Radio, 1972 (mimeographed) pp. 59-60.

27. Ibid., p.62.

28. Bisheshwar Prasad, ed., Ideas in History (Bombay, 1968)

contemporary historians must make a departure from treating history as a mere catalog of rulers and their exploits and explore the thoughts and ideas operating as motive forces for the emergence of institutions, and institutional structures in society, economic dealings, political organisations and even religious practices. Events, then, are studied for the ideas expressed in them, as history, from this point of view, is treated as being "history of thought". Ideas that initiated the Bengal and Maharashtra reform movements, Western ideas reflected in educational and official policies such as Utilitarian and Evangelical ideas, would all form part of this new approach to studying history.

In yet another perspective to the viewing of history, Kenny has suggested taking in account the archaeological remains that have come to light in the last thirty years, for a study of the pre-Vedic foundations of Indian civilization, since the Vedic culture itself did not emerge out of a cultural vacuum.²⁹

29. Ancient History session, Indian History Congress, Chandigarh, December, 1973, Times of India Report, January 1, 1974.

2. New Perspectives in Sociology.

As sociologists turned to the modern scene in India, it was inevitable that they would focus attention upon "varna" and "jati" which one of them described as "that complete ethos... which embraces all and is all-embracing", in an effort to achieve a breakthrough in the understanding of the caste system in the context of the modernization process. The contrasts that the caste system presented were staggering. There were not only a tremendous variety of caste groups, when looked at from a regional point of view, but the diversity of the number of ranks and the manner of the differentiation of these ranks was equally baffling. Clearly no single explanation of the institution of caste or any treatment of it as a single institution would have validity. A noticeable feature of caste studies in the fifties and sixties is that they are empirical and confined to well-defined regions and groups.

The older view of caste assumed that religious values were the sole determinant of the attitude towards caste. Social mobility, it was assumed again, seldom occurred, and the place assigned to an individual in a society was his caste position and no other. The

older view was derived from the Brahmanical texts of the Dharmashastras by scholars who were Sanskritists and who found in these texts divine sanction for the social order and a whole range of instructions for its maintenance.

Social scientists coming on the scene and basing their studies on empirical data have found sources of social mobility outside the rigid socio-religious orbit, though perhaps they have tended to underestimate the inveterateness of the religious sanctions in a contra-social mobility context.

Both external and internal pressures that gave impetus to social mobility have been found. Military invasions and conquests which changed the composition of the armed forces making it possible for individuals and lower caste groups to seek upward social mobility is cited as one instance of an "outside" factor. Examples of internal factors are found in migration to urban areas and the taking on of new occupations.

The newer view of caste sees the individual and his kin group as ranked in Indian society not along one single dimension, but along several social and cultural dimensions. Besides the original scale

of ritual-pollution, there is now the economic dimension, or the dimension of "influence" or power wielded by a group which may or may not coincide with the ritual position of the group.

M.N.Srinivas called these dimensions "the ritual and secular contexts" in his Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India.³⁰ The study marked the beginning of a great output of work in the nineteen fifties and sixties in the social sciences, the way being paved for it by earlier works of Hutton and Ghurye. His Coorg study introduced a description of the process by which the alteration in ritual rank takes place. Srinivas introduced the term "Sanskritization" as a process of social change in this work and later added the notion of Westernization³¹ and continued to work out elaborations of the two processes in subsequent studies.³² A continuing debate on the

30. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1952.

31. M.N.Srinivas, "A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization", Far Eastern Quarterly, XV, 1955-56, pp. 481-496; This essay was reprinted in his Caste in Modern India and Other Essays (Bombay, 1962) in which he also explores other dimensions of caste vis a vis modernization of India.

32. M.N.Srinivas, Social Change in Modern India (Bombay, 1966); "Mobility in the Caste System" in Singer and Cohn, eds., Structure and Change in Indian Society, (Chicago, 1968), pp. 189-200; "The Cohesive Role of Sanskritization" in Philip Mason, ed. India and Ceylon, op.cit., pp. 67-82.

subject was carried on by other scholars.³³

Two observations on studies of social mobility suggest themselves. Firstly none of the scholars studying social mobility as an empirical phenomenon have suggested that the system as a whole is changing. Internal and external sources have brought about changes within the Hindu society which as a whole is an essentially stable, relatively unchanging system. Indeed scholars have pointed out that a common misconception is to be avoided, namely, that even a small amount of social mobility in the caste system is destructive of that system.

Secondly, it lies beyond the scope of empirical

33. V. Raghavan, "Variety and Integration in the Pattern of Indian Culture," Far Eastern Quarterly, XV, No.4, August, 1965, pp. 497-505; J.F. Stahl, "Sanskrit and Sanskritization", Journal of Asian Studies, 22:1963, pp. 261-275. Both articles point out non-Sanskritic elements in Sanskritization. Harold C. Gould, "Sanskritization and Westernization: A Dynamic View", Economic Weekly, 13(25), 1961, pp. 945-51 and "Sanskritization and Westernization, Further comments" Economic Weekly, 14, No.1, 1962, pp. 48-51; Gould points out the anachronism involved in the higher groups seeking modernization urgently when they had a greater stake in the old order and considers Westernization to be an important dimension of the total process of mobility and change in society.

studies to make evaluative statements or judgments on the system itself, or to question the right of one group to treat another as lower or even the inherent rightness or wrongness of a hierarchical system. This perhaps is a task left to the philosophers rather than to the empirically-oriented social scientists.

Another departure from an older view became apparent when the basic units of the joint family, caste and village were seen not as "structural isolates" but as being inter-connected. Marriot's Studies in the Little Community³⁴ was among the early empirical village studies. Robert Redfield first introduced the concept of Great and Little Tradition in 1955³⁵ and modified it in his Peasant Society and Culture.³⁶ Singer offered a preliminary report of a functional and contextual study of what happens to a Great Tradition and its literation in a metropolitan center in South India.³⁷ One of

34. McKim Marriot, ed., Village India: Studies in the Little Community, (The American Anthropological Association, 1955).

35. Far Eastern Quarterly, XV, No. 1, 1955-56, pp. 13-21.

36. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956

37. Milton Singer, "The Cultural Pattern of Indian Civilization. A Preliminary Report of a Methodological Field Study", Far Eastern Quarterly, Ibid., pp. 23-36.

Singer's hypotheses is that in a primary civilization like India's, cultural continuity with the past is so great that even the acceptance of "modernizing" and "progress" ideologies does not result in linear forms of social and cultural change but may result in the "traditionalizing" of apparent "modern" innovations. Numerous studies on Indian villages since that time have appeared, which are beyond the scope of this work.³⁸

André Beteille's essays are of a more theoretical study of the nature of traditional groups and the contrasts between closed and open stratification in India.³⁹ He has also made a distinction between harmonic and disharmonic social systems.⁴⁰ In harmonic social systems, the status of

38. Two important studies are cited here. "The Indian Village: A Symposium", Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. XVI, No. 1, November, 1956 in which there are contributions from Singer, Morris E. Opler, Rudra Dutt Singh and S. C. Dube; also Milton Singer, Bibliographic Essay of works on Indian villages, Singer and Cohn, eds., Structure and Change in Indian Society, op. cit., pp. 3-25.

39. André Beteille, Castes: Old and New Essays in Social Structure and Social Stratification, (Bombay, 1969).

40. André Beteille, Harmonic and Disharmonic Social Systems, (Sydney, 1971);
André Beteille, Inequality and Social Change, (Delhi, 1972).

inequalities not only exist but are considered legitimate. Disharmonic social systems refer to those societies wherein inequalities in the condition of existence co-exist with a normative order committed to equality. The traditional caste system of India represented a classic example of the harmonic kind of social system. But the declaration of equality and social justice as the new norms of Indian society by the Constitution has set India towards becoming a disharmonic social system, with the inevitable emergence of new social conflicts and tensions.

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 Karve has described the main cultural feature of Indian society as that of the retention of group integrity. She points out that in a society where there are no forces demanding a definite amount of homogeneity of behaviour, adjustments that come from a mutual exchange of ideas and a certain amount of mutual accomodation are lacking and have not led to merging of groups by obliterating characteristics of group. She thinks that

41. Irawati Karve, Hindu Society- An Interpretation, (Poona, 1968), p. 159.

"cultural alternatives" which are different modes of behaviour must be studied and those harmful or those which jeopardise national unity be condemned. As she pointed out earlier "Ultimately all the urgent problems are such that India must become fully aware of its past as a determining factor for its present and must make up its mind as to what it wants to be in the future."⁴²

Another major area of study in sociology concerns the Backward classes. The change in status guaranteed to them under the Constitution of India has stimulated investigations of the economic, social, political and religious factors which facilitate or inhibit their integration into Indian Society.

Béteille and Srinivas have discussed their position vis á vis the Law and the Constitution and the social and economic blocks to their progress.⁴³

42. Irawati Karve, "The Cultural Processes in India" in A. Aiyappan and L.K.Bala Ratnam, Society in India (Madras, 1956), p.45.

43. André Béteille and M.N.Srinivas, "The Harijans in India", Scientific American Vol.213, No.6, 1965, pp. 13-17, reprinted in Béteille (ed) Castes Old and New, op.cit. Ch.3.

Pauline Mahar Kollenda investigated ideas about Karma held by a group of Untouchables in North India.⁴⁴ Other scholars have examined the Buddhist movement and varied aspects of their position in present times.⁴⁵

3. Political Science- New Perspectives.

The contemporary political scene provides evidence of the interaction between indigenous tradition and imported political ideas and institutions. It offers the scholar a field of investigation which can be studied from many aspects as well as from many ideological viewpoints. A few studies are cited below that pin-point the type of forces that emerge when there is such an interaction or even confrontation between old patterns and new ones. These forces are important

44. Pauline Mahar Kollenda, "Religious Anxiety and Hindu Fate" in Edward B. Harper, Religion in South Asia, (Seattle, 1964) pp. 71-82

45. J. Michael Mahar (ed) The Untouchables in Contemporary India, (Tucson, Arizona, 1972); André Beteille, "The Future of the Backward Classes: The Competing Demands of Status and Power" in Philip Mason, ed. Unity and Diversity, op.cit., pp. 83-120.

in the context of modernization because they will determine the manner in which the parliamentary form of government, universal suffrage and the secular state will become established in the country.

A noticeable feature of the contemporary political scene is the manner of mobilisation in three dimensions that is taking place at once. These are the vertical, horizontal and differential dimensions.

Vertical mobilisation is characteristic of an early stage of political development, and in rural India follows the line of the accepted patterns of rank, and traditional authority. But horizontal mobilisation involves the marshalling of support on a class basis. Differential mobilisation is based upon ideologies, and interests. Rudolph and Rudolph explore the political scene from these bases. They are of the view that there are "sectors of traditional society that contain or express potentialities for change from dominant norms and structures" which become critical for understanding the nature and processes of

modernization.⁴⁶

How do caste consciousness and caste solidarity function in the context of adult franchise? Studies based on empirical data derived from different regions and different groups⁴⁷ are increasingly providing answers to these questions. Kothari thinks that a political system gets stabilised in a country only as its procedures and symbols are internalised and traditionalised, and accepted as being intrinsically good. Thus those elements in the caste system that have a secular and integrational potential should be strengthened and he feels that this is happening in India. But the second test of social change, which is the traditionalisation of modernity, is yet to take place, he thinks. The new system of values and institutions must become traditions of Hindu society, wholly replacing the old.⁴⁸

Problems of effective leadership as needed

46. Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, The Modernity of Tradition, Political Development in India, (Bombay, 1969).
47. Rajni Kothari, ed. Caste in Indian Politics, (Bombay, 1970)
48. Ibid., p.23.

in the country where rapid economic development with concomitant social changes were taking place were studied by individual scholars. Fisher writing about "Nehru: The Hero as Responsible Leader"⁴⁹ saw Nehru's leadership as providing a sense of responsibility and a sense of accountability to moral principles, and among the dominant reasons why Gandhi chose him as his successor. Bondurant⁵⁰ sees Jayaprakash Narayan and Acharya Vinoba Bhave as examples on the nonconventional political leader.

Indian and non-Indian scholars investigated the effect of religious pluralism on the political scene⁵¹. Weiner felt that the change-over from a rigid hierarchical social system to a mass society has entailed a price that the country's leaders have been willing to pay, and he names "an increase in particularistic loyalties, a diminution in educational standards and perhaps even a decrease

49. Margaret W. Fisher, "Nehru: The Hero as a Responsible Leader", in R.L. Park and I. Tinker, eds., Leadership and Political Institution in India, (Madras, 1960), pp. 41-65.

50. Joan V. Bondurant, "The Nonconventional Political Leader in India," *Ibid.*, pp. 279-298.

51. "India: The Politics of Religious Pluralism" in D. E. Smith, ed., South Asian Politics and Religion, (Princeton, N. J., 1966), pp. 49-336.

in the rate of economic growth" among them.⁵²

Some scholars have attempted to find in the ancient heritage prototypes of modern political ideas, or to analyse political ideas of ancient India.⁵³ Fewer studies exist which attempt to interpret these basic Indian political concepts in terms suitable to contemporary conditions in India.

4. Economic Growth and Planning-New Perspectives.

There has been such a high and consistent rate of inability to meet economic targets in the country that scholars are forced to ask questions of a fundamental nature regarding the whole rationale of economic planning. Increasingly it has come to be felt that planning for economic growth has not taken adequate account of socio-cultural and religious traditions. Daya Krishna thinks that in contemporary economic planning scant attention has been paid to the socio-cultural tradition in which economic

52. Myron Weiner, "The Struggle for Equality in India", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 40, No. 4, July, 1962.

53. A.L. Basham, "Some Fundamental Political Ideas of Ancient India" in C.H. Philips Politics and Society in India (London, 1963), pp. 11-23; D. Mackenzie Brown, The White Umbrella: Indian Political Thought from Manu to Gandhi (Berkeley, 1953).

planning is taking place, and particularly to "the pattern of economic development as facilitating or retarding the socio-cultural values embodied in the traditions and institutions of a society."⁵⁴

Economists and sociologists have only considered socio-cultural institution in terms of their aiding or inhibiting the process of economic development. It is sociometric rather than econometric models, he urges, that are the need of the day. Socio-cultural traditions are not the ultimate arbiter of all that can and ought to be done, because a selective approach will be necessary, a discarding from the heritage of the past of what is evil, or outmoded as well as the instituting of new evaluational horizons. Daya Krishna sees the vital issue as being that of reappraisal, one of discussing or debating in a self-conscious manner "what is to be discarded and what is to be sought."⁵⁵

Kusum Nair,⁵⁶ investigating the agricultural scene, found the aspirations of the village farmers

54. Daya Krishna, Planning Power and Welfare, (New Delhi, 1959)

55. Ibid., p.63.

56. Kusum Nair, Flowers in the Dust, The Human Element in Indian Development (London, 1961)

to be "limited" and is of the view that any economic changes to be introduced must take account not of economics alone but also of the relevant social and psychological attributes of the community. As Gunnar Myrdal points out in the Foreword to her work, people's attitudes to work and life, hardened by stagnation, isolation, poverty and ignorance and underpinned by tradition are frequently inimical to change. To expect the people to have the inclination and the daring to aim at intentional, concerted co-operative effort to remake society is to provide a "frail basis for democratic planning." What needs to be changed is the whole system of traditional attitudes.

In other studies, attempts have been made to identify specific cultural values that relate to economic planning, either as forces that facilitate economic growth and development or that inhibit it. These studies themselves encompass a whole range of views, so widely varied to be at times even opposed to each other.

Milton Singer⁵⁷ identifying cultural values in economic development thinks that there has been an over-emphasis of the other-worldly aspect of renunciation in Hinduism in scholarly Western interpretations of Indian religion, to the neglect of traditions more hospitable to economic enterprise. He thinks that Tagore and Aurobindo both exemplify a balance between materialism and spiritualism and that Gandhi's asceticism found sources in the Gita which would support not only a "fruits of action" philosophy but also an extensive social reform programme. Chacko⁵⁸ finds in Indian thought a "core of rugged realism" that would support economic development and one that is almost in opposition to the lofty structure of other-worldly orientation.

Burra Venkatappiah⁵⁹ outlines five stages of the response of Hindu society to the impact of

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57. Milton Singer, "Cultural Values in India's Economic Development", Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, Vol. 305, May, 1956, pp. 81-91.
58. George Kuffical Chacko, "Indian Thought and the Ethos of Economic Development" Diogenes, No. 45, pp. 66-83.
59. Burra Venkatappiah, "Adaptation of Traditional Society to Modern Mass Society", Diogenes, Spring 1961, No. 33, pp. 1-27.

Western thought, literature and political institutions. The first stage was that as exemplified by Rammohun Roy which was one of absorption. The second was one of reaction against imitation and absorption. The third stage was that of social reform followed by the stage of political reform, the Tilak and Gandhi platforms. The fifth stage is still in the process of development. It is the stage of the awakening of the economic consciousness of the country. Out of the values of individual liberation (mukti), dharma, and the universal values of tolerance, detachment to results and an attitude of loving kindness (samabuddhi) is to be evolved a concept of social and institutional dharma that will provide a social philosophy and a social purpose to the economic development of the country.

Kapp⁶⁰ makes an analysis of the effects that religion, thought and values in India have on economic growth. Dimensions of Hinduism are identified: (i) As the most "catholic" of all religions, accomodating diverse interpretations

60. William K.Kapp, Hindu Culture, Economic Development and Economic Planning in India, (Bombay, 1963).

of the universe. (ii) As a religion and a culture at once, regulating human relations, and man's relation to the universe, attitudes to work and its fruits and interpretations of freedom and salvation for the individual, as well as demarcating the group in terms of the extended family and caste as the unit of action.

(iii) Cyclical concepts of time and history which are treated as "real" making the view of cause and effect part of a general scheme of cosmic causation. Kapp's analysis includes an evaluation of these dimensions in terms of the modernization process. For instance, he thinks that mastery of the environment and man's confidence in himself to do so are related to the linear concept of time and belief in physical laws. Again, caste makes for moral aloofness which in turn affects the manner in which the energy of free men for work, can be harnessed.

Two diverse views of the cultural values and their relation to economic growth can thus be seen. The first viewpoint finds no incompatibility between the value system that is needed for modernization and the inherent traditional values of the culture.

A readjustment or reemphasis of them only is what is needed. The second viewpoint finds a gap between the value system needed to undergird the modernization process and the existent system. Clearly, it will be left to the philosophers in the first instance, and to interdisciplinary effort in the ultimate analysis to provide an ethical and valuational system that facilitates the transition or the adaptation of a traditional society to the processes of modernization.

5. Conceptual Aspects of Modernization.

Introduction.

The new approaches and the different perspectives that have forced themselves upon the social scientists both in their respective fields and from an interdisciplinary point of view by the modernization process, have been briefly considered in the foregoing section.

A similar task set before the philosopher is of an even more fundamental nature. It is becoming quite clear that traditional value systems of those societies trying to modernize are assuming an importance that had not been anticipated when

the process was undertaken. It was then taken for granted that no frontal attack on tradition per se in respect of those aspects that would impede economic and social development, would be necessary because the processes involved in modernization such as education, urbanization, industrialization and even a measure of the secularization of life, would be sufficient to counteract their effect. Now it is being realised that modernization of traditional societies is a most complex phenomenon requiring not only a vigorous analysis of traditional values that are contra-modern but a reinterpretation and a restructuring of the value system in a manner that would support modernization. Writing about these problems in South and Southeast Asia, Soedjatmoko of Indonesia said, "the time has come to face up to the general problem posed by the unsuspected strength and ubiquitous influence of traditional value systems in the modernization process, in order to see how the impetus for progress can be strengthened and sustained.⁶¹"

There is another compelling reason that makes

61. Quoted in Robert N. Bellah, Religion and Progress in Modern Asia (New York, 1963), p. x-xi.

the reinterpretation of the value system imperative. Ancient models and traditional values cannot be plainly rejected just because they are ancient and traditional. A rejection of the tradition system in in this manner would be unrealistic and contrary to the demands of history. But the greater hazard in such a rejection comes from the possibility of an identity crisis, which all societies in transition face.

India's response to modernization must be seen "as a response to the challenges of systematic change against the canvas of a continuing civilization"⁶² When the image of the modern Indian is projected, the answers to the questions, "who am I?, who do I want to be?" will have to draw upon interms that take their meaning from the culture itself. In the absence of such moorings, anxiety and uncertainty characterise these answers.

But the image does not draw exclusively upon these sources, for the very core of the modernization process implies the phenomenon of "cultural osmosis" to use a phrase made familiar by M.N.Srinivas. The

62. Rajni Kothari, "Approach to Modernization", Politics in India, (New Delhi, 1970), p.86.

modern man is open-minded. He seeks perspectives and attitudes that are not of a local or parochial nature, but rise above these levels to universalism and cosmopolitanism.

The philosopher has a task of extreme complexity set before him when he is called upon to create philosophical attitudes and a value system relevant to modernization, that is also in keeping with the culture of the society. The task derives its complexity, among other dimensions, from the fact that in traditional societies the way of life, "the totality of the social processes and the concreteness of the individual" is largely determined by religious tradition, making dispassionate, and intellectual consideration of these matters difficult.

Three interrelated aspects will determine the scope of philosophical studies in the context of modernization.

I. It will be necessary to identify the distinctive and essential features of Indian culture. In this connection, as pointed out by W. Norman Brown, a mere catalog of hundreds of cultural traits which have persisted over large spans of Indian civiliza-

tion, does not explain what gives it its distinctive character and vitality. It is in the fields of values and attitudes and not in the material productions of arts, literature and the sciences, or in particular skills, customs, institutions or forms of thought that it is to be found.⁶³

Numerous studies on traditional values in Indian culture exist. They have been made from diverse viewpoints. Some are descriptive and others are at once descriptive and interpretive. In some of the studies, objectivity has made way for rationalization. From the point of view of their relation to modernization, the studies have varying relevance.

One of the earliest identifications of the points of agreement between all the systems of Indian philosophy excluding the Carvaka materialists, was made by Das Gupta.⁶⁴ Thus, the Karma theory, the doctrine of Mukti, the Doctrine of the Soul, the Pessimistic attitude towards the World and Optimistic Faith in the end and the general principles of ethical, religious and philosophical endeavour for the attainment of the goal(sadhana) were found to be the

63. W.Norman Brown, "The Content of Cultural Continuity in India", Journal of Asian Studies, Vol.20 1961.

64. Surendranath Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol.I (Cambridge, 1932), pp.71-77.

essential features of all Indian thought.

Essential Values in Indian Thought.

Indian philosophical thought is a body of great complexity and comprehensiveness and there is not complete agreement either about the listing of its essential characteristics or its principles and attitudes or about the interpretation of these principles. Nevertheless, within certain limitations, the following principles have found general acceptance as constituting the essentials of Indian thought;⁶⁵

A universal and primary concern for, and almost a preoccupation with matters of spiritual significance—especially with the ultimate spiritual goal of man. Daya Krishna has, however, explored the myth of characterizing Indian philosophy as exclusively spiritual.⁶⁶

A Belief - which is common to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism in the doctrine of karma and

65. C.A. Moore, The Indian Mind Essentials of Indian Philosophy and Culture (Honolulu, 1967), pp. 12-16.

For the greater part, the general characterizations made here of Indian philosophy are based on Moore's text.

66. Daya Krishna "Three Myths about Indian Philosophy", Diogenes, Fall, 1966, No. 55, pp. 89-103.

and rebirth. The doctrine of karma has been given diverse interpretations, not all of which have been compatible. T.P.M.Mahadevan for instance, has characterized it as standing for freedom of man's will, the counterpart in the moral realm of the principle of cause and a regulated course of things. He describes it thus: "According to this law, there is nothing chaotic or capricious in the moral world. As we sow, so we reap. What we are and what circumstances we find ourselves in are dependent on what we were and what we did; similarly, what we shall be and how we shall be circumscribed will depend upon what we are and what we do... every action has a double effect; it produces its appropriate regard and also it affects character. The reward may be reaped either here or in a hereafter, either in this life or in a later one".⁶⁷ Karma, however, does not bind men completely. Man has the capacity to get out of the vicious cycle of samsara and if he has the will, karma will not hinder his progress. Moksha is the final end.

67. T.P.M.Mahadevan, "Social Ethical and Spiritual Values in Indian Philosophy" in C.A.Moore, Ibid., p.159.

On the other hand, Kuppuswamy has pointed out the anti-social implications of the doctrine of karma. An insensitivity to the sufferings of others and a justification of the injustices of life, can both be given explanations through this doctrine.⁶⁸

Basic concern with ultimates- the metaphysical perspective or "sense of the infinite" and only a secondary concern for the empirical perspective.

An emphasis upon the close relationship of philosophy and life - a contrast between wanting to be the truth in Indian philosophy with wanting to know the truth as in Western philosophy.

The recognition of the validity and necessity of intuition and authority rational intellectual pursuits are treated as being distinctly limited in scope.

Again, truth is achieved by the whole man, not by his intellect alone. Man has been described "as a spirit, an integral whole, consisting of his body, mind, intellect, passion and will, and his reason alone can no more exhaust him that his animality can encompass his reason."⁶⁹

68. B. Kuppuswamy, Social Change in India (Delhi, 1972) pp. 24-26.

69. S. K. Saksena, "Philosophical Theories and the Affairs of Men" in C. A. Moore, Essentials of Indian Philosophy, op. cit., p. 25.

Deep concern with the inner man and the introspective approach to truth, as contrasted with outer things and values- the transformation of the inner self is primary, while the concern with changing or controlling the outer world is secondary.

Common ethical principles are non-violence, non-attachment, restraint and self-control.

The values of social life- the four ends of man (Purusharta) are: Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Dharma is a most influential concept in Indian culture, the basis of the social and moral order. It has to do with the duties and rights of an individual in an ideal society. There is a dharma for each group. The concept of dharma is not static, and was seen to change from time to time over the ages. Broadly speaking, dharma consists of "precepts which aim at securing the material and spiritual sustenance and growth of the individual and society."⁷⁰

The first three values are accepted as significant in the empirical realm, but subordinate to the ultimate goal of emancipation or spiritual realization (Moksha).

70. Wm Theodore de Bary, Sources of Indian Tradition, (New York, 1958), p.218.

A classification of the members of society in some form, in the interest of the welfare of society as a whole, and as a means of spiritual progress through the performance of one's social and moral duties. The hierarchical structure of society in the form of the caste system emanates from this principle.

A belief in "initial pessimism" that life is suffering- and the "ultimate optimism" consisting essentially in the achievability of spiritual emancipation from the suffering and spiritual inadequacies of life.

A synthetic attitude in both philosophy and religions, such that practically all views are deemed partly true or true from their own particular points of view. Ultimate truth is a synthesis of the many partial truths discovered by different approaches to truth and reality.

II. The second task falling to the philosopher concerns an evaluation of traditional value system and essential principles of Indian thought in the light of their potential for promoting modernization. The philosopher will have to decide what interpretations given to them are in keeping with the ideals

inherent in the modernization process. He will have to demonstrate that certain values are in accord with the modern understanding of man and his place in the universe and that others have an inhibitory effect on the modernization process.

Here again, unanimity of viewpoints cannot be expected. On a comparative basis, there have been fewer studies of an evaluative nature than there have been of those that concerned themselves with exposition of the main characteristics of Indian thought. Some of the salient points made in the evaluative studies will be considered here.

Methodology.

The matter that needs to be discussed first has to do with the method of approach to be followed in evaluative studies of principles and values in Indian philosophy. While evaluation here considered has to do with the modernization process, the method of approach suggested is not confined to such a study. It could also be used when an attempt is being made to find in traditional thought that which is of perennial value and validity.

M.P.Rege⁷¹ has brought out certain pertinent aspects of the Indian philosophical tradition and its potential for participating in contemporary times in the creating of a meaningful philosophy. The Indian philosophical tradition has been characterized, he thinks, by analytical thought of the highest quality. A great passion for clarity, precision and explicitness is exhibited, and a constant endeavour is made to seek hidden assumptions on which conclusions are made to rest. It was seen, to its best advantage, in the Navya-Nyaya, which was the last creation of Indian analytical thought. The qualities of analytical thought became diffused among the Indian intelligentsia and made possible a rapid and thorough assimilation of the Western intellectual tradition. The most characteristic method of philosophizing of the Indian tradition is to comment on a work, which is an attempt to elucidate its meaning, and consists of clarification of "passively accepted dogmas." Herein lies its limitations, because any attempt at free

71. M.P.Rege, "Indian Philosophical Tradition", Ten Years of Quest, Ayyub and Datta eds., (Bombay, 1966), pp. 188-207.

perspectives on the universe and human life is overshadowed by the analytical approach.

Intellectual attitudes fostered by the analytical method, are found by Rege⁷² to be

(i) Conservatism: A deep respect for tradition becomes ingrained. (ii) Revivalism: a return to the original sources of tradition, to its unsullied state, before its admixture with heresy and error. (iii) Eclecticism: The assumption that ultimately, diverse traditions can be synthesised, and therefore differences can be ironed out. Such an approach robs any system of thought of its distinctiveness. (iv) Anti-intellectualism: If the mode in which truth is revealed is immediate experience, then ideas and concept lose their significance.

From the point of view of reinterpretation and restructuring of the Indian value system, the analytical method has its limitations. It is not the meaning that concepts and value had in their traditional form that is sought, but new meanings and new perspectives. This requires a boldness of approach a willingness to go beyond the bonds of tradition and traditional meaning. It implies a

72. Ibid., pp.202-3.

search for rational, universally valid principles pertaining to human life and human ends and human relationships.

R.L.Nigam⁷³ points out that scientific method and scientific knowledge have created over the centuries certain social and philosophical implications and attitudes of mind. Nigam quotes the view of Ernst Cassirer that "human culture taken as a whole may be described as a process of man's progressive self-liberation. Language, Art, Religion, Science are various phases in this process." Science is to be regarded as the highest and most characteristic attainment of human culture.

In the Indian context the issue is between modern scientific thought and the values of the Hindu religion, since Indian culture is essentially Hindu culture which again implies that its values are those of the Hindu religion. Nigam says, "A patient and thorough re-examination and scientific criticism of the entire body of Hindu thought is a precondition for the modernization of that thought

73. R.L.Nigam, "Science and Indian Culture" in Shah and Rao eds., Tradition and Modernity in India, (Bombay, 1965), pp.29-46.

which is the way of revitalization of Indian culture, whose values must have warrant in modern science."⁷⁴

Ancient Ideas in Conflict with Modern Times.

Among the basic features of Indian culture that Nigam identifies as being in conflict with modern scientific thought are the following:

A heavy reliance on the supernatural, which being a matter of faith or mystic experience, regard faith, mystic experience and intuition as sources of valid knowledge.

The doctrine of Karma and that of rebirth and transmigration of the soul inherent in it. The doctrine of Karma leads by its inexorable logic to fatalism, and the theory of the transmigration of the soul casts the whole of human history and development into a predetermined and prefabricated steel frame.

The theory of the four Varnas into which society is stratified.

Karma, transmigration of the soul and the four Varnas, Nigam says, "run counter to the modern ideas

74. Ibid., p.31.

of human dignity, freedom and creativity? Nigam is severe in his indictment of B.L.Atreya, Radhakrishnan and Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya⁷⁵ for their attempts to "rationalize the irrational", that is, to provide rationalization and justifications for these doctrines. In the context of modernization, there will have to be a rediscovery of those ideas and principles in Indian thought that have the potential to support modern values- these have been largely ignored by the supposedly main current of Indian thought- and the discarding of those notions that are obsolete in modern times. Nigam suggests turning to Charvaka, Brihaspati, Ushana and Vyasa for insights relevant to our times.

A.B.Shah⁷⁶ finds that there is an essential incompatibility between the traditional world-view and that modern world-view which is based on empirical and scientific knowledge. The morality of the latter is rational, secular and relative. As secular, the implication is that worldly success is not belittled. As rational, there is a

75. B.L.Atreya et al, Indian Culture (New Delhi, 1966); Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, Traditional Values in Indian Life (Delhi, 1961); S.Radhakrishnan, The Hindu View of Life (London, 1927)

76. Shah and Rao, op.cit., pp.10-12.

necessity of relating means to ends and of integrating ends among themselves as also with those of others, and using knowledge to do so. As relative, the source of morality is in the consciousness of man interacting with its historical environment, rather than in a metaphysical principle governing the universe.

The traditional world-view in India is based of the doctrines of Maya, Karma and the transmigration of the soul. Its ethical values are transcendental. Secular values are given a secondary role, by subordinating morality to the supreme value of Moksha or at a lower level to the obligations of Dharma as determined by one's caste or professional group. The former denudes it of its interpersonal character and the latter the source of value is transferred from the individual to an abstract collectivity.

Shah finds that the social institutions are authoritarian in spirit and discount individuality, initiative and free inquiry, all of which are among the core elements of the modern outlook. Tolerance as understood in Indian society implies indifference

rather than recognition of a Man's right to be different. It does not promote interaction of ideas and attitudes and the formation of wider secular loyalties are inhibited.

Sibnarayan Ray⁷⁷ cites three powerful elements in India's traditional society which effectively retard modernization: the caste system, the duty-oriented nature of Hindu society, which in a hierarchic order of closed groups does not recognise the notion of individual rights, and thirdly, the Indian attitude of "world-and-life-negation."

McClelland⁷⁸ explores Indian culture from a somewhat different perspective. Its customs, beliefs and institutions are interpreted in terms of the core theme of giving. Giving implies a giver, a gift and a receiver as also an exchange, an event taking place in time with a beginning, a middle and an end which can occur over and over again and is not going anywhere in time. The core theme is

77. Sibnarayan Ray, "Traditional Indian Societies and the Process of Modernization", Report of International Conference on the Problems of Modernization in Asia (Korea), pp.213-218.

78. David C. McClelland, "Some Themes in the Culture of India", in A.R. Desai, ed., Essays on the Modernization of Underdeveloped Societies, (Bombay, 1971) Vol. II, pp. 254-293.

organized under seven major themes under which various facets of the culture are subsumed.

McClelland points out that it is necessary to be cautious about making judgements of values as impeding or promoting economic and social progress, because even with values that impede, there are sections of the population that are affected by them only marginally. He thinks it would be profitable to investigate in the Indian context the fact that every culture has a dominant and a substitute or variant value orientation, a point made by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck. From this point of view traditionalism need not prove to be a handicap, as flexible value patterns can be found which allow themselves to be reinterpreted so as to be consistent with change.

T.P.M. Mahadevan does not appear to share the views of Nigam, Shah and Sibnarayan Ray whose identification of the traditional values that need to be transformed to suit the conditions of modern times exhibits a common denominator. Mahadevan⁷⁹

79. T.P.M. Mahadevan, "Indian Culture and the Industrial Age" in Traditional Cultures, (Madras, MCMLVI) pp. 62-63; also T.P.M. Mahadevan, Outlines of Hinduism (Bombay, 1956) pp. 74-75.

feels that while casteism and untouchability must be rejected because the fast changing conditions of modern life make it impractical to observe them, the essential religio-philosophical or spiritual culture must be preserved. He is concerned that instead a secular point of view is increasingly becoming apparent as industrialization and urbanization take place and suggests that Gandhian ideology be adopted as it is in keeping with Indian culture.

III. The passing of value judgements on value systems and beliefs and norms of a society presuppose certain assumptions or principles that serve as measures for these evaluations. In the context of the modernization process, it is the task of the philosopher and the social scientist to give explicit formulation to these principles which in addition to being the basis of evaluative judgements, also set the direction in which reinterpretation and restructuring of the value system must take place. To the scholar who sees modernization as being something of intrinsic worth these principles appear to be a priori, that is, their truth is self-evident and they

need no further justification.

The principles cited below must form part of a body of first principles or assumptions in the context of modernization as it relates to Indian culture. The principles are contained in implicit and explicit form in the evaluative studies considered in the foregoing section. They have already been considered in the larger context of dimensions of modernization, in Chapter One. Here they emerge with more specific contextual reference.

The principles are:

Recognition of the inherent dignity and worth of man- every man. Values, beliefs and institutions must be in keeping with man's dignity, rationality, freedom and creativity.

Fraternity as the basis of man's relation to others. Men will see themselves in relation to other human beings, not on considerations determined by ascription or by birth, but by common concerns, common interests and a whole range of humanistic values.

Highest recognition will be given to modern scientific knowledge, the scientific temper and attitude of mind and the rational method which will supersede other forms of thinking and knowing.

The way in which nature and man's relation to nature is conceived and the way in which time is envisaged will be determined by the insights derived from scientific knowledge.

Perspectives must give due recognition to the empirical world. There will be a concern for the "here and now" and life on this planet. Alienation from the objective natural world will thus be replaced by a concern about it. The negative approach will be substituted by a more positive way of looking at things and concepts.

The Search for Relevance.

Adaptation to changing times is not something that merely traditional societies face. Even societies which have achieved a high level of modernization are continually required to make a search for relevance in their religions and to re-interpret religion for this purpose. Cogley⁸⁰ has suggested that the religious response to modernity in the West must meet three requirements:

1. Acceptance of Pluralism- in which "tolerance" is not enough. There must be recognition that every man has a right to be religious in the way that appeals to his own conscience. The idea of religious liberty is recognized as a "firm

80. John Cogley, Religion in a Secular Age, (London, 1968), pp. 140-142.

right, both juridically and theologically."

2. The Search for Relevance- the so-called "knowledge explosion" has confronted all religions with great theological problems. Unless theology is to cut itself off from what is known about the universe, it will have to keep pace with this knowledge. Theology will have to be correlated with every branch of learning, and in the search for relevance, the cleric and religious professional cannot act alone but collaborate with the philosopher, the scientist, the humanist, jurist, artist, educator and every other manner of specialist.
3. A greater move towards ecumenism- dialogue and collaboration between different groups with the emphases focussed on what is held in common rather than what has kept them apart.

Max Weber's thesis regarding the rise of modern type of capitalism as due to the influence of Protestantism and especially Calvinism is well known. What seems more relevant from the conceptual point of view is that the thesis provided a basis for a continuing search for relevance because of

the controversies it created. Today it is the transforming capacities of Protestantism rather than any direct casual connection between Protestantism and capitalism that have gained general acceptance. Eisenstadt⁸¹ discusses them from the standpoint of the strong combination of "this-worldliness" and transcendentalism that was made possible by Protestantism which orients the individual behaviour to activities within this world but at the same time does not sanctify any of them from a ritual point of view. A strong emphasis on individual activism and responsibility and an unmediated, direct relation of the individual to the sacred were other dimensions made possible.

Other reinterpretations have given religion and natural science a certain compatibility. Truth was seen as revealed not in God's word but in God's work and the discovery of the laws of natural science were seen as a religiously sanctioned duty, a means of glorifying the Creator

81. Samuel N. Eisenstadt, "The Protestant Ethic in Analytical and Comparative Context", Diogenes, Fall 1967, No.59, pp. 25-46.

of the great ordered system of the Universe.

Bonhoeffer, Richard Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Harvey Cox, to cite just a few names have continued the search for relevance into contemporary times, in the Western world.

The point to be emphasized is that the search for relevance and meaningfulness is an on-going, continuing process, and in the nature of the case cannot ever be a terminal process. In a world of rapid changes, new interpretations and new emphases must be sought continually so that man may be helped to a greater understanding of himself and the universe he lives in and of life itself. Eastern or Western, traditional or modern each culture has a responsibility to search for relevance, so that it provides a measure of adequacy and meaning for that age. Seen in this context an Indian Ethic, will incorporate traditional values reinterpreted for modern times and new values and new emphases made imperative by these times.

Part II : MAJOR INFLUENCES OF MODERNIZATION IN
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Chapter III: The New Educational System

THE NEW EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.Introduction.

It is a well recognized fact that the new educational system introduced in India in the early years of the nineteenth century was a major influence in bringing about tremendous changes in Indian society- both in its thinking patterns and ideas and in its behaviour.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to analyse the various dimensions of the new educational system and particularly those at the university levels, in order to obtain an adequate understanding of one of the major forces that created an elite group whose function it was to serve as an impetus for social change. All the liberal leaders of this century were products of the new system and their mode of thinking was, in part, formed by the education they had received. The content of the course they studied, and the ideas behind the instituting of course structures at different levels, assume importance for an understanding of education as providing a stimulus to social change. Moreover, it was the graduates

of the university that, in turn, were responsible for guiding the later destiny of the educational system so that it would, in a larger measure, serve the purpose of creating more men of ideas and men of action. The role that was played by Telang, Bhandarkar and Gokhale in university affairs is studied from this point of view.

Inevitably, some consideration of the development of the educational system becomes necessary. These historical considerations cannot be avoided because they are also a history of the ideas that prompted the very introduction of the system and its continuing and as well as its changing phases. The greater part of the chapter is confined to educational developments in Bombay and Poona.

Early Beginnings

The claim of being regarded as the founder of Western education in India, perhaps recognized by a few, belongs to Charles Grant (1746-1823)¹

1. For biographical material on Charles Grant see "Charles Grant Founder of English Education", H.V. Hampton, Biographical Studies in Modern Indian Education (Bombay, c.1946), pp.1-27; E.J. Rapson, "Charles Grant", Dictionary of National Biography (London, 1922), Vol.VIII, p.378-80.

who had served the East India Company in Bengal, holding many positions of importance from 1773 to 1790. In 1792 he prepared a pamphlet, Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals; and the Means of Improving it. It was a lengthy opus, running to 237 pages of manuscript. The document was placed before the Board of Control in 1797 when Grant became a Director, but it was not before 1813 when the question of the Company's Charter was renewed, that the document, in revised form, was given wide circulation and was largely instrumental in convincing advanced opinion, both inside and outside Parliament, of the Government's duty to make some provision for the enlightenment of the people of India.

While still in India, Grant had been sympathetic to the missionary movement. In 1794, he joined the Clapham Sect attracted by the evangelical and humanitarian leanings of the group. Wilberforce, Thornton and Zachary Macaulay were members of this Sect and together they promoted the cause of slave-abolition movement and that of Protestant missionary

enterprise. Grant helped in the founding of the Church Missionary Society (1799) and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1804).

His Observations criticised Hinduism and British Rule² with equal relish, and if his predilections towards proselytizing are abstracted, it must be conceded that he showed "uncanny foresight" in anticipating the path of educational reform in India, especially in view of the Company's indifference towards assuming any responsibility for education other than the indigenous kind.

Grant was in favour of the introduction of the English language. It would make for a rapid spread of knowledge, which otherwise would be greatly retarded if it had to depend upon translations and the skill of the English-knowing teachers alone. He had no objections to the use of the vernaculars in this task but raised doubts about suitable textbooks and qualified teachers. He made a distinction between the principle of "communicating our light" and the channel or mode of doing so, and felt that while English was more suited to the communication

2. C.H. Philips, ed., Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, (London, 1961), p. 345.

of Western knowledge, lacking that, the vernaculars would satisfy.

Grant's observations indicate what he thought to be the function of Western education and the manner in which it should be introduced. He wrote:

The true cure of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant; and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them would prove the best remedy for their disorders...there are two ways of making this communication: the one is, by the medium of the language of those countries; the other is by the medium of our own... it is perfectly in the power of this country, by degrees, to impart to the Hindoos our language; afterwards through that medium, to make them acquainted with out easy literary compositions, upon a variety of subjects,... progressively with the simple elements of our arts, our philosophy and religion... These acquisitions would silently undermine, and at length subvert, the fabric of error... the first communication, and the instrument of introducing the rest must be the English language; this is the key which will open to them a world of new ideas...

3

Wilberforce and Grant working behind the scenes and despite powerful opposition and some

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3. Charles Grant's Observations, 16-8-1797, Extracts quoted in M.R.Paranjpe, (compiled) A Source Book of Modern Indian Education, 1797 to 1902 (Bombay, 1938), pp. 1-4.

set-backs, were instrumental in bringing about two significant changes in policy. Firstly the thirteenth of a series of Resolutions submitted to the House of Commons in June 1813 providing for the renewal of the Company's Charter for another 20 years, contained the idea that the education of the natives was incumbent upon the paramount power and that "such measure ought to be introduced as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement."⁴ Secondly they were able to also secure a reversal of the Company's policy of strict neutrality in religious matters. Under the New Act missionaries would be legally entitled to reside and carry on their work in British territories. Through the sanction of missionary enterprise by Parliament, the cause of education received an indirect fillip, because the missionaries were at the fore-front in the years to come in the field of English education and boldly experimented with it, particularly during the period when both

4. Parliamentary Debates Vol. XXVI (1813) 562-63 quoted by B. T. McCully, English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism (New York, 1940), p. 16.

Governmental schemes and private efforts were slow to materialise.⁵

The Bengal Scene.

An obvious reluctance to implement the directives of the East India Act of 1813 was characteristic of the Policy in India in the early part of the nineteenth century. Since the methods of implementation had not been stated in these directives, there seemed to some confusion as to how the provisions of the Act were to be accomplished. Warren Hastings had supported indigenous learning and Lord Minto, Governor General, 1806-1813, had subscribed to the Orientalist point of view. Nevertheless, it was in Bengal that the early steps in introducing English education are to be found, a development that is to be traced to its favourable situation vis à vis the new learning. The presence of a small class of English-knowing affluent merchants, in Calcutta, anxious to derive the benefits for

5. For a consideration of this aspect of missionary enterprise in this early period, see "Education", Chapter IV, in K. Ingham, Reformers in India 1793-1833, (Cambridge, 1956).

themselves from Western culture and the influence of Rammohun Roy, of whom it can be said that in those early days there was no greater advocate among native leaders of English education, must be counted among these favourable circumstances.

Hindu College, established in 1817, in Calcutta, without Government aid was the earliest centre to impart instruction in the new learning through the medium of English. Sciences such as astronomy and chemistry were taught. David Hare (1775-1842) had been a pioneer in the efforts to start the College and remained the mainstay of the College and other educational efforts for almost a quarter of a century⁶. In 1823 the Bengal Government appointed the General Committee of Public Instruction, whose reluctance to promote English education was reflected in its disregard of Rammohun's memorial to Lord Amherst in the same year which urged that Government "should promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, with other useful sciences..."

6. Hampton, op.cit. "David Hare, 1775-1842", pp. 59-84.

The proposal for the establishment of "a Sanscrit school under Hindoo Pundits to impart such knowledge as is already current in India" did not meet with Roy's understanding of what the Indian situation needed most. He said, "The Sanscrit language, so difficult that almost a life time is necessary for its perfect acquisition, is well known to have been for ages a lamentable check on the diffusion of knowledge; and the learning concealed under this almost impervious veil is far from sufficient to reward the labour of acquiring it." Roy dwelt at length on the nature of instruction and speculation imparted by Sanskrit and urged Lord Amherst to take into account "the state of science and literature in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon, with the progress of knowledge made since he wrote." Rammohun Roy said:

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanscrit system of education would be best calculated to keep this

country in darkness...7

The Committee went ahead, however, with the establishment of Sanskrit College in 1824. By this time Hindu College was running into administrative difficulties and the Committee agreed to participate in its management by having its secretary serve as Vice-President of that College. Students of Hindu College under the rapid progress the institution began making, soon became a force to contend with, contributing to the intellectual life of Bengal, by stimulating rethinking on many issues as a result of their marked impatience with traditional ways. Derozio, a young professor at the College, encouraged his students to think out issues for themselves, whether these concerned social, moral or religious matters. Alarm at the results of this rationalism which bred a scepticism among the young men, taken together with certain excesses of behaviour on their part, resulted in a wave of indignation against Derozio, who ultimately resigned from his post. However, till 1835 and Macaulay's

7. Raja Rammohun Roy's Address, 11th December, 1823, to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble William Pitt, Lord Amherst, quoted in M.R. Paranjpe, Source Book, op.cit., p.12.

Minute, Hindu College continued to be the single achievement in the field of the new learning in Bengal.

Beginnings of English Education in Bombay Presidency.

The course of English education in Bengal had little effect outside the state and it was left to the Provincial Government of Bombay in the early years to work out its own distinctive policy and pattern of development.

In Bombay, the beginnings of English education can be traced back to the old Charity School founded in 1718 by the Rev. Richard Cobbe, Chaplain of St. Thomas's Church, for "the education of poor European children in Christian religion." In 1807, the Company assumed direct control of the School and made it an annual maintenance grant of Rs.3600/-. The Company handed over its management in 1815 to the Church of England's newly founded "Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor within the Government of Bombay," which later came to be known as the Bombay Education Society. A special sub-committee was appointed in 1820 by the Society to draw up plans for

extension of its educational activities and the opening of schools for Indian children. The sub-committee which was known as the Bombay Native School and School Book Committee, applied to the Government for financial assistance for its schemes. Elphinstone, seeing this to be a good opportunity for Government to support the improvement and spread of elementary education, concurred with a suggestion that the sub-committee separate from its parent body (1822). He became the first President of the newly independent Bombay Native School and School Book Society. The separation was welcomed by both the parent body⁸ whose main concern was the Christian education of European and Anglo-Indian children and by the Government which could now unhesitatingly support this new secular organization. In 1827 the sub-committee was renamed, The Bombay Native Education Society and continued to function till 1840 when the Board of Education came into existence.

Mount-stuart Elphinstone⁹ had arrived in

8. Ballhatchet, p.260. Letter of Archdeacon Barnes to Elphinstone 26-7-1822.

9. Hampton, op.cit., "Mountstuart Elphinstone 1779-1859, pp. 157-186.

in Calcutta in 1795, and spent the first four years at Benares, in the service of the Company, during which time he said to have acquired an intimate knowledge of Persian, Hindustani and Marathi. In 1801 he was posted to Poona as an Assistant Resident at the Court of the Peshwa. In August of 1803 he joined General Wellesley's staff as Political Officer and his good services earned him the post of Resident at Nagpur from 1804-08. In 1817 Elphinstone was appointed Commissioner of the Deccan and in 1819 he was the obvious choice for appointment as Governor of Bombay.

Elphinstone's Governorship lasted eight years, and his judicial, administrative and educational policies came out of his own reading of the Indian situation. These policies were based on the conviction that "political institutions and social usages which had lasted for centuries could not be entirely devoid of merit."¹⁰ The keynote of his policies was caution. "Many

10. G.W. Forrest, Selection from the Minutes and other Official Writings of the Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone (1884), p. 57.

novelties", he wrote to the Governor General in 1818, "must accompany every revolution... it is better that it (our own system) should gradually encroach on the institutions of the country, than it should overwhelm them at once, and leave the inhabitants without any known objects by which they could direct their course."¹¹

Elphinstone's Educational Policies.

Preoccupation with educational problems was characteristic of the thinking of the administrators of the period. It was so with John Adams, officiating Governor-General in Bengal and Sir Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras (1820-27). All of them saw in education the chief instrument for bringing about the amelioration of the people. As Elphinstone said, "It is difficult to imagine an undertaking in which our duty, our interest and our honour are more immediately concerned".¹²

Elphinstone's famous Minute on Education,

11. Quoted by Ballhatchet, Social Policy and Social Change in Western India, 1817-1830, (London, 1957), p.30.

12. Forrest, op.cit., p.101.

1824,¹³ is the most important document on Indian education prior to Wood's Despatch. The Minute is a clear formulation of Elphinstone's educational policies and determined the course of education in the Bombay State till 1854 when a change of policy became all too aparent.

Elphinstone proposed the following principal measures required for the diffusion of knowledge among the natives:

1. to improve the mode of teaching at the native schools and to increase the number of schools.
2. To supply them with School books.
3. To hold out some encouragement to the lower orders of natives to avail themselves of the means of instruction thus afforded them.
4. To establish schools for teaching the European sciences and improvements in the higher branches of education.
5. To provide for the preparation of publication of books of morals and physical sciences in native languages.
6. To establish schools for the purposes of teaching English to those disposed to pursue it as a classical language, and as a means to acquiring a knowledge of European discoveries.
7. To hold forth encouragement to the natives in the pursuit of these last branches of knowledge.

13. Ibid., pp. 77-116.

In his Minute, he indicated his conviction that it was the duty of a government to promote the cause of education. It was ranked fifth by him in a priority list which gave repression of violence, matters connected with land revenue, administration of justice and establishment of freedom of trade, precedence over the claims of education.

One of the merits of Elphinstone's policy was the realization, rare at that time, that instruction must be imparted to the people through an idiom that was familiar to them, "through the living languages of the people."

The Board of Directors in their Despatch of 1825 approved Elphinstone's plan to place an emphasis on primary education, which was conceived by them as consisting of "the elementary part of literature, reading, writing and arithmetic."

The "Bombay experiment" was unique, since in neither Bengal nor Madras was the Government disposed to encourage primary education. The immediate results were that the existing

indigenous schools¹⁴ were revived through a guarantee of their teachers' salaries, textbooks were distributed free and prizes instituted for proficiency. Some new schools were opened. The Bombay Native Education Society played a pioneering role in creating suitable literature for this purpose and in this work some of the best reputed names in Marathi Literature of that period were associated.

14. A survey of indigenous schools in Bombay Presidency made in the 1820's at the instance of Elphinstone revealed that there were in all 1705 schools, with 35,143 scholars for 4,681,735 inhabitants, or one school for 2700 people, when started in round figures. Hartog, Some Aspects of Indian Education Past and Present, (London, 1939), p. 11. The Report which gave these figures in 1829, included summaries of the statistics furnished by the collectors of the Presidency. Hartog, (p.72-74) does not express doubts about these statistics which work out about to the proportion of about 1 scholar to 133 persons of the population. Hampton, on the other hand, is reluctant to put too much reliance on these figures. Hampton, op. cit., p.161; that the word "school" must be interpreted in something less than a formal sense is apparent from the description of the indigenous school curriculum in Report of the Education Commission, 1882, p. 65.

In assigning to the Society the task of supervising the publications of text-books, Elphinstone's Minute presupposed that it would take great care that "neither religion nor any topic likely to excite discontent among the natives should ever be touched in its schools or publications." In laying stress on the fact that such publications would serve little purpose if they merely confined themselves to religious legends already known to the people, Elphinstone gave a much needed boost to vernacular books on secular subjects.

Translations into Marathi from Sanskrit and English works became the order of the day. From Sanskrit came translations of tales and fables suitable to improve the morals of the pupils and from English came translations and other materials suitable for use as textbooks in the classroom.

Elphinstone could not have for^eseen the long-term effect his policy was to have on the development of Marathi literature and the particular directions it would take. From this period

on, there are to be found scores of Marathi litterateurs writing on every conceivable subject, scientific and non-scientific, much of it for use in the schools. Translations and adaptations as a mode of writing opened up a new world together, the world of Shakespeare, Scott et al and one ultimate effect of all this literary activity was the creation of modern Marathi literature.

Strangely enough, Elphinstone's elaborate scheme of primary education seems to have been conceived as one that would cover only children belonging to the higher classes. He seems to have been emphatic about this notion, and shunned the help of the missionaries in his educational efforts for the very reason that they had little toleration for caste restrictions in the classroom¹⁵ and in fact, deliberately encouraged education among the underprivileged and groups outcast by society. He said in his Minutes:

"It will be much easier to make the lower orders desirous of learning to read, after a spirit of enquiry

15. For the varied approach adopted by the missionaries to this problem see. K.Ingham, op.cit., pp.22-37.

and improvement shall have been introduced among their superiors." 16

If education were to be encouraged among them now;

"We might find ourselves at the head of a new class, superior to the rest in useful, knowledge, but hated and despised by the castes to whom these new attainments would always induce us to prefer them.

17

In this aspect of his view of education, Elphinstone, despite his great respect and admiration for Bentham's works, was no die-hard Benthamite, though some of his judicial policies would have delighted Bentham. Ballhatchet has this explanation of Elphinstone's position. Ballhatchet says:

"His love of the past, so characteristic of the Romantic movement, must have predisposed him to sympathy with the traditional aspects of Indian life and to a reluctance to tamper with them merely for the sake of utility. His aristocratic breeding must have predisposed him to sympathy with privileged social groups in India whose position was threatened by Western methods of government. Many of his broad social policies may well have

16. Forrest, p.66.

17. Forrest, op.cit., p.67.

been directed towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number, but he was no egalitarian. He was of aristocratic birth and proud of it. Hereditary privileges which would have seemed 'factitious honours' to Bentham seemed to Elphinstone worthy of preservation both on political and social grounds.

18

The fact of the matter seems, as Ballhatchet says, that Elphinstone was caught between two worlds. Writing to Malcolm he said "... You will not know what difficulty is still you come to manage revenues & Adawluts & to reconcile efficiency with economy & Maratha Maamol with Jeremy Bentham."¹⁹

The establishment of the Poona Sanskrit College in 1821 might be seen as much as an attempt on Elphinstone's part to conciliate the higher classes and allay their fears regarding interference in their religious beliefs as it was to preserve Oriental learning, an action which would to an ardent Greek and Latin classicist need no justification. An additional argument used by Elphinstone was that the College would

18. Ballhatchet, op.cit., p.36.

19. Ibid. (Mamool is the same as mamul which means custom.)

provide for the training of Shastris for the Law Courts where the lack of qualified Shastris and Maulvis was being felt.²⁰

On the matter of English education Elphinstone's position was not so easily discerned and was at variance with that of Francis Warden,²¹ Secretary to the Government of Bombay, who was an ardent protagonist of "English as the primary object of education." It was not that Elphinstone was opposed to English education as such, for he seemed to have welcomed a limited extension of English education, among the higher classes, among those Indians who demanded it, in the large metropolitan centres where it would aid their business pursuits or qualify them for Government service. But he never conceived it as something for more than a small class of people and the latter consideration may have been paramount in his seeing English education as a way to make official careers for educated Indians.

20. Ballhatchet, op.cit., p.254.

21. Francis Warden, was Secretary to the Government of Bombay and became a member of the Bombay Council in 1823. He disagreed with the view that Government should assume the responsibility for mass education and was one of the early proponents of the downward filtration theory.

Thus Elphinstone was able to support the starting of the Central English School by the Bombay Native Education Society in 1824 "where English may be taught classically." It was this school that supported by him and George Jervis, Secretary of the Society, went from strength to strength, to become the oldest English School in Western India, and to emerge as Elphinstone Institution and then to grow into Elphinstone College.

But to Elphinstone, "English education was merely an appendix... to his wider plan, which was based on the fundamental conviction that education in India must be based on India's original and particular character. Even if it can be argued that he had in view an ultimate synthesis of Eastern and Western learning, it still remains true that he believed... that the foundations must be laid on Indian thought and culture and not on knowledge, however valuable in itself, imported from abroad.²²"

22. Hampton, op.cit., p.168; however, another dimension of Elphinstone's thinking is revealed in his private correspondence. He thought that the spread of Western knowledge would weaken certain social evils as also foster a spirit of political independence. Ballhatchet, op.cit., pp.248-251.

It is idle to speculate on what course education in Bombay would have taken, if it had been allowed to proceed along this path undisturbed, or whether changing circumstances then made a deviation from Elphinstone's policy unavoidable. Present-day commentators who are critics of the system of education introduced in the years after Elphinstone, are inclined to bemoan these later incorporations without indicating or suggesting how the indigenous system could have actually been revitalized or adapted to suit the conditions of a changing society.²³

Syed Nurullah and Naik point out that the difference between the viewpoints of Elphinstone and Warden highlights the fact that the language issues

23. The Report of the Education Commission, 1882, comments on the difficulties on building up a network of primary schools based on indigenous schools. The Report said, "... although education must be most readily and widely extended by building on the indigenous foundation, it could not be adapted to the progressive wants of society, unless for a generation or two the whole system of primary education was lifted out of the conventional rut and its level raised by the direct instrumentality of Government." p.85;

The Report also pointed out that indigenous schools had no existence amongst the aboriginal races and did not generally admit the lowest castes of Hindu society and that exclusive reliance upon such schools would doom to perpetual ignorance large sects of the community who were incapable of helping themselves., p.84.

in Bengal and Bombay were quite different from each other. In Bengal the conflict was about the respective claims of the classical languages and English, while in Bombay the conflict was between the mother tongue and English.²⁴

Another aspect of Elphinstone's policy in retrospect concerns the education of the masses. While his Minute proclaimed that "Some encouragement to the lower order of natives to avail themselves of the means of instruction... afforded to them" must be given, one is not really convinced that he was thinking of mass education in any complete sense of the term. There would still be a whole mass of humanity who would be excluded from the so-called "mass" education. Perhaps Elphinstone's views were simply in keeping with the times in which he lived, reflecting all the barriers and restrictions of Indian society. It was three quarters of a century later when Gokhale came on the scene that any truly extensive programme of mass education was advocated.

24. Syed Nurullah and J.P.Naik, A History of Education in India (During the British Period, Bombay, 1943), pp. 82-83.

Elphinstone Professorships and Elphinstone College.

The high esteem in which Elphinstone was held by the public is evident from the address presented to him on the eve of his retirement in 1827. The "native inhabitants" also subscribed a handsome sum of Rs. Two lakhs to institute two professorships to endow Elphinstone's memory for the purpose of teaching the natives the English language and "the arts, science and literature of Europe". These appointments were first to be held by "learned men invited from Great Britain" and later by competent natives. But it was 1835 before Harkness and Orlebar, selected in England by Elphinstone himself to hold the Elphinstone Professorships started delivering lecture in the Townhall, Bombay. Sir John Malcolm, who was Elphinstone's successor, proposed that the Elphinstone Professorships be attached to the Elphinstone High School (the former Central English School), a proposal that was accepted in 1840 when

25. Forrest, op.cit.,p.69

26. Ibid., pp. 69-70.

the institution was renamed the Elphinstone College School and later (1845) the Elphinstone Institution.

English education was becoming more popular than even Warden and certainly Elphinstone had anticipated. The position in the Elphinstone Institution was described thus:

In 1841, in the higher department of the English branch of the institution, 62 pupils received instruction in mathematics, general literature, natural philosophy, chemistry and botany. Instruction was given in mathematics and general literature by Professor Orlebar and Assistant Professor Bal Gangadhar Shastree in natural philosophy and chemistry by Professor Bell and in botany by Professor Orlebar.²⁷

By 1856 increasing numbers made it necessary to separate within the Elphinstone Institution itself, the college from the school, bringing into existence the Elphinstone College and the Elphinstone School. John Harkness was first principal of the College.

Poona Sanskrit College.

In Bombay Presidency the earliest collegiate education was of the Oriental type. The Poona

27. S.R.Dongerker, History of the Bombay University, p.2.

Sanskrit College of 1821 was designed "for the encouragement of the study of Sanskrit and of ancient Hindu literature and science." Originally two Hindu colleges at Nasik and Wai were planned but did not materialize and the Poona Sanskrit College was based on a modification of Elphinstone's plans made for these two colleges by Chaplin, Commissioner for the Deccan. It was conceived as being entirely for the benefit of the Brahmins, and patronage of their learning was to continue as in the days of yore, through the Dakshina fund, through professorships for the teaching of Hindu Divinity and Mythology and through prizes offered for proficiency in Sanskrit learning. It opened with a hundred students.

In the early years the management of the College by the principal Shastrees was lax and negligent. Methods of teaching in the early years followed those of the path shalla. William Hodge Mill visiting the College in 1822, "found the level of instruction there very low, and the elementary knowledge which was all that even the professors possessed had produced in them merely

mental confusion²⁸ ..."

A student recalling his classroom experiences, in instruction in the old style described it thus:

The hair-splitting of Nyaya, the vapid minutiae of Alanakara, the senseless verbiage of Vedanta, the infinite labrynths of Dharmashastra....²⁹

The closure of the Sanskrit College was saved in the early years of mismanagement by a protest from Elphinstone himself and in 1834 the Constitution of the College was remodelled. In 1837 Captain³⁰ Candy was appointed Supervisor of the College and a period of progress set in.

In 1837, even this College succumbed to the process of "anglicization". In this year both its exclusive character and its courses changed. The study of the vernacular and English was introduced

28. Quoted in Ingham. op.cit., p.56. William Hodge Mill was the first Principal of Bishop's College, Calcutta.

29. Quoted from Deccan College Quarterly, in J. Nelson Fraser, Deccan College: A Retrospect 1851-1901, (Poona, 1902), p.23.

30. Thomas Candy was born in 1805 and came to India in 1821. In 1837 Thomas and his twin George assisted J.T.Molesworth in the compilation of a voluminous Marathi-English Dictionary which to this day remains a classic in the field. Thomas later brought out a English-Marathi Dictionary in 1847.

and the College was thrown open to all classes³¹. In 1842 an English School was added to the College and on June 7, 1851, the Sanskrit College and the English School were amalgamated to form the Poona College. Major Thomas Candy was its first Principal. Another illustrious name associated with the Poona College was that of William Wordsworth who was principal in 1862-3. In 1869 when new buildings were occupied, made possible by the beneficence of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy, the name of the College was changed to Deccan College.

Sanskrit teaching in the Poona College underwent a change in 1856 when Murray Mitchell was appointed to review teaching methods and styles and make recommendations for changes in keeping with changing patterns of education. He thought that Sanskrit literature needed to be studied aesthetically and students taught to exercise judgement in addition to learning by memorization. Also comparisons of Sanskrit and English in matters of philosophy and principles and literary composition were introduced. It was not long before Sanskrit

31. Report, Education Commission, 1883, Vol. I, p. 261.

as a separate course for all students was abolished.

Major Candy and E.I. Howard were interested in promoting the study of Marathi in the College but found two obstacles- the despising of the language as a popular tongue by those in Poona who prided themselves on their knowledge and facility in Sanskrit and the high market-value of a knowledge of English, which was gradually gaining in popularity.³² Moropant's works were introduced as a course of study in 1859. By 1865 Marathi courses had to be discontinued, as a result of a general indifference to them.

Before 1857, thus it was that the Poona College and the Elphinstone College though "differing in their original object" became³³ colleges of the "purely modern type."

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32. In 1844 Lord Hardinge's Resolution made knowledge of English essential for employment in the higher ranks of public service and thus the growing popularity of English was given an indirect fillip. Lord Hardings Resolution, 10th October, 1844, quoted in Paranjpe, Source Book, pp. 67-69.
33. Report, Education Commission, 1883, Vol. I. p. 262 For the Commission's assessment of the new education, see "The Effect of Collegiate Instruction upon the Enlightenment of the People", Report, Section 326, pp. 300-301.

Courses Taught in the 1850's.

Till 1860 when the Bombay University began to govern the courses of study, courses taught in the 1850's in the Poona College provide a basis for understanding in what manner the dimensions of English education were conceived. In 1851 the Junior class at Poona College³⁴ studied Chambers' History of the British Empire and Marshman's India. Cliff's Political Economy, Whately's Essay Lessons in Logic, and Selections from McCulloch's Course in Reading which was a compilation made in Scotland in 1839 of science and common subjects, views of history and religion and poetical extracts from the early nineteenth century writers. The Senior class were exposed to more advanced works in the same subjects. History courses comprised Murray's British India and Hume's History of England upto the end of Edward I. Political Economy now embraced Mill's work upto Book II, in addition to some other writers in the subject. Logic included Hamilton Reid and Mill's Logic, Part I. In the literature course, Johnson's The Rambler, Goldsmith's The Citizen of

34. Details of courses at Poona College are taken from J. Nelson Fraser, op.cit., "The Early Curriculum" Chapter 2.

the World and Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream were studied.

Expansion of Course Content in the 1850's.

When the division of students into three classes instead of two was made in 1853, an enlargement of the base of the courses prescribed for study was made. Now divided into the Freshmen, Junior and Senior levels, suitable gradation of courses also took place. In the English course, for instance, a foundation in the mechanics of the language was considered essential. At the freshman level, the study of English now included Cannon's English Grammar and Reid's English Composition. The Literature course had Chamber's Cyclopaedia Period VII as one of the books to study. The junior class studied Guizot's History of Civilization and Taylor's History of Modern Europe. Principles of Elocution and Stoddart's Treatise of the English Language and Blair's Belles Letters comprised and English course, while the Literature course contained some works of Addison and Goldsmith's Essay on Taste. The Senior Class studied The Merchant of Venice and in Moral Philosophy

Butler's Discourse of Human Nature found a place.

In this pre-university period, changes in curriculum could be expected with a change of administrative head. Thus Sir Edwin Arnold on assuming charge around December of 1857 brought about certain changes. Butler's Analogy and Bacon's Essays, Othello and Childe Harold were introduced in 1859. Hamlet and Paradise Lost had made their appearance in the curriculum in 1858.

Assessment of the quality of education in the Deccan College in this period was somewhat contradictory. There seemed to have been mixed reports on this matter. Some praised the small size of the classes and the means of acquiring facility in conversational expression made possible by the conversational methods used in instruction. Others criticised a certain "meagreness, slovenliness and inaccuracy of both thought and expression" that crept into teacher and student performance.

After the University came into being, Howard in 1862 commenting on the stimulus the first B.A. exam provided said, "The University has swept away the last traces of that imperfect system

under which the teachers reported without check the performances of themselves and their pupils—a fertile cause of error and exaggeration deceiving the Government, the public and the youths themselves.”³⁵

Board of Education.

In 1840 the Government of Bombay appointed a Board of Education for the management of all the institutions established for the education of Indians. Thus the Board inherited not only all the institutions conducted by the Bombay Native Education Society which now ceased to exist but also the Poona Sanskrit College and the Elphinstone Institutions. By this time the controversy between the medium of instruction had more or less been resolved, with Elphinstone's proposals for mass education through the mother-tongue shelved for want of funds and a triumph for Warden's downward filtration theory. Undoubtedly these events echoed happenings in Bengal and Lord Auckland's Minute of 24 November, 1839. Lord Auckland was Governor-General of India and declared that the principal

35. Quoted in J. Nelson Fraser, op.footnote, p.28.

aim of educational policy in India was to communicate through the medium of the English language a complete education in European Literature, Philosophy and Science to the greatest number of students who may be found ready to accept it at our hands, and for whose instruction our funds will admit of our providing.³⁶ Lord Auckland's faith in the filtration theory was no less obvious (than those of the others) and today raises the question of the reasons why this spontaneous filtration downward to the masses as expected by Auckland and so many others did not occur.

The Board of Education assumed a role of a decisive character in education in Bombay. The Board's President was Sir Thomas Erskine Perry who held this position for nine years till his resignation in 1852. He had very firm views on educational matters, views which when brought to the Board were responsible for creating a controversy, which was of more significance than that of the Anglicists and Classicists in Bengal.³⁷

36. Sharp, Henry, Selection from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839), Bureau of Education, India, 1920, p. 157.

37. Syed Nurullah and J.P.Naik, op.cit., p.136. They discuss the views of the different members of the Board at length, pp. 136-144.

Perry shared Trevelyan's belief that given the proper encouragement, the English language would become the lingua franca of the country. Perry advocated a concentration of the Board's resources on higher education, on educating a few rather than trying to utilize it on education of the masses for which it was inadequate. However, Perry's stand must not be misunderstood. As the Report of the Commission said, "But at the same time he was anxious to open higher education to the poor and encourage a thorough study of the vernacular pari passu with English."

Colonel Jervis and Jugannath Shankarsett, members of the Board, following the lines of Elphinstone's policies were in complete opposition to Perry's views. Perry had written:

...if an educated native at the present time arrives from Upper India, from Bengal, or from Madras, there is no language in which he can make himself so readily intelligible to an educated native of Bombay as English, and it is

38. Charles E. Trevelyan, Extract from "Education of the People of India", London, 1838. M.R. Paranjpe, Source Book, pp. 54-66. Trevelyan was a member of the General Committee of Public Instruction as also of the Bengal Civil Service.

the only language which, a native would think of employing if he were writing to a Bengali friend at Calcutta or to a Tamil at Madras.

39

Colonel Jervis, on the other hand maintained that the direct extension of vernacular education was the need of the time. He said:

Surely, it must be admitted, that general instruction cannot be afforded, except through the medium of a language with which the mind is familiar.

40

Jagannath Shankarseth speaking with the concurrence of the other two Indian members of the Board, Framjee and Mahommad Ibrahim Mackba said in his Minute of 1st May 1847:

I am persuaded that the Vernacular languages possess advantages superior to English, as the medium of communicating useful knowledge to the people of Western India... If our object is to diffuse knowledge and improve the minds of the natives of India as a people, it is my opinion that it must be done by imparting that knowledge to them in their own language. 41

39. Sir Erskine Perry, Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, IV (1852-53), p. 315 footnote, quoted by McCully op.cit., p. 106;

40. Selections from Educational Records, Vol. II, p. 11

41. Ibid., pp. 16-17.

Matters came to somewhat of a crisis, with the Governor in Council issuing a statement on 5th April,⁴² 1848 which did not clearly opt for one or other of the two different views in the Board, leading to a certain indecisiveness, which taken together with the Bengal trends, ultimately led to the adoption of English as the medium of instruction in higher education.

Perry had justifiable cause to be pleased with the progress of English education in the city of Bombay. The report of the Board of Education for the year 1849 reported that there were nine English private schools, five English Charity schools and seventeen vernacular schools operating on a commercial basis in the city, training native youth for Elphinstone Institution. Around 1855, the aggregate student enrolment in the English schools of Bombay amounted to twenty-three hundred, almost fifteen hundred of which were Parsees and the rest Hindus.⁴³

42. Quoted by Nurullah and Naik, pp. 142-143.

43. Quoted in McCully, p.112, from Proceedings of the Students Literary and Scientific Society, 1854-55 and 1855-56.

English Education in India-A New Phase - Wood's
Despatch 1854.

The parliamentary inquiry that preceded the renewal of the East India Company's Charter in 1853 led the Despatch of 18⁴⁴54 from Sir Charles Wood who was then President of the Board of Control of the Company. The Despatch is considered to be a document of considerable significance for educational progress in India. It was indeed described as "the climax in the history of Indian education; what goes before leads upto it; what follows flows from ⁴⁵it."

The Despatch reflected changing ideas about governmental responsibility for education in England, where "the evolution of political theory ... had by that time brought about the gradual acceptance of the doctrine that popular education was one of the duties of the government", a principle that is stated in the Preamble to the Despatch. Sir Charles Wood, speaking in the House of Commons, when introducing the East India Company Bill in June, 1823 said:

44. Educational Despatch of 1854, From the Court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor General of India in Council, dated July, 19th, 1854, Paranjpe, Source Book, pp. 73-113.

45. Hartog, pp. 17-18.

... I believe... that if the great body of natives were educated and enlightened... we should increase rather than relax our hold upon the Indian empire. But, be that as it may, it seems to me that the path of our duty is clear and plain- to improve the condition and to increase the enlightenment of the people.⁴⁶

Alexander Duff's hand is seen in the content that was given to the Despatch, emerging out of a desire to remedy the defects of the system of English education revealed during the years it was operative in India before 1854. The main provisions of the Despatch are described by Hartog:

It imposed on the Government of India the duty of creating a properly articulated system of education, from the primary school to the university; and perhaps its most notable feature was the emphasis which it laid on primary education, and therefore its implicit repudiation of the more extreme forms of the "filtration theory."⁴⁸

Among the measures prescribed were: the constitution of separate departments for the administration of education; the institution of universities in the presidency towns; the establishment of teacher training institutions; increased attention to vernacular schools at both secondary

46. Quoted in McCully, p.131

47. "Genesis and Content of the Wood Despatch, McCully, op.cit., pp.135-142.

48. Hartog, p.18.

and primary level; and the introduction of a system of grants-in-aid which would encourage private educational enterprise. Female education was to be encouraged, as also technical education. The Despatch declared emphatically that:

the education which we desire to see extended in India is that which has for its objects the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short of European knowledge.

49

While the Despatch envisaged a continuation and promotion of the study of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian literature, which it considered important for "historical and antiquarian purposes" and for the study of 'Hindoo and Mahomedan law", for the purposes of "all modern discovery and improvement" itself they were considered deficient. There was no suggestion of denigration on the part of the Despatch when it said that "we look... to the English language and the vernacular languages together as the media for the diffusion of European knowledge, and it is our desire to see them cultivated together..."

49. Educational Despatch, Para 7, Paranjpe, op.cit., p. 75.

50. Para 14, Paranjpe, op.cit., p. 78.

Thus the Despatch saw an extension of European knowledge to all classes of the people, through the means of the English language in the higher branches of studies and in the vernacular to the great mass of people. By the institution of universities the Despatch claimed it provided "the highest test and encouragement of liberal education". Government's attention was to be directed to the lower and middle classes. The Despatch did not visualize "any sudden or even speedy results" to follow from the adoption of these measures. It realized the immensity of the task. It said:

To imbue a vast and ignorant population with a general desire for knowledge, and to take advantage of that desire when excited, to improve the means for diffusing education amongst them, must be a work of many years... As a Government we can do no more than direct the efforts of the people, and aid them wherever they appear to require assistance. The result depends more upon them than upon us...⁵¹

In retrospect, the deficiencies and shortcomings of the Despatch can be counted as many.⁵²

51. Paras 99 and 100, Ibid., pp. 112-3.

52. Both Nurullah and Naik, and M. R. Paranjpe point them out. The former think that many of the defects of the present educational system are to be traced back to the failure to give effect to some of the Despatch's recommendations.

It is possible to see that many recommendations could not be carried out or were not done so. The fact of the matter was that the task was one of colossal magnitude.

University Education.

The Despatch had made comprehensive recommendations and some of them were put into effect immediately. Education Departments were organized in the very next year, in 1855, in both Bengal and Bombay. Inspectorships and minor offices were set up and the newly constituted Departments took over the functions of the Boards of Education.

Another recommendation almost immediately implemented was that which concerned the establishment of universities⁵³. The Governor-General appointed a committee of sixteen European and four Indians to draw up a plan for universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Act XXII of 1857 brought the University of Bombay into existence, with the signing of the Bill by the Governor-General on July 18, 1857. The

53. Educational Despatch, 1854, Paras 24-40, Paranjpe, pp. 83-89.

preambles of the Act stated that the prime object of the University was "the better encouragement" of the people and the "pursuit of a regular and liberal course of education." Its purpose would be that of "ascertaining, by means of examination, the persons who have acquired proficiency in different branches of Literature, Science and Art, and of rewarding them by Academical Degrees as evidence of their respective attainments..."

The Mutiny prevented the University of Bombay from functioning immediately, and its first Matriculation examination could be held only in October, 1859. Again, in Bombay there were six institutions to be affiliated to the University, as compared with Calcutta University where there were fourteen. The law school (1855) and Medical College (1845) and Engineering schools (1824) that had made their appearance in Bombay in the post-Elphinstone period were among the six. The liberal arts institutions in 1860 were the Elphinstone College, and Deccan College. The non-Government College, the Free General Assembly's Institution which John Wilson had established in Bombay was affiliated in 1861. St. Xavier's College,

Bombay, was affiliated in 1869.

One of the defects of the type of university which was merely an affiliating body, as seen by the Calcutta University Commission, was that its elaborate administrative structure and its primary duty as a regulatory and examining body, made for a consequent restriction of the freedom of the teacher. It said that with "uniform curricula and an exaggerated emphasis upon examinations" the colleges were reduced too much to the same pattern. Such a system the Commission held "could contribute nothing to strengthen the intellectual resources of the colleges and little to stimulate free criticism and independent thought among teachers or students."⁵⁴

It must be remembered that this deficiency of the Indian University system was seen only retrospectively. As long as the classes were small, the deficiency or evil could not be detected. Small classes made possible "that direct contact between teacher and pupil (which) is the most valuable element in any system of training," as the Commission

54. Calcutta University Commission's Report (1917-1919) quoted in Nurullah and Naik, op.cip., p.276.

printed out.⁵⁵

Neither did this difficulty in the system itself come to the minds of any of liberal stalwarts in Maharashtra that were connected with University affairs in one way or another. Thus Gokhale, Ranade and Bhandarkar who were great protagonists of English education pointed out other problems of education but not the particular one cited by the Calcutta Commission. Gokhale had expressed a concern for the expansion of primary education, and advocated compulsory education at that level. Ranade had been anxious about the work-load of the university course and its detrimental effect on the health of the student. Bhandarkar had expressed concern as to whether the right sense of perspective and a breadth of comprehension in the subject matter was being communicated in the lectures.

55. Quoted in Dongerkery, op.cit., p.14; A contemporary criticism of the new educational system, in rather ambiguous terms was made by M.S.Gole, professor of Physics and Chemistry in Fergusson College. With Tilak and Agarkar Gole was among the very first teachers in the College and was associated with the establishment of a science department there. He died in 1906. See Brahman ani Tyanchi Vidya, Poona Poona, Aryabhushan Press, 1895.

Bombay University Course, Structure and Degrees.

The Senate of the University was empowered by the Act XXII of 1857 to confer the Bachelor and Master of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degrees in addition to those in Medicine and Civil Engineering. The course for the B.A. was of three years' duration after Matriculation. Twenty-two months after passing the latter, a student could take the First B.A. Examination, the passing of which was a prerequisite for taking the examination for the degree of the B.A. An examination in Honours could be taken five years after passing the Matriculation. The M.A. degree in Arts could be obtained by an Honours graduate without passing any further examination, but also could be obtained by others after passing the M.A. Arts examination.

The subjects for the B.A. degree were languages, mathematics and natural philosophy, history, logic and moral philosophy and one optional subject chosen from the following:

- i) Rhetoric and Criticism
- ii) Dynamics and Hydrostatics
- iii) Optics and Astronomy

- iv) Chemistry, Heat and Electricity
- v) Physiology, Vegetable and Animal
- vi) Physical Geography.⁵⁶

The law examination was taken after a three-year course of study in any recognized law school and was open to graduates in arts of two years' standing. The first Matriculation examination conducted by the University, in 1859, revealed that there was a "deficiency in a complete and scholar-like knowledge of...(the) mother-tongue." Only 22 of the 132 candidates who appeared were successful.

In 1868 the honours course in arts was abolished and candidates obtaining a first class at the B.A. or M.A. examination were considered to have taken honours. Other important changes also took place. In 1870, all languages excepting English and the classical languages were excluded from the examinations after Matriculation and political economy was substituted for Rhetoric and Criticism as an optional subject at the B.A. examination.

56. Dongerkery, op.cit., p.16.

Sir Alexander Grant, who was one of the Vice-Chancellors of the Bombay University and later Director of Public Instruction from 1865-68, had been instrumental in bringing to the University in its infancy a high sense of purpose and direction that were in the same traditions as that of Oxford. He was conscious of the anomalous position a university might assume because of its close connection with the Government. In a farewell speech made as Vice-Chancellor on the occasion of the retirement of Sir Bartle Frere in 1867, Sir Alexander said:

...for, the mission of a university in a country like this is nothing else than to create an intellectual and vital soul among the people; and there can be no question whether this mission is likely best to be fulfilled by persons feeling themselves merely to carry out the views of a government, or by the free and enthusiastic action of men feeling responsible to themselves for the good or bad success of the university...58

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57. George Bennett Smith, "Sir Alexander Grant, 1826-1884", Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. VIII, pp. 374-376. In 1860 when Elphinstone Institution was remodeled, Grant was appointed professor of history and political economy. In 1862 he was appointed Principal of Elphinstone College and dean of the faculty of Arts of the University. He was Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University from 1863-68, with a short interruption and became Director of Public Instruction in 1865.
58. Quoted in Dongerkery, op.cit., p. 131.

Sir Alexander, himself a graduate of Oriel College, Oxford, saw in the Bombay University a preponderance of Oxford men among its founders, who reflecting the great prestige of Thomas Arnald's views on education at Oxford itself, were led to the formulation of curricula at Bombay which laid heavy stress upon the classical languages and literature, classical history and mathematics. Calcutta University curricula gave a preponderance to mathematics and the Physical sciences because its main association had been with Cambridge men.⁵⁹

59. Quoted in McDonald, "English Education and Social Reform in the Late Nineteenth Century" "A Case Study in the Transmission of a Cultural ideal Journal of Asian Studies, Vol.25, No.3, May, 1966, p.455 footnote. A cursory survey of Oxford men connected with higher education in Bombay Presidency yields these names: W. Draper, Professor of English Literature and Mathematics, 1856; Edwin Arnold, Principal of Deccan College 1857; V. Green, Professor of English Literature for a few years; R. G. Oxenham, Principal of Deccan College, 1874, and of Elphinstone College, 1890; F. G. Selby, Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy at Deccan College and later its Principal in 1885, as also Chairman of the Deccan Education Society; F. W. Bain, professor of history and Political economy, 1892; J. N. Fraser, professor of English literature, 1896; W. H. Sharp, professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy at Elphinstone College, 1891; and E. I. Howard who was connected with Deccan College and later Director of Public Instruction from 1856-1867, the year he was killed in a railway accident near Lonawala.

Courses taught at Deccan College, in the pre-university days certainly reflected this bias, and what is even more significant is that it continued to be seen into the course structure and content in the first few decades after the University's founding. For the very first examination in Arts held in 1861, a student read Southey's Life of Nelson, Goldsmith's Deserted Village and Traveller, Rasselas and L'Allegro and II Penseroso.⁶⁰ At the B.A. degree exam that year the list was not substantially different and therefore in that very first year of holding a University Examination a differentiation was made between the two levels by making the first examination of an easier and more elementary nature.

61

In 1862 the English course for the first exam included Johnson's Lives of Cowley, Dryden and Pope, Robinson Crusoe, Milton's Samson Agonistes and Scott's Lady of the Lake. For the B.A. Examination in 1862 Hooker on Laws (The Ecclesiastical Polity Book I) and Shakespeare's Henry VIII were added to the Southey and Goldsmith works prescribed in the

60. Bombay University Calendar, 1861.

61. Ibid., p. 131.

previous year. For Marathi, Balshastri's Itihasa (Introduction to the History of India), Bal Mitra Vol.I, Tukaram's Abhang (as in Navanita) and selections from Ramdas' Dasabodha were prescribed. For the B.A.Honours Course in Languages, Milton's Aeropagatica, Burke's Speeches and Coriolanus, Julius Ceasar and Anthony and Cleopatra, and Tennyson's Idylls of the Kings were prescribed.

These are the courses that must have been taken by those who graduated in 1862. Ranade (Mahadev Govind), Bhandarkar (Ramakrishna Gopal) Bal Mangesh Wagle (Bala Mungesh) and Vaman Abajee Modak (Vamun Abajee) are listed as undergraduate students in the Arts at Elphinstone College⁶². They passed the B.A. in 1862, with Ranade and Bhandarkar both securing a first class in the examination.

In the course outlined in 1866-67 for the next five years, in English at the first year examination in Arts the authors and poets studied are the same and there was merely a variation of the specific works to be read. Thus in successive years Johnson's Lives of Addison, Dryden, Swift and Pope, and Milton and Gray were prescribed. With Sir Walter Scott it was Kenilworth, Quentin Durward,

62. Ibid., pp.72-3

63. Bombay University Calendar, 1866-67.

Ivanhoe, The Talisman and Woodstock that formed part of the English Course from 1866-1871. With Milton's Paradise Lost, it was the precise Books that are to be studied in any year that are varied. Poems of Byron (Childe Harold), Gray, Cowper (Retirement) and Thompson (Seasons) are also included in this way.

For the B.A. Examination, Bacon's Essays, Bacon's Advancement of Learning, varied plays of Shakespeare, Anthony and Cleopatra in 1866-67, followed by Othello, King Lear, Macbeth and Hamlet in successive years, Lamb's Essays of Elia and Southey's Ithalaba, all find a place in the curriculum. Wordsworth's Prelude makes its appearance in 1866-67, and his Excursion in 1870-71. Arnold's Lectures on Modern History appear in 1868-69. For the Honours course and for the M.A., Locke's Toleration (1866), Hobbes' Leviathan (1867) Milton's Aeropagitica (1868) Locke's On the Human Understanding (1869) and Burke's Reflection on the French Revolution (1870) shared places with Chaucer, Ruskin, Shakespeare, Coleridge and Dugald Stewart.

In these early years the heavy concentration on languages was seen also in the fact that Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic courses were taught at the First year, B.A. and M.A. level and Portuguese, Marathi, Gujerathi, Canarese, Hindustani and Persian and Sindhi at the first year and B.A. levels only. History courses were taught from the First Year to the Master's level. The Bachelor of Science degree.

A landmark in the University's history came in 1879 when more than twenty years after the founding of the University, a Bachelor of Science degree was instituted as an alternative to the Arts degree. It was done at the instance of Sir Richard Temple, Chancellor of the University, at the meeting of the Senate on 12th April, 1879. The new course was comprised of English, mixed mathematics, chemistry, physical geography and one of the four groups, namely physics, zoology, botany and geology. The curriculum of the B.A. course was amended to enable specialization after an earlier period of general education.

Size of the Newly Educated Class

By 1885 there had come into being an English-educated class of about fifty-five thousand natives, including at least several thousand who had received their education before 1857. Taking 1885 as the index year, McCully quotes statistics to show that from the beginning of the university system in 1857 till 1885 a total of 48,251 candidates had passed the entrance examination of this group, 12318 passed the intermediate stage of higher education and some 5,108 passed the Bachelor of Arts examination. Figures compiled for Bombay presidency alone showed an estimation of the educated class in 1872 to be between 6000 and 7000.⁶⁴

Women's Education.

In 1883 women were admitted to all degrees in Arts, Medicine, civil engineering and law on the same basis as the men, a significant fact when the state of female education in toto in the country was considered.⁶⁵ One of the most consistent recommendations made by the Indian National Social

64. MacCully, op.cit.,pp.177-78.

65. Dongerkery, op.cit.,pp.26-27.

Conference over the years had concerned the promotion of the education of girls. The matter had figured in Conference speeches as one of the most urgently required reforms of the country, one which was intimately bound up with the ushering in of a new age. First pioneering efforts in Bombay Presidency were made by the American Missionaries in 1824 with the establishment of the first native school for girls in Bombay. Two years later they reported an increase of nine girls' schools with an aggregate attendance of 340 pupils. In 1829 the number had risen to 400, with about 122 of them able to read and write and do needle work. In 1829-30 Dr. and Mrs. John Wilson established six schools for native girls in Bombay, with about 200 girls enrolled in them. The Church Missionary Society's first school was established in 1826. In 1831 two girls' schools were established in Ahmednagar by the American Mission and within the next ten years schools sprung up in Thaná, Bassein and Nasik under missionary impetus.⁶⁶

66. The figures are compiled from Selections from Educational Records, Vol. II, p.50.

In 1851 Maganbhai Karamchand gave a grant of Rs.20,000 for two girls' schools in Ahmedabad. Jyotirao Phule's first girls' school opened in Poona in 1851 and the Student Literary and Scientific Society entirely supported in the city of Bombay nine vernacular free schools for girls attended by more than 650 pupils.⁶⁷

In 1854 the number of girls in schools known to the Department of Education in Bombay was rather more than 4000. The statistics for 1870-71 showed 9,190 pupils in girls' schools and in 1881-82 there were nearly 27,000 girls in schools recognised by the State and "the percentage of the female population in schools known to the Department, though small, was higher than in any other Province in India."⁶⁸

Thus when Bombay University took the step in 1883 to admit women to all its degrees, it was a move that was in keeping with the fine traditions already in existence in the state. It was a progressive move per se, because London University

67. Report of the Education Commission, 1883,
Vol. I, p. 14

68. Ibid., p. 35; also Chapter X, "Female Education", pp. 521-549.

did not admit women to its degrees till 1878 and Cambridge University admitted women to its 'titular' degrees only after the first World War. Oxford did so in 1920.

Changes in Course Structure and Content - The Role of Telang, Bhandarkar and Gokhale.

"Telang Courses".

Kashinath Trimbak Telang's association with the Bombay University lasted for a period of sixteen years, distinguished at the end of this period by his appointment as Vice-Chancellor. He was the first Indian to be so appointed and held the office for one year, from August 1892 to September, 1893.

Ten years before this appointment he had served as an Independent non-official member of the Hunter Education Commission. Now, already a Justice of the High Court, he was responsible for moving a Resolution in the Senate on 14th April, 1890 by which a major change in the curriculum for the B.A. course was brought about, Concieved in the manner of what has come to be known in our time as general education, Telang saw the need for the

acquisition of a broad base of knowledge and the cultivation of a certain type of mental discipline as part of collegiate education for those taking the liberal arts courses. Telang said:

A B.A. should, I think, be a man who has had the general cultivation which ought to be the basis of all special cultivation. He should know English and a classical language, should have the discipline which mathematics gives, should know the elements of logic and of political economy and the physical sciences, and have a general knowledge of the history of England and India.⁶⁹

Thus the content of education was still conceived more as serving an elite group rather than the common man. The system of higher education was organised in a way that was in keeping with the philosophy of education in those times. Education gave entree to places of position and power in society, in addition to making for a cultivation of the mind through the ideas that came from the literary works of some foremost names in the various areas of study. McDonald has suggested that the content of higher education in these times may have had a social utility

69. Quoted in Dongerkery, op.cit., p.28.

for the educated elite quite apart from its informational value, and that Government conceived this group in the manner of propogandists, as "cultural brokers". This certainly was the hope expressed in Macaulay's oft-quoted words. McDonald says:

The content of their education profoundly influenced their accomplishments in their pivotal social role, enabling them to create a cultural and eventually a social revolution.⁷⁰

Telang succeeded in getting a new course structure through the Senate with one notable exception. He was not able to make the Moral Philosophy course a part of the compulsory group of papers,⁷¹ though it was a matter of pride to him that he was able to do so with the history courses. The new course structure, which came to be as the Telang Courses remained in force from 1892-1913.⁷²

Previous⁷³

1. English, 2. Second Language, 3. Mathematics,
4. History (Greek and Roman in alternate years).

70. McDonald, op.cit., p.454.

71. Dongerkey, op.cit., p.30.

72. Ibid., p.95.

73. Ibid., pp.28-29.

Intermediate (First Year B.A. was changed to the Intermediate in 1880).

1, English, 2. Second Language, 3. Mathematics and Physics, 4. Deductive Logic.

Bachelor of Arts

1. English, 2. Classical language, 3. History of England and History of India and Political Economy, 4. One of the following groups:

- (a) Language and Literature (English and a classical language).
- (b) Philosophy,
- (c) Mathematics,
- (d) Physical Science,
- (e) Natural Science,
- (f) Roman History, Law and General Jurisprudence.

Bhandarkar supported Telang's view both on general education and the teaching of history. He became Vice-Chancellor in 1894, and his Convocation address reviewed the changes made in the curriculum. He pointed out that it was in 1863 that logic and moral philosophy had become optional and in 1865 history had been made optional. Telang in 1890 succeeded in getting history back as a compulsory subject. Twelve years later when the Senate Committee recommended the abolition of history and political

economy from the compulsory list, Bhandarkar appended a minute of dissent to its Report.

Bhandarkar said:

When an educated man comes out into the world, he has to form some opinion on moral, social, economic and political questions. His education at College must be of such a nature as will enable him to form a sound opinion on these questions.. I am, therefore of the opinion that an educated Indian should, while at College, go through course of history, political economy and moral philosophy.⁷⁴

Gokhale's Stand- Changes in the University

Course System-1902,

The Education Commission of 1882, which was appointed to review the working of the policy outlined in the Education Despatch of 1854 did not have the power, by the terms of reference given to them to make specific recommendations for improving university of collegiate education. Its main concern was matters connected with secondary education. But rapid increase in the number of institutions of higher education in the major provinces of India, among other considerations led to the appointment of Universities Commission of 1902 to

74. Dongerkery, op.cit., p.30; p.68.

make recommendations which may "lead to elevate the standard of university teaching, and to promote the advancement of learning."

From the very start the appointment of the Commission had become a subject for controversy. The composition of its membership was questioned and the hurried manner in which it collected evidence was in contrast to that of the Commission of 1882. When its recorded evidence did not reach the public because of its non-publication, there seemed to be even more cause for suspicion about the motives of the Government.

Gokhale as member of the Imperial Legislative Council gave voice to all the objections and fears of the educated community regarding the Indian Universities Bill which emanated from the findings of the Commission.⁷⁵ He dwelt on antecedent events such as the absence of any member on the Commission who could be said to represent "indigenous enterprise in the field of education." The many admi-

75. Gokhale speeches, Vol. II, pp. 3-58; also Dongerkery, pp. 38-52 for a discussion of the changes recommended by the Commission and a consideration of the merits and demerits of the Universities Act of 1904.

nistrative reforms suggested by the Bill came in for criticism. And all things considered, Gokhale did not think that the quality of instruction imparted in colleges would show any improvement, because these depended upon "better men, more money and improved material", none of which was made provision for by the Bill.

Further Changes in Course Content.

The 1907-1913 period in the history of the University was marked by vigorous debate on course content and structure in the university, particularly in connection with radical changes that were sought to be brought about in them, to make them reflect the needs of a changing society in the twentieth century of unprecedented scientific and industrial advancement. Spearheading the move to do so, was Sir George Clarke, later Lord Sydenham, who was Chancellor during these years.

The Chancellor in his very first convocation address, in 1908, deplored the "rarity of the scientific attitude or mind in India and the paucity of leaders of research, literary, historical or scientific."⁷⁶ To consider certain proposed changes

76. Dongerkery, p. 63.

in the curriculum a committee was appointed in which Chandavarkar who was then Vice-Chancellor, P.M.Mehta, Chimanlal Setalvad, R.P. Paranjpe and V.K.Rajwade were among the members. From the earliest stages of their deliberations there were differences of opinion regarding whether the purpose of the B.A.course was to offer general education or specialization. Bhandarkar supported the former and K.Natarajan supporting the latter moved a resolution in the Senate that would make only English compulsory at the B.A., with the other subjects forming a voluntary group. Thus the History of England, political and constitutional, till now in the compulsory group, would form part of the voluntary group, "History and Economics".

Gokhale's agitation over the move to make History an optional subject was based on twin considerations and he put up a vigorous opposition to the proposed amendment. He objected to the Government's letter of 21st June, 1911 which had suggested that History be dropped from the B. A. compulsory group on the ground that it constituted as an interference in the autonomy of the Senate affairs. He claimed that Natarajan's resolution of

17th July, 1911 if not directly, at least indirectly served the purposes of the Government directive.⁷⁷

Gokhale replied to the five objections to the teaching of History, as raised by the Government and reiterated his view that it was by the study of English history and English literature that students "more than anything could be made useful and responsible citizens."

Gokhale also expressed a reservation in the whole matter of changing a curriculum, with the object of improving or reforming it, as seemed to be the purpose of Sir George Clarke, Chancellor of the University. He thought that the Governor was not taking "enough note of the fact that many of the best minds of the presidency, European as well as Indian, had devoted their best for years to the formation of the curriculum as it then stood."⁷⁸ He thought this to be a "tactical mistake, for it created in many minds a critical, he would not say an antagonistic, frame of mind."

The upshot of the whole controversey was

77. "History Teaching in Bombay", Gokhale Speeches, .
Vol.3, pp. 200-204.

78. Dongerkery, p.72.

that Mr. Natarajan's amendment was carried, though by a small margin. The Senate acceptance of the recommendations made by the Committee brought about many changes of actual course groupings as well as a strengthening of course content particularly in the sciences. The areas of specialization offered to the student were widened so that a student could make a choice according to his aptitude, a distinction was made between courses offered for the pass and Honours degree at the B.A. Teaching also came into to be one of the responsibilities of the University itself which began to offer a limited teaching programme for the M.A. sciences courses were upgraded with a proper attention paid to the practical side and a "correlation of subjects... for specialized study as a preparation for research."

But in retrospect, Lord's Sydenham's scheme of reform did not seem to have lived up to its claims. One of the particular deficiencies was that for science students the study of English was completely eliminated from the science courses. As Dongerkery described it, "the courses in arts and science became lop-sided."

They lost in breadth while not gaining sufficiently in depth.⁷⁹" The B.A. Pass course also proved to be rather ineffective. The courses thus revised in this period remained unaltered for almost a quarter of a century, till 1937 when the Bifurcation scheme was introduced whereby a student on entering the University was required to make a choice between the arts and the science courses.

Behind all the changes contemplated and objections raised to these changes, more specifically in connection with the structure of courses and course content, lay the conviction that a student carries away from the courses he has studied a lasting effect, an abiding influence that outlives the information he may have culled from them or the facts that he may have memorized. Certainly it was this conviction that prompted Telang and Gokhale to take the positive stands they did on university affairs in general and on matters pertaining to syllabi and curriculum in particular.

In quoting the words of Sir Thomas Raleigh, who as Chancellor of the Calcutta University in 1899 had expressed such sentiments, Gokhale was putting

79. Dongerkery, p.72.

his own stamp of approbation on them. Sir Thomas said:

There is... an inherent influence inseparable from the curriculum through which the student has had to pass before he can take his degree which is not without its effect upon character and morals which inspires in him something more than a hungry appetite for a diploma, and which turns him out something better than a sort of phonographic automaton into which have been spoken the ideas and thoughts of other men...⁸⁰

Sir Thomas continued in the same vein, with the use of a rhetorical form. Gokhale continued to quote:

Is it, possible, is it likely, that we have been for years teaching hundreds and thousands of young men, even if the immediate object be passing an examination or the winning of a degree, a literature which contains invaluable lessons for life, and science which is founded upon the reverent contemplation of nature and her truths, without leaving permanent impress upon the moral as well as the intellectual being of those who have passed through this course? ⁸¹

80. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.55.

81. Ibid., p. 56.

Chapter IV : Modern Marathi Literature

Modern Marathi Literature and Journalism - Their
Role in Promoting Ideas of Social Change.

Modern Marathi Literature, which came into being around the end of the 18th century was essentially a response to the contact and confrontation with Western Civilization. An exposure to different modes of thinking, different customs and manners and different literature forms created a whole body of new literature- both as to form and content. It was in marked contrast to the earlier literature in Marathi that was not only religious and philosophical in content but was restricted to the form of devotional poetry. The poet-saints preached the equality of man in the sight of God and sang of the glories of God, but the emphasis was on renouncing the world and striving for salvation. There were also historical forms of literature- the povadas and the lavanis, which were again forms of poetry, but in narrative style.

Modern Marathi literature was different from the old body of literature in diverse respects. Its content was different. It embraced secular

subjects breaking away from the narrow confines of religious content. Scientific subjects, humour, depictions of human life and emotions, history, descriptions of nature and a host of other topics increasingly found a place in the literature.

The forms of Marathi literature also underwent major transformations. The essay form the personal essay, the short story, the novel, drama forms, different poetry forms, criticism and even structural changes in sentence formation and punctuation became part of the new literature.

It was in Bengal that the first impetus was given to the creation of Modern Marathi. William Carey's Grammar of the Mahratta Language was the first printing in Marathi, and was printed at the Serampore Baptist Mission Press in 1805. By 1818 he had published ten books in Marathi which included a Marathi-English Dictionary (1810) and translations of portions of the Bible. In fact, translations from the Bible into Marathi by missionaries was one of the factors which stimulated the growth of Marathi prose, because in being moulded to carry a different burden, a new language form had to evolve. If the translations themselves seemed

to contain inaccuracies or seemed less chaste, these deficiencies were to be accounted for as much by the strangeness of the new tongue to the translator as the need to find a new idiom to convey connotations that were also different.

In Bombay a whole series of Marathi grammars and dictionaries appeared, among which the most notable were Dadoba Pandurang Tarkhadkar's Marathi Bhasheche Vyakarana and Molesworth's Dictionary, (1831). The period from 1800 onwards was also characterized by translations from English and Sanskrit works. Sadashiv Kashinath Chhatre, Jambhekar, Hari Keshavji Pathare and Krishna Shastri Chiplunkar are names that stand out in this period for bringing English works like Pilgrim's Progress, Aesop's Fables and Arabian Nights to a Marathi reading audience. Shakespeare's Othello was translated by Kolhatkar.

Translations and adaptations gave a glimpse of a different world than known hitherto, of different people and different ideas but the genius of Marathi writers extended beyond this form, to that of creative writing. Gopal Hari Deshmukh (1823-1892) writing under the pseudonym

of Lokahitawadi in the Prabhakar is a good example of early writing of this type. The Shatapatre brought a maturity to Marathi prose and were an onslaught on evils existing in the society. He is among the earliest writers to use the written word to spread his gospel of social change. Jotirao Phule (1828-1890) also had a message of social change, but directed to the masses and written in a style suited to that purpose. Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar's Nibhandmala, not only ushered in the essay form of writing but set the trend of writing that whips up a sense of political consciousness, a style used later by Tilak with tremendous success.

The avant-grade role filled by many litterateurs in the latter half of the nineteenth century indicates their preoccupation with social reform themes and remoulding of people's ideas and mores, in keeping with their humanistic philosophy. Their writings ushered in a quiet social revolution.

Baba Padmanji's Yamuna Paryatan (1857) was the first novel in Marathi inspired by the controversy on widow remarriage. Hari Narayan Apte (1864-1919) under the influence of Ranade's progressive ideas, turned his genius to protesting against

social injustices, on humanitarian grounds. Pan Lakshyat Kon Ghetto? was the most famous of his many novels on the disabilities of women. His Aaj Kalchya Goshti proclaimed a message of social idealism and the urgency of social reform. Apte's eminence in Maharashtra equals that of Tagore's in Bengal and is deserving of a wider recognition. Though Apte set a trend in writing, it was Vaman Malhar Joshi who alone came upto the same standard. His Raginee, Sushilecha Dev and Indu Kale va Sarala Bhole, written in the first quarter of the twentieth century, portray changing social patterns and ideas.

Sangit Natak reached new heights with the staging of Kirloskar's Shakuntala in 1880 and his Soubhadra in 1882. G.B.Deval exploited to the fullest the power of the stage to highlight social evils and to influence public opinion and thus to be "a means of progress and enlightenment." His Sharada (1899), popular to this day, depicts the evils of ill-assorted marriages. S.K.Kolhatkar, influenced by Shakespeare and Moliere, wrote on social themes but did not quite bring them off. His Mukanayak (1897) was on the evils of drink and his Mativikar (1906) was intended to support the cause

of widow remarriage. His Sudamyache Pohe was a "skilful synthesis of rollicking humour and keen social satire" and set a new trend in Marathi writing. Ram Ganesh Gadkari (1885-1919) his chief disciple, surpassed him in the quality of humour as also illustrated the use of humour as a double-edged weapon. His Premasannyas centres around the theme of marriages, widow and ill-assorted, and was daring in that it suggested divorce as a solution to marital problems years before society was ready for legislation in this matters.

Keshavsut (1866-1905) who is regarded as one of the greatest names in Modern Marathi poetry broke away from traditionalism, and brought into his poetry a strong social and political content, thus using his poetry as an instrument of awakening.

The establishment of the Bombay University and the instituting of formal curricula with required reading lists brought the whole wealth of English literature within the realm of those influences that really leave a mark. Mill, Bentham and Spencer, the English poets such as Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Tennyson and Browning, Humourists such as Sterne, Fielding, Cervantes and Mark Twain and

writers of Criticism, such as Dryden, Johnson, Hazlitt, Coleridge, Ruskin, Arnold, Pater, Moulton, Bradley, Brander Matthews and Shaw have over a whole century had an influence, sometimes gross and easy to pinpoint, at other times subtle and gossamer-like on their readers and on Marathi litterateurs. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the influence of the thought and style of English literature came into Marathi from the graduates of the University.

The greater proportion of writers in Marathi came from what were termed pre-university or non-university graduates. By 1865, a preference for English seems to have been evident among university graduates, as seen from figures supplied by Ranade's A Note on the Growth of Marathi Literature¹. For instance, of biographers, 7 were university graduates as compared with 63 who were not. In making on Translations from English and Sanskrit, university graduates were only 25 compared to 51 of the others. Among writers of history the proportion was 5 to 20,

1. M.G.Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings (Bombay), pp. 12-56. The period under review is 1866-1898.

among authors of medical works it was 20 to 50. Eleven Dramatists were university graduates as compared with 139 non-university graduates and there were 113 non-university fiction writers compared to 7 university graduates.

The Bombay Government after 1825 made an attempt to standardize Marathi and give it an impetus through providing model writings by organizing a Translator's Office in 1827. As Oriental Translator to the Government in 1867, Ranade had prepared an assessment of the 661 Marathi books in existence at the time. 431 were prose books consisting of school books, popular literature, scientific works and law books. 230 were books of verse. The document was entitled "Remarks on the Marathi portion of the Catalogue,"² and Ranade felt that the total number of books was to be "hailed for the promise it holds out for the future than for any accomplished success of the past."

2. Ibid., pp. 1-11.

Periodicals.

Periodicals and newspapers in the nineteenth century in Maharashtra also played a part in the moulding of public opinion, in addition to being sources of information of current events. Jambhekar's Pombay Durpun was the first of a whole set of weeklies and fortnightlies of lesser or greater repute, that appeared in this period. The Durpun was established in 1832 as a bilingual periodical with the specific aim of the spread of scientific knowledge and the debate of social issues. The Digdarshan made its appearance in 1840 with almost the same aims as the Durpun. In 1842 the Dnyanodaya was established, the first bilingual Christian weekly. Its avowed religious stand prompted the starting of Upadesh Chandrika in 1844. The most notable

of the periodicals of liberal standpoint were the Induprakash (Bombay, 1862), Prabhakar, the Sudharak and the Dnyanprakash (Poona, 1849).³

⁴McDonald has worked out the Gross circulation of Marathi periodicals in five districts of Maharashtra, 1878-97 period. The figures for Bombay and Poona quoted below are not only indicative of their rapid growth but of the proportion of population, reached by them which presumably was larger than figures quoted since a single copy of a periodical circulated among more than one reader.

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3. Except for the Dnyanodaya, Kesari, Mahratta and Dnyanprakash, files of the other periodicals of this era are in a state of complete disarray. In most cases, only stray copies now exist, though there are compilations of selected articles from some of the highly reputed periodicals.
 4. Ellen E. McDonald, Vernacular Publishing and "Mobilization" in Nineteenth Century Maharashtra, Unpublished paper, University of California and Columbia University, n.d.

TABLE I : GROSS CIRCULATION OF MARATHI PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

1878 - 1897

5

Table I	1878			1882			1887			1892			1897		
District	D	W	F	D	W	F	D	W	F	D	W	F	D	W	F
Bombay	1057	2725	1500	350	3547	1643	350	7651	1200	950	6215	2300	6650	20000	6250
Poona	700	1825	—	484	3150	900	500	8142	1065	500	16900	—	450	17930	300

TABLE II : NUMBER OF MARATHI PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS 1877-1897

6

District	1877	1882	1887	1892	1897
Bombay	7	11	16	11	23
Poona	4	8	13	10	15

5. Compiled from Bombay Native Newspaper Reports for years cited by McDonald, Ibid., p.42

6. Ibid., p.45.

Conclusion.

The foregoing sections have touched briefly on some aspects of the growth of modern Marathi literature and of periodicals in Marathi.

The role of both in setting the current of thought of the age is plain. The latter half of the nineteenth century was preoccupied with questions of social change and social reform, in that, two clearly opposite standpoints were discernible. There were those who were concerned about the need to make changes in society and there was an equally powerful group opposed to change, wanting to maintain a status quo or even advocating a return to tradition and the ways of the ancient past. The literature and periodicals played their part in creating new casts of mind or reinforcing old ones.

From the point of view of giving a society new perspectives and ways of seeing itself, there is a feature of literature that is significant. Literature communicates through its various forms and through its popular writers certain ideas and certain modes of thought to vast multitudes of people who are unacquainted with the rationale and

the basis of these ideas. It creates changes in society and a receptivity to change. But the very power and potential of literature to do so, puts upon it a tremendous responsibility to discharge this function with wisdom, foresight and a clear conception of goals.

Chapter V : Christian Missions And Social
Change.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

It has been conceded by some scholars¹ that missionary activity in India, by forcing a mood of introspection and a questioning of accepted values and social customs upon its thinking people, played a part in creating the intellectual ferment that was characteristic of the nineteenth century, particularly in Bengal and Maharashtra. That such doubts and questioning are the first step in bringing about social change needs no elaboration and from this point of view, missionary activity can be seen as providing a stimulus to social change.

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1. Some assessments of the missionary movement have been ambiguous. In a contemporary assessment, for instance, Sibnarayan Ray claims that no impact was made on the majority of the people, except their success "in converting a section of the untouchables and the very primitive tribes in the forest." He blames missionaries for the terribly bad influence they had in introducing a puritannical spirit which prevented the growth of the humanistic spirit and thinks that the former resulted in the disappearance of the Indian school of painting for a whole century. Sibnarayan Ray, Korea Report, op.cit., pp.218-224; on the other hand, Gopal Krishna Devadhar is more objective in his assessment of the impact of Christian Missions. see his speech "Call to young India for Sacrifice" made on the occasion of Commemoration of the Centenary of the American Marathi Mission on 7th November, 1913 at Town Hall, Bombay.

As an external force, contributing to social progress, Christian missions present two significant features. Firstly they were older than many indigenous movements promoting social change. Also, in contrast to the cautious approach of the Government that was willing to legalize change, as in the case of sati and infant marriages, but not force it, missionaries were inclined to be unhesitant and outspoken in their public denunciations of what they saw to be the evils of society.

The missionary movement has been studied from the point of its history and its achievements conceived in concrete terms. Its influence, direct and indirect, on the thinking of the people is more difficult to assess and still awaits systematic treatment.

That the main object of the mission movement was evangelization² was never in doubt. The first and

2. The term "evangelization" connotes the concern for the spiritual welfare and happiness of the person towards whom the evangelical efforts are directed. It is used in preference to the word "proselytization" which has acquired a derogatory sense.

inspiring purpose, the leitmotif of missions, came from obedience to the command to "go... teach all the nations", and "go... preach the gospel to every creature." The missionaries made no attempt to conceal or camouflage this purpose. Periodical literature and public debates of the time show that the most general response evoked by the movement was one of suspicion and even hostility. However, despite this strong anti-missionary reaction, it must also be said that there was also a semblance of a dialogue carried on between the two groups professing different faiths and an attempt to understand each other's faiths. Ram Mohun Roy's A Guide to the Precepts of Jesus and the writings of John Wilson and William Carey are examples of this attempt.

Missionary activity, however, must be viewed in a different perspective to find the dimension along which its impact was made, and one whose degree was far greater than might be suggested by the size of the community it created.

That a social ministry³ and a humanizing ministry emanated from the religious convictions of the Christian missionaries is evident. A sociological role was almost forced upon them, in which the ethical and humane aspects of society merited attention. New social ideals for the elevation of society were preached, which also inevitably implied a criticism of the existing pattern of society and a disturbing of its structural elements.

Among the many beliefs and convictions that were a source of inspiration to the social ministry of the missionaries, were those that concerned the inherent dignity and worth of the human person, and the universal brotherhood of man, with its binding factor found in mutual love and respect. A sense of compassion towards all those who suffered deprivation and rejection and a sense of social responsibility and personal duty to work for the betterment of society were

3. The derivation of the term "ministry" is from the verb "to minister" understood in the sense of "to give service, care or aid; to attend to necessities or wants." It has acquired a special connotation from Christ's words, "... not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

generated by these convictions.

Commandments and Injunctions laying down the dimensions of social responsibility and the duty of men towards their fellow-men abound in the New Testament and were basis of the social ministry of the missionaries. Consider this passage from St. Matthew's Gospel as one such measure of a person's social duty:

"...For I was hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison and ye visited me not... Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

The basis of the actual works of the missionaries- their medical mission, their pioneering in education in its different aspects such as women's education and vernacular education, and the manifold and diverse types of other work, can be seen as an expression of their social concern and social responsibility. The works were in the nature of both setting things aright as well as setting an example for others to emulate.

That the caste system, as the very foundation of the social order, would come in for attention was to be expected. Its many evils and

anomalies were highlighted, among them its inhumane regulations, its basis of inequality of man and rejection of large bodies of human beings from being accepted in a society, the general apathetic indifference to the needs of others that it generated and the stifling of individual freedom and initiative that it created. The missionaries proved that caste was not unassailable, in itself a step in the direction of social change.

Thus the works and the criticism made by the missionaries became a stimulus to social change and to the creation of social awareness and a social conscience. Many leaders in the last hundred years did not spare words in their condemnation of social evils. Tagore's words are instructive both as a condemnation of the caste system and as a perspective on social change. He said:

This immutable and all-pervading system of caste has no doubt imposed a mechanical uniformity upon the people, but it has, at the same time, kept different sections inflexibly and unalterably separate, with the consequent loss of all power of adaptation and readjustment to new conditions and forces. The regeneration of the Indian people to my mind directly and perhaps solely depends upon the removal of this condition of caste. When I realise the hypnotic hold which this gigantic system of cold-blooded repression has taken on

the minds of our people, whose social body it has so completely entwined in its endless coils that the free expression of manhood, even under direct necessity, has become almost an impossibility, the only remedy that suggests itself to me is to educate them out of their trance...⁴

When a culture becomes self-critical and systematically reflective, it has reached a level of intellectual maturation. Through the development of an intellectual conscience it has developed the ability to distinguish the rational from the irrational, and the just from the unjust.

That the missionary movement contributed in no small measure, in the nineteenth century to the development of the intellectual conscience of its leaders cannot be gainsaid. It had the effect of turning thoughtful Indians into taking a different look at social and cultural practices and beliefs. It was the kind of impetus needed to induce the Indian Reformation.

4. Rabindra Nath Tagore, quoted in C.F. Andrews, The Renaissance in India, (London, n.d.), pp. 184-5.

Part III : ORGANIZATIONS PROMOTING IDEAS OF
SOCIAL CHANGE

Chapter VI: The National Social Conference

In the history of political change in India and that of the freedom movement per se the part played by the Indian National Congress has commanded much attention and inspired many political studies. The role of the Congress in the creation of nationalism and the political reforms the Congress advocated vis à vis British policies in India are just two aspects of the many topics studied. Anil Seal's The Emergence of Nationalism (1968) is a study of Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century and provides an example of one such work. Sankar Ghose investigates a more specific influence in the political scene in his The Western Impact on Indian Politics 1885-1919 (1967). Individual leaders involved in the Congress such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta and Surendranath Banerjea as well as local organizations providing political leadership have also come in for consideration. The latest in a series of the latter type is Dobbin's Urban Leadership in Western India (1972) which studies Politics and Communities in Bombay City 1840-1885.

But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century though political problems were at the forefront, they were not the only ones that occupied the minds of the

leaders of the times. An awareness of the need for social change was also becoming manifest then and this awareness was nowhere more apparent than in the meetings of the National Social Conference. The Conference provided an arena, at a national level, where the more progressive-minded men of the educated elite could make known their thinking on issues of social change, and where because of the public expression given to such thinking, social change issues became open to public debate.

The Social Conference is recognized mainly for the fact that it was the platform from which Ranade made his major social reform addresses. A wider context in which it can be viewed has generally been neglected. This context concerns the part it played in creating a climate for social change, for stimulating a public awareness of problems other than the political. In this respect the role of the Conference in bringing public attention to bear on social issues as a focal point is comparable to that played by the Congress in political matters.

The leaders of the Social Conference were a core-group showing concern about the state of society. By associating with the Conference and by being vocal

about their concerns, they showed for the most part that they had no hesitation in being identified with a certain way of thinking or a certain ideology. Their deliberations take on significance because they yield data on many pertinent questions, and it is possible in retrospect today to make an assessment of the modes of their thinking, culled from these deliberations.

In order to make such an assessment two matters must first be discussed. Firstly, what were the actual, concrete social change issues discussed in these meetings? Secondly, what were the ideas and motivations that prompted these leaders to seek changes in society? After these related matters are discussed, it will be possible to see how far these ideas give evidence of being a self-sustaining philosophy for social change and to what extent their motivations still provide an adequate stimulus for the purposes of modernization.

Status of Social Reform vis à vis Political Reform.

The Social Conference was a single body men and a very few women, who were drawn together on a voluntary basis, year after year, by the concerns they shared on social issues. That the venue of the

Social Conference was the pandal of the Indian National Congress meetings and generally following those meetings was significant for more reasons than one. Firstly it was within the larger group gathered together to transact business of a political nature, that a smaller group evolved, finding its agitation over the state of Indian society reason enough to want to seek together, ways and means of facing up to their concerns. But secondly, the separate meeting of the two groups also signified the emphatic conviction of most, that the nature of the business of each group was different and that there would be no mixing of political and social issues.

The first Indian National Congress was held at Bombay on 28, 29 and 30 December, 1885. Commenting on this historic occasion the Times Weekly Edition said:

For the first time, perhaps since the world began India as a nation met together. Its congeries of races, its diversity of castes; all seem to find common ground in their political aspirations..... the delegates were mostly lawyers, schoolmasters and newspaper editors..... fairly representing the educational and intellectual power

of India. And now let us see what they (did) ... they discussed politics alone; not a word was said about social reform".

1

The criticism pointed to a certain ambivalence that existed in those times towards social reform matters and evoked sentiments that showed up a defensive attitude on the part of the leaders. For instance, Kashinath Trimbak Telang felt the need to explain the omission of social reform matters from the Congress deliberations, in a letter to the Times, dated March 9, 1886.

Both Ranade and Bhandarkar attended the first session as amici curiae. Ranade was then a Member of the Legislative Council and a Small Cause Court Judge, Poona. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Pandita Ramabai, Rao Bahadur K.L.Nulkar, Chairman of the Poona Sarva-janik Sabha and Ramchandra Moreshwar Sane, Marathi editor of the Dnyanprakash and Vaman Abhaji Modak were also present. Ranade felt differently about the

1. "Political Progress in India", Times Weekly Edition, February 5, 1886, reprinted in Proceedings of the First National Congress, Appendix B, p.78; Also, "The Indian Congress", a Times editorial, Appendix C, *ibid*.

separation of the two kinds of issues. He thought that, "the importance of social reform is even more powerfully recognized when it is eagerly discussed by persons avowedly assembled for another purpose than when it is taken up in ordinary course as part of a formal programme²". The Induprakash echoed similar sentiments.

The matter was by no means settled that first year. Both Dadabhai Naoroji, President of the Indian National Congress, at Calcutta, 1886 and Budrudin Tayabji, President at Madras, 1887, somewhat on the defensive, felt the need in the face of adverse criticism to explain the reason why social reforms could not be discussed at Congress meetings. Naoroji impatiently declared:

....if you blame us for ignoring these...
you should equally blame the House of
Commons for not discussing the abstruser
problems of mathematics or metaphysics...³

2. Proceedings of the First Indian National Congress, Bombay, 1885, Appendix B.

3. Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, Calcutta, 1886, p.54.

After these brief citations, Congress Reports largely ignored the meetings of its sister body and only cursory references were made to it in subsequent years.

By all the indications available, it seems reasonable to infer that the beginning of the Social Conference can be traced back to the "discourse by one or two friends" at Bombay in 1885, these being Ranade and Raghunath Rao⁴ and that it was they who first conceived of a separate, independent body to debate social issues. At Calcutta 1886, as Ranade said, "we absolutely did nothing", but at Madras, 1887 he continued, "we were able to put up the scaffolding." This was the first session of the Conference held at Congress Hall, Mackay's Garden, Madras on the 30th and 31st of December, 1887.⁵

A convention was established early to have a man of repute from the host town serve as Conference President. Thus the first president was Sir T. Madhav Rao, K.C.S.I. Ranade became Vice-President of the Conference and Raghunath Rao was named General Secretary.

4. A biographical sketch of Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao C.S.I. appears in Indian Statesmen Dewans and Prime Ministers, 1st edition. Madras: Natesan and Co., n.d.

5. A Brief Report of the First National Social Conference appears in the Report of the Third National Social Conference, Poona, 1890, pp. 1-30.

In 1888 at the Second Social Conference at Allahabad⁶ the bothersome issue of social versus political reform was still not resolved and Ranade felt constrained to point out in what way a "common" platform was possible in the Congress deliberations.

He said:

In the Congress, we meet as citizens of one empire, subjects of one sovereign-obeying the same laws, liable to pay the same taxes, claiming the same privileges, and complaining of the same grievances. This common character makes the deliberations of the Congress a matter of common anxiety to all, Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis, Christians, Europeans, without distinction of colour or creed.

7

It is clear from Ranade's words that the new spirit of nationalism that was emerging was political in nature and that a singleness of purpose could characterize such issues. However, that in the nature of the case, a consideration of social issues would not generate a process that unified. The divisions among the populace that existed by virtue of the differences that were found from province to province and from group to group as regards caste structure and

6. A Report of the Second National Social Conference held at Allahabad, 30th December, 1888, appears in Report of the Third National Social Conference, Bombay, 1889, Appendix A., pp. 49-62.

7. Ibid., p.50.

customs and mores precluded a single-minded forging ahead on the social front. Ranade was focussing attention on these differences when he used the following description of the state of society. He said:

... The conditions of Hindu society and of the various castes and divisions of which it is composed preclude the idea of our meeting together in a common association, in the same way as we meet together in the political Congress... apart from the distinctions of creed and race, among the Hindu community itself, the customs of one province do not obtain in another, and the caste organization is based on different principles in different provinces. Polygamy prevails in one province, while it is almost unknown in another. The widow's unhappy disabilities affect different castes in different ways. In fact marriages are unknown in many castes and communities, while they represent a great evil in other classes. The prohibition against foreign travel are operative in one place, while they are practically not of much moment elsewhere...

8

Ranade's observations show, firstly, that even at this very early stage of the development of national consciousness, there was an awareness of the tremendous differences in the country that divide man from man, when it came to social and cultural matters. This may have well been one of the reasons

for the reluctance on the part of Congress leaders to mix issues, in case the cause of political reform suffered from the divisiveness that would characterize social reform debates. Seen in this context, the dissociation of social matters from Congress agendas is understandable. However, in so relegating matters of social change to limits outside their purview, there were leaders who were indicating that social change issues were not of sufficient import to be treated on a par with political matters.

That such a sentiment was not shared by all the leaders is obvious, because it was precisely the desire to do something about social change that led to the formation of the Social Conference. And the success of the deliberations of the Conference itself depended upon finding a common substratum beyond the differences, that would enable a common exchange of views and a fruitful debate on the subject. Ranade's words tell of his anxiety to find such a common ground for debate as also to dispel any feeling of pessimism that may result from a dismal picture of diversities. "We are" he said "in a sense as strictly national socially as we are politically". The differences should not be allowed to impede common deliberations, because

differences not withstanding, there is a background of 'common traditions, common religion, common laws and institutions and customs and perversions of such customs, which makes it possible for us to deliberate together inspite of our differences..... We have to eliminate the differences, and correct the perversions".⁹

Two members from Bengal echoed the convictions expressed by Ranade and others in the Conference, that social reform could not lag behind political reform, because they were closely allied. Babu Norendranath Sen, Editor of the Indian Mirror and later president of the Tenth Social Conference in Calcutta, 1896,¹⁰ was of the opinion that progress was at once a march ahead on many fronts and that "no progress was possible unless they had become great socially, morally and religiously."¹¹ Surendranath Bannerjea shared the view of Sen and further pointed out that the Social Conference not only performed the function of "offer-
ing the completest contradiction to the charge that

9. Appendix A., op.cit., p.30

10. Babu Norendranath Sen, Presidential Address at the Tenth Social Conference in C.Y.Chintamani, Indian Social Reform, Madras, 1901, Part III, pp.190-94.

11. Report, Second Social Conference, p.54.

this large meeting did not attend to social questions" but also had another implication. He declared that their meetings showed that they were appealing to themselves, not to the Government and that they were convinced that "reform must come from within".

Sen and Bannerjea and the whole group of reformers implicitly and explicitly equated social reform with 'female enfranchisement'. Sen had said that "till their women help them no progress was possible". Bannerjea said:

If they wished for political enfranchisement, they must educate their females and abolish child marriages.... a nation that was politically great could not be socially inferior.

12

Not to be out done by their Bengali compatriots, the Bombay delegates were equally positive and outspoken. For instance Kashinath Trimbak Telang supported these reforms proposed by Bannerjea and went on to chide anti-reformers, especially in his own province. He said:

At present I am at a loss to appreciate the views of those who would consider that there is nothing wrong in the prevailing customs

requiring improvement. I am very much afraid that in this matter, more perhaps than in any others, we are getting into the disastrous habit of shutting our eyes to our own shortcomings.... in our parts I have noticed with much concern that in many quarters, it appears to be thought that true patriotism consists in ignoring or denying our real defects, and in standing up for our customs, right or wrong. I can only say, that if this way of thinking is largely resorted to we shall have to bid adieu for ever to all improvement, for obviously the first end (?) of all improvement is the recognition of an existing defect, or an existing evil and if patriotism consists in refusing to recognise it, patriotism becomes the enemy of all progress, and an engine of mischief.

13

Local Reform Organizations Encouraged.

From the beginning it was the avowed intention of the Conference to encourage "Sabhas, Social Reform Associations and Caste Unions" in the various states and to affiliate them to the Conference. It was hoped that through a common, shared platform there would be achieved a sense of solidarity. The reports of these different associations were generally read and approved at the Preliminary meeting of the Conference where also would be worked out those resolutions on various reform items that were to be presented to the General Public

Meeting. Generally Ranade was the moving spirit behind these preparations for the Public Meeting and had among other responsibilities, one that was quite suited to his temperament. It was left to him to prepare drafts of resolutions in a manner that would be likely to cause the least friction possible when they came up for discussion.

By the end of 1889 there were 15 branches of the Social Conference at Bombay, Madras, Bengal, Poona, Sind, Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Benares, Lahore, Lucknow, Ajmere, Berars and the C.P.. The Bombay and Poona areas sent in names of associations promoting social reform in their areas, with twenty-five names of groups that kept recurring year after year.¹⁴

14. Among the names reported from Bombay were: The Widow Remarriage Association, which now revived under the name of the Vidhavavivaha Association under the presidentship of K.T.Telang, was the old Punarvivah Ottejak Association, the Hindu Union with R.G.Talvalkar as secretary, the Pathare Prabhu Association, the Jain Association and the Brahman Sabha. From Poona the names listed included the Arya Dharma Prakashika Sabha whose president was the Shrimat Jagatguru Shankaracharya and the Social Reform Association, whose president was the Raja of Sangli and secretary was M.G.Ranade. Report of the Third National Social Conference, 1889, Appendix S.pp. 138-39.

It was to be expected that the formation of local social reform associations would be looked upon with suspicion. Rao Bahadur Chintaman N. Bhat, delegate from Bombay, felt the need to allay certain fears. "Whenever an association for promoting social reforms is started", he said, "some people are afraid that the members thereof aim at subverting the existing order of things. Nothing is further from our minds than to do so. In political as well as social matters as the circumstances of any society change, new wants and aspirations arise and new remedies are necessary to meet them". Those in charge of the various provinces and committees, he was sure "will be the last persons to advocate any reform for which the society is not prepared".

Nature of Social Reforms Discussed by the Social Conference.

The First Conference really set the mood and plan of action for the next fourteen years and drew up a memorandum of subjects that the Conference should discuss. It recognised the necessity for adopting measures necessary for the "improvement of the status of our society, and of our social usages". Among the social subjects to be discussed, it

suggested that the Conference might take up those relating to the disabilities attendant on sea-voyages, the ruinous expenses of marriages, the limitation of age below which marriage should not take place, the remarriages of youthful widows, the evils of the remarriage of old men with young girls, the forms and evidences of marriages and intermarriages between subdivisions of the same caste.¹⁵

In subsequent years other social subjects were introduced. These covered such matters as the Widow Remarriage Act, the disfigurement of Child Widows, the Age of Consent, Restitution of Conjugal Rights, Anti-Nautch and Temperance Movement, Religious and Moral Education, Elevation of Low Castes, Amendment of certain Acts and recommendation of some new legislation.¹⁶

These were the dimensions along which the Conference leaders sought to achieve social change. While the specific reforms that took precedence at

15. Brief Report of the First Social Conference, op. cit., p.1.

16. Chintamani, Appendix, pp.367-76, gives a comprehensive list of subjects discussed at the Conference from the beginning to 1899 and quotes a single Conference resolution for each of these subjects as adopted at one or other of the Conference sessions.

any given session varied, and Natarajan is of the view that the Conference tended to be influenced more by the region in which the session was being held,¹⁷ the sum-total of impression gained is that the subjects remained substantially unchanged over the years. The tone of the wordings of resolutions passed at Conference sessions also varied from those were vigorous, forceful, concrete and specific to those that were vague or tame and couched in generalities. Progress in achieving reforms was slow, if recurring references to same issues are adjudged, and most reformers seem unhurried and dwelt repetitiously on the same themes year after year. In any case most reformers of the time, would not have advised haste. Patience was the keyword whether the advice came from Wedderburn, as claimed by Vishnu Narayan Apte or from Ramchander Bose, delegate from the North West Province Congress.

Methods of Social Change.

In the second year of the Conference, the question of what 'methods of operation' should be advocated by the Conference was under consideration.

17. Natarajan, A Century of Social Reform, (Bombay), p. 94.

It was Ranade who gave form to the earliest statement on methods, and in a resolution before the Conference, seconded by Dayaram Gidumal, the statement was given unanimous support. The methods to be used were as follows:

- a) Formation of a social reform fund.
- b) Employment of preachers.
- c) Periodical lectures on social reform.
- d) Formation of local or caste associations.
- e) Publication and distribution of Social reform literature both in English and the Vernacular.
- f) Registration of associations under section 26 of the Companies' Act-VI of 1882.
- g) Pledges by members against marrying their male or female relations below a certain age, as well as for education all their female relations to the best of their ability.

18

Ranade spelled out at somewhat greater length the four methods that can be used in "making a conscious effort to reform". The occasion was his address at Hislop College, Nagpur in 1891.¹⁹ The

18. Report of the Second Social Conference, op.cit., Resolution IV, p. 57.

19. Chintamani, Part II, pp. 23-26.

methods are: I. The Method of Tradition, of basing reform on the old texts. The method has been used in the widow remarriage campaign. It made "all feel that there was an effort to preserve the old continuity, and that there was no attempt at innovation". II. The Method of appealing directly to the conscience of the people, to their sense of right and wrong, good and bad, sinful and virtuous. The use of this method would involve the binding of men to their pledges and promises and this is a subject that came up for discussion at Conference

20. Ranade himself had used the method of tradition in promoting social reform. For the Gidumal book he had specially prepared two such documents. See Dayaram Gidumal, The Status of Woman in India or A Hand Book for Hindu Social reformer, Bombay, 1889, Appendix VI; Shastric Texts on the subject of Infant Marriage, pp. 299-314 and Appendix VII; Vedic Authorities for Widow Marriage, pp. 315-337. Both were written by M.G. Ranade.

In Conference Reports, too, support of such authority for social reforms was sought. For instance, see Some Passages from the Hindu Shastras and medical works recommending marriage of girls at somewhat advanced age, Appendix O, Report of the Third Social Conference;

Texts of Hindu Law prohibiting the taking of money for the gift of girls in marriage, Appendix D, Report of the Fifth Social Conference, pp. 22-23; Shastric Texts in support of the Age of the Bride, Appendix E., Ibid., pp. 24-26; Shastric Texts on sea voyage question, Ibid., pp. 39-53.

sessions. III. The Method of enforcing reform by means of penalties imposed by the State or the caste. IV. The Method of breaking away from the main stream of life to pursue in isolation, in independent surroundings a chosen way of life. Only the first three methods had found favour with the Conference. G.S.Khaparde, in his presidential address at the Social Conference, Nagpur, 1891, pointed out a variation of the 'method of tradition'. He said:

We try to find out what the beliefs and sentiments of the people are, what they would accept or do actually accept, whom they revere as authoritative writers on Dharma Shastra, and then after finding that out, we try to meet them on their own ground. If they accept the Shastras, we accept them too, but interpret them in the light of the knowledge we have acquired....We accept the premises supplied by the old text writers, and then we stop there and resort to logic and reason. This is the method of what is called Yuktiwad.

21

The Bombay branch of Social Reform Association summed up the dilemma faced everywhere by the reformer group. While conceding that the 'stage

21. Report of the Fifth National Social Conference, pp. 6-7; Chintamani, Part III, p.144.

for intellectual and academic discussion had passed away and that the time has arrived to translate the result of each discussion into movement for practical guidance', they found the task of implementation to be by no means an easy one. Their Report said:

Friends of Social Reform have been exercising their minds about a modus operandi, which while practically advancing the cause of social reform, and removing some of the most crying grievances will at the same time secure if possible, the tolerance if not the active sympathy of the conservative classes of community.

22

Events in Bombay in the 1880's :I. Reactions to Malabari's Notes.

The Third Social Conference held in Bombay, 1889, stands out for some clear and unequivocal thinking on the place of social legislation and the nature of sanctions that should obtain in the enforcement of reform. It is as if the Conference had come to grips with specificities and actualities and the number of resolutions it actually got through is outweighed by quality of the resolutions themselves. Moreover, here is also provided an opportunity to

22. Report of the Third National Social Conference, App.D., pp.73-74.

hear from the lesser luminaries in Maharashtra. In the 1880's there had been so many different social reforms issues debated in Bombay and Poona through the press and public platform that one could almost say that the locus of social reform activities and antagonistic reactions to these activities, had, after Bengal, now shifted to Maharashtra, though not without soundings from all over the country. The main issues for discussion were the Age of Marriage, the Age of Consent and the Remarriage of Widows but ^{the} whole matter of social justice for women was under review. During this decade the grounds on which both reformers and anti-reformers based their arguments were well-established and individuals too by this time were identifiable as belonging to one or other camp.

23

Malabari's Notes on the subjects of Infant Marriage in India and Enforced Widowhood had appeared

23. Malabari's Notes are contained in Dayaram Gidumal, The Life and Life-Work of Behramji M. Malabari, (Bombay, 1888). Note I. Infant Marriage in India, pp. 1-5; Note II. Enforced Widowhood, pp. 6-13; Both were submitted for consideration on 15 August, 1884. Malabari also prepared a Revised Note on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood, pp. 38-45, which was dated 23 October, 1884.

in 1884. Malabari's enumeration of the evils of Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood were the usual ones seen by most reformers. It was however the response that the Notes elicited from every conceivable section of the population that may be said to have launched a certain onslaught on these social evils. Opinions came from Madras, Bengal and Bombay presidencies and N.W.Provinces, Oudh, the Punjab, Central Provinces, Burma, Assam, Coorg and Hyderabad (Deccan) as well as from reformers and from supporters of the orthodox viewpoint, also from officials and professional men.²⁴ These men cited not only facts and laws about Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood in the three presidencies but speculated about their causes, and expressed views on possible remedies. Some cited reasons for non-

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24. Among the evils cited by Malabari consequent upon Infant Marriages were a host of physical ones. He also mentioned "Absence of free Will" and "Social Alienation" as two others. More than twenty evils were listed.
25. Dayaram Gidumal, The Status of Women in India or A Handbook for Hindu Social Woman Reformers, Bombay, 1889, contain the replies sent to Malabari. Gidumal's fictionalized account of a symposium between Hindu domestic reformers and Anti-reformers is enlightening. Ibid., pp. I-CII.

interference in such matters. From Bombay presidency opinions came from Bhandarkar, Atmaram Pandurang, Phule, M.M.Kunte, V. N. Mandlik, K.T.Telang, Ranade, Tilak and S.H. Chiplunkar. A restless soul where reform was concerned, Malabari travelled extensively in 1885-86 in the pre-National Social Conference years and spoke to groups sympathetic to social reform at Lahore, Agra, Aligarh, Lucknow, Allahabad and Mathura.

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26. Telang's Reply to Malabari's Notes were conveyed to him in a letter dated 16 September, 1884. Selected Speeches and Writings of K.T.Telang, Vol.I, (Bombay, 1916), pp. 239-58; Ranade felt that Malabari's statistical argument had perhaps been pushed too far, but the situation appeared to him to be grave one, needing immediate reform. Gidumal, Status, pp. 13-14; Even the Government of India took cognizance of the issues raised by the Notes. Gidumal, ibid., p. 230.
27. Malabari's speeches, Gidumal, Ibid., pp. 249-277.

II- The Rakhmabai Case.

28

The Rakhmabai Dadaji case during the year 1886-87 had received wide publicity because of the debate in the Anglo-vernacular press of Bombay. Reformers rallied around Rakhmabai. Telang and

28. Rakhmabai was the daughter of Janardhan Pandurang who died in 1867. Thereafter her widowed mother married Dr. Sakharam Arjun in 1871. The matter of the inheritance of Pandurang's property brought to the forefront the question of whether widows could inherit the property of their husbands if they were remarried, a matter on which the orthodox and the reformer points of view differed. To complicate matters further Rakhmabai who was married to Dadajee refused to live with him on the grounds that the marriage had been contracted without her consent. Dadajee sought court action for the restitution of his rights, but a lower court ruled in favour of Rakhmabai. When backed by his conservative friends, Dadajee took the matter to the High Court. He was able to obtain a ruling reversing the first verdict and one more in keeping with Hindu Law. Rakhmabai's case had evoked the sympathy of reformers and the wrath of the orthodox for obvious reasons. The former could see how a wife, herself educated, could not be forced to live with a husband who was supposed to be both illiterate and consumptive against her own wishes. The later construed her actions as calculated to spread discontent in Hindu families. Rakhmabai later qualified as a doctor and practised in India. She died in 1955 at the age of 91.

An article, 'On Purdah' written by Dr. Rukhmabai, M.D. appears in E.C. Gedge and Mithan Choksi, Women in Modern India, (Bombay, 1929).

Ranade were members of the Rakhmabai Defence Committee formed in 1887 of which Professor W. Wordsworth of Elphinstone College was Chairman.

The attack from the anti-reformer group must have been of a particularly vituperative character because Wordsworth felt compelled to take notice of it in his Minute recorded as Chairman. He said:

...I find some of them employing all the resources of theological sophistry and cant, not simply to palliate but to vindicate what is plainly the most cruel, blighting and selfish forms of human superstition and tyranny. I find others manoeuvring to arrest every sincere effort at reform, sophisticating between right and wrong, defaming the character and motives of reformers.....

29

V.A.Modak was taken to task by the Kesari for his public utterances against those who would encourage 'evil customs in Hindu Society'.³⁰The
³¹May 1887 Poona Spring Lecture Series evoked a

29. William Wordsworth, Minute recorded as Chairman of the Rakhmabai Defence Committee, Indian Spectator, June 5, 1887, reprinted in Gidumal, Status, pp. 177-8 n.

30. Kesari, 31st May, 1887, in Pradhan and Bhagwat, Lokmanya Tilak, (Bombay, 1958), pp. 50-51.

31. Ibid., p. 51.

a controversy as to which position the Shastras really supported. In a lecture on "Marriage Law and Its Enforcement" Ranade sought to show that the Shastric position did not prescribe any punishment to ensure the enforcement of cohabitation. Tilak chided Ranade for such a misinterpretations of the Dharma-shastras. A similar stand was taken by Vaman Shivram Apte in his June 1887 lecture in the Spring lecture series.

Rakhamabai, herself, on being convicted despaired about the position of women in India and the possibility of their ever getting a fair deal. In a letter to Pandita Ramabai she said:

The learned and civilized judges of the full bench are determined to enforce, in this enlightened age, the inhuman laws enacted in barbaric times, 4000 years ago. They have not only commanded me to go to live with the man, but have also obliged me to pay the costs of the dispute. Just think of this extraordinary decision! Are we not living under the imperial British Government, which boasts of giving equal justice to all ..., there is no hope for women in India, whether they be under Hindu Rule or British Rule.

33

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32. N.R.Phathak, Nyayamurti Mahadev Govind Ranade Yance Charitra, 2nd edition, (Poona)1966, p.266.
33. Letter to Pandita Ramabai, dated 18 March, 1887, quoted in Padmini Sen Gupta, Pandita Ramabai Saraswati Her Life and Work (Bombay, 1970), p.169.

III- The Age of Consent Bill.

It can be seen that when the National Social Conference met in Bombay in 1889, the stage was set for making some concrete recommendations to bring about Social reform. The discussion got off to a start on the question of an amendment to the Age of Consent Act in the Indian Penal Code to correct the anomalies of sections 90 and 175. The Age of Consent Act of 1860 set the age of consent at 10. The resolution to amend the act came out of a brief pamphlet published earlier by Gidumal proposing such an amendment. The pamphlet had provoked Tilak into writing a brochure opposing Gidumal's stand. Since Gidumal himself could not be present at the Conference, it was Ranade who moved the resolution. He proposed:

.....that with a view to prevent early completion of marriages, which leads to the impairment of physical health of both husband and wife, and to the growth of a weakly progeny, cohabitation before the wife is twelve years old should be punishable as a criminal offence, and that every effort should be made by awakening public conscience to the grave dangers incurred to postpone the completion of marriage till the age of 14 at least, as being in

accordance with the dictates of our ancient medical works and modern science, and countenanced by the approved sentiment and practice of the country.

34

Rao Bahadur C.N.Bhat seconded the Resolution and his comments were in reply to an argument used by B.G.Tilak:

Many ignorant people, who have not considered the subject well, argue that as our enlightened rulers, who are not likely to pass over the question of physical fitness, have sanctioned 10 as a permissible age for sexual intercourse with a woman, the age of 10 is unobjectionable even on grounds of health. But it was more influenced by a desire to respect the feelings of the ignorant masses than by any consideration of health.

35

N.G.Chandavarkar, already exhibiting the impatience at the slow pace of reform, an impatience that would be noticeable in Conference deliberations

34. Chintamani, op.cit., Part II, p.6; also *ibid*, p.368 for full resolution; A.O.Hume, general Secretary of the Indian National Congress in a letter dated 25 January, 1891 explained some of the objections to legislation about the Age of Consent Bill had encountered, and Lord Lansdowne also tried to answer objections similarly raised against the Bill. He commended the support given by Bhandarkar, Nulkar and Telang to the legislation. C.H.Philips, The Evolution of India and Pakistan 1858 to 1947, (London, 1962), pp. 735-740.

35. Report of the Third Conference, pp. 13-14.

after 1900, expressed dissatisfaction with the vagueness of Ranade's resolution. He deplored the words, "the awakening of public conscience" and wanted something more positive. He was of the view that it should be made mandatory on each member of any Social Reform Sabha Association connected with the Conference to "pledge not to complete in his own case or his children who are minors any marriage before the bride completed 14 years"³⁶. Chandavarkar felt that there would be a great deal of merit in such action, because the twin purpose of 'assisting themselves' as well as that of inducing the Government to accept it, would be served.

Gangaram Bhau Mhaske was among the staunch supporters of those wanting to enlist government help in social reform matters but he was sceptical about the value of pledges. He thought that "early marriages and early completions of marriages had been the ruin of India" and wondered if when social influence had not been able to check evils up to this time, would it ^{be} possible for a handful

36. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

of people taking a pledge that they would postpone the marriage till 14 be able to check it? Would 200 odd million people profit by it? Mhaske urged, 'that Government must be moved to act if permanent improvement was desired³⁷'.

N.S.Kale in no uncertain terms, supported 'legislation against great social evils'. Citing the cases of sati and compulsory vaccination, he said:

great social reforms which were introduced and brought about in the Hindu community...and the great social evils which were checked and extirpated from said community... were not checked and extirpated without Government direct or indirect aid or interference'.

38

Kale's indictment against his own people gave him further support for legislation:

Our people as a body, I am sorry to confess, are an inert mass, which require some external force or agency to stir them up and set them a-going.

39

The Question of Pledges- How binding are they?

The question of pledges and their place in

37. Report of the Third Conference, p.16.

38. Report of the Third Conference, pp. 23-24.

39. Report of the Third Conference, p.24.

the practical promotion of social reform was one that came up for discussion at Bombay. Just what are the implications of taking a pledge? Does it bind a person to carrying out in practice that which he had taken a pledge to do so? What are the moral responsibilities of pledge-taking? It was not a question in which men saw their way clearly to a theoretical answer or practical action.

The thought that loomed large in many a speech related to the cases, in the words of N.S.Kale again who "are found to be sadly wanting in moral courage ⁴⁰ to act up to their word". Ranade was seen to be

40. Report, Third Conference, p.24. The Report of the Poona Branch of the Social Reform Association cited a peculiarity of the Scheme of Pledges as followed by them. While members were to agree to pledge themselves to accept the responsibility of practical reform, a member is "not compelled to bind himself to carry out reform under all heads specified, but is left free to pledge himself to effect any of them". Among reforms were listed, marrying a second wife in the lifetime of the first, discouraging marriage after 50 years of age, abstinence from the use of intoxicating liquors and promotion of female education. Patrons of the Association were the Maharajas Gaikwar and Holkar. His Highness Bala Saheb Patwardhan, Chief of Miraj was President. Among the 549 who took pledges, 438 were Brahmins, 33 Prabhus and Kayastas 6, Kshatriyas, 7 Vaishyas, 6 Marathas, 5 Brahmans and 2 Jains. The highest number 180 were government servants, 112 were scholars and fellows, 56 were pleaders and barristers, 9 doctors, 8 professors, 6 landholders in addition to others belonging to other professions in smaller numbers. See Report of the Third Conference, App.D., pp.74-78.

seeking a way "to enforce without difficulty and expensive litigation" certain penalties on those who would violate certain pledges taken by them when they voluntarily associated with groups promoting social reform.⁴¹ Ranade felt that the proposition was intimately connected with the future of all organised attempts at social reform, and to meet this end moved a resolution to the effect that certain provisions of both the Companies Act of VI of 1882 and the Act XXI of 1860 (Literary and Charitable Societies Act) be incorporated in a special Act, a draft of which prepared by Dayaram Gidumal. The draft was to be submitted to a committee consisting of Ranade, Telang, Chandavarkar and Gidumal himself, before its submission to Government for an early consideration.

Shamrao R. Rele supported the move for binding people to their pledges for another reason. He welcomed the move so that:

We shall have the safeguard of knowing
that we are not joined by those mushroom

41. Ranade's speech on "Legal Enforcement of Voluntary Pledges in matters of Social Reform" Chintamani, Part II, pp.9-14.

reformers, who in the heat of the discussion and the momentary enthusiasm for a cause, pledge themselves to a certain line of conduct, but according to which they are incapable of acting at the time of trial.

42

There were doubts expressed to whether such legislation for enforcement of pledges did not constitute an infringement of one's freedom of action. Telang saw the matter differently. He argued that if the resolutions were to be taken as binding on only those who had voluntarily agreed to bind themselves to accept punishment for violation of such pledges, then the question of restricting of liberty or even the general question of state interference in social matters did not arise.

Tilak took the usual stand that he considered legislative interference in social matters very undesirable, a position in which he was supported by Rao Saheb G.V.Kanitkar. Tilak also drew attention to the circular issued by the Poona Social Reform Association dated November 1, 1889 stating that it had abandoned promotion of legislation in

42. Report of the Third National Social Conference, p.26.

social matters as 'impractical'.⁴³

IV- Problems Related to Young Widows.

The lone voice of a woman, that of Pandita Ramabai, was heard when the discussion centred on the 'matter of fixing the age below which disfigurement of widows should be prohibited'. A stir was created by the publication which dwelt on the non-shastrical character of the disfigurement of widows by Vyankat Rango Katti, Principal of Dharwar's Training College. This had led the Conference to consider the issues involved. Pandita Ramabai's arguments were based on the most fundamental rights that are given to human beings. A widow, she said, when of age, must be left free to choose for herself how she will live and, whether or not, she would submit to disfigurement. It was her 'privilege' to decide these matters. When the Pandita declared that she had seen a great number of widows in her time, but had never yet met one who was willing to have her head shaved, her statement was greeted with cheers.⁴⁴ The same concern for double-talk that

43. Ibid., p.29

44. Report of the Third Social Conference, pp.44-45.

other speakers had shown in the issue of pledge-taking is echoed by Pandita Ramabai when she said that while "she would not quarrel with anyone who did not think that this reproach to the community should be removed", she wanted to impress on them that "once they came to a resolution, they should keep to it."⁴⁵

The Conference resolution read, "that disfigurement of child widows before they attain the age of 18, and even after that date without her consent in writing be prohibited". Repercussions of this decision were felt in the city.⁴⁶

45. Ibid., p.47.

46. Early in 1890 a great stir took place among the barbers of Bombay, led by Meghaji Lokhande and G.R.Mogre against the shaving of heads of young Brahmin widows. It had the support of the English and Vernacular Press, the Din Bandhu, in particular. The agitation culminated in a public meeting of 800 barbers on 14th May, 1890 who resolved unanimously to give up the practice. Echoes of the decision reached London and a letter from a group of ladies there commending the action, was acknowledged by the barbers in Bombay Gazette. Report of the Fourth Social Conference, App. C., p. 20.

The Ninth Social Conference, in Poona in 1895 was still discussing disfigurement of child widows and by 1898 the Sudharak evinced impatience when it advised the Conference to arrive at some concrete action in the matter at the Madras session that year. It said:

"Let the Hindu Community take warning... that the question of reform in the condition of the child widow never be pressed upon their attention with more fatal vividness... we are not sanguine as to forget that things would mend in a single year, if the whole intellectual class resolved to do so, because the abuse has encrusted and formed a part of our idea of religion but we can surely take a step in the direction of reform....

47

Bombay's first confrontation with the issues
48
connected the remarriage of widows seems to date back to the publication of a pamphlet in 1837. The weekly Mumbai Darpan carried favourable and unfavourable reactions to it. The Pathare Prabhu Reform Association of Bombay had advocated widow remarriage in 1863. But it was with Vishnu Shastri Pandit (1827-1876) that promotion of widow remarriage became a cause celebre in Bombay. As

47. The Sudharak, 5 December, 1898.

48. Waman Madhav Kolhatkar, "Widow Remarriage", Chintamani, Part I, p. 293 f.

editor of the Induprakash and a man of eloquence, he was much in demand as a speaker all over Maharashtra. He was already known for his reformist reviews and had prepared a Marathi translation of Vidyasagar's Marriage of Hindu Widows. The Widow Remarriage Association⁴⁹ started at Bombay in 1866 was a fruit of his labour with many young reformers rallying around him. Thus Ranade, Telang, and Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh, N.M.Parmanand, Bal Mangesh Wagle, Bhaskar Hari Bhagvat, Vishnu Moreshwar Bhide, Janardhan Sakharam Gadgil, Vishnu Parsharam Ranade and Krishna Shastri Talekar were active members, seven of them becoming signatories to the wedding invitations sent out for the first public celebration of a widow remarriage on 15th June, 1869. Vyankat Shastri who deserted the reformers at the last moment had given them a sound argument in favour of remarriage, namely that "the central period of the Kali age which is the Yuga proper and to which alone the prohibitions against remarriage and other institutions can apply, has not yet commenced and in fact will commence only after some 31,000 years from this date"⁴⁹.

49. Ibid, p.303

With this background it was to be expected that the Bombay Conference would express a concern for the remarriage of widows and it took up for discussion the working of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act XV of 1856. While Pandita Ramabai was able to support Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao who pointed out six ways in which the Act had failed to secure to a widow full enjoyment of her personal and civil rights, and many others raised genuine difficulties, the wording of the Conference resolution itself was tame. It was proposed by N.G. Chandavarkar and merely called for an inquiry into the working of the Act, so as to remedy its defects. There seems to have been a genuine concern that any resolution asking for a Government enquiry into the working of the Act with a view to suggesting improvements may lead to a storm of protest and cause an alienation of the cause of widow remarriage. Tilak had reiterated his stand on social legislation during the discussion, and this doubtless is what caused the cautious approach to be adopted. Tilak's stand was that:

Many of the customs required reform but there were serious difficulties in the way of legislation..... there must be

no legislative interference in any
of their social customs.

50

The Ninth Social Conference, Poona, 1895.

By 1895 the relatively irreconcilable positions on which the Ranade group and the Tilak group took their stand were well-established. The split between the Moderates and the Extremists⁵¹ in the Sarvajanic Sabha had taken place on the 14th of July of the same year. Preceding events had included Agarkar's resignation from the Mahratta and Kesari in 1887, the starting of the Sudharak in 1888 and the bitterness surrounding Tilak's resignation from the Deccan Education Society in 1890.

In 1892 the Indian Social Reformer had remarked that, "if it is still insisted to hold the Conference with the Congress, then the future of the Conference is not hopeful. It is only another way of proclaiming to the world that the Conference cannot stand on its own legs".⁵²

50. Report of the Third Conference, p.60.

51. The identification of the Moderates with the Liberals was first made by Ranade in his Deccan Sabha Manifesto.

52. Natarajan, op. cit., p.88.

But when the controversy arose over the holding of the Conference sessions in the Congress pendal it was really evidence of a disagreement over fundamentals, as to whether or not national issues and social reform issues were compatible. That the Conference recognised it as such is clear from these words that appeared in the Report, summing up the achievements of the previous eight years. The Report said:

The controversy is in outward appearance a mere trifle but those who have raised the cry of religion in danger here or elsewhere, have done so by way of a test which separates the old order from the new, and it is this circumstance which gives importance to it. The point for you to consider is whether the influence of new ideas should be confined to our relation with the Government or should be equally concerned with all agencies which make for righteousness and elevate the whole man.

54

Ranade as secretary of the Conference had addressed a letter to the Congress on 7 November, 1895, on the issue of the use of the Congress pendal

53. The immediate events surrounding the controversy are well-known. See Pradhan and Bhagwat, Lokmanya Tilak, p.93; Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962), pp.71-76; Ranade, "The Cause of the Excitement in Poona", Chintamani, Part II, pp.53-62.
54. Report of the Ninth National Social Conference, Poona, 1895.

by the Conference. Of the replies received from local Congress Committees, thirty-two were favourable, seventeen were unfavourable though ^{they} state that they were sympathetic to the cause of the Conference, and seven were opposed. In Bombay province itself, nine were favourable, 2 merely sympathetic and 2 opposed.⁵⁵

Eventhough it was ultimately ruled that the Social Conference could use the facilities of the Congress pandal, Ranade thought it best not to comply, in order to avoid a showdown, though the old practice was resumed at Calcutta the very next year.

Ranade felt that it was the use of all the methods of reform in the Bombay Presidency, not just any single one, as in most provinces, that had led to cross purposes, and the unhappy state of affairs, in which excitement had been generated not only in Poona but all over the state. 'The method of revolt and schism' was not compatible with the traditional method, the pledge method or the legislative one advocated by the Conference and 'because we try to utilise all these ways... this, of course, brings us into conflict with our orthodox and reactionary friends'.

55. Ibid., App. C., pp.24-25.

When the Conference finally settled down to transact business in December, 1895 it had more than ten specific reforms⁵⁶ to discuss and formulate into resolutions. But the spirit, at least among the delegates from the host province seemed to have been affected by the prior happenings and was rather subdued. The kind of firm and definite convictions expressed by them at Bombay in 1889, were absent at Poona.

The Poona Session however, was distinguished for the fact that it was for the first time that the Conference was seized by any concern for the plight of the untouchables. Earlier presidential addresses had touched upon 'female disabilities', the role of the Social Conference, the present the general degraded state of society and the need for reform. But none had the considered the treatment given to the untouchable per se or even the evils of the rigidity of the caste system. It was R.G. Bhandarkar, the Poona Conference President who first made specific reference to these issues.

56. Report of the Ninth Social Conference, Poona, 1895, App. E., pp.60-64.

He pointed out that the Santas of olden days "with their hearts elevated by faith and devotion" had admitted the lowest Shudra to religious communion and instruction and he asked:

shall we upon whom a greater variety of influences have been operating, refuse to exert ourselves for bringing enlightenment in the dense darkness in which his mind is shrouded?

57

He spoke of the colossal national waste that is involved in keeping the lowest classes in ignorance and how it deprived the country "of an appreciable amount of intellectual resources." He dwelt on the rigidity of the caste system. He said:

.....and generally allow me to observe that the rigid system of castes, which prevails among us, will ever act as a heavy drag on our race towards a brighter future. To tie men down to occupations, even when they have no aptitude for them, renders those men less useful to the country... unless perfect freedom is allowed to men...and each allowed to make best use of his own powers, the country cannot economically advance. Special privileges enjoyed by certain castes must keep the members of others in a disadvantageous position in the rivalry and competition of life. In order that a nation as a whole may put forth all its power, it is necessary that there should be no special privileges and special restrictions.

58

57. Chintamani, Part III., pp. 181.

58. Ibid., pp. 181-82.

Bhandarkar did not stop there but went on to point out the divisive nature of the caste system. He said:

.... again the principle of caste has throughout our history operated in such a way that each caste has now come to form a separate community with distinct usages, even as to the kind of food that is eaten and the manner in which it is cooked. And there is not social inter-communication between them.... instead of a feeling of sympathy between the different castes, there is instead a feeling of antipathy... as long as this state of things lasts, I shall feel greatly obliged to any one who will explain to me how it is possible to form a united Hindu nation.

59

The Poona Conference in recommending 'the education of pariahs and other castes' went on record as saying:

....The education and social amelioration of these outcastes in all parts of India is a duty which devolves upon all those who have the permanent good of the country at heart and every effort should be made to raise these classes to a position where by education and industry they may rise above the disadvantages of their condition.

60

59. Ibid., p. 182

60. Report, Ninth Conference, App. E., p.63.

Conference Achievements.

The Fourteenth Conference, Lahore, 1900 in a sense marks the end of the Ranade era. Because of ill-health, he was unable to travel to Lahore and it fell to G.K.Gokhale to read his Inaugural address, Vashista and Viswa-mitra.⁶¹ Ram in his presidential address summed up the achievements of the Conference of the past fourteen years. He said:

The question is often asked what has the Conference done during the past fourteen years of its existence. Year after year, it has assembled in some centre of education and enlightenment, has passed resolutions and dispersed. It is said that the resolutions are not binding upon anybody, not even upon those who support them... it is true that there has been wanting that living connection between the central organization and the various Reform Associations in the country... yet, this is but a partial view of the question. The work of the Conference lies in other directions.. The Social Conference is the only institution in India which brings to a focus the enlightened opinion and the aspirations of our educated countrymen on social matters. It is difficult to overestimate the silent influence that it exerts in educating public opinion. Every year... (it) distributes...a large mass of literature on social reform questions.

61. Chintamani, Addenda, pp. 377-383.

The reports of the Conference are received by the Press....both English and Vernacular, and the resolutions adopted at these annual gatherings are read by thousands and ten thousands of intelligent people, over the length and breadth of India... yet it is a small beginning of a movement which is destined to exert a mighty influence upon the future social structure of this country which is slowly evolving itself in this ancient land.

62

The First Fourteen Years- A Search for First Principles.

The torch passed on Ranade's death in 1901 the general secretaryship of the Social Conference passed to Chandavarkar. Henceforth the accent would be on action and actual work to be done. The younger members of the Conference were already restive, showing signs of being irked by resolutions passed repetitiously over the years, resolutions that seemed to them to have lost their elan. The transfer of the Indian Social Reformer to Bombay in September, 1901, gave these young men a formidable weapon with which to continue the onslaught on traditional ways.

The new leaders wanted action, not "first

principles stated in halting language". But actions do not spring out of a void. Impetus to action comes from convictions and first principles. They are the very raison d'être of actions.

Perhaps the first fourteen years of the Social Conference should be characterised as being the years when a search for first principles was being made by the liberal-minded elite. Articulation of ideas and motivations that spurred them to associate with the cause of social change and social reform and to do something about the state of society was not easy. Their thinking was wound up with the cause of specific reforms, so that practical issues tended to obscure the fundamental principles on which the very advocacy of these reforms depended. It would require an act of abstraction to get to these principles. Secondly, the Conference provided the very first organization of its kind in the history of the country where men sat down to debate social change issues. It was a unique democratic venture and it was a new type of venture. And as with any infant, the ability to articulate words and ideas

comes gradually. Moreover individuals differ in their ability to state their thinking in abstract terms, and in this context only a few speeches were characterised by statements of first principles and how social reforms were derivable from them.

Social Change- Ideas and Motivations Emanating from the Social Conference.

The very first organised effort in India at bringing about social change, as is witnessed by the functioning of the Social Conference, is of historic significance because the thinking of its leaders represented the thinking of the liberals, as that group came to be formed in the nineteenth century. The new philosophy that was being developed through coming to grips with urgent social reform problems must be considered as being in the vanguard of a whole new way of thinking needed to make modernization possible. These leaders were setting into motion certain vital processes and creating certain attitudes that form the very core of a philosophy of social change, and general observations on these processes and attitudes can be made.

1. It is evident that the realization that the progress of a nation lies in many directions at once, and not only in a single one, came early. Such a notion was involved in the whole debate over the place of social reform vis à vis political reform. Babu Norendranath Sen and Ranade had made the point most eloquently. Political enfranchisement would be one dimension along which change must be sought. But the pursuit of changes "socially, morally and religiously" was as imperative as the former and it was a matter that had to be faced up to.

That these other changes, were in the nineteenth century, equated with specific reforms pertaining to female disabilities as the most glaring of the evils existing in society, has given rise to the criticism that these leaders were preoccupied with matters that affected only a small percentage of the population since the evils agitated against were not universal practices. The criticism has only limited validity, if it is thought that the Social Conference had the more important function of creating a climate for social change. If the creating in a society of a

certain frame of mind for self-criticism and an awareness of the need for change is the goal, then to this end, even a discussion of limited evils serve a purpose. And this must be considered to be the larger function the Social Conference did serve.

2. It is also evident from these deliberations that there was a recognition of the facile way in which a spurious notion of patriotism can creep in. It was Telang who pointed out that there was a tendency to turn a blind eye to shortcomings and to defend a whole range of modes of behaviour because they derived their sanction from being part of a long established tradition. The first step in seeking progress or a change in a desired direction is the awareness of the need for such a change. For those who recognize no such need, there can be no felt-need for improvement either.

3. The question of pledges so vigorously debated by the Conference raised important ethical considerations. The notion of pledges and the taking of pledges carries with it the implication that firstly, the pledge states something which is in

accordance with one's convictions and beliefs. The pledge itself may have a positive content, in which case one promises to do that thing which the pledge states. It may have a negative content, in which there is an implication of promising to abstain from some particular kind of action. A pledge is a solemn promise or vow and again ideally considered, is something that is not taken in a light-hearted manner or even in the flush of momentary enthusiasm. It is a promise voluntarily given in which there is consciousness of the nature of the promise given and the expectations or implications that the promise entails. Does not then such a promise carry with it a moral and intellectual commitment to abide by its tenets? Does it become an imperative, the nature of which is categorical? Or does it admit of extenuating circumstances, so that its nature takes on a hypothetical or conditional character? Does a distinction have to be made between pledges taken that concern some form of action which has to do with the individual himself, something that he promises to do or not to do and so concerns his personal

life as such and those pledges that have to do with a control of the behaviour of others? From all that is known of the difficulties that faced reformers in their own family life, and Telang is a good case in point, it seems that this very fine distinction has some relevance in deciding the issue of pledges and the commitments resulting from them.

It seems quite evident that such questions were in the background of the entire discussion of pledges in the Conference and there was a great concern about the fact that the actions of individuals fell short of the pledges taken by them. There was also concern about what effects such broken promises have on a whole movement of social reform. One cannot escape the feeling that broken pledges cast an aura of insincerity and lack of seriousness of purpose on such a forward-looking movement.

4. Methods of social change as advocated in the Conference are not on a par with each other when considered individually and from the point of view of their effectiveness to make for change.

The method that evoked the greatest controversy was that of social legislation. Clearly even in the Conference itself, there were two distinct groups, one in favour of the method and the other opposed to it. Within the former group there was a realization of the limited role and scope of legislation in bringing about social change, and many leaders emphasized the importance of 'reforms from within' and the place of self-help in bringing about that "metamorphosis which takes place when one kind of organism changes into another kind of organism—when one ^{is} accustomed to living under a certain habitat into another living under different habitat", to use the description given at Lahore 1893. In the same context, a question was raised as to the relative merits of "exhortation and advise" to create public opinion in favour of reform as opposed to that of the more stringent method of legislation.

It has been seen how the method described by Ranade as that which sought to base change on the old texts, what he called the method of tradition, was used with relevance in the nineteenth

century when there was a need to allay fears and preserve the notion of a continuity with the cultural heritage. But even in those times, it was recognized that "too much adherence" to textual support and subjection to authority had the effect of creating a blind reliance on authority, which may work in a way that was detrimental to the cultivation of a perspective which decided issues on their own merit and judges the rightness and goodness of acts or institutions as opposed to their wrongness or badness on independent, rational grounds.

When it came to the method of forging an independent way of action, isolated from social considerations and for that reason, opting out of the main stream of life, Ranade had pointed out that it was a method of which the Conference was in not favour. In the era in which these early debates were taking place, this rejection may have been the result of some realistic thinking, though at the same time it was also perhaps a concession to traditionalism. The person who accepted isolation because of his independent actions or connections accepted at the same time

"social death" or "martyrdom"- both expressions were used in 1893- and while it exhibited rare courage, it also rendered him ineffective as far as society was concerned, as an instrument of social change.

We do not find in these early Conference debates explicit consideration of the place of the educative process and the method of critical inquiry and method of reason, all of which had a major place in the thinking of Bhandarkar, Agarkar and Gokhale, in the same era. There is also a hesitancy to advocate innovation and change per se, and see its place in experimentation, when theoretical goals are sought to be actualized. An approach to social change problems, conceived in these dimensions, take the problems out of the normative realm. But these were perspectives that came with the twentieth century, an advance stage from perspectives discernible in the nineteenth and more characteristic of the scientific way of thinking.

5. What priorities were accorded actual social reforms sought? Altogether considered, the greatest preoccupation was with those reforms that

had to do with the removal of certain "female disabilities" and within this group the evils of child marriages and the plight of widows as well as their right to remarry were singled out for discussion.

The question of the evils of the caste system were beginning to be recognized and it was Bhandarkar who gave the matter more than the cursory mention it got from the others. Bhandarkar cited the national waste that results when a large section of the population is kept in a state of disablement and thus rendered useless for nation building. He pointed to the divisiveness and parochialism that results when group is separated from group by rigid lines. He saw the economic implications of forcing people to follow professions not of their choice or suited to their aptitude or interests. He deplored the hierarchical nature of the system which bases privileges on the factor of birth, thereby accorded to some and denied to others.

6. How much of a general goal-setting process is discernible in Conference deliberations? The expressions "you must know what you are"

and "you must improve the fountain of life" and the like, are indicative of an awareness that for social change of any magnitude, there is a need to get down to basic principles and goals. But their discussions centred around particularized reforms, and a total goal-setting process, in which an image is projected of what one wants to achieve, appraised in the light of the needs of a given society, could not be expected in these early times. Such concerns have become the concerns of the twentieth century, at least as far as some aspects of deliberate planning for social change are concerned.

Conclusions.

What were the fundamental principles of man's relation to man that were assumed to be true and to serve as guiding light for any reforms?

Dewan Narendranath in his presidential address at Lahore⁶³ in 1893 referred to the principle that "all human beings as such have

63. Dewan Narendra Nath, Presidential Address, Seventh Social Conference, Lahore, 1893, Chintamani, Part III, pp. 150-167.

equal rights and privileges" as being the one gradually being asserted" in the history of human progress. He characterised it as slowly making a triumph over the opposite one of "might is right". The two principles of which formed the very foundation of morality, "Love thy neighbour as thou lovest thyself" and "Do unto others as thou wouldst be done by" emanated from this fundamental principle of the equality of men. Dewan Narendranath went on draw out another principle implicit "as the very foundation of Political and Moral Philosophy viz. that every human being should be allowed the free exercise of his power, with the usual proviso that the exercise should be consistent with the harmonious development of all other powers and with a similar exercise of those powers on the part of others".

It is self-evident that some of the fundamental tenets of liberalism are at the foundation of the reforms and social changes sought by the Conference. There was a line of development that lay ahead. It concerned a refocussing of sights and perspectives on the larger magnitudes of social change. The

The concern for a better deal for the weaker sex was the beginning of a movement in which changes, more fundamental, and more encompassing, would have to be sought, as the process of modernization was undertaken with greater vigour and greater insights of its implications.

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Chapter VII : The Poona SarvaJanik Sabha 1870-1896

The Deccan Sabha

The Servants of India Society

I - The Poona Sarvajanic Sabha 1870-1896.Early History - Objectives.

Organized bodies have a tremendous potential to make themselves heard. The unanimity and solidarity behind the opinions expressed or representations made, give them an effectiveness that a lone voice does not have. The intellectuals in Poona in the early 1850's were quick to utilize the opportunity to organize themselves into formal bodies, following a revision in the Company's Charter. Calcutta's British Indian Association (1851) was the inspiration for a short-lived venture called the Deccan Association which was organized in Poona in 1852 under the leadership of Gopal Hari Deshmukh and Yeshwantrao Madhav Rastia. It was in the same year that the Bombay Association was launched, which later became the model for the Poona Association organized in 1867. Here again the name of Gopal Hari Deshmukh figures prominently in the membership. The objectives of these bodies were of a political nature.

1. Proceedings of Public Meeting, 26 August, 1882, to inaugurate the Bombay Association, M.R.Palande, Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol.I. 1818-1885, (Bombay, 1957), pp.133-149.

The Poona Sarvajanic Sabha came to be formed out of the Poona Association on April 2, 1870. Its stated objective was to serve as a

mediating body (between the government and the people) which may afford to the latter facilities for knowing the real intentions and objects of Government as well as adequate means for securing their rights, by making a true representation of the real circumstances in which they are placed.

2

In this task of providing a liaison between the Government and the people, the men associated with the Sabha took upon themselves the responsibility of being the spokesmen for the people. They represented the educated elite and the various arguments used by them in their many representations and essays provide an invaluable guide to their thinking, that concerned not only the immediate reforms under discussion, but the more long-term

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2. The Constitution of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and its Rules (1870), p.5; The Government, for the greater part, was favourably disposed towards the Sabha during the 1871-1896 period. In 1873 the Indian Statesman of Bombay called it the "leading Association of the progressive party in Western India". Sir Richard Temple in his India in 1880 had described it "as a native association which can make their voice heard, not only in India, but even as far as England". But in 1897, following the split in the Sabha, the Government declared that the Sabha had ceased to be recognized "as a body which has any claim to address Government on questions of public policy". Palande, Ibid., p. 152.

concerns such as their vision for the future of the country, and the lines along which progress should take place.

Sabha Speeches and Writings Reflect Nineteenth Century Liberal Thinking.

The Sabha's membership represented the intelligentsia of the times. It included businessmen, lawyers, teachers, sardars and landlords and retired government servants. That this group was considered to represent the liberal-minded elite is seen from Ranade's observation about them. He said:

The educated minority of the native population, with their Free Press and their Associations, unconsciously sympathized with by the mass of their countrymen, represent the soul of Indian liberalism.

3

The views expressed by the men associated with the Sabha covered a wide range of subjects. The Sabha's greatest preoccupation was with political, economic and legal matters and views expressed were realistic and moderate. They were quick to see the many forms of injustices that existed and to demand

3. The Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, (Hereafter cited as QJPSS). Vol.VII No.1, July, 1884, p. 25.

redress of these injustices. But they also saw that the Rule had a limited function to perform.

The Sabha's own purpose lay in providing a platform for the consideration of the larger issues of social change, which extended beyond the economic and political and legal fields. Writings in the Sabha's Journal extended from these subjects to those also that had to do with history, education and social matters. Running through all these writings, it is possible to discern a thread of liberal thinking, which shows a concern for the well-being of human beings per se and for the creating of those conditions which make it possible for them to lead a fuller and richer life.

Thus, ^{an} analysis of the thought in these writings becomes imperative in a study of nineteenth century ideas of social change. Firstly, the analysis will provide a comprehensive view of the dimensions of liberal thinking of these times. A large range of topics were reviewed by Sabha men in the various fields but just what topics did they pick out as worthy of bringing to the attention of the public? Then again, when they took a stand on a given issue, just what liberal grounds they did take their stand

on? When they made criticisms of prevalent practices and customs, were they not making evaluative judgements on beliefs that sanctioned such practices? and in the reforms they supported or actively promoted, were they not guided by the vision of an ideal, a utopian society, which they desired to see realized? That thinking in these directions constitutes thinking about social change in both "small" and "large" letters is self-evident.

Secondly, from the point of view of the twentieth century, liberal thinking as seen in Sabha writings forms part of the legacy on which the present democratic state is built. To understand the present, we must turn back to the past, for a line of development can be traced, which was progressive in nature, because the consequence of the increasing recognition of man's inherent worth and dignity was the growing measure of changes that were advocated. On a comparative basis, when a span of a hundred years is considered we shall also be able to decide whether there were "little" changes or "great" changes taking place, ^{whether changes} of a fundamental kind that prepare the way for modernization or superficial changes.

Thirdly, the analysis will yield data on "motives and feelings and internal facts" as they existed in those times and give insights into understanding of present-day motivation for modernization. What differences exist in the motives that prompt social change then as compared to now? Is there a greater sense of urgency now? For answers to these queries, Sabha proceedings and writings provide important source materials.

A "Public Society".

The Sabha deserved its name of being a "Public Society" because of the manner in which it enrolled members. Each prospective member was required to have the backing of at least fifty adults of his caste, who signed a mukhtianama, authorising him to speak on their behalf. A year after it was formed, the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha could claim a membership of 140 representing about 17,000 people. It was the mismanagement of the annual Government grant of about Rs.20,000 to the Parvati Temple that had led to the formation of the Sabha in the first place, on this interesting and novel basis. From there it was an easy step, in the light of the concerns of earlier Associations, for the Sabha to want to extend its

scope to deal with diverse matters. Thus

all bills of regulations and acts published in the government gazette; all bills of regulations, acts, circulars and rules which were in force or which might come into force; all such regulations, acts, circulars or rules as the passing of which was essential to the welfare of the people; the operations of the municipalities; the management of devasthans (religious endowments); and all matters connected with public weal would all come under its purview in the years to come.

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The founder of the Sabha was Ganesh Vasudev Joshi (1828-1880), affectionately known as "Sarvajanik Kaka". However, the tour de force behind the Sabha was Ranade's and he built it up into one of the foremost bodies of the times. He became associated with the Sabha in 1871 when he came to Poona as a sub-judge and the active association continued until 1893. For Ranade himself the Sabha and later its Quarterly Journal became a platform and a vehicle for the communication of his many thoughts on political, economic and social issues. G.V.Joshi himself, and then by 1878 Shivram Hari Sathé served as Secretaries of the Sabha. Besides

4. S.R.Mehrotra, "The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha: The Early Phase (1870-1880)", "The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol.VI, No.3, September, 1969, p.303.

them the Managing Committee of the Sabha was dominated by such names as those of S.H. Chiplonkar, Gangaram Bhau Mhaske, Madhavrao Yeshwant Raste, Rao Bahadur Krishnajeelaxman Nulkar and Rao Bahadur Sadashiv Ballal Gowande. By 1888-89, Rao Bahadur Vishnu Moreshwar Bhide was Chairman of the Sabha's Managing Committee and Gopal Hari Deshmukh a member. In the 1889-90 Managing Committee the membership included Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Waman S. Apte. Gokhale became an Honorary Secretary of the Sabha in 1891-92. The native princes served as presidents and vice-presidents and the Sabha Rooms in Nagarkar's Wada in Vishrambagh were the centre of much activity.

The Quarterly Journal of the Sarvajanic Sabha.

The launching of the Sabha's Quarterly Journal in July, 1878, was an event of considerable significance. In a Note to Subscribers which appeared in the first number the purpose of the Journal was stated thus:

A desire has been expressed by several European and Native well-wishers of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha that its proceedings should be published regularly in the form of a quarterly publication so as to be easily available for purposes of reference. Besides publishing the proceedings it

is proposed to take advantage of such a publication to insert independent communications, reviewing and discussing the more important political questions of the day. There are many important topics upon which public opinion has to be created and formed before any formal action can be taken in respect of them by the Sabha. Such topics will find a fitting place in the independent section of the proposed quarterly.

The Journal's first editor was Sitaram Hari Chiplunkar. G.K.Gokhale was the editor from 1889-1896. In 1896 after the split, M.R.Bodas, a High Court Vakil, became its editor, but publication⁵ of the Journal after this date was irregular.

What is not generally known is that the Sabha published also the Poona Sarvajanjik Sabheche Masik Pustak for the specific purpose of bringing to its large non-English reading public, information regarding its work and matters debated in its English Journal, as well as Memorials forwarded to the Government. Sitaram Hari Chiplunkar and Krishnarao Bapuji Mande were editors of this Marathi Journal which started publication in 1880.

5. V.M.Potdar, "Sabheche Traimasik", Poona Sarvajanjik Sabhechya Ardhashat Utsavapriyarth Kelela Leksangraha (Poona, 1920), pp. 115-120.

Ranade's Anonymous Authorship of Journal Documents and Articles.

Among the many reasons that give the Journal a significant place in the history of the thought in Maharashtra in the nineteenth century is the fact that it was from Ranade himself that most of the writing in the Journal came. Not only did he draft and supervise the many memorials and representations made by the Sabha to the Government, which found place in the Journal, but he was responsible for the other sections too. The essays that appeared in the Independent section of the Journal, and the book reviews that are found in the Journal's earlier numbers in its Current Literature section, are a testimony to the breadth of Ranade's interest, the perceptiveness of his mind and the ^{ta} ⁶ ~~ta~~ versatility of his pen. Gokhale estimated that two-thirds of the Journal's contents were written by him. Mankar thought "that there is hardly a number of the Journal which does not contain an article from him from the time of its starting (July, 1878)

6. Gokhale Speeches and Writings, Vol.III, p.288.

upto 1893"⁷.

Ranade's writings in the Journal assume even greater significance when it is realised that they form a major source of his original writings reproduced in his published works. Many of the essays in his Essays on Indian Economics⁸ first appeared in print in the Journal. Again R.B.Pandurang's "A Hindu Gentleman's Reflections respecting the works of Swedenborg and the Doctrine of the New Jerusalem Church" is reviewed by Ranade in Dadoba R.B.Pandurang and the Swedenborg School.⁹ F.A.H.Elliot's History of the Gaykawada Family of Baroda and Professor Selby's Notes of lectures on Butler's Analogy and Sermons both get critical appraisal by Ranade in The Rulers of Baroda¹⁰ and Butler's Method of Ethics.¹¹

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7. Mankar, G.A., A Sketch of the Life and Works of the Later Justice Mr. M.G. Ranade. (Bombay, 1902) Vol. I, p. 213. Mankar has also made an incomplete listing of representations that "were drafted under his (Ranade's) advice or composed by him" and Ranade articles in the Journal. Ibid., pp. 211-217. In 1893 Ranade was appointed Judge of the Bombay Court but severance with the Sabha came only after 1896.
 8. Ranade, Essays on Indian Economics, A Collection of Essays and Speeches by Mahadev Govind Ranade, C.I.E. 2nd Ed., Madras, G.A. Natesan and Co., 1906.
 9. QJPSS Vol. I, No. 3, January 1879, pp. 43-46; Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 57-60
 10. QJPSS Vol. III No. 4, April, 1881, pp. 46-52; Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 60-65
 11. QJPSS Vol. IV No. 3, January, 188, pp. 40-45; Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 65-69.

Educational Essays.

The greater part of the legacy of Ranade's thoughts on educational matters has come from his essays on the subject in the Journal. In fact, the selection of the only four educational essays in his published work, The Miscellaneous Writings of the Late Honb'le Mr. Justice M.G. Ranade are from those which first appeared in the Journal in 1882, 1894 and 1895.

On Sept. 8, 1882, Sitaram Hari Chiplunkar, Honorary Secretary of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha had appeared before the Hunter Education Commission to present views of the Sabha on Primary, Secondary and Higher Education in Bombay, in response to the Commission's questionnaire. Ranade's views on these matters had already been discussed by him in the Journal of July, 1882 under the titles of Primary¹²
Education and Indigenous Schools and Higher Educa-¹³
tion- Its Claim on State Support. The views of the Sabha reiterated the stand taken by Ranade.

12. QJPSS Vol.V, No.1 July, 1882, pp.22-50;
Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 248-275.

13. QJPSS Vol.V, No.1 July, 1882, pp. 51-70;
Miscellaneous Writings, pp.275-294.

The vexed question of the Indian examination system did not escape Ranade's attention and suggestions for reform of the system were the subject of two Journal essays in 1895. They had¹⁴ originally appeared in the Times of India (July 7 and 14, 1895) and were a report of the speeches made by Ranade at Bombay University Senate meetings on September 6 and 13, 1895.

The Sabha was concerned about "the entire exclusion of the modern Vernaculars of India from the present programme of higher studies". The Classics had replaced the Vernaculars in 1867. In 1881 G.V.Joshi wrote an essay on Indian Vernaculars¹⁵ and University Reform, in which he refuted the charge of the poverty of Modern literature in the vernaculars and went on to outline in detail a scheme for changes in curricula at various year levels of the Bombay University courses to make a study of the vernaculars possible. Nine years later

14. QJPSS Vol. XVIII, Nos. 1 & 2, July & October, 1895, pp. 1-15; Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 316-329.

15. QJPSS Vol. IV No. 2 October 1881, pp. 1-31.

the Sabha made a Representation to the Senate of the University in regard to the readmission of the Vernaculars into the University Curriculum. ¹⁶ A similar document was addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, the Hon'ble E.T.Candy, Ranade himself, G.K.Gokhale, N.G.Chandavarkar, G.S.Agarkar, V.S. Apte and V.M.Bhide were among the 80 signatories, all Fellows, Graduates or undergraduates of the University.

Difficulties of Anonymous Authorship.

It has been suggested that Ranade wrote anonymously for the Journal for two reasons. These were, firstly the limitations implicit in his official connections and, secondly, and perhaps the stronger of the two, his own personal preference to work behind the scene rather than in the limelight.

From the point of view of posterity and the legacy of his writings left to it, this anonymity has deprived Ranade of recognition for a substantial portion of his writings. To the extent that his published works do not contain a large part of what was written by him for the Journal, they do not reflect the staggering variety of topics and events of his day on which he had an opinion to express.

Moreover, "stylistic grounds" prove insufficient evidence when it comes to crediting him with writings that are not known from independent sources to have come from him. In this pre-1896 period, men associated with the Sabha shared liberal convictions and these convictions were reflected in their writings in the Journal. On stylistic grounds the essay on the Censorship of the Vernacular Press, for instance, seems to belong to Ranade but, in fact, this is known not to have been so.

Some Sabha Documents and Representations.

Perhaps the best known of Sabha documents are
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the Famine Narratives prepared by it. These Narratives were addressed to the Chief Secretary to the

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17. Famine Narrative No. I, dated October 21, 1876 and No. II, dated 23 November, 1876, appear in QJPSS, Vol. I, No. I, July, 1878, pp. 5-22; for Famine Narrative III see QJPSS, Vol. I, No. 2, October, 1878, pp. 29-49; Famine Narrative IV, prepared on 7 February, 1877 appear in QJPSS, Vol. I, No. 4, April, 1879, pp. 52-59; Famine Narrative V, dated 6 March, 1877, Ibid., pp. 67-73. The Sudharak of January 23, 1899 reprinted a letter appearing in the Dnyanprakash in which it was observed that the Sabha's Famine Reports were not as beneficial as they were claimed to be by the Kesari, because they generally evoked a negative reaction from the Government, and the letter recalled the different situation that had existed about Famine Reports in the earlier days of the Sabha, when Ranade was at the helm of its affairs.

Government, Poona and contained 'an abstract of the information obtained by the Sabha by means of its deputed agents and correspondents of the present condition of the Deccan and Southern Mahratta districts of the Presidency', pertaining to the famine of 1876-77, which they estimated to be far worse than ^{of} previous famines/1792, 1803, 1804, 1818, 1824-25, 1830-33, 1845 and 1855.

A draft Memorial was prepared as a result of the Public Meeting held under Sabha auspices on May 2, 1878, to protest against the Vernacular Press Act IX of 1878 and was addressed to "The Honourable The Commons of the United Kingdom in Parliament Assembled". The good offices of Gladstone, Fawcett and O'Donnell were to be solicited to present the ¹⁸ draft to Parliament.

The involvement of the native princes in the Sabha, particularly that of the chiefs of Aundh, Akalkot, Jamkhindi, Jat, Kurundwad and Sangli gave the Journal concern for the affairs of native states. ¹⁹
The Armies of the Native States, A Constitution for
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Native States and The Native States of India and

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18. QJPSS Vol.I, No.2, October, 1878, pp. 14-28.
 19. QJPSS Vol.I, No.4, April, 1879, pp.1-23.
 20. QJPSS Vol.II, No.3, January, 1880, pp.1-17.

21

and their armies are among some of articles that pertained to them.

There were assessments made of the terms of office of governors and viceroys. Thus, for instance, Sir Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay received a welcome address from the Sabha and later there was no hesitation in making a critical assessment of his term of office. ²² A welcome address was presented to the Marquis of Ripon, Viceroy and Governor General. Later the Sabha went to the extent of addressing a Petition to Her Majesty the Queen Empress of India "praying for the extension of the Viceroyalty of the Marquis", after a public meeting at Poona under Sabha auspices on February 25, 1883. On this occasion speeches the speakers were M.M.Kunte, Gangaram Bhau Mhaske and ²³ K.L.Nulkar.

Assessments of the administrations of Lord Lytton in 1880, Sir James Fergusson in 1884, Lord Reay in 1890 and Lord Harris in 1894 were also made by the Sabha.

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21. QJPSS Vol.VII, No.3 January 1885, pp.23-67; Vol.VIII, No.2, October, 1885, pp.31-72.
 22. QJPSS Vol.II, No.4, April, 1880, pp.40-54.
 23. QJPSS Vol.VI, No.1, July 1883, pp. 1-3.

Historical Documents in the Journal.

Significant documents pertaining to the history of Western India, particularly Maratha History, and some of them of known Ranade authorship, first appeared in the Journal. In the essay Maratha Bakhars²⁴ or Chronicles and Grant Duff's History of the Marathas, the author expressed impatience at the fact that the Bakhars had not been used as original source material and chided men from Jambhekar down to Mandlik for being content with producing dry translations from English narratives. Other historical essays are An Unwritten²⁵ Chapter on Maratha History, The Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra²⁶ and The Tree Blossomed-Shivaji as a Civil²⁷ Ruler. K.T. Telang's Gleanings from the Chronicles,²⁸ a paper read at the Deccan College Union also first appeared in print in the Journal.

The review of George Smith's The Life of Dr. John Wilson is interesting for the insight it gives

24. QJPSS Vol. I, No. 2, October, 1878, pp. 13-23

25. QJPSS XVII, No. 3, January, 1895, pp. 1-12.

26. QJPSS XVII, No. 4, April, 1895, pp. 1-19; this essay was written by Ranade and is included in his Rise of Maratha Power and The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, ed. Jagadisan (Madras, 1942).

27. QJPSS Vol. XVIII, Nos. 1 & 2, July and October, 1895, pp. 1-17.

28. QJPSS Vol. XIV, No. 4, April, 1892, pp. 1-50.

into the terms of reference that were in 1880 considered to mark the beginning of "moral and religious progress". Identifying Dr. Wilson as a pioneer of this forward movement, the reviewer cited these events as part of the movement. He said:

The era of reform may well be said to have begun with his arrival in India. Sati was abolished in 1829, the year when Dr. Wilson landed on these shores ... in that same year Capt. Candy and Mr. Molesworth were bringing out first proofs of their great Dictionaries. In 1830 the Bombay Literary Society was made a Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society ... in 1833, came the great Charter of liberty which after a hard fight between the orientalist and Lord Macaulay secured on a firm footing the policy of higher education of the natives in the English language and for the first time recognized the equality of all classes in Her Majesty's subjects ...

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Many important legal enactments were cited as also details of missionary efforts in Western India to establish institution of varied types.

Liberal Principles in Journal Writings:

Freedom of Expression.

The Journal started off, in its very first number with a defence of the freedom of the press, using the support of the principles of Mill's

Areopagitica. The essay Censorship of the Vernacular Press³⁰ was written in an attempt to answer the many arguments that had prompted the passing of the Vernacular Press Act in 1878, reversing the "inestimable privilege of the liberty of expression" enjoyed by newspapers since 1835. Referring to the fact that "a free press is fitted to be one of the most efficient agencies of the education of the people", it was pointed out that the rendering of this agency "inoperative" would have the effect of "arresting" progress and thus work against the people and to that extent be contrary to the liberal spirit, which is the fundamental principle of the English Constitution.

A Responsibility to use the Critical and Rational Method.

The essay on the Refutation of the Arguments of Dr. Shoepfer of Berlin in Favour of the Fixity of the Earth³¹ is clearly an attempt to ridicule the kind of pseudo arguments that pass as "scientific". The purpose of the essay was "to disprove some of his

30. QJPSS Vol. I, No. I July, 1878, pp. 1-27. The Times of India, in an opinion sought about the Journal singled out this article for special praise. Mankar claims authorship of this article. Mankar, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 205.

31. QJPSS, Vol. I, No. 3, January, 1879, pp. 27-42.

crude and faulty assertions in the face of observed facts" and to counteract a facile acceptance of such arguments, which, as the author pointed out, is a common occurrence in India. The reliance that must be placed on observed facts is a point well made and is one that gives due recognition to the place of observation in scientific method. The power of observed facts to disprove and displace assertions that are speculative and contrary to the nature of observed facts forms the very crux of the experimental method. By dwelling at length on a topic such as this one, the Journal was putting its weight behind the method of the sciences and what the method implied in the Indian context. It was bringing to the notice of its readers the need to see that conclusions must derive their support from observed facts before they can be accepted and that in the absence of such support, credulity becomes an attitude of mind. The Journal was demonstrating how honest doubts must be raised when a theory is not based on observed evidence and how a refutation itself of such a theory must be based on such evidence.

Legislation in Accordance with Humanitarian Principles.

Another positive, unequivocal stand taken by the

Sabha concerned the whole question of the place of legislation in bringing about social changes and that of seeking changes in laws that already existed in the statute books so that they reflect the greater insights a society was beginning to have regarding its mores and practices. A single instance of this aspect of the Sabha's concerns is cited below.

On 5 June, 1881, the Sabha made Representation to the Government praying for an Amendment of the Law Relating to Infanticide,³² under the signature of K.L. Nulkar and S.H. Chiplunkar. It was the contention of the Sabha that the present law did not distinguish between crimes committed in "wantonness and deliberation" and those that were committed from a sense of shame and under temporary insanity.

The actual case that had prompted the action of the Sabha was that of Vijaya Laxmee, a Brahmin widow of Ulped, who had been convicted at Surat under Section 302 to death, but whose sentence had been confirmed and then commuted to one of the transportation for life, by the Bombay High Court on May 25. It was the plea of the Sabha that the social and physical hardships meted out to a widow in India were so different from the treatment received by an English

widow or for that matter, "any of her sisters in any part of the world", that no fair comparison between any of these cases was possible and that therefore a lenient view should be taken of the Vijaya Laxmes case and that under the special powers conferred on H.E. The Governor, her sentence should be reduced to one of imprisonment.

Contextual Significance of Religious Sanctions and Injunctions.

In one of the earliest documents that was prepared for the Journal, pertaining to social change and the inhibitory influence exercised upon it by religious sanctions, some thoughts are expressed which have a validity and a relevance for modernization. The essay was On Overpopulation and Marriage Customs³³ and it has been attributed to Ranade.

Dwelling upon the awful evils that result from overpopulation and famine in a land, Ranade pointed out that it would signify nothing in such a case to quote a religious injunction that man was made to

33. QJPSS, Vol. I, No. 2 October, 1878, pp. 24-32; R. P. Patwardhan is of the opinion that the essay was written by Ranade because of his general concern for population problems as seen in some other of his writings, Speeches and Writings of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Vol. I. Introduction, p. xviii.

grow and multiply. The evils will not be exercised and laid to rest, he said:

....by mere posings in Scripture and phrases of blessings and rules of conduct, which, however pertinent they might have been in the times and places when and where they were promulgated cannot claim the same sacred sanction (now).....

34

It may have been that in the past, that for the public good, the old holy sages and the legislators of a country inculcated a certain practise or custom as a "sacred and indispensable duty" giving it the backing of "religion with an armory of all its terrible weapons". But when an institution "proper and right in itself and highly commendable under certain circumstances, becomes a positive evil and curse, it becomes the duty of every rational being to strip it of its sacred and time honoured vestments and display it in all the horrors of its nakedness".

The question is posed as to who is to be blamed for the "miserable lives of wretchedness" that follow when a certain institution which has lost its meaning and relevance is accepted as a "sacred duty" and as being "obligatory on all". The answer, Ranade said, "is surely the blind people who believe that their

religion inculcates (it) as a sacred duty". "To allow such wretchedness to continue becomes a heinous sin in the sight of God and man".

The aid of legislation and exhortation must be sought to discountenance and condemn evil social practices. Ranade pointed out that when "the supposed sanction of religion and caste opinion" creates helpless situations and when "rational and moral considerations" do not teach men the evils of the practices, then in agreement with Mill, he thinks the formation of public opinion, the enactment of legislation to restrain the practices and exhortation must all be enlisted in the fight against the practices. He quoted from Mill:

....all experience shows that the mass of mankind never judge of moral questions for themselves, never see anything to be right or wrong until they have been frequently told it....

35

Putting the responsibility to do so unequivocally and squarely on the shoulders of the educated elite, Ranade said:

It is for the educated and reflective among (the people) to remove the ignorance and false notions prevalent on the subject by

public discussions, and by the formation of an enlightened public opinion...
36

Fundamental Principles Derivable from this Essay.

The particular subject under discussion by Ranade in this essay concerned the evils of over-population that result from the custom of early marriages. But, absolutely, and without a doubt, the general and fundamental principles that can be abstracted from this discussion have a relevance and a validity for any social practice or custom that has not only outlived its usefulness and purpose, but has in the course of time becomes a positive menace to the good of a society and has acquired dimensions which exert an inhibitory force on progress and advancement. The sanctity that has grown around any custom or practice because of religious dictates does not imply that it is excluded from the need to be brought to the bar of reason where it may judged, and when found wanting, the obvious course is to jettison it without any compunctions. The essay clearly indicates that it

is the responsibility and moral duty of those who call themselves educated to use rational and humanitarian considerations alone in deciding the worth of any custom or practice or traditional mode of behaviour.

Issues of Social Reform Made Prominent by the Sabha.

The Sabha's Journal took as much notice of the social reform issues of its times as it did of economic and political matters. Moreover, it viewed these issues from an all-India perspective and brought to its reading public information of the progress of the movement in Bengal, the first major centre where social reform issues had figured prominently. It must also be remembered that the Journal's writings of the 1878-1887 period in this context antedate the deliberations of the Social Conference and gain a significance all their own, for this reason too.

Two aspects of the Bengal scene were dealt with in articles by Babu Dinanath Gangoli. In Revival of Hinduism in Bengal³⁷, Gangoli traced developments that had take place in the last ten years or more, in the form of a "reactionary movement.... protesting against change" following the rise of Brahmoism. The other paper brought notice to its readers the evils of

37. JPSS Vol. XIII, January, 1891, pp. 1-26.

Kulinism, against which Pandit Ishwar Chandra had waged a campaign.³⁸

The reactions evoked by the publication of Malabari's Notes were also taken note of by the Journal. The article Infant Marriage Statistics and Preventive Remedies commended Malabari for provoking a "healthy discussion of large social problems" and endorsed many of his recommendations.³⁹ Two papers summed up the official and non-official opinions received on the Notes. They were A Summary of Official Opinions on the Question of Hindu-Socio-Religious Reform,⁴⁰ and Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood in India.⁴¹ One of the purposes served by giving prominence to Hindu and Non-Hindu Evidence in this debate was that of seeing what arguments were used in presenting views that were in favour or opposed to an issue of social change. Thus, for instance, Ranade was seen to advocate "state action in both its legislative and executive capacities, because of the lack of a self-regulating power in

38. QJPSS Vol. XIV, January, 1892, pp. 19-32

39. QJPSS Vol. VII, No. 2, October, 1884, pp. 42-56

40. QJPSS Vol. IX, No. 1, July, 1886, pp. 1-19

41. QJPSS Vol. IX, No. 4 April, 1887, pp. 1-72.

Hindu society. The only way to secure emancipation from the "bondage to past ideas", according to him was "to withdraw one by one, these fetters of so called religious injunctions, and turn them into civil restraints, which are more amenable to change and adaptation". Dr. Sakharam Arjun advocated a view in which it was apparent that he wanted social reform issues to be analysed in such a manner that the more essential aspects needing reform could be given attention. Otherwise when many sides of an issue are mixed up and presented as a single one, it was bound to meet with resistance from the conservative elements in a society. Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao thought the best remedy against priestly tyranny that followed an action that was contrary to established custom was "to show contempt openly, and neglect it".

In similar manner the Dadaji vs. ^Rakhmabai case evoked reactions from the Sabha, in the form of a letter to the Government concerning legal aspects of the Restitution of Conjugal Rights and two major articles on the subject⁴², one of which was by Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao. Even Ranade's papers specially prepared for Dayaram Gidumal's book first appeared in the Journal under the title of The Sutras and Smriti

Dicta on the Age of Hindu Marriage⁴³.

"The Exigencies of Progress in India"⁴⁴- A Unique Document of Social Change.

Perhaps there is no other nineteenth century document in the annals of the intellectual history of Maharashtra which can match the essay entitled "The Exigencies of Progress" that appeared in the Sarvajanik Sabha Journal for clarity of purpose and statement of essentials put down in a forthright, unambiguous manner regarding problems of advancement and progress. It is a unique document, considered both from the point of view of the fact that it was written in 1893 when such notions were yet to form a full coherent way of thinking, and for the fact that its message has continued to have relevance into this century, even into the post-independence period. Authorship of the essay is again shrouded in anonymity, but it could well number among the last of Ranade's anonymous contributions to the Independent Section of the Journal, since by the end of the year he had moved to Bombay.

The term "exigencies" was well chosen. It conveyed at once both the sense of urgency needed in problems related to bringing in progress as well as

43. QJPSS Vol. XI, Nos. 3 & 4, January & April, 1889,

pp. 1-20
44. QJPSS Vol. XV, No. 4, April, 1893, pp. 1-27.

the fact that the demands in this connection were those that were intrinsic in character, related to fundamental ways of thinking and ordering of priorities.

There is recognition of the fact that the "exigencies of modern progress are indeed very exacting" and a number of formulations are made of aspects that lie at the very core of the process itself.

Offered as a take off point for the discussion is the assertion that "nations like individuals are the architects of their own fortune" and that the "worth of a nation is the sum and reflex of the collective energy and industry of its constituent individuals." There is no need to dwell on the truth of assertions of this type, which is obviously manifest in the statements themselves, except to point out that there is involved in all progress the notion that it is through striving and endeavour that it is achieved. Men are required to devote all their energies and powers to its achievement, and in this sense progress is not inevitable in that it will come while men stand and watch. Again, there is the implication that a belief in progress is not compatible

with a belief in man as a helpless being tossed upon seas unchartered and hopelessly at the mercy of forces unknown. It is incompatible also with another belief, that of being a victim of his fate, or past misdeeds. If man is to be master of his own destiny and likewise a nation, then it involves a certain orientation to goals which necessitates a control of the direction in which he moves. Both the notions that the goal is of one's choice, sought consciously and deliberately and/that the movement in the direction of the actualization of the goal is one over which there can be controlled exercised, are involved in the concept of progress.

Another notion also implicit in a belief in progress is a desire for improvement, a desire to have thing different than they are. The description of this dimension of progress is stated thus:

...Modern civilization is a condition of existence in which every person is ceaselessly striving to improve his station in life, to develop his powers, to raise the standard of his comforts, and as far as he can, with reasonable sacrifices on his part, of the country or nation, with which his personal interests and the welfare of his kindred are in some measure bound up

45

This description covered improvement on a more

personal level. But it is also pointed out that improvement of a nation must be sought for a different reason, from a desire to attain to "an honoured position in the front rank of civilized communities... to move with the times, and to understand the demands of the day."⁴⁶ One can already discern in this brief statement the beginning of what forms the main motivation to modernization among a traditional people in our times. The main marks a modern nation are outlined in the following words:

The real standing of a country in the scale of civilization...is measured by the practical pursuits of its people, the number and magnitudes of their callings, their industries, their enterprises, their skill, their ambition and their performances and by the extent to which they employ natural forces as aids to production. Progress is measured by the superiority enjoyed by one nation over another in the arts and the reproductive industries of the world.... science and scientific culture occupies the pedestal of honour....

47

A mind reared in a modern civilization has developed "practical instincts and practical traits". Such rearing gives a person "the power of true insight into the actualities of life- the ability to grasp the practical bearing on every question... to see clear,

46. Ibid., p.1

47. Ibid., p.6

to think straight, and to differentiate dreamy ideals from practical possibilities". What is really being said here, is that a modern mind uses measures of assessment that are quite distinctive, and makes distinctions between essentials and non-essentials on a perspectives that view man and his function in the world as also the place of nature differently than the view that obtains in traditional thinking. A clear statement of what is implied here may be seen through the consideration given to those aspects of traditional life that inhibit progress. Thus:

The active impediments to progress at present are the inquisitorial power of religion, and the overpowering influence of tradition and custom, which have associated the highest ideal of happiness in our minds with in-activity and ease...we have stood before the world with folded hands, a picture of helplessness and despair, lost in dutiful veneration of everything pertaining to the past, and yielding ourselves in placid contentment to the guidance of antiquated usages, and to rules of conduct which regulated social life before the dawn of modern civilization.

48

Attitudes of mind which 'clog reform' are to be abandoned, and a release must be sought from "Traditional constraints". To the abandonment of sentiment also, there must be reconciliation as also to those "prejudices which obscure the view and pervert the

judgement". A reliance on "mere prestige" will not avail in the struggle for progress.

There is also seen in this context a new perspective brought to bear on the place of "radical changes" in those pursuits which are unfamiliar, if success is to be obtained in them. It is pointed out thus:

Those who aspire for preeminence in these days cannot live the life of a sinecure. Unfailing in resources, untrammelled by prejudice, and unremittingly watchful of every passing change, the individual or nation that would succeed, should be ever ready to recognise difficulties as fast they arise, and ever prompt in applying remedies as adjusting efforts to recurring obstacles....

49

Conclusion.

That the Sarvajanic Sabha and its Journal served the purpose of being pace-setting institutions when it came to progressive thinking is clear from a review of the matters it discussed over a period of almost two decades. The legacy of this thinking for contemporary times rests in what it has to say about the dimensions of social change. There was a recognition of the need for change and a realization that it was not "against Heaven's ordination to talk of improvement".

Side by side with emphasizing the need for improvement, it was also seen that certain specific reforms and dimensions along which changes should be made in relation to these evils that were to be reformed occupied a good deal of attention. That there was an increasing awareness of fundamental principles, which recognized the inherent worth of man and his right to demand the conditions that were due to him as a human being as well as to point out his duties and responsibilities as a member of society is evident, though clearer formulations of these principles were less in evidence than the discussions of the actual nature of particulars. Change per se was recommended as a mode of behaviour that must be sought by a society that was bound by traditions and ancient usages. New attitudes and new approaches were seen as the very essence of progress, and in the Indian context, those old modes of thinking that must be changed were identified. As the beginning of the modernization process, these insights were invaluable.

II. The Deccan Sabha.

The 1890's were turbulent years in Poona. Tilak's resignation from the Deccan Society in October 1890, and the 1895 Social Conference pandal incidents were in themselves trivial, but the bitterness they evoked were evidence of a deep malaise. The two groups, of whom Tilak and Ranade were leaders, had sharp political and ideological differences, that became apparent even in the Sarvajanic Sabha affairs, and by 1895 control of the Sabha had passed into Tilak's hands.

Twenty-seven issues of the Sabha's Journal had appeared under the editorship of Gokhale. In 1896 he ceased to be editor and altogether the tone of public life in Poona by this time had left in him a feeling of utter disgust. He wrote to G.V.Joshi:

... Our recent misfortunes make it incumbent on me that I should devote as much of my time as I possibly can to my school and College. I have besides grown absolutely sick of the public life in Poona.... of course a great deal depends yet on Mr.Ranade's wishes, for I don't wish to do any thing that would in any way displease him. But personally I wish now to wash my hands of all political work in Poona. There is so much that is selfish and ignorable here that I would fly from it to the farthest extremities of the world if I could...

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50. G.K.Gokhale to G.V.Joshi, 8 February 1896:
Sr.No.203. Reel No.5 Microfilm. Gokhale Papers.

To Ranade, Gokhale and other "earnest lovers of political progress in India", the conviction was not long in coming that a new Sabha was needed "to give adequate expression to the spirit of modern liberalism which animates the more thoughtful leaders of public opinion on this side of India."

The formal establishment of the Deccan Sabha took place at a public meeting at the historic Kibe Wada in Poona on November 4, 1896 at which a hundred and one prominent citizens were present.

The Deccan Sabha's Manifesto explained that the Sabha had come into existence because the Sarvajanic Sabha, eschewing its policy of twenty-five years to secure the cooperation of all classes, had now so shaped up that "sectional interests had obtained an ascendancy...."

51

The Deccan Sabha's stated Object was "to promote, by strictly constitutional means, political,

51. Manifesto of the Deccan Sabha, reprinted in M.R.Palande, ed. Source Material for History of the Freedom Movement in India Vol.II, 1885-1920, Bombay, 1958, p. 847.

economic and social interests of the Indian people."

52

The Manifesto itself is one of the clearest and unambiguous statements of Liberalism made in the nineteenth century. It was prepared by Ranade and reflects the "severe mental struggle" which by his own confession he underwent in making the decision to start a new organization, and how the principles he believed in, left him no other choice.

The Manifesto states:

...Liberalism and Moderation will be the watchwords of this Association. The spirit of Liberalism implies a freedom from race and creed prejudices and a steady devotion to all that seeks to do justice between man and man, giving to the rulers the loyalty that is due to the law they are bound to administer, but securing at the same time to the ruled the equality which is their right under the law. Moderation imposes the condition of never vainly aspiring after the impossible or after too remote ideas, but striving each day to take the step in the order of natural growth by doing the world that lies nearest to our hands in a spirit of compromise and fairness. After all,

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52. An excerpt from the Manifesto and the stated Objects of the Deccan Sabha appeared in the left-hand corner of the membership form. The fact that members had to indicate their acceptance of "the principles and methods of political work as contained in the marginally printed extract from the Manifesto" is evidence of the differences that divided the new Sabha from the old one. A copy of the Membership form is available with D.V. Ambekar, at the Servants of India Society, Poona.

political activities are chiefly of value not for the particular results achieved, but for the process of political education which is secured by exciting interest in public matters and promoting the self-respect and self-reliance of citizenship. This is no doubt a slow process, but all growth of new habits must be slow to be real.

53

The tenets of Liberalism are clear in the document. Liberalism implied justice for all and a responsibility to work this principle. It meant that any form of narrowness, whether based on religious grounds or on racial or caste distinctions had no place in this philosophy. Liberalism had as its corollary the principle of moderation which implied a sense of realism about the true nature of a situation and a concern to fulfill immediate obligations in a fair and speedy manner, than to chase a will-o'-the-wisp.

Gokhale served as secretary of the Deccan Sabha for the first five years. The Sabha continued to address memorials to the government in the same manner as had been done by the Sarvajanik Sabha prior to 1896 and received in acknowledgement from the Government,

"reasoned statements, dealing exhaustively with the points raised by the Sabha"⁵⁴ in itself a testimony to the importance attached by it to the issues raised by leaders associated with the Deccan Sabha. The Sarvajanic Sabha, after the take-over by the Tilak group, was strangely silent. As Gokhale put it. "It is now eight months since the Committee came into power and yet not a single memorial has been sent up to Government during all this time, an unheard of thing in the previous history of the Sabha."

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When the Royal Commission on Expenditure, popularly known as the Welby Commission was appointed in 1896 to inquire into the conditions of Indian Finance and its relationship to England, Gokhale was selected to represent the Deccan Sabha. Madras sent G.Subrahmanya Ayyar and Bengal sent Surendranath Banerjee and the Bombay representative was D.V.Wacha.

The Deccan Sabha went through a lean period following the death of Ranade. In 1908, on the eve

54. D.V.Ambekar (Poona, 1947), p.5.

55. Gokhale to G.V.Joshi, op.cit.

of the Morley Minto Reforms a "revival" meeting was held. In this second stage of its activities, prominence was given to the Hindu-Mohamedan Question among other public problems. Gokhale was an active Sabha worker during this period.. The third stage of the Deccan Sabha's work began in 1921 with the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

Illustrious names were associated with the presidentship of the Deccan Sabha. Rao Bahadur Vishwanath Moreshwar Bhide served as the First President of the Sabha. From 1902-1929 Sir Hormusji Wadya was president. From 1929-1946 the Hon. Srinivas Sastri held this office and after him it fell to H.N. Kunzru.

Changed circumstances give a changed role to any organization. The Deccan Sabha could not be expected to make the same impact on the people as the Sarvajanic Sabha, because the early twentieth century had a different focus on problems facing the country. Purely political issues took prominence and extremism took precedence over moderation and liberalism. The Deccan Sabha's place in history and its impact on the thinking of its times was precisely the stand it took on these issues. It gave the tenets

of liberalism eloquent formulation, and gathered around itself a galaxy of men who subscribed to these tenets. It was really a way of putting before the public a choice of goals and of means to the goals.

III- The Servants of India Society.

The Servants of India Society, established in 1905, by Gokhale was a third organization that lay before the people ideas conceived in the liberal tradition, to bring about social change.

It is a known fact that the leadership of the liberals group, in the early twentieth century, fell upon the shoulders of Gokhale. In starting the Servants of India Society, he revealed, as Hoyland put it, "a strain of other-worldly idealism." With a nation-wide reputation already established, as a statesman of consummate ability, and that of an expert on economic matters, this new venture spoke of his great concern for selfless, dedicated service to the nation. Patriotism as a qualification for national service was not enough, as it only belonged to realm of emotions. It needed to be supported by a rigorous training period, which included travelling and working under trusted leaders and the Servants of India Society was formed with the purpose of creating such leadership.

Both Ranade and Wacha had shared Gokhale's concern. In 1899, Wacha had counselled, "You must gather around you a strong band of earnest and honest enthusiasts like yourself and train them up. Ranade

56.
56. D.E.Wacha to G.K.Gokhale, 3 June, 1899: File No.8
Wacha Letters, Gokhale Papers.

felt:

...Our great want is that young men with great promise of usefulness do not step in the place of older men who are disabled for active duty in the Political and also the Social spheres....

57

Gokhale described the need as he saw it, in the Preamble to the constitution of the Servants of India Society:

...For some time past, the conviction has been forcing itself on many earnest and thoughtful minds that a stage has been reached in the political education and advancement of the people, when, for further progress, the devoted labours of a specially trained agency, applying itself to the task in a true missionary spirit, are required... The results achieved so far are undoubtedly most gratifying, but they only mean that the jungle has been cleared and the foundations laid. The great work of rearing the super-structure has yet to be taken in hand, and the situation demands, on the part of workers, devotion and sacrifices proportionate to the magnitude of the task.

58

The establishment of the Society took place on 12th June, 1905 on the hill behind Fergusson College, where seven⁹ vows as given in Clause 9 of the Society's

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57. M.G. Ranade to G.K. Gokhale 3 January, 1902: File No. R/36, Ranade Letters Gokhale papers.
58. Original Constitution, The Servants of India Society, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 180.
59. Ibid., p. 183.

constitution were administered to the first three
⁶⁰
 members, N.A.David, (1872-1952) Gopal Krishna
 Devadhar (1871-1935) and A.V.Patwardhan (1873-1939)
 by Gokhale who as First Member took the vows him-
 self before others. Among the seven vows were those
 where each new member pledged that "the country will
 always be first in his thoughts and that he will
 give to her service the best that is in him", that
 he would 'seek no personal advantage for himself'
 and that he would lead 'a pure personal life.' The
 third vow was conceived in terms of the tenets of
 liberalism:

That he will regard all Indians as brothers,
 and will work for the advancement of all,
 without distinction of caste and creed.

While Gokhale is said to have derived inspiration
⁶¹
 for his Society from the Society of Jesus there is
 something about the single-mindedness of purpose in
 the vows taken and in the rigorous training

60. A personal account of the events preceding this formal ceremony is given by N.A.David. See N.A. David, "Entrance into the Servants of India Society" in Gopal Krishna Devadhar, Edited by The Hon.Dr.H.N.Kunzru, Poona, Servants of India Society, 1939, pp.17-29.

61. R.P.Paranjpye, op.cit. p.65.

visualized for the members that is reminiscent of Plato's training of the Guardians. Writing about the Mission of the Society Gokhale said:

...The servants of India Society will train men prepared to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit... and will seek to promote, by all constitutional means the national interests of the Indian people.

62

The formulation of the Constitution for the Servants of India Society had occupied Gokhale's mind for a considerable length of time and had prompted him to consult many friends on the matter. The Constitution contained his considered judgement on the manner in which a corps of selfless public workers could be created- a judgement arrived at, in the light of his own bitter personal experiences and his perceptiveness about the ways in which the young men could be sidetracked from the purpose in hand.

A Wider Base for the Servants of India Society- G.K. Devadhar's Contribution.

When G.K.Devadhar joined the Servants of India Society as one of three founder members, he had

62. Constitution of the Servants of India Society, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, p.182.

already through his earlier experiences, formed some clear ideas on what constructive steps needed to be taken in the service of the nation. His own connection with the Aryan Education Society had given him some scope to try out these ideas. It is little wonder that he jumped with alacrity at the opportunity of being associated with Gokhale in the new Society whose aims and aspirations had an immediate appeal for him. In fact, sometime before the Society's actual founding, he was already working for Gokhale, travelling in India to secure subscriptions for the Congress Journal India that was being published in London.

Neither is it to be wondered at, that a man of Devadhar's temperament would become restive with the narrowness of the declared aim of the Society to train men for the work of political education and agitation" alone. Devadhar impressed others with his 'inexhaustible energy and capacity for carrying things through", his "strong individuality" and his "joy in a life of intense practical activity."⁶³

Devadhar felt that the task of 'nation building' must certainly extend beyond the named goals and had

63. Kunzru, op.cit., pp.11-111. These are Kunzru's own impressions of Devadhar.

frequent discussions with N.A.Draavid the other
 64
 founder member on this aspect of the Society's
 projected work.

Among the formative influences in Devadhar's life must be counted Agarkar 'Sudharak articles on social reform issues, his own close association with the work of Christian missionaries through his work as head-master of the Mission Girls' School at Poona, and his years of tutoring missionaries in Marathi as well as the years spent in Wilson College, Bombay as a student. His biographer said:

...he appreciated the sentiments of faith and hope and love with which their mission was actuated...throughout his life he was never tired of saying that Indian public workers must imbibe the spirit of Christian missionaries if they want to make improvement in the condition of India's poor and ignorant millions to any appreciable extent...65

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64. Draavid's opinion was "I seriously doubt now whether Devadhar would have joined the Society at all, if he had been told clearly at the time that the Society should do what is in ordinary parlance called political work, and nothing else." N.A.Draavid, op.cit., p.24.
65. N.V.Phadke, "Early Life" in Kunzru, Gopal Krishna Devadhar, op.cit., p.9. Devadhar was born in a Chitapavan Brahmin family on 21st August, 1871, took his high education in Poona at the New English School, attended Fergusson College in 1892 and took his B.A. from Wilson College in 1897. He joined the Aryan Education Society founded by M.H.Jayakar and others in Bombay and later became Principal of the Society's High School in 1900. In 1909 he founded, together with Mrs. Ramabai Ranade, the pioneering Seva Sadan.

Gokhale was sympathetic to Devadhar's insights about the needs of the nation and allowed him considerable latitude in working out plans for social activities which seemed to Devadhar to be equally important as political work. Kunzru said:

...While politics appeared to consist of largely in pointing out faults of the foreigner who ruled over us and leading others to believe that his elimination was the only requisite to full national development, social work, on the other hand, seemed to direct our attention to the beam in our own eyes and to call for the exercises of constructive efforts to cure the ills from which the country was suffering..

66

It seems important to stress that it was due to Devadhar that the Society extended its objectives beyond mere political work and that a new statement of its aims met with Gokhale's approval. The new "six-maxim charter", stated that: members will direct their efforts, principally towards:

- (i) creating among the people, by example and by precept, a deep and passionate love of the motherland, seeking its highest fulfilment in service and sacrifice;
- (ii) organizing the work of political education and agitation, basing it on a careful study of public questions, and strengthening the quality of public life of the country;
- (iii) promoting relations of cordiality, goodwill and cooperation among the different communities;
- (iv) assisting educational movements, especially those for the education of women, the education of the backward classes and industrial and scientific education;

- (v) helping forward the industrial development of the country; and
- (vi) the elevation of the depressed classes.

67

What is the nature of the ideas of social change that were promoted by the Servants of India Society? Firstly, there was an awareness of the fact that any form of agitation, and particularly that of political agitation, needed the solid backing of informed and enlightened opinion. This gave education a high place of priority, not only as a formal discipline, but as means by which the public could be taught to view issues rationally and dispassionately. Again, for the weaker sections of society, women and the backward classes, education was given the role of creating the conditions whereby they would receive a better and fairer deal. This implied not only education of the two groups themselves but education of the community at large, that through many forms of social injustice practised by them, had ordained that a large section of society live in deprivation of their fundamental right to enjoy a better life.

Science education and industrialization were seen as instruments through which progress could be achieved. And above all, the rights of every community to live a life of its own choosing, without encroachment from interference from others was recognized. It was not sought as a legal right, but as a moral responsibility, given to each group to live in harmony and cooperation with other groups.

Chapter VIII: The Students' Literary and
Scientific Society

Hemantostav Vyakhyan Mala

I - THE STUDENTS' LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.

It is in the urban setting of Bombay that the first intercommunal efforts to promote ideas of social change are found. The Elphinstone Institution numbered among its graduates men drawn from the Parsee, Gujarati and Maharashtrian communities. In 1848, a group of Elphinstonians with encouragement from their professors, formed the Students' Literary and Scientific Society for the express purpose of "self-improvement". The advice given to the group was in the tradition of the belief in progress, so characteristic of the nineteenth century. "But before all, and above all," they were told, "remember that you must always be advancing. If you move not forward, you are going backward. Progress is the universal law."

1

The main impetus for the new Society came from Dadabhai Naoroji, Naoroji Furdunji, Bhau Daji and Sohrabji Shapurji Bengali. Bhau Daji (1822-1874) was one of first medical graduates of Bombay, and

1. Quoted in Christine Dobbin, Urban Leadership in Western India, 1840-1885, (London, 1972), p.56.

in later years became a social reformer of repute. Dadabhai was to become prominent in political affairs.

In 1852 a hundred and six members were enrolled in the Society. The early programmes of the Society included paper reading and debates, particularly related to the existing state of society, and on scientific topics.

In 1849 a lecture by Behramjee of "Female Education" fired the imagination of his audience and a number of young men responded to the call and volunteered to become participants in a programme of education for girls. But it was becoming evident that social reform problems could only be tackled if the Society divided itself up into three distinct groups. Thus the Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Sabha came into being, following the linguistic and communal lines of the Society's membership. Each group sponsored paper reading and the writing of articles in the regional languages.

The Marathi press had long been active in debating issues of social change. From the time of Jambhekar's The Bombay Durpun in 1832, which had been described as "well fitted to inform, expand

and correct the native mind", there had been a large number of Marathi newspapers, published from Bombay, Poona and district towns. Naoroji Furdonji started a Gujarati periodical the Vidya Sagara in 1840. In 1850 Sorabjee Shaporji Bengalee started the Jagatmitra.

The Gujarati and Marathi Dnyan Prasarak Mandalis were instrumental in giving prominence to social problems, particularly those of women. In 1857 the Stribodh was started by the Gujarati branch and was received well by women for whom it was primarily intended.

2

The first Parsee girls' schools were opened in October, 1849 with a enrolment of about 300 girls upto the age of twelve, studying Gujarati, history and geography. This was the beginning of a reform movement within this community that led to quick social changes and a broadening of outlook.

The first Marathi schools for girls were also opened in October 1849, but with a poorer response from the community, at large, though particular

2. The Speeches and Writings of Sr. Narayen G. Chandavarkar, (Bombay, 1911), p. 162.

communities like the Saraswats and Prabhus were quick to take the benefits of the new venture. By the mid 60's two Marathi schools, the Jagannath Shankarsett Girls' School, and the Bhau Daji School, under the supervision of Bhau Daji himself, were progressing.

It is natural to find among the promoters of the efforts of the Society, the names of those who were active in many spheres of public life. V.N. Mandlik, Bal Mangesh Wagle, Bhandarkar, Ranade, V.A. Modak and Mama Parmanand were all in this group.

But it was Telang who was the real mainstay of the Society, in the 1870's. Telang became a Joint-Secretary of the Society with V.N.Mandlik in 1872. At this time Bhau Daji was the Society's President, but when he died in 1874, Mandlik became President. In 1889, when Mandlik died Telang became President, and remained so till the year of his death.

Telang's earliest literary output is to be found in the connection with the Students' Literary and Scientific Society. Among the many papers that he read before the Society, was one read on 2nd September, 1872 which was in the nature in reply to the thesis of Professor Weber that the Ramayana was

was copied from Homer.³ An earlier paper, was read
in 1871, on the Life of Shankaracharya.⁴

The Students' Literary and Scientific Society's main impact was the impetus it gave to the education of girls. Only the missionaries had before this, tackled the problem in any organized way. The Society's efforts belong to the 1850's, which indicate how far ahead of the times they were. It is significant that the impetus came from a group of Elphinstonians, who themselves were the first products of Western education in Maharashtra. Their zeal was understandable. They were filled with the urge to bring about reforms in society and their programme of paper readings and debates brought issues before the public as part of the educative process of society as a whole. The educative process was extended, further to a weaker section of the society. If the response was poor, still a point was made, because notice was served on the society through these efforts, that women needed to be given the same opportunities for education as the men.

3. K.T.Telang "Was the Ramayana Copied from Homer?"
Select Speeches and Writings, Vol.I, pp.3-93.

4. Telang, Select Speeches, Vol.II, pp. 234-267.

The Students' Literary and Scientific Society which started out as an organization, with membership drawn across communal lines, found that when working in an area as sensitive as that of social reform, it could not but succumb to these divisive lines. However its three branches continued to work for social reform in their own respective groups and set the direction in a major area of such reform.

II- THE HEMANTOSTAV VYAKHYAN MALA.

The Hindu Union Club, which was established in Bombay in 1875 was another organization dedicated to the task of promoting social change. Its avowed object was "the promotion of social union by interchange of ideas and sympathies by meeting at gatherings for intellectual and social improvement."

As the name implied, the purpose of the Club was to create a feeling of unity and fellow-feeling among the members, a purpose which Ranade, at least on two occasions, found it necessary to reiterate.*

* The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi; ed. Jagadisan (Madras, n.d.), p. 36; N.R.Phathak, Nyaya Murti Mahadev Govind Ranade Yanche Charitra, 2nd ed., (Poona, 1966), p.300.

The impact of the activities of the Hindu Union Club was perhaps most felt through the Hemantostav Vyakhyan Mala series which it instituted about the year 1886. In contrast to the topics covered in discussions in the Students' Literary and Scientific Society, the Hemantostav Vyakhyan Mala series was varied and included political and religious topics.

From the very first year, the lecture series evoked much public interest. It stimulated public debate on many social problems, and gave evidence of that primary requirement that brings about changes in a society, namely, a willingness to make a critical evaluation of the existing state of society and to consider the nature of changes that need to be introduced.

Commenting on the Vyakhyan Mala editorially, the Dnyanodaya said:

The Lectures delivered before the Hindu Union Club have excited much interest and have been attended by large audiences. These lectures cannot fail of proving useful..... it is a great gain when leaders in a community begin to criticize their own customs and urge for a better state of things. Nothing is worse than stagnation of thought. These lectures are encouraging signs of the good times to come when social

customs will be taken earnestly in hand and moulded into better shapes, or if bad, pitched overboard.**

The Induprakash was of the opinion that it was the discussions and opportunities to participate in them that were responsible for drawing large audiences to the lecture series, even to the point where there was standing room only. ***

The series got off to a start in 1886 with a lecture on "The Relative Importance of the Shastras and Customs", which was delivered by K.T. Telang. The lecture generated a good deal of public interest in the subject of social reform, and especially those reforms connected with infant marriage. The 1884-1891 period, marked by the publication of Malabari's Notes and the passing of the Age of Consent Bill, had seen all aspects of this controversial subject publicly debated and Telang's lecture centred around the question of the relative claims of authority against those relating to the need to keep up with changing times. ****

The Hemantostav Vyakhyan Mala in its second year announced a series of ten lectures which covered

** Dnyanodaya, February 18, 1886, Vol.45, No.7, p. 98.

*** Quoted in the Dnyanodaya, January 24, 1889, p.26.

**** Dnyanodaya, January 27, 1887, Vol.46, No.4, p. 53

a wide range of topics, but had a predominance of social and religious ones. The 1887 series was announced as follows:

- January 8 : Ganesh Ramchandra Kirloskar-
Sarkarche Kar.
- January 15: Vaman Abhaji Modak- Vividha-Kalachya Sambhandhane hit-ahit Vichar.
- January 22: Ramchandra Bhikaji Gunjekar- Vidya-vridhichya Kami amchi anastha.
- January 29: Yeshwant Vasudev Athalya- Hindu Lokatil Vividha Kal.
- February 5: Shridhar Ganesh Jinsiwale- Ved-shastranchi Khari Yogyata.
- February 12: Janardan Balaji Modak-Mahabharat.
- February 19: Kanoba Ranchhodas- Ashru: Tyanchi Utpatti ani Yojana.
- February 26: Rawji Babanrao Pawgi- Amchya Avanatiche Rahasya.
- March 5: Vinayak Konderao Oak- Amchya Lokane Itihas Konata Shikawa.
- March 12: Moreshwar Gopal Deshmukh- Vivaha Kalavishayi Sharirshastrache Mat.

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The first lecture in the 1888 series was delivered by Vasudev Gopal Bhandarkar on "The True Glory of Woman." It stimulated a discussion in which two clearly opposed viewpoints could be discerned, namely that of the social reformer who wanted changes

xxx Dnyanodaya, January 6, 1887, Vol.46, No.1, pp.11-12; Full coverage was given by the Dnyanodaya to Waman Abhaji Modak's thoughts on Infant Marriage in its issues of February 10, 17 and 24, 1887.

to be made in social customs and the other of the conservative element that wanted to maintain the status quo. The pace with which reforms should be undertaken also came in for consideration.^{xx}

The 1889 series continued to give prominence to social issues, but political and religious topics and a lecture of value for the scientific information it imparted were included in the series. The details of this series are:

- January 19: Vaman Abhaji Modak- Hindulokant Aikyachi Vridhhi Honyas Harkati va Eya Dur Honyas Upaya.
- January 26: Rajaram Ramkrishna Bhagwat- Ved va Vaidik Dharma
- February 2: Keshav Vaman Pethe- Amche Kalaukaushilyant Sudharana Karnyas Konkante Upay Yojile Pahijet.
- February 9: Bal Yadnyshwar Shastri-Gurjar-Dharmodarya.
- February 16: Kashinath Vaman Kane- Jagache Utpaticha Itihas.
- February 23: Vishnu Krishna Bhatwadekar-Anticorn Law League.
- March 2: Nam.Kashinath Trimbak Telang-Samajik Vishyasambhandhi Tadjod.
- March 7: Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi- Sainyavyavastha.

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xx Dnyanodaya, January 12, 1888, Vol.47, No.3, pp.18-19.

xox Dnyanodaya, January 3, 1889, Vol.48, No.1, pp. 7-8.

The Lecture series continued in this manner into the nineties. The Dnyanodaya reported that printed copies of the lectures were available, making its audience one that extended beyond the four to five hundred people that were present at them.

What impact did the Hemantotsav Vyakhyan Mala have on the era which has been considered here? First of all, it made it possible for information to be imparted on a number of varied topics. For instance, one of the 1893 lectures had dwelt on the latest discoveries in astronomy, which in turn gave an opportunity to see how far the new knowledge had advanced as compared to older notions.

Secondly, the Lecture series created a climate for debate and exchange of views. By putting before its audience the pros and cons of a social issue, it cleared the air for both sides, so that issues could be seen in their essentials. Both the reformers and anti-reformers, thus, were able to place before the public the arguments supporting their diverse positions. Such an instance is provided by the debate on the relative claims of authority and the changing needs of the times, referred to above.

The Lecture series created a climate for social change, but did it in actuality extend beyond public debate of a particular issue? Did it stimulate any concrete action? The most frequently debated topic of this period was that of Infant Marriage. That the consequence of debate was still inaction, is seen from an excerpt quoted from the Dnyanodaya which said:

Are our reformers asleep again? And what shall be done to awaken them: Thousands of infant-girls are being married every year, nearly all of whom will grow up ignorant and superstitious, and a large portion must endure the disgrace of enforced widowhood, and the men of India care not at all. Thousands are ready to spend their thousands to prevent the killing of a dog, or an old horse or cow; but as for delivering their sisters and mothers from ignorance, or life-long sorrow, who cares to lift even a finger? It is easy to write, and the Press does occasionally now and then have an article on these questions of reform, but so far as we can discover, nothing is being done; time for action is now being wasted in prevailing indifference. We earnestly wish that something could stir up our Reformers to set to work, and leave the talking to those who have nothing else to fill up their time. To this prevailing indifference there are, however, notable exceptions. Mr. Malabari's pen does not cease its activity, though sometimes the indifference of others seem to make it weary; and lately a widow-remarriage took place in Bombay adding to the small list of such unions.^{xx}

xx Dnyanodaya, February 3, 1887, Vol. 46, No. 5, p. 55.

Part IV : IDEAS OF SOCIAL CHANGE RELEVANT TO
MODERNIZATION.

Chapter IX: Mahadev Govind Ranade- His Writings
An Early Years of Training

RANADE - HIS WRITINGS AND EARLY YEARS OF TRAINING

Among the nineteenth century leaders and thinkers in Maharashtra, Mahadev Govind Ranade towers above others in the clarity of perceptiveness in identifying areas in Indian society where social change had become imperative and in spelling out in conceptual terms, the dimensions of social change and the directions in which a society must move, if it is to provide to its members that environment in which they may realise their highest potential. His ideas and thoughts in this context rank him among the type of leader who sees far ahead of his own times. He has often been called a traditionalist, but the mode of his thinking was anything but traditional. An analysis of his ideas in the light of their value for modernization will be attempted in the next chapter.

Biographical Works.

The lack of an autobiography or personal memoirs from Ranade leaves a gap in our understanding of the precise influences that shaped his life and therefore forces deductions to be

made from other sources.

It must ever remain a loss to the social history of Maharashtra that Ranade's natural reticence and lack of conceit would allow him to have no part in the preparation of such a document. "Who will write the life of our grand old man?" was a question that bothered his contemporaries. His biographer G.A.Mankar¹ found him "little disposed to afford me any information about his life" and was told instead to concentrate on "a history of our times." Gopal Krishna Gokhale who for fourteen years was privileged "to sit at his feet" was perhaps the person best qualified to produce a biography of Ranade, its authenticity based upon the very closeness of their relationship. Gokhale spoke of having had "exceptional opportunities to become acquainted with his innermost thoughts and hopes, with his ideals and aspirations²." It was, however, this very closeness that made

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1. G.A.Mankar, A Sketch of the Life and Works of the Late Mr. Justice M.G. Ranade, Vols. I and II, (Bombay, 1902)
 2. "Madhav Govind Ranade" in Speeches and Writings of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Vol. III, (Bombay, 1967), p.283.

Gokhale confess to a certain inadequacy to form a critical estimate of Mr. Ranade's career or achievement. Gokhale said:

In the first place, we are not sufficiently removed from his time. And secondly I stood too near him to be able to possess that aloofness without which no critical estimate can be usefully attempted.³

Nonetheless Ramabai Ranade indicated that it was Gokhale's intention to produce such a document⁴. Ganesh Janardan Agashe at Ranade's death anniversary meeting in 1904 spoke as if he was already engaged in doing so. He said:

And hard indeed is the task which the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale C. I. E. has set to himself out of pure admiration, respect and friendship of doing the same justice to the memory of Mr. Ranade, that Prof. Morley had done to Mr. Gladstone... Mr. Ranade unlike Mr. Gladstone has not left us a voluminous diary... his biographers will have to depend on such experiences and reminiscences as his numerous friends can recount.⁵

3. Ibid.,

4. N. R. Pathak, Nyaya Murti Mahadev Govind Ranade Yance Charitra, end ed. (Poona, 1936), p. 5

5. Ganesh Janardan Agashe, Hindu Union Club Ranade Third Death Anniversary Address, (Bombay, 1904), p. 2.

Thakur⁶ stated that Gokhale had proposed to bring out volumes of Ranade's works in the manner of Burke's works. However, the sum-total of what Gokhale has left in this context are his eloquent tributes to Ranade made in speeches at Bombay in 1901 and 1903 and at Madras in 1904.⁷ Hari Narayan Apte's⁸ warm tribute to Ranade appeared in the Karmanuk in the form of an obituary.

Pathak's Charitra (1924) rested on sources which since then appear not to be extant. Most invaluable and irreplaceable of all were Ranade's personal records and papers (daphtars) handed over to him by Ramabai Ranade. Moreover, Pathak

6. Vasudeo Waman Thakur, Kailaswasi Namdar Nyayamurti Mahadev Govind Ranade, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, C.I.E. Yanche Charitra, (1842-1901), (Bombay, 1942), p.3. Thakur also indicated that Gokhale was to have written the introduction to the Miscellaneous Writings of the Late Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.G. Ranade, but did not live to do so.

7. Gokhale Speeches, Vol. III, pp. 279-298.

8. "Namdar Nyaya Murti Rao Bahadur Madhavrao Govind Ranade", Karmanuk, January 19, 1901, pp. 82-86; The obituary in the Deccan College Quarterly, "The Late Hon. Mr. Justice M.G. Ranade, C.I.E.", Jan. 1901, pp. 5-13, ends with the lines:

His statue may well bear the lines
Not enjoyment and not sorrow
But to act that each tomorrow
Find us further than today.

also had the assistance of individuals whose personal experience and familiarity with the times and with Ranade gave him first-hand source materials that could not be matched by later biographers. It is unfortunate that stylistic trends of those decades did not demand fuller documentation. Another document based on personal knowledge is Dwarakanath Govind Vaidya's biographical sketch of Ranade.⁹

The Legacy of Ranade's Own Writings.

Contrary to Kellock¹⁰ the volume of Ranade's published works seems meagre. For one thing they contain what had already appeared in print during the Ranade years. Moreover the compilations of his writings and speeches tend to be repetitive, so that the same material occurs in different places. Even much of what he said was presumably not available even as

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9. Dwarakanath Govind Vaidya, "Mahadev Govind Ranade, Nyaya Murti Mahadev Govind Ranade Hyanchi Dharmapar Vyakhyane, 3rd Ed. (Bombay, 1923), pp.1-8; also D.G.Vaidya, Prarthana-samajacha Itihas, (Bombay, 1927), pp.95-126.
 10. James Kellock, Mahadev Govind Ranade Patriot and Social Servant, Builders of Modern India series, (Calcutta, 1926), pp.vii-viii.

early as 1902 when the first compilation of his speeches was made¹¹ because it contained for the most part what had already been published before then. Numerous but scant references to speeches made in Poona, Nasik and Bombay suggest that they far exceeded what has been preserved. He is known to have been a frequent speaker in the Poona Vasant Vyakhyan Mala series and an occasional one at the Bombay Hemant Vyakhyan Mala series. Thakur¹² estimates that after 1893 there was probably not a week when he was not called upon to deliver an address on some subject or the other. Mankar described Ranade as a 'copious letter-writer' but found it difficult to secure "any of much importance." One of his biographers D. V. Kirtane said:

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11. Religious and Social Reform: A Collection of Essays and Speeches by Mahadev Govind Ranade, C.I.E., M.A., LL.B. and Judge, His Majesty's High Court of Judicature, Advocate: Dean, Bombay University, collected and compiled by M.B. Kolaskar, (Bombay, 1902)
 12. Thakur, op.cit., p.1, The Induprakash of September 9, 1878 carried one of the fuller reports still extant of such public utterances. Pathak Charitra, op.cit., pp.193-196 carries the full Induprakash report of the speech delivered by Ranade at Nasik on 18th August, 1878 on "Ingrizi Bhashanatil Vidya."

It is impossible to give a list of all the writings and speeches of Mahadev Govind Ranade... their name is legion and they embrace every conceivable subjects from questions on social reform, finance, industries, economics, all religious reform, philosophy and Maratha history, to even such special questions as the cultivation and manufacture of cotton, the exploitation of iron and old mines etc... Even Mr. Ranade himself found it difficult to give a complete list of his voluminous writings and speeches... if all his writings and speeches were published in a compact form, the work would extend over six or seven volumes.¹³

Just how repetitive the published works of Ranade are, will be seen from the following comparisons. Ranade's speeches at the Indian National Social Conferences, some of which were inaugural speeches, others were made in moving resolutions, are included in the Proceedings of the Conference, which also contain his public address made in the Conference host towns, such

13. D.V. Kirtane, The Late Mr. Justice Ranade, in Indian worthies, Vol. I (Bombay, 1906), p. 19. D.V. Kirtane's father, Vinayak Janardan Kirtane (Dajisaheb) was one of the boys who went with the young Mahadev to Bombay for further schooling, and later became Dewan of Baroda and Indore. D.V. Kirtane mentions the fact that in 1895 Ranade had prepared a paper on "The Objects and Aspirations of Young India" Ibid., p. 23.

as at Hislop College, Nagpur (1891), Allahabad (1892), Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, (1893), and Christian College, Madras (1894). Chintamani¹⁴ acknowledged Ranade's help in producing his work on Social Reform and devotes Part II of his book to reproducing these Ranade speeches contained in the Social Conference Proceedings. The major part of the Miscellaneous Writings¹⁵ (1915) again contains the same speeches. Jagadisan¹⁶ reproduces the Conference addresses of Amraoti (1897), Lucknow (1899) and Lahore (1900). Kolaskar¹⁷ reproduced the Conference addresses of Amraoti (1897), Madras (1898), Lucknow (1899) and Lahore (1900). Four addresses delivered in Bombay at the Hindu Union Club (1895), Wilson College

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14. Yajnesvara Chintamani, Indian Social Reform (Madras, 1901) Second Part, pp.1-125 and pp.377-383.
 15. Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings, op.cit., pp. 88-229 and pp. 240-247.
 16. T.N.Jagadisan ed. The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, (Madras, n.d.) Included in this Collection is the address by the Rt.Honourable V.S.Srinivasa at the Ranade Centenary Celebrations, Bombay on January 18, 1942.
 17. Kolaskar, Religious and Social Reform, op.cit.

(1896), the Prarthana Mandir (1895) and on the occasion of the 63rd anniversary of Ram Mohan Roy¹⁸ (1896) appeared both in Jagadisan and Kolaskar. Ranade's inaugural address to the First Bombay Provincial Conference, Satara (1900) in Miscellaneous Writings, and the Jagadisan, Chintamani and Kolaskar collections. Other essays included in Kolaskar had also appeared in print before.

There is also contrary evidence regarding the duration of Ranade's editorship association with the Induprakash¹⁹. Mankar estimated it as having lasted from 1862-66. Kirtane concurs in this estimate²⁰. But Pathak²¹, himself associated later with the Induprakash as editor, cites

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18. The Ram Mohan Roy address appears in Marathi Translation in Ranade's Dharmapar Vyakhyane, pp. 295-315.
19. Started in 1862 as a bi-lingual weekly, through the efforts of Vishnu Purushottam Pandit and Gopal Hari Deshmukh, it appears to have continued publication till 1924, as least in its Marathi form.
20. Mankar Vol.I, p.95; Kirtane, op.cit., p.12.
21. Pathak, op.cit., pp.88-89; see also a fascimilie of Ranade's own list of articles in the Induprakash 1862-63 in Selected Writings of the Late Hon'ble Mr. Justice M.G. Ranade, M.A., LL.B., Advocate, C.I.E. on Indian States, ed., Vasudeo Waman Thakur, 1942.

evidence to show that it lasted from November 23, 1862 to March 23, 1863. The fact is that, however this matter may be resolved, nothing seems to exist, except cursory references, to Ranade's editorial output of this period or even of his later contributions to it. As an indication of his early thinking on the subject of change in society, it would have had no equal. The bulk of his works now in existence date from 1887.

It is already known that Ranade's Dharmapar Vyakhyane contained only brief summaries of sermons delivered at the Prarthana Samaj as they appeared in the columns of Subodh Patrika, Mumbai Vaibhav and Dnyanprakash. This itself is a meagre part of the "numberless sermons" Ranade preached from the pulpits of the Prarthana Samaj at Bombay and Poona, as D.V.Kirtane pointed out.²²

Thus it seems reasonable to conclude that despite the invaluable nature of Ranade's published works, they do not begin to measure up to the great output of speeches and writings that are known to have come from him.

22. D.V.Kirtane, op.cit., pp.53-54.

The Early Years- Ranade's Training in Western Thought.

Mahadev Govind Ranade who belonged to the Chitpavan caste²³ was born in Niphad in the Nasik District on January 18, 1842. His English education began in 1851 in Kolhapur and the year 1857 marks the beginning of his education at Bombay. Attending Elphinstone High School, he was among the twenty-one students who passed the first matriculation examination of the Bombay University in 1859. Thereafter he became a Jr. Dakshina Fellow, with responsibilities of tutoring along with R.G. Bhandarkar and Javerilal Umia Shankar Yajnik who had passed at that time. In 1862 he his degree of Bachelor of Arts and then offered History and Political Economy for the Honours Examination. The M.A. degree came in 1864 and

23. The place of Chitpavan leadership in Maharashtra has been of the subject of some studies. Gordon Johnson, "Chitpavan Brahmins and Politics in Western India in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" in Leach and Mukherjee, eds. Elites in South Asia, (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 95-118; Maureen L.P. Patterson, "Chitpavan Brahmin Family Histories: Courses for a Study of Social Structure and Social Change in Maharashtra" in Singer and Cohn (ed) Structure and Change in Indian Society, op.cit., pp. 397-412.

in 1865 he was nominated a fellow of the Bombay University, its first indigenous Fellow. By 1866 he had received the LL.B. degree with first class honours. As a student, Ranade's "patience, his endurance and avidity for extensive reading" could not be matched. Wacha recalled seeing him "intently absorbed writing his weekly essay or reading aloud his Grote and Gibbon, his Hume and Macaulay, his Locke and Hamilton²⁴."

E.I. Howard, Director of Public Instruction, Bombay was impressed with his command over English²⁵. Never one to spare himself Ranade also voluntarily elected to offer Latin during the year 1858-59, taking a course which was visualised as helping to "cultivate a sounder acquaintance with the English language and the principles of grammatical science than would be easy from the study of

24. Reported in the Times of India, 2nd February, 1901, quoted in Kellock, op.cit., p.10.

25. For evidence of the command of the English language at a young age see Mahadev Govind's English essay on "The Rise and Progress of the Maratha Power" reproduced in Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, 1858-9, Appendix C, pp.53-56. For the other question set, at this Sr. Scholarship examination, one can only speculate as to Ranade's thoughts. The question was, "Write an essay in your Vernacular on the change in Indian society which have taken place since the days of Manu.", Ibid., p.28.

English alone." Fifteen chapters in Ceasar and the first eight chapters in Horace, Book ii were read in the course.²⁶

Much must be made of Ranade's thorough familiarity with the thinking in England of those times. A clear view of what must have formed the minimum in his reading of History, Law and Political Economy in his preparation for the B.A. Hons. and LL.B. examinations is obtained from the report he made as Dakshina Fellow.²⁷ Lingard, Froude, Hume, Mackintosh, Ranke, Hallam, Macaulay and Guizot all figure in the History list. In the Political Economy list one finds the names of Mill, Senior, M.Culloch, Malthus, Smith and Ramsay. For a thorough grinding in Western and Hindu and Muslim Law the list of books which covered Criminal and Civil Law and Evidence must have been hard to improve upon.

Even more instructive is the report made by

26. DPI Report, Ibid., Appendix B., p.100

27. Mankar, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.28-32 reprints the list of these books from the Reports of the Director of Public Instruction for the years 1862-63 and 1865-66.

Ranade in a letter dated 26th June, 1865 to J.P. Hughlings, Acting Principal of Elphinstone College for the year 1864-65 about the preparation he made for the teaching of his classes, a responsibility he had as Junior and Senior Dakshina Fellow, 1860-66.²⁸ For instance for the F.E.A. class to whom he taught a course on The French Revolution, he used the following books:

Buckele's History of Civilization (latter part Vol. I)
 Tocqueville's French Revolution
 Carlyle's French Revolution
 Alison's History Vols. I-IV
 Thier's Revolution (down to Robespierre's fall)
 Lamartine's Girondists
 Mignet's Revolution-Vol. I in part.

29

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28. Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, 1864-65, pp. 30-32. In the year 1864-65, Ranade taught nine hours in the first term—three hours to the M.A. (Roman History) and six hours a week to the Matric class, three in Comus, one in History and two in Mathematics. In the second term he had eight hours of work—four hours with candidates of the F.E.A. in History and Mathematics and four hours with the Matric candidates in Samson, History and Euclid.
29. Ibid., p. 31. For private study, books read for the first time in Ranade's list included Mill's Representative Government and Milman's Christianity Vols. I-II; in his report made on 15th June, 1866 to K.M. Chatfield, Principal, Elphinstone College, there is the addition of Burke's Speeches and Pamphlets and Mackintosh's Defence of the Revolution to his reading list on the French Revolution, so that the "controversies of the period" may be illustrated, Report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1865-66, p. 109.

The years 1857-1871 formed the period, when as a student and teacher, Ranade spent the greatest time with his books, as compared to later years when public duties made many inroads on his time. It was also a preparatory and incubative period, for his mature thinking of later years.

Answering his critics, when speaking on the benefits to be derived from a study of what was described as "Ingrizi Bhashantil Vidya" he maintained that a first-hand experience of its study only was qualified to bring home its advantages, and not any number of descriptions of such advantages.³⁰ This could have been a reflection of his own personal experience. To him it was important not to equate such knowledge as belonging to England only but as being representative of the thinking of all advanced Western countries. He said:

The important thing about any body of knowledge is that it should tell us who we are, what are duties are, and what we should accomplish in this world.... such matters are essential for the human race to know.³¹

30. "Ingrizi Bhashantil Vidya", Pathak, op.cit., pp. 193-196.

31. Ibid., p. 194.

Ranade was of the opinion that it mattered little where such knowledge came from and felt that on these questions as a "youthful dynamism" was to be seen in the thinking Western countries, it certainly gave us something to learn from them. He pointed out that it was not for nothing that the Japanese and Chinese sought out such knowledge deliberately.

Chapter X: Mahadev Govind Ranade - The Liberal
Foundations of a Modern Society.

RANADE - THE LIBERAL FOUNDATIONS OF A MODERN
SOCIETY.

The liberal tradition established in ^{the} third and fourth quarter of the nineteenth century in Maharashtra assumes significance for a variety of considerations.

First and foremost, it was this tradition that became a precursor to later developments which made it possible for India to choose for its future an ideal conceived in liberal and democratic terms. Ideas promulgated in this period became part of the foundation on which the superstructure of modern India is to be built. If, in 1950, India was able to enact for herself a Constitution in which values were enshrined which were based on a recognition of the inherent dignity of man, and of Equality and Liberty and Fraternity, this accomplishment was in no small measure due to the climate created the thinking and actions of men in this period. A familiarity with liberal notions had been established by them. They created a situation by which the Fundamental Rights of men could be written in to the code books with a general acceptance, at

least, if not a universal one.

One of the main features of the new thinking was that the attitude to change itself was changing. This in itself might be considered to be the beginning of the modernisation process. If more doubts were raised and more questions asked in this generation than in any previous one, it bespoke of that healthy scepticism that forms the perfect foil to authoritarianism and that creates the setting for social change.

With a new sense of what constitutes social injustice and what modes of thought and behaviour in the traditional system are harmful to that tradition or that society, nineteenth century leaders were forced into articulation of the reasons why changes must be made and why goals, motives and institutions must be redefined and restructured. The nucleus of a new different philosophy of life began to take shape, with a different set of attitudes and values. A study of their ideas will reveal what nature of change in society these men sought. What relations did they think must obtain between man and man? What were the levers in society that would bring about

change or the instruments to effect such change? What "mainsprings of creative social action" did they find within tradition itself? What elements in tradition they did identify as those which impede progress? What notions of progress itself did they carry? What contributions did they make to secularism, which in a multi-religious, multicultural nation must be at the base of any modernization efforts? What ways did they advocated to alleviate man's inhumanity to man? Nineteenth century answers to these, questions will give an understanding of how the modernization began in India and how time has not dimmed the value of what they said.

It is to Ranade's thought we turn first. To him fell the analysing task, in a most articulate manner, ^{of} values and attitudes suitable to the liberalizing and modernizing of tradition. The greater part of his writings left to us are in English through the medium of which he was able to reach an all-India public. But through his numerous speeches and sermons, such as the Spring lectures series or the Prarthana Samaj platform, he also reached a wider public at home than just

the English-knowing elite class. Controversy and opposition to his ideas and social reforms in the press and from public platforms also stimulated clarity of thinking on these issues.

Ranade gained importance for another reason. It was as if the mantle of responsibility for guiding the liberal movement started by Ram Mohan Roy fell on his shoulders. Roy had espoused the cause of "social reform", had taken definite stands on issues of sati and the merits of English education. He was in his own life-time known outside Bengal, an all-India figure hailed as the "father" of modern India. The monotheistic and anti-idolatorous teachings of the Brahma Samaj had attracted to it many intellectuals who had the courage of their convictions to be so identified.

Ranade shared these distinctions. By the end of the 1880's he had through his association with the Indian National Social Conference, become known all over the country. He had travelled widely had by his own admission been in every large city of India, and had been heard from many a public platform. His religious beliefs were monotheistic and anti-idolatorous and in the same manner as in Bengal,

many intellectuals¹ of Maharashtra had gathered around the Samaj, with smaller branches springing up in towns all over the state.² However, as Collet in 1880 perceived it, there were certain differences between the two samajes. She said:

The theistic Church in Western India... has never detached itself so far from the Hindu element of Brahmaism as many of the Bengali Samajes, and both in religious observances and social customs, it clings far more closely to the old models. It is more learned and less emotional in its tone, and far more cautious and less radical in its policy than the chief Samajes of Bengal.³

From a different point of view, it is singularly appropriate that this foremost leader of nineteenth century liberals should have filled a multi-faceted role, not confining his thinking to any one area of interest but equally showing concern in the areas of economics, history, social reform, education and theology. His writings and speeches in centering around some pertinent aspect, in any one of these fields was really an

1. For brief introductions to some of the main figures in the Prarthana Samaj movement, see "Charitratmak Lekh" in D.G.Vaidya, Prarthana Samaj Itihas, pp. 3-362.

2. Ibid., pp. 288-307.

3. Ibid., p. 308.

attempt to achieve a breakthrough, to seek a new perspective, or a new relevance that would facilitate the transition from tradition to modernity. The times demanded that a single individual fill these many roles at once, and Ranade's contribution is all the more significant for this reason.

The homiletic quality of Ranade's speeches and indeed of other liberals of that era, could not be missed. They seemed to have been so gripped with the fervour generated by the principles they believed in, that they could not but sound like crusaders, which they were in point of fact. There was an inner compulsion that moved them and one they sought to communicate to others. Thus the intensity and depth of their concerns are reflected in their choice of words to express these concerns and come out in a high-sounding lofty idealism.

In Ranade, one senses the earnestness and sincerity of a man with a spiritual message. His idealism takes on religious hues and his monotheistic beliefs are evident in his writings. Phrases such as "The voice of God," "the image of God," "The Divine Command in us", "The Divine principle enthroned in the heart of every one of

us high or low" appear throughout the text of his writings. The single impelling force in Ranade's life was described by Gokhale in these words:

...(he) came to realize the great mission of his life, and reach that faith which no injustice, no opposition, no disappointment, ever dimmed. His one aspiration through life was that India should be roused from the lethargy of centuries, so that she might become a great and living nation, responsive to truth and justice, and self-respect, responsive to all the claims of our higher nature, animated by lofty ideals...⁴

The same sentiments appear in Ranade's own stirring words:

With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and lastly with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world.⁵

Running throughout all Ranade's speeches is a tone of high optimism. To him, the real wealth of human beings consisted in "not what a man hath, but what a man is, or can become", giving to it not a materialistic but a spiritual interpretation.

4. Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, op.cit., p.284.

5. Chintamani, op.cit., Part II, p.80.

A Personal Commitment to Liberal Principles and Practices.

Evidence of Ranade's great capacity for perceptiveness and ability to reach the heart of the matter under consideration in a clear-cut manner and without hesitancy is seen in the assessment he made of the changes needed for the creation of a modern nation. He said:

...the evolution that we seek is a change from constraint to freedom, constraint imposed by our own weaker nature over the freedom of our higher powers. It is a change from credulity to faith, from credulity which behoves without grounds to faith which builds itself upon firm foundations...
 (a change) from status to contract, from authority to reason from unorganised life, from bigotry to toleration, from blind fatalism to a sense of human dignity. This is what I understand by social evolution for individuals and societies.⁶

The desire for "social regeneration" or "national elevation" as Ranade was wont to describe it, seemed to him, to be a matter of deep personal commitment. The personal commitment to lofty ideals was, in reality, a

6. Ranade, "Social Evolution", a public address delivered at Allahabad, 1892, Chintamani, Part II, p. 29.

commitment to progress, using a nineteenth century term, or a commitment to modernization, if its twentieth century avatara as M.N.Srinivas put it, was used. Ranade was at great pains to show that mere lip-homage to high principles without the responsibility to act in accordance with them was a self-deluding exercise for both individuals and a nation. When looked at from the point of view of the problems faced by Ranade and others in the Social Conference on the issue of broken pledges, already discussed in a previous chapter, the fundamental importance of creating an understanding of the relation of precept to practice becomes apparent.

Ranade was of the firm conviction that for the sense of personal commitment there could be no substitute. Thus he came to grips with a fundamental issue when he held that individuals must face this matter and with all honesty. He said:

Whether reformer or non-reformer, let each one in the seclusion of his own home, when he retires into his own hearth, ask himself the following question:- Does he feel the desire that he should grow in purity, temperance, justice and mercy, and

that these virtues be more and more incorporated into the practical life he leads from day to day?⁷

Stating the matter in a more personal way, with Biblical overtones, Ranade said:

I put the question to myself, "Do I feel any yearning, any regret, any compunction, that there is anything wanting, anything wrong, anything cruel in me, and do I try to abstain from doing anything that I ought to, and feel inclined to do things which I ought not to do?" If I feel this sort of compunction, this sort of struggle, if I feel noble impulses, if I feel at the same time that these noble have been weakened by nature, the work before me of reform is clear.

8

Commitment to Reform: A Conscious Choice- A Matter of the Spirit.

Concomitantly, a commitment to reform implied a conscious deliberate choice on the part of the individual who was committed to bring about a change in the existing state of affairs. Ranade conceded that there were some who held that:

7. Closing Address, Twelvth Social Conference, Madras, 1898, Chintamani, Part.II, p. 109.

8. Ibid., p. 110.

They should preach reform... but that they should in practice only drift in- to reform, which means that we should close our eyes, shut our mouths, tie our hands and feet, and wait and wait till the train of events transferred us from one stage to another. Things should be allowed to take their own course... 9

The fallacy in such a view, Ranade felt was that:

... When one drifts into reform he is not reformed, he remains exactly as he was. 10

Using an analogy, Ranade continued:

... The fastest railway train does not give exercise to our body, if we do not ourselves move. 11

Another view held that reform was an external matter, involving a change in the environment, without an accompanying change of attitude or heart. He described them as:

... who thought that when they were asked to lend their support to reform, there was some objective reality outside themselves that they had to deal with. 12

9. Ranade, Hislop College Address "Social Conference and its Aims and Methods", Nagpur, 1891, Chintamani, Ibid., p. 24.

10. Chintamani, p.25

11. Ibid., p. 25

12. Ibid., p. 25.

Ranade's retort to this view was clear. He said:

There was no such thing. The thing to be reformed was their own self, heart and head and soul; their own prejudices were to be removed, their superstitions to be eradicated, their courage to be strengthened their weaknesses to be conquered in fact their character to be so formed again so as to suit the times, so as to fit in with the spirit of the age.¹³

The work of reform was described as "holy work" in which we seek not to advance our temporal interest but promote our spiritual welfare. The issues involved are clear cut, and unequivocal, and Ranade has no hesitation in stating the choice before man in blunt, frank terms. He said:

...the issue... is a choice between life and death, we live or we die according as we make the choice... the choice lies with us and we may choose which we prefer.

14

Ranade spelled out the choices in these terms:

...suppose instead of saying "I shall take for myself a vow that, as far as lies in my power, I shall undertake the education of my female relations", we say, "I shall not undertake the education of my female relations", shall we be the better or the worse for our resolution?...Will our resolution be

13. Ibid., p.25

14. Ibid., p.109.

to our advantage or loss spiritually or morally? Suppose instead of saying "I shall", as far as possible, protract and prolong the period of celibacy amongst men and women", we were to say, that "as far as possible that period shall be shortened", shall our country be the better for our efforts or the worse?... Shall we not be just, and merciful to those who need justice and mercy at our hands? shall we not be more considerate to those whom we have hitherto treated as if their very touch was pollution, and help them in rising higher, or shall we say to them, "Do not stand near and cast your shadow on us"; will the inner man in each one of us grow stronger, braver and more charitable and humane, by reason of our resolve in one way and not in the other?

15

On a different occasion, Ranade had used these words to make the same point. He said:

...It is not the gains that you make outside of you, it is not what you have, but what you yourselves become, that makes or mars a man's or a nation's destiny.¹⁶

In the ultimate analysis the issue of social change, Ranade held, which must be "infused in our minds," was the issue of living in accordance with liberal principles. He said:

...(it) was not this or that particular reform...but the general spirit of purity,

15. Ibid., pp. 108-109.

16. Ibid., p. 28

justice, equality, temperance and mercy...
 toleration and appreciation of all...(as
 opposed to) exclusiveness, haughtiness,
 pride, cruelty and misery of all kinds...
 17

The philosophy of his mature thinking, "the
 philosophy" which he confessed "comes upon me at
 times", he said was:

...to make men feel that they have duties
 and responsibilities for which alone, life
 and health are given to them. 18

The creation of this state of awareness
 involved a rousing of man's conscience. He said:

...Until the conscience is stirred up,
 nothing great or good can be accomplished
 by agencies from outside, which hardly
 touches the surface. It is not an easy
 thing to stir up the conscience of a
 nation such as ours...19

Ranade's Identification of Traditional Ideas and
 Practices That Need Change.

In Amraoti, at the Eleventh Social Conference,
 Ranade identified those "inward forms of ideas and
 practices which have been hastening our decline

17. Ibid., p. 109.

18. Ibid., p. 110.

19. Ranade, Inaugural Address, The Tenth Social
 Conference, Calcutta, 1896, p. 74.

during the past three thousand years." He listed them as:

- i) Isolation.
- ii) Submission to outward force or power more than to the voice of the inward conscience.
- iii) Perception of fictitious differences between men and men due to heredity and birth.
- iv) Passive acquiescence in evil or wrong doing and a general indifference to secular well-being, almost bordering on fatalism. 20

What importance is assigned by Ranade to these ideas? What is the part they have played in creating the existing state of affairs? From what source do they emanate? Ranade explained:

These have been the root ideas of our ancient social system. They have as their natural result led to the existing family arrangements where woman is entirely subordinated to the man and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity (italics supplied). 21

In assigning to the "prevalence of ideas" the place of starting points or first principles

20. Ranade, "Revival and Reform", The Eleventh Social Conference, Amraoti, 1897, Ibid., p.91.

21. Ibid.

or premises from which the existing evils follow, Ranade had indicated the conceptual base of practices and social institutions. The patterns of behaviour of a society have at their foundation, beliefs and convictions that sanction these practices and institutions. Superficial and external changes introduced into the practices themselves will not root them out or cause them to disappear, or be transformed. Social institutions and practices will change only as the ideas behind them change and Ranade is very clear in his mind about this matter.

He said:

All the evils we seek to combat result from these ideas. They are mere corollaries to these axiomatic assumptions.... As long as these ideas remain operative on our minds, we may change our outward forms and institutions and be none the better for the change. These ideas have produced in the long course of ages their results on our character, and we must judge their good or bad quality, as St. Paul says, by the fruits they have borne.²²

As a true liberal Ranade would refused to be daunted by the results, "however disastrous" of such ideas and saw hope for the future if we would "learn the lesson for our guidance" from these facts.

The lesson was:

22. Ibid.

... the current of these ideas must be changed, and in place of the old worship we paid to them, we must accustom ourselves and others to worship and reverence new ideals (*italics supplied*)

23

One of the lasting impressions made by Ranade on Gokhale's mind had been this great sense of optimism and abiding faith that he found in his guru, as well as the capacity to see that lessons must be learned from the times in which we lived. Gokhale described it thus:

...(he) had reached that faith which no injustice, no opposition, no disappointment ever dimmed... he was a careful student of the history and institutions of other people... he studied them mainly to derive lessons from them for the guidance of his own countrymen.

24

Dimensions of Social Change- New Ideals to replace Old Ideals and Ideas.

Ranade identified the new ideals and ideas that must replace old axiomatic assumptions, in terms of the latter. Using the four major ideas already named, he dwelt at some length on the evils of the old ideas and the merits of the new ones

23. Ibid., p.92

24. Gokhale Speeches Vol.III, p.284.

that would transform or replace the old ones. His discussion of these matters show how his thinking was in advance of his times and how it has relevance almost a century later. Changes must take place along these dimensions:

1. A Spirit of Fraternity must replace Isolation.

The first idea of "isolation" was described by him in terms of the ridiculous lengths to which it was carried. He said:

... At present it is everybody's ambition to pride himself upon being a member of the smallest community that can be conceived, and the smaller the number of those with whom you can dine or marry, or associate, the higher is your perfection and purity... Every caste and every sect has thus a tendency to split itself into smaller castes and smaller sects in practical life.²⁵

The malaise had wider extension even covering philosophy and religion, he thought. He said:

...Even in philosophy and religion, it is a received maxim that knowledge is for the few, and that salvation is only possible for the esoteric elect with whom only are the virtues of sanctity and wisdom, and that for the rest of mankind, they must be left to wander in the wilderness, and grovel in superstition, and even vice, with only a colouring of so-called religion to make them respectable...²⁶

25. Chintamani, p.92

26. Ibid.,

"Now all this must be changed" he said.

A spirit of fraternity or "elastic expansiveness" must be created in place of isolation. This "new mould of thought" implies:

...a capacity to expand outwards, and to make more cohesive inwards the bonds of fellowships... the tendency must be towards a general recognition of the essential equality of man and man. It will beget sympathy and power. It will strengthen your own hands, by the sense that you have numbers with you, and not against you, or as you foolishly imagine, below you. 27

2. Conscience and Reason to replace Blind Reverence to Authority.

In a traditional society the place of authoritarianism has always been a high one. Men accept ideas and customs from the past, as if they were unquestionable, not open to doubt or criticism. The rationale behind behaviour and conduct based on scriptural authority, is that it is right on the very ground that it has been so ordained. The implication of such blind reverence to authority is the state that results where men become virtual prisoners to the ways of the past, unable to break away from them. Of even more fundamental significance is the

fact, under these conditions, men abandon their capacity to think, to reason for themselves, to question customary beliefs and mores and bring them to the altar of reason where they can be viewed dispassionately in all their aspects and implications, with due regard given to men's increasing knowledge of history, sociology and science, and the breakthroughs achieved in his own understanding of human behaviour as well as the understandings reached in the psychology and philosophy of religion.

Ranade is constrained to emphasize these and other aspects of authoritarianism when he considers the old idea which he has described as "submission to outward force or power". He said:

...The next idea which lies at the root of our helplessness is the sense that we are always to remain children, to be subject to outside control, and never rise to the dignity of self-control by making our conscience and our reason the supreme, if not the sole, guide to our conduct.²⁸

He describes the chaotic condition of thinking and action that results from such 'helplessness'. He said:

28. Ibid., pp. 92-93.

...All past history has been a terrible witness to the havoc created by this misconception...with too many of us, a thing is true or false, righteous or sinful, simply because somebody in the past has said that it is so. Duties and obligations are duties and obligations, not because we feel them to be so, but because somebody reputed to be wise has laid down that they are so. In small matters of manners and courtesies, this outside dictation is not without its use. But when we abandon ourselves entirely to this helpless dependence on other wills, it is no wonder that we become helpless as children in all departments of life.²⁹

Ranade warned against a "rebellious overthrow of authority" but described "the new idea which should take the place of this helplessness and dependence." It is "freedom responsible to the voice of God in us." He said:

...We are children, no doubt, but the children of God, and not of man, and the voice of God is the only voice which we are bound to listen.³⁰

Not every human being may be able to hear the voice of God when he so desires, Ranade said, "because from long neglect and dependence upon outside help, we have benumbed the faculty of conscience within us". But he continued, "it is this sense of self-respect, or rather respect for the God in us,

29. Ibid., p.93.

30. Ibid., p.93.

which has to be cultivated. It is a very tender plant which takes years and years to grow". Ranade was emphatic that it was something that had to be done by human beings, as a duty and that there was really no choice in the matter if we were to be true to our higher nature. In a summing up of the place of authority in life he said:

...Great and wise men in the past, as in the present, have a claim upon our regards, but they must not come between us and our God-the Divine principle enthroned in the heart of every one of us high or low...
 Revere all human authority, pay your respects to all prophets and all revelations, but never let this reverence and respect come in the way of the dictates of conscience, the Divine command in us. 31

3. The Law of Duty in place of the Law of Karma.

There is a brief consideration of the effect of a belief in the law of necessity, by Ranade, who thinks it results in the "perception of fictitious differences between men and men due to heredity and birth." The belief that "all men are created equal" does not imply that they are all equal in ability, nature or heredity. Ranade is seen emphasizing this important truth when he said:

...There is no doubt that men differ from men in natural capacities and aptitudes, and that heredity and birth are factors of considerable importance in our development. 32

But from this truth to jump to the assertion "that heredity and birth" are the only factors that count in assessing a man's worth is a far cry from the liberal standpoint and Ranade has no hesitation in bringing this fact to the notice of his audience. He said:

...It is at the same time true that they are not the only factors that determine the whole course of our life for good or for evil, under a law of necessity. Heredity and birth explain many things, but this law of Karma does not explain all things! What is worse, it does not explain the mystery that makes man and woman what they really are, the reflection and the image of God. 33

He also explained that the Law of Karma seems to derive support from "our passions and our feelings, our pride and our ambitions" and in so doing "completes our conquest... and in too many cases enforces our surrender." The "misconceptions" brought about by the Law of Karma, Ranade concedes "are very hard to remove, perhaps the hardest of the old ideas."

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

But, here again, there is really no choice open to man, whether or not to do so. He said:

...But removed it must be, if not in this life or generation, in many lives and generations, if we are ever to rise to our full stature.³⁴

The new philosophy preaches that one's karma can be overcome, that there is hope, where formerly there was resignation. As Ranade said:

...The new idea that should come in here is that this Law of Karma can be controlled and set back by a properly trained will, when it will be made subservient to a higher will than ours. This we see in our every day life, and Necessity or Fates are, as our own texts tell us, faint obstacles in the way of our advancement if we devote ourselves to the law of Duty.

35

4. Dignity of Man to replace Passive Acquiescence in Wrong-doing.

When a true awareness of the essential dignity of man exists, when an understanding of his higher nature as opposed to his passions and appetites is arrived at, then it is inevitable that there will be no "passive acquiescence", no giving in to ideas and practices that in the nature of the case must be wrong. "The fetters of mind" Ranade felt "once

34. Ibid., p.94

35. Ibid.

realized as fetters would drop off themselves. They cease to be fetters, and even become a discipline for better existence.³⁶

There is something reminiscent of the teachings of Ranade, of the Socratic doctrine "virtue is knowledge", when he discusses, with a great amount of moral fervour, the state of a society that "permits" evils within its life, out of sheer passivity by assuming the role of disinterested passers-by or mere spectators. He condemns as a "worst form of atheism", the belief that evil-doing is an "inevitable condition of human life, about which we need not be very particular" or the belief that "all human life is a vanity and a dream, and we are not much concerned with it". He said:

No man or woman really ceases to be an animal who does not perceive or realise that wrong or evil-doing, impurity and vice, crime and misery, and sin of all kinds, is really our animal nature prolonged. It is the beast in us which blinds us to impurity and vice and even makes them attractive. There must be nautches in our temples...drunkenness...

36. Ranade, Address at Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, 28th December, 1893, Chintamani, p.36.

poverty and wretchedness and tyranny...
 fraud and force. No doubt these are
 facts and there is no use denying their
 existence, but in the name of all that
 is sacred and true, do not acquiesce in
 them, do not hug these evils to your
 bosom, and cherish them. Their contact
 is poisonous...it corrupts men.

37

This "passive acquiescence" must be corrected
 by "a healthy sense of the true dignity of our
 nature and of man's high destiny."

Change and Reform- Its Inevitability.

There had never been any doubt in Ranade's
 mind that in any process of nation-building the
 need for reform was of paramount importance. As
 Gokhale said:

...(Ranade) preached reform, not merely
 because his conscience urged him to do
 so, but also because his intellect was
 satisfied that without reform there was
 no hope for us as a nation.³⁸

Ranade was all too afraid that opportunities
 to bring about reform would be allowed to slip by,
 if sufficient awareness of its need was not
 generated. His outspokenness and the zeal and the
 single-minded concentration he put behind the work
 of the National Social Conference is understandable

37. Ibid.

38. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.III, p.284.

in the context of this sentiment.

Ranade was also convinced that the passage of time and the march of events was such that there could really be no marking time in the history of a nation. He described the process in different ways:

...but time and tide wait for no man. Social evolution will not allow you to rest where you are.³⁹

...slowly but surely the progress of liberal ideas must be allowed to work its way in reforming our social customs, and the process cannot be stopped even though we may wish it.⁴⁰

...it is quite plain that no lapse of time can bar the way of reform where such is needed by the exigencies of our present difficulties. Above all mere ordinances and institutes, stands the law eternal, of justice and equality, of pity and compassion, the suggestions of the conscience with-in us and of nature without us. We can no more resist the stream of these influences as working for righteousness than we can roll back the tide".⁴¹

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39. Ranade, The Ninth Social Conference, Poona, 1895, Chintamani; pp.59-60.
40. Ranade, The Eleventh Social Conference, Amraoti, 1897, Ibid., p.88.
41. Ranade, The First Bombay Provincial Social Conference, Satara, 1900, Ibid., p.130.

Reform - A Slow and Extensive Process reaching
Every Part of the Social Organism.

Whatever be the nature of urgency about reform, and however inevitable it is, Ranade was always conscious of the fact that the process itself would be a slow one and time and again has dwelt on this aspect of it. Habits and actions and modes of thought that have lasted for centuries cannot be changed in a hurry and there is no quick and easy way to achieve such change. He said:

...The whole existence must be renovated. The baptism of fire and not of water must be gone through by those who seek a renovation of the heart such as this.⁴²

He felt that "it may take years and generations to achieve this result" and using a mixed metaphor continued:

...We may all have to die and become manure for the seeds of life in future generations. But once we enter upon the right path, the torch of light blazing inside us, which we only seek to darken with our artificial rushlights, will show to those who come after us the way to heaven. The way to heaven is a narrow path, and one has to tread upon sharp-edged instruments, carefully balancing the weak limbs and spirits..
43

42. Ranade, Lahore Address, 1893, Ibid., p.37.

43. Ibid., p. 36

Clearly subscribing to an organic view of civilization, Ranade said:

...The process of growth is always slow, where it has to be sure growth. The best natures naturally want to shorten this long process in their desire to achieve the work of a country in a decade. This temptation has to be resisted, and in this respect the teachings of the evolution doctrine have great force, because they teach that growth is structural and organic, and must take slow effect in all parts of the organism, and cannot neglect any, and favour the rest.

44

Such a view of civilization is reiterated throughout his writings.

The Relativity of Assessment - Indian Conditions to be judged on Their Own Merit.

In 1892, Ranade delivered an address at Deccan College, Poona on "Indian Political Economy"⁴⁵ which not only attained recognition in his own life time but has been the basis of many economic studies of Ranade's viewpoint and

44. Ibid., p.30.

45. Madhav Govind Ranade, C.I.E., "Indian Political Economy" in Essays on Indian Economics, 2nd ed. Madras: G.A. Natesan & Co., 1906, pp. 1-42.

and other allied studies.⁴⁶

In this essay Ranade commended List and two American Thinkers, Hamilton and Carey who shared the view of the Historical School of Germany about the "relative and hypothetical" character of Economic Science. He was critical of the Ricardian School for its "universalism and disagreed with the Laissez-Faire doctrine. He said:

...that the Principles of the Sciences, as they have enunciated them in their Text Books, are universally and necessarily true for all times and places and for all stages of Advancement. Modern Thought is veering around to the conclusion that the Individual and his Interests are not the centre round which the theory should revolve.. and that Collective Defence and Well-being, Social Education and Discipline.. must be taken into account..."

47

46. Sir, J.C. Coyajee, "Ranade's Work as an Economist", The Indian Journal of Economics, Vol. XXII (1941-42); Bhabatosh Datta, "The Background of Ranade's Economics", The Indian Journal of Economics, Vol. XXII (1941-42); Morris D. Morris, "Towards a Reinterpretation of Nineteenth Century Economic History", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. V, No. 1, March, 1968; N.V. Sovani, "Ranade's Model of the Indian Economy", Artha Vinjana, Vol. VI, 1962, pp. 10-20; V.S. Minocha, "Ranade on the Agrarian Problem", The Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol. II, No. 4, October, 1965, pp. 357-366.

47. Essays on Indian Economics, p. 22.

Very different conditions obtain in the Indian situation, Ranade said, describing them as "old legacies and inherited weakness... stagnation and dependence, depression and poverty..." and these fundamental differences must be recognised in any comparison of Indian economic conditions with others or in making any economic principles applicable to it.

48

Clearly the same relativity exists when an assessment of progress or achievement is to be made in the field of social reform. Speaking on "The Past History of Social Reform" in 1894 he said:

...I hope I have said enough to justify my position that the last seven years have not been fruitless of results, not measured by the standards of Western races, but by the conservative strength of our prejudices and by the rule of improvement observable in our political and industrial spheres of work.

49

48. Ibid., p. 24

49. Ranade, Address on "The Past History of Social Reform" delivered at the Madras Christian College, Madras, on 27th December, 1894, Chintamani, p. 51.

"Reform is not Revival."

It was to be expected that when Ranade and the "heroes and martyrs" as he named them, in the reform movement- he named Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pandit Vishnu Shastri (Pandit) Karsandas Muljee, Madhavdas Raghunathdas, Rao Saheb Kolhatkar, Bhandarkar, Vireshlingam Pantulu, Karve, Dayaram Gidumal, Atmaram Pandurang on one occasion⁵⁰ among others whom he named at other times⁵¹ - took a positive stand on reform matters, that they would encounter stiff opposition from what, Ranade himself described, as "the camp of extreme orthodoxy." This camp advocated "revival", not reform, and a "return to the old ways and appeal to the old authorities and the old sanction." To such demands Ranade responded:

...people speak without realising the full significance of their own words. When we are asked to revive our institutions and customs, people seem very much at sea as to what it is they seem to revive. What particular period in

50. Ibid., pp. 106-7.

51. On another occasion he named Rao Bahadur Chintaman Narayan Bhat, and Waman Abhaji Modak as part of the group of "heroes and martyrs" in the Reform movement.

our history is to be taken as the old?
 Whether the period of the Vedas, of
 the Smritis, of the Puranas or of the
 Mohomedan or Modern Hindu Times?⁵²

In order to expose the ridiculous lengths
 to which demands of this nature may be carried,
 Ranade launched a virtual diatribe against
 certain old practices and indulged in some
 pretty plain speaking and demanded:

what shall we revive? Shall we revive
 the old habits of our people when the
 most sacred of our caste indulged in
 all abominations as we now understand
 them of animal food and drink which
 exhausted every section of our country's
 Zoology and Botany?... Shall we revive
 the twelve forms of sons, or eight
 forms of marriage, which included
 capture, and recognised mixed and
 illegitimate intercourse?... Shall we
 revive the old liberties taken by the
 Rishis... Shall we revive the hecatombs
 of animals sacrificed... and in which
 human beings were not spared as
 propitiatory offerings?... Shall we
 revive the Sati and infanticide
 customs?... these instances will
 suffice to show that the plan of
 reviving ancient usages and customs
 will not work our salvation...⁵³

Ranade's stand is unequivocal. There can
 be no going back, to what is a matter of past

52. Ranade, "Revival and Reform", Amraoti, 1897,
 Chintamani, p.89-90.

53. Ibid., p. 90.

history. A revival or restitution is not possible, a restructuring is what may be attempted. He said:

...it seems to be forgotten that in a living organism as society is, no revival is possible. The dead and the buried or burnt are dead, buried and burnt once for all, and the deed past cannot therefore be revived except by a reformation of the old materials into new organised beings.⁵⁴

Culture- Maintenance of the Continuity of the Whole.

While a return to the past is neither possible nor desirable, Ranade showed rare insight in opposing those reformers who would advocate a "complete break with the past." Firstly, the view was unrealistic because a person was a product of his heritage and could not disown it. Secondly, such a cutting away from one's cultural moorings has its own set of dangers. We have here glimmerings of what has, in our times, come to be called a crisis of identity.

Ranade's words are instructive. He said:

54. Ibid., p.91.

...You are unconsciously influenced by the traditions in which you are born, by the surroundings in which you are brought up... influenced by those things in the world which you cannot disown. To say that it is possible to build up a new fabric on new lines without any help from the past is to say that I am self born...

55

Neither did Ranade feel any compulsion to effect such a break. He said:

...we cannot break with the past altogether; with our past we should not break altogether for it is a rich inheritance and we have no reason to be ashamed of it. 56

The Achievement of Progress.

(1) Viewing the Past- The Selective Approach.

The historian in Ranade comes to the forefront in an address made at Madras in 1898,⁵⁷ in which observations made by Abé Du Bois⁵⁸ are

55. Ibid., p.91.

56. Ibid., p.30.

57. Ranade, "Southern India a Hundred Years Ago", Madras, 1898, Ibid., pp.96-108.

58. Abbe Du Bois, Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies, (Oxford, 1906); also see Ranade's Account of "India A Thousand Years Ago", Lucknow, 1899, based on observations made by Alberuni, Ibn Batuta and Abdur Razzak, Mohomedan Philosophers and travellers in India, Chintamani, pp.113-116; in this same account, Ranade touched on an uncommon subject viz. the benefits of Mohomedan rule and a brief comparison of Hindu and Mahomedan civilizations, Ibid., pp.119-125.

calculated to make us anxious and thoughtful, and to sober and moderate our enthusiasm." Ranade offered a hypothesis to explain how the "evils and vices and obscenities and enormities" described by Du Bois came about⁵⁹. It was essentially a case of an old civilization of "pristine purity" becoming adulterated, deflected and corrupted by force of historical circumstances, a case of "parasitical growths" encrusting it and sucking the life out of it. Thus Ranade said:

...We have not to unlearn our entire past- the past which is the glory and wonder of the human race. We have to retrace our steps from the period of depression, when in panic and weakness a compromise was made with the brute force of ignorance and superstition.

60

The task of reform, vis a vis the past, is thus clear in Ranade's mind. He said:

We have to... correct the perversions, which have sprung up and obscured the nobility of our common stock and ancient origin. It is a fortunate thing that most of the social evils, complained of in these days, were unknown in the days of our highest glory, and that in seeking their reform, we are not imitating any foreign models, but restoring its ancient freedom and dignity in place of subsequent corruptions.⁶¹

59. Ibid., pp.101-105

60. Ibid., p.105

61. Ibid., p.4.

(2) Progress by Absorption and Assimilation.

The second mode by which progress is to be achieved, Ranade thought was illustrated by the lessons from history. Every invasion in the past had demonstrated the power of the Indian culture to absorb and assimilate the best from alien influences. From this point of view, he felt, conservatism had its uses. He said:

...our conservatism is (a) strength...
(it) does not prevent the slow absorption of new ideas and gradual assimilation of new practices.

62

The history of India abounded in instances of this type of assimilation. As Ranade said:

...the history of this great country is but a fairy tale, if it has not illustrated how each invasion from abroad has tended to serve as a discipline of the chosen race, and led to the gradual development of the nation to a higher ideal if not of actual facts, at least of potential capabilities. The nation has never been depressed beyond hope of recovery, but after a temporary submerging under the floods of foreign influences, has reared up its head-absorbing all that is best in the alien civilization and polity and religions.

63

62. Chintamani, p. 39.

63. Ibid., p.28.

In 1893, speaking on "The True Tests of Social Progress" at Lahore, Ranade indicated that both assimilation and social evolutionism were involved in social progress, where not only are excellences of alien cultures were absorbed, but each stage in the civilization itself was an advancement in terms of the previous one. He said:

...Change for the better by slow absorption-assimilation not by sudden conversion and revolution - ~~we have~~ ~~been~~ outlived Buddhism, and we conquered it by absorbing its excellences and rejecting its errors. We have outlived Mahomedan repressions by being the better for the hardy discipline in the suffering we went through under the domination... the old world fetichism has given place to idolatry. The old world polytheism...to a full recognition by the humblest of our people to the unit of the godhead...⁶⁴

(3) "New Environments"- A Principle of Growth.

Ranade's view of the organic nature of the growth of cultures and civilizations taken from the science of life gave him a third principle of social change and progress. He said:

64. Ibid., p. 38

65. Ibid., p. 28.

If the environments determine the growth a change in the environments must bring about a change in the political and social organism.

65

Liberals of the nineteenth century were inclined to view the Indo-British connection as more than Pax Brittanica, to see it as a form of divine dispensation, working for the benefit of India in the first instance, but also as having mutually beneficial effects. Ranade, more so than other liberals, exemplifies this school of thinking, evidence of which is to be found both in his Social Conference addresses and his philosophy of theism, and in his essays on Economics.

There are perhaps three different perspectives of looking at this Indo-British connection, distinguishable in Ranade's writings. The first one may be seen in the context of providing "new environment" and an infusion of new blood, so vital for growth and well-being. In like manner, it can also be viewed as a form of "migration". Ranade said:

...the environments which surround us have changed, and are not the same as they were a hundred years ago. Peace and order

reigns throughout the land instead of the old disturbances which made the preservation of life one's chief care. Instead of our country being a sealed book, we are now part of the community of nations... distances and local barriers which so long separated us have been removed, and we are made more mobile and coherent than we were before. These are only physical changes. More important still is the discipline afforded us by the example and teaching of the most gifted and free nation in the world, whose rule guarantees us to a long continuance of these favourable conditions... I contend that the changed order of things... are the new environments, in which, without change of place, we have been forced to migrate... they infuse new blood in our veins. 66

Again, six years later he described the connection in these words:

...the British connection and its "just and humane" administration have brought about a change in our religion, law and polity, of such a character as not to make it necessary that we should be all turned into atheists and barbarians... and if we have not acquired a new nature, we have at least acquired inclinations and aspirations which will prevent our relapse into our former condition.

67

Ranade reiterated his stand in a similar way in his essay on Indian Political Economy. He said:

66. Ibid., p.30

67. Ibid., p.98.

...As a compensation against...depressing influence, we have to set off the advantage of a free contact with a race which has opened the Country to the Commerce of the world, and by its superior skill and resources have developed communications in a way previously unknown. If we wish to realize our situation fully, we may not overlook this factor, because, it represents the beam of light which alone illumines the prevailing darkness.68

A second identifiable aspect of viewing the British connection was to see it as part of a divine plan. He said:

...It cannot be well be a mere accident of history that the destinies of this country have been entrusted to the guidance of a Nation whose characteristic strength is opposed to all our weaknesses... whose life is full of hope, and whose powers or organization have never been surpassed.

69

In another passage he saw it thus:

...(through) the guiding hand of God in history... we have been brought under influences of a still more elevating kind... The Old Testament testifies to the truth and benignity of the promise of the New Gospel...which teaches us the supreme duty of unification in place of dissension. It teaches us by example and precept the supreme virtue of organization and self-reliance. It holds before us the brighter ideal of the dignity of the individual soul—the image of the God in us. It seeks to bridge the chasm we otherwise would have

68. Ranade, "Indian Political Economy", op.cit., p.25

69. Ibid.

been unable to span by our own unaided efforts, and holds us out a hope of a more hopeful future than we have ever enjoyed in the past.⁷⁰

In a third aspect of the connection between two different cultures, Ranade saw a different dimension. He said:

The hand of God in History is but dimly seen by those who cannot recognize in the contact of European with Eastern thought a higher possibility for the future of both races. Already the morning dawn is upon us, and we can see glimpses of the bright future reflected in our ability to see and appreciate each other's strength and excellence.⁷¹

A Chosen People - A Message of Hope.

Ranade's faith in the ultimate triumph of the eternal principles of justice, equality and charity, is matched by his faith in India as the "chosen land" and her people as a "chosen race". This particular theme of "A Chosen land and a chosen people" has been used in the history of man, time and again, as a message of hope, as an assurance that the fallen shall rise again and an incentive so that a people may be spurred on to greater things again. Ambedkar pointed out that

70. Chintamani, p.38

71. Ranade, "Philosophy of Indian Theism", The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, ed. T.N.Jagadisan, p.58.

in bringing this message to his people, Ranade had the vision of a prophet, the latter term used in the Jewish sense. The new Mosaic Gospel of hope and confidence is brought to a people to whom the Battle of Kirkee and the downfall of the Maratha Empire must have utterly confounded the best intellect of Maharashtra and darkened its horizons fully and completely.⁷²" To his people Ranade said:

...I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race.

73

True Reform.

In the ultimate analysis the true work of a reformer and true measure of the reform movement is not the success of a particular reform but the extent to which larger perspectives and readiness for change in the society have been inculcated. Ranade's awareness of this dimension is seen in these words:

72. B.R. Ambedkar, Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah, Address delivered on the 101 Birth Centenary of Mahadev Govind Ranade (Jullundur, 1964), p. 13.

73. Chintamani, p. 37.

...Reforms in the matter of infant marriage and enforced widowhood, in the matter of temperance and purity, inter-marriage between castes, the elevation of the low castes... are reforms only so far and no further, as they check the influence of old ideas, and promote the growth of the new tendencies..(the reformer) must have his family, village, tribe and nation recast in other and new moulds.

74

A Contemporary Assessment of Ranade's Thought and Work.

The Times of India, writing to commend the appointment of N.G.Chandavarkar to the Bombay High Court Bench less than two weeks before Ranade's death, summed up Ranade's work in these eloquent terms:

We have always regarded Bombay as the most progressive part of India. We have looked to Bombay for light and guidance... Bombay was not only in the run of progress but was also well adapted to take in its train the south that has chilled us at times and intensified the interest and enthusiasm in the work when oppressed by formidable odds...Its Presidency Association and the Sarvajanic Sabha as originally constituted and conducted till some years ago, the Sarvajanic Sabha Journals, the system of Summer lectures in Poona... the honoured names of Mandlik, Dadabhai, Nulkar, Bhide, Tyabjee, Wedderburn, Telang, Ranade and Bhandarkar, the benefactions and endowments in the Bombay University, one of

74. Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings, p. 196;
Chintamani, p.95.

the richest, the strength of vernacular journalism, the diffusion of vernacular literature...all support the view we have ventured to express ... to borrow a phrase and idea from the atmosphere, Bombay's temperature is the most equable and most congenial for progress on all lines... Mr. Ranade has contributed in no small measure to make Bombay what it is. His fearless advocacy of social reform and all his sacrifice for its sake, the perseverance with which he has conducted the campaign against social evils, his courageous advice in political reform, his accessibility to all, his interest in matters pertaining to the well-being of his country, his massive intellect, the marvellous way in which he has used that intellect for the benefit and edification, both of the Government and of his countrymen- all these have contributed in no small degree to build up the Bombay today. Take up the Bombay of Ranade's childhood and take up the Bombay of today. And in the edifice which you now see you will find the handiwork of Ranade and his illustrious coadjutors and contemporaries.

75

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75. "Mr. Chandavarkar and Mr. Ranade", The Times of India, Saturday, January 5, 1901, p.5. It also carried a full report of the Lahore Indian National Social Conference and the full speech of Ranade, "Vashista and Vishwamitra", pp.8-9 and p.11; for the latter see Chintamani, pp.377-390; an example of Ranade's "accessibility to all" is afforded by an instance related by Ambedkar who found in a bundle of old papers belonging to his father, a paper purported to be a petition sent by the commissioned and non-commissioned Officers of the Mahar Community to the Government of India against orders issued in 1892 banning the recruitment of Mahars in the Army. On enquiry I was told that this was a copy of a petition which was drafted by Ranade to help the aggrieved Mahars to obtain redress". B.R. Ambedkar, Ranade, Jinnah and Gandhi, p.2.

Ranade's Ideas and Their Relevance for Modern India

The Times of India's notice given to Ranade's full speech in 1900 at the Social Conference as well as the assessment made of his thought and work show that in his own life-time, he had been identified as the type of non-conventional leader whose insights and work had already set in motion a process of modernization of Indian society.

The consideration of Ranade's writings in the foregoing section of this chapter reveal the liberal basis of social change that he advocated—of the dimensions in which this change must take place, and the direction in which Indian society must move if it is to take its rightful place among nations.

A gathering up of the salient points of his thinking is indicated, so that the liberal foundations on which his philosophy of progress is structured can be seen anew and from the point of view of its continuing value and relevance for the reconstruction of society in our own times. A philosophy of thought and action for today must incorporate these dimensions that were also given recogni-

by Ranade:

The inherent dignity of the individual- Ranade called it "the image of God in us."

A natural respect for humanity .

The worth of a person to be determined not by birth, heredity or status.

A sense of fraternity that will bind men to men in a fellowship of equals.

A sense of justice that deals fairly with all and a sense of love that overleaps all bounds.

A deep spiritual conviction of the principles of purity, temperance, justice, and mercy and a personal committment to live in accordance with them.

An unclouded intellect and the power of reason to replace obedience to authority and blind faith and superstition.

A concept of Dharma and a sense of personal responsibility to progress, change and the advancement of society in keeping with the principles of liberalism .

Optimism, hope, and a confidence in one's own power and capacity to set matters right and to secure the secular well-being of men.

The role of every individual and every idea in bringing about social change, however small and insignificant it may seem, when considered in a larger perspective were really not so very small. As Ranade described the matter in a Prarthana Samaj sermon, it was small ideas and small efforts of change that like small sparks had the power to set off a big fire.

76

Chapter XI : Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar- Advocate
of the Critical Method.

RAMAKRISHNA GOPAL BHANDARKAR¹ (1837-1925)SANSKRITIST AND LOGICIANAdvocate of the Critical Method.Early Training and Work.

Bhandarkar was born in Malwan, in Ratnagiri District on July 6, 1837 and took his early Marathi education at Rajapur. In 1847 the family moved to Ratnagiri enabling him to begin with an English education, a step which his biographer Vaidya felt must be given its due importance, as neither was the need for such an education felt at that time nor was it an easy matter to acquire it.

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1. While Tilak, Gokhale and Ranade have provided inspiration for many substantial biographies, both in English and Marathi, Bhandarkar is one of the nineteenth century leaders of whom there appear to be not many such works. D. G. Vaidya, editor of the Subodh Patrika compiled a brief biographical sketch in Marathi which was included in the collection of Bhandarkar's sermons and writings made by him and had the merit of having been seen by Bhandarkar, Prapannpralpit atva Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar Hyanche Dharmapar Lekh va Vyakhane (Bombay, 1930), pp. 1-95; S.N. Karnatki wrote^a fuller biography in 1927, Guruvarya Dr. Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar Yanche Charitra, (Poona, 1927); one of the briefest of biographical notes in English appears in Limaye, The History of the Deccan Education Society, op.cit., Part II, pp. 205-6; also see a short biography in English, H.A. Phadke, R.G. Bhandarkar, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1968.

Following the example of Vishwanath Mandlik, Bhandarkar went to Bombay to pursue English education at the Elphinstone Institution in 1853. In 1856 when Ranade came to Bombay for the same purpose, he shared quarters with Bhandarkar at Fanaswadi.

By 1858 he had completed the curriculum of the Elphinstone Institution and later was appointed as a teacher in the Elphinstone Institution, and then transferred to Poona College. In 1858 he had been made the first Dakshina Fellow², a position which he continued to hold for five and half years till 1865. When Bombay University was established in 1857, Bhandarkar was among those who appeared for the first examinations conducted by it, the Matriculation in 1859, the First Year in 1861 and the B.A. in 1862. Ranade and Bal Mangesh Wagle, too, were in this group. In 1866 he was granted

2. The Director of Public Instruction, Mr. E. I. Howard, described Bhandarkar as a promising young man, who during the year 1858-9 had "taught Murathee and assisted the professor of Mathematics, contributing, no doubt, to the excellent appearance made by the students in that branch at the senior scholarship examination." Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay of the year 1858-9, Bombay, 1860, pp.29.

the M.A. degree, with Sanskrit as his special subject.

His teaching assignments at Poona covered courses in English, Logic and Philology. In Logic, Whatley's Easy Lesson on Reasoning and Mill's Logic were the books prescribed.

For a brief period, 1865-8, he was Headmaster of the school in Ratnagiri where he had received his own early English education. From 1866 to 1908 he was an examiner in Sanskrit for the Bombay University. In 1867 he was appointed as teacher of Oriental Studies in a leave vacancy at the Elphinstone College, a position he held till 1872. After that he was appointed an assistant professor at the Elphinstone College for the years 1873 to 1882³, with a break of one year 1879-1880, when he taught again at Deccan College. After 1882 he was appointed to Deccan College permanently and made Poona his his home for many years. He retired from Deccan College in 1893.

3. For a brief account of this period, see Bhandarkar, Collected Works, Vol. I, pp. 523-527.

A Renowned Scholar.

In the early 1870's Bhandarkar's scholarly contributions to Indian Antiquary began to gain him world-wide recognition. His paper The Nasik Cave Inscriptions communicated to the First Oriental Congress of Orientalists, London, 1876⁴, was a further step in this direction and it was natural that he should be honored by international bodies. In 1875 the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland made him an Honorary Member of the Society. American, German, French and other European Oriental societies followed suit. In 1885 Göttingen University conferred on him the degree of the Doctor of Philosophy, to be followed in 1908 by Calcutta University. Bombay University, in 1904, conferred the LL.D. degree on him making it the first time that an Indian had received this honour from Bombay. Later Dadabhai Naoroji was another recipient of the degree. Edinburgh University also conferred the LL.D. on him. In 1887⁵

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4. Bhandarkar, Collected Works, Vol. 1, pp. 231-283.
5. For a delightful account of his visit to England and his thoughts and experiences in Vienna, see "My Visit to the Vienna Oriental Congress", Bhandarkar Collected Works, Vol. I, pp. 332-360.

he attended the Vienna Oriental Congress and in 1911 he was made a K.C. I.E.

Bhandarkar was associated with the Bombay University in many capacities. He was a Member of the Syndicate from 1873 to 1881. In 1877 he was appointed Wilson Philological Lecturer at the Bombay University and delivered a series of seven lectures on Sanskrit and Derived Languages⁶. In 1893 he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University to succeed Telang. He was also a founder member of the Deccan Education Society and one of its First Fellows and member of its First Council. Later he was Chairman of the Council from 1906 to 1925 and brought to his duties the same devotion and single minded purposefulness that was characteristic of his scholarship.

A very fine scholar of Sanskrit, with work of highest order in the field to his credit⁷, Bhandarkar

6. see Collected Works, Vol. IV, pp. 239-640.

7. Bhandarkar's works include "Early History of the Dekkan down to the Mohomedan Conquest" Bombay Gazetter, Bombay, 1896, pp. 132-276; "Vaishnavism, Shaivism and Minor Religious Systems", prepared for the Grundriss der Indo-arischen Philologie, 1913 which could easily be considered to be his magnum opus. It is reprinted in Collected Works, Vol. IV, pp. 1-238. A volume of Commemorative Essays was presented to him in 1917, on his eightieth birthday, in which forty papers by European and Indian scholars were included.

presents a rare example of the scholar whose interests extended far beyond his immediate field of scholarship. And it is this aspect of his thinking that must be considered here because it has much relevance to the process of modernization. Some of his ideas and perspectives were so far ahead of his times that they cannot but evoke approbation. His biographer D.G.Vaidya was struck by the fact that his scholarships in Sanskrit did not have the effect of narrowing his perspectives but instead that there was to be found in his thinking an open-mindedness to accept truth regardless of where or from whom it came.⁸

THE CRITICAL, COMPARATIVE AND HISTORICAL

METHOD OF INQUIRY.⁹

The great advantages to which the critical

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8. D.G.Vaidya, Prarthanasamajacha Itihas, op.cit., pp.285-6.
9. Bhandarkar, "The Critical, Comparative and Historical Method of Inquiry, as applied to Sanskrit Scholarship and Philology Indian Archeology" Collected Works, Vol. I, pp.362-393; Following this address in 1888, Bhandarkar spoke again in 1905 to the same group, the Free Church College Literary Society, Bombay on the same subject, and referred to the fact that his earlier address had not attracted the notice of Sanskrit students and that in the intervening years there had not been much work done by Indian Scholars in the field of critical research. see "Lines for Fresh Research in Sanskrit, Literature and Indian Antiquities, "Collected Works, Vol.I, pp.394-415.

and comparative methods had been used in the West for the advancement of knowledge in a great variety of fields compelled Bhandarkar to dwell upon the merits of these methods and indicate their significance for similar progress in India. In doing also, in 1888, at a meeting of the Free Church College Literary Society of Bombay, Bhandarkar was spelling out in precise terms the need to employ the right methods, not only to enable one to "arrive at a knowledge of what is true but also of what is good and rational" and he had in mind the peculiarities of the Indian situation per se. His thinking in this context is unique for the reason that of all the nineteenth century liberal leaders, he was the only one to state in explicit terms what is only implicit in the thinking of the others. It was the scholar in Bhandarkar that would not rest, that felt it imperative that this very basis of sound scholarship be given wide notice so that India should be enabled to reproduce her own band of sound scholars who could compare favourably with those anywhere else.

To Bhandarkar's mind the attention drawn to the method had an even more fundamental purpose. The use of the critical method would serve as a corrective to faulty notions that impede progress. Employment of the critical method would lay the foundations of "healthy progress in the future."

The inductive method, developed by Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and the comparative and historical methods used in the eighteenth century held a peculiar fascination for Bhandarkar as tools for rational thinking.

In an assessment of the kind of fallacious thinking men are subject to, Bacon's doctrines of Idols (Idola) has gained general acceptance and the same is implicit in Bhandarkar's writings. In his Novum Organum, Bacon cited four Idola, the first two innate, pertaining to the very nature of the mind and not to be eradicated; the third creeping insensibly into men's minds and the fourth as imposed from without. The Idola are:

- 1) Idola Tribus, idols of the tribe, fallacies incident to humanity or the race in general. Some of the more prominent of the such fallacies are the tendency to use affirmative instances to support a preconceived notion with a corresponding neglect of negative instances; the tendency to

generalize from few observations and the tendency to give reality to mere abstractions or to perceive greater order and regularity in nature than there actually is to be found; sense perception is also peculiarly prone to error, leading to conjecture and there is the possibility of passions influencing one's thinking.

- ii) Idola Specus, idols of the cave, or errors incident to the peculiar mental or bodily constitution of each individual, for according to the state of each individual mind is his view of things.
- iii) Idola Fori, idols of the market-place, errors arising from the exercise of the influence of mere words on the mind. In this group is included the fallacy of treating as existent a thing that is non-existent merely because the latter has been given a name. Also the fallacy where names applicable to a few objects are hastily and indiscriminately applied to objects having the faintest resemblance to the first.
- iv) Idola Theatri, idols of the theatre, fallacious modes of thinking resulting from received systems of philosophy or faulty methods of demonstrations.

Such philosophies are divided into three classes, the sophistical of which Aristotle is the best example, who according to Bacon, forces nature into his abstract schemata and thinks to explain by definition the empirical which from few and limited experiments leaps to general conclusions; and the superstitious which corrupts philosophy by the introduction of the poetical and the theological notions.

Bacon's Inductive Method rests on the pre-supposition that nature must be thought of as a huge congeries of phenomena, the manifestations of some simple and primitive qualities, which were hid from

us by the complexity of the things themselves. The was a vast labyrinth, amid the windings of which we require some clue or thread whereby we can track our way to knowledge and thence to power. This thread, the filmi labyrinthi, is the new method of induction. To apply the new method, facts must be observed and collected, and in emphasising the place of experimental observation in scientific enquiry absolutely free from preconceived notions, Bacon was giving it a new stress and a new meaning. J.M. Keynes pointed out that "Bacon's great achievement in the history of logical theory lay in his being the first logician to recognize the importance of methodical analogy to scientific argument and the dependence upon it of most well-established conclusions. The Novum Organum is mainly concerned with explaining methodical ways of increasing... positive and negative analogies, and of avoiding false analogies." His Novum Organum is epoch-making for the reason that it gave systematic formulation to ideas that were already in the air, it also gave an impetus to that change from dependence on authority which scholasticism had implied.

Bacon, however, failed to see the importance

of hypothesis in controlling scientific and experimental observation and the fact that even framing hypothesis is no mere random guess work but rests on scientific imagination. Bacon's insights were carried a step further and formulated by John Stuart Mill as the methods of experimental enquiry. But Mill also failed to realize the importance of hypothesis. Both Bacon and Mill mistook one stage of the scientific method for the whole and while in scientific method today, the methods of Bacon and Mill have ceased to have much importance, the more significant aspect of their role, for all that their contributions were described as "an alphabetic view of the universe" lay in paving a way for newer insights and newer approaches, particularly the modern emphases on quantification.

Bhandarkar's writings reveal his endeavour to bring to the notice of thinking men, the fallacies of reasoning to which preconceived notions and idola lead them. In the context of social change, and the rational thinking in a society, that would make such a change possible, Bhandarkar's endeavour must be considered to be

one of the main contributions he made, not only to his own times, but even into present times. Vigilance about these fallacies in one's thinking has the power to dispel xenophobic and obscurant reactions which in traditional societies are likely to retard the process of modernization.

Dimensions of Critical Inquiry.

1. Assessment of Direct and Indirect Testimony.

Bhandarkar defined the critical inquirer as:

...one who does not accept an account or an occurrence just as it is presented to him, whether orally or in writing. He subjects it to certain tests calculated to prove its truth or otherwise. He takes care, for instance, to ascertain whether the person giving the account was an eye-witness to the occurrence, and if so, whether he was an unprejudiced and the same time an intelligent observer. If his information is based on other sources, the critic endeavours to ascertain the credibility of otherwise of those sources. When it is a thing or a verified occurrence that he has to deal with, he does not satisfy himself with that view of its nature and relations that appear plausible at first sight. He seeks for extraneous assistance to enable himself to arrive at a correct view."¹⁰

Clearly Bhandarkar was drawing attention to the importance of viewing all data accepted on the

10. Bhandarkar, The Critical Method, Vol.I, p.362.

basis of authority with a critical eye. Whether the testimony was of an oral or a written kind, it was necessary to subject it to many tests to determine its veracity. Thus, implied in Bhandarkar's tests for determining the veracity of direct testimony are such things as the capacity of the eye-witness to make accurate observation of the event taking place, his proneness to exaggeration that might lead to a distortion of facts, his capacity to sift the essentials from the non-essential aspects of the events he was an eye-witness to, the likelihood of bias and prejudice vitiating his testimony, and his dependence on memory which is often notoriously undependable. Bhandarkar would have applied these tests to testimony, whether it came from a single eye-witness or from many such witnesses though in the latter case there might be other tests needed.

Bhandarkar also dwelt on the critical yardsticks needed for the evaluation of indirect testimony, that is oral or written records that do not come from original witnesses but which have been based on or compiled from other sources. Thus, in assessment of the value of indirect

testimony, such matters as its authenticity, its integrity and its date become important as also corroboration of its subject-matter from other sources.

Bhandarkar also pointed out that in assessment of the narrative types of ancient works which were considered to be historical it was necessary to:

...to ask oneself whether the object of the author was to please and instruct the reader and excite the feelings of wonder, or to record events as they occurred. If the former, the narrative cannot be accepted as historical, but legendary. Our obvious and almost axiomatic notions of ordinary probability should also be brought to bear on the question.¹¹

Bhandarkar illustrated the use of this critical method by referring to some Sanskrit texts.¹²

It would also be in order to speculate that Bhandarkar would have approved the "notions of ordinary probability" being made applicable to almost every field of human enquiry as a corrective and particularly in the context of the proneness to credulity that exists in a traditional society,

11. Ibid., p. 365.

12. Ibid., p. 365-373.

in which belief in superstition and in the occult, occurs far too easily and uncritically.

2. Modes of Interpretation: The Importance of Reference to Context.

The Critical Method has yet a different aspect, which Bhandarkar, the Philologist and Sanskritist, was quick to discern. It concerned the mode in which interpretations of ancient texts were to be made, but certainly had application far beyond just this field.

In addition to the measures of assessment of the value of written testimony such as texts and historical documents, Bhandarkar added the all-important one of the manner in which such documents and texts are to be interpreted. The need to consider the context in which subject-matter is to be interpreted, the need, or what almost amounts to an obligation or a responsibility, for the critical mind to determine the domain of discourse, into which any form of thinking or writing fits, was what Bhandarkar was referring to when he raised the question in connection with Sanskrit texts per se. He said:

The first rule is that a word as occurring in a book must be interpreted in the sense which usage has given to it, Etymology may serve as a guide; but it ought never to set above usage. Consequently no word should be understood in an etymological sense only.¹³

Taking account of the changing meanings of words over periods of times and in different ages, Bhandarkar said:

Often times it is difficult to find the correct etymology, and a man has recourse to one that is fanciful. An interpretation of a book based on such fanciful etymologies must be incorrect. Then again, the literature of a country is divisible into periods, and the usage of one period differs from that of another. A word, therefore, occurring in a certain book, should be understood in the sense which it has in the usage of the period in which the book was written... in the same manner, the ideas and modes of thinking which from our acquaintance with the period we have seen to be prevalent should be referred to for help in interpreting a passage...

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Bhandarkar wanted to point out the inherent dangers involved in the interpretation that omitted to look at the contexts in which words were used. He said:

If, instead of resorting to these methods, we take an isolated passage and interpret it according to modern usage, modern ideas

13. Ibid., p. 373

14. Ibid., p. 373.

and fanciful or even true etymology, we may make it mean anything; and we shall thus find in the Vedas not only pure theism, but even railways and telegraphs. These observations are also applicable to works belonging to other periods...15

THE COMPARATIVE AND THE HISTORICAL METHODS.

The Historical Method was the same as the Mill's Deductive method used in the social sciences to explain complex phenomena such as the generalisations made in the political and social sciences and the movements in history. Mill attributed to Comte the first clear statement of the method, which again was put to interesting use by Herbert Spencer in his Principles of Sociology to prove a connection between industrialism and free institutions. The Method in its essential aspects consists of the establishment of a probable connection between phenomena (empirical law), by the employment of the Method of Agreement or Difference or the Joint Method, the demonstration of the connection of the conclusions so reached with other historical or social generalisations and then finally to attempt to show by deduction, that in the very nature of the case, such an empirical generalisation or law

was to be expected.

The Comparative Method, was by its name, open to certain confusion because comparison is not a specific method as such but enters into every scientific method. Some social scientists used it to mean the Evolutionary Method, which investigates the origin and developments of certain species, or social phenomena such as customs or institutions. However this use is restrictive, since the method can be used in other contexts with phenomena where such evolutionary development is not being studied and generally the two methods have been distinguished. Comparative Philology was one of the first sciences to employ the Evolutionary Method in the eighteenth century in the study of the development of language.

As applied to the social sciences the Comparative Method makes the assumption that human nature is to some approximate degree the same in different countries and different ages, particularly in cases where the similarities of culture are very apparent. Thus if certain beliefs or institutions are found to be similar in two situations and the reasons for the

changes in one are not known in the one case but known in the other, it may be possible to conjecture that the same reasons for changes obtained in the former. Such a conjecture had particular value if the two cultures are related by descent from a common origin or by reason of neighbourhood.

Bhandarkar illustrated the use of all these methods in the study of Indian civilization and languages by citing concrete examples. For instance he cited some instances of false and un-scientific Marathi etymologies¹⁶ and the doubts surrounding the origin of the names of the twelve signs of the Zodiac.¹⁷

It seems important to stress the central point that Bhandarkar was making, that when the "critical and comparative faculty" is used with "energy", it brings with it progress. One had simply to turn to European achievements not only in the fields of experimental sciences but in "geology," paleontology comparative philology... comparative mythology, evolution and the origin of the species, scientific history, comparative

16. Ibid., pp.378-387

17. Ibid., p.387.

jurisprudence, archeology, sound scholarship, and even comparative religion..."to see the potential of the methods.

There is yet another aspect of the Comparative Method that was brought out ^{by} Bhandarkar. It concerned the fact that comparisons of social and religious customs and institutions of one country with that of another afford a basis of determining the evil practices in one as compared with that of the others or even finding the good points and rational grounds in the one or the other. Such critical comparisons would aid a legislator to improve laws of his country, or to be of help to the social and religious reformer.

When two very different civilizations and systems of thought confront a person, they cannot fail to evoke, Bhandarkar thought, the spirit of comparison and criticism. He held that such a confrontation was almost a prerequisite to the understanding and appreciation of one's own culture as well as the ability to distinguish its good elements from its bad ones. He said:

When you are acquainted only with your own manners and customs and your ways of thinking, it is but rarely that a

doubt crosses your mind that there may be evil in them. Though, for instance, in the course of time institutions such as child marriage and caste have grown up among us to such an extent that their evil consequences cannot fail to strike an unprepossessed mind, they did not strike us before we became acquainted with a condition of society in which these institutions did not prevail.¹⁸

In fact, the method could be employed in a infinite number of ways and Bhandarkar was anxious to see his compatriots wake up to the immense potential of the Critical method as opposed to that frame of mind which accepts everything uncritically, permitting indiscriminate praise of everything ancient, a spirit which "seeing nothing but good in our institutions and our ancient literature, asserting that the ancient Hindus had made very great progress up all the sciences, physical, moral, and social and that... and denying even the most obvious deficiencies in our literature such as the absence of satisfactory historical records and our most obvious defects."¹⁹

In fact, such a frame of mind, which supposes out of a mistaken pride, that everything we have is good, Bhandarkar called "pernicious" and one that

18. Bhandarkar, Collected Works, Vol. I., p. 465.

19. Ibid., p. 392.

"augurs evil for the future of our community" and "cuts off all hope of rise."

The Comparative method can be used to demonstrate how in the history of the world, "one race learns from another." He said:

...The Greeks adopted something from the Phoenicians and Egyptians, and the Romans from the Greeks; while in the civilization of modern Europe, four distinct elements are observable, the Greek, the Roman, the German and the Jewish. And we too are no exception to the rule. We too in olden times adopted a good deal from the Dravidian races, later on from the Greeks and still later from the Arabs...²⁰

Like other nineteenth century leaders, Bhandarkar wanted his country to capitalize on the manifold advantages that the British and European connection had brought utilizing them for the progress of the nation. Though he used harsh words to describe the future of the country should there be failure in this respect, the place of dire predictions are not to be denied to the leader whose impatience at the slowness of progress was intense. He said:

...Let us learn, let us reform. If we do not do so, fifteen centuries hence the antiquarian of the period, will say, "the English placed before the Indian Aryas the

highest civilization which Europe had reached by the nineteenth century; but in the hot plains of India, the Indian Aryas had grown so degenerate that it produced no influence whatever on them, and their degeneracy deepening, they eventually became hewers of wood and drawers of water, or were swept off the face of the earth by the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest."²¹

One feels sure that Bhandarkar would have considered it imperative for men to shape their thinking in the light of ever-increasing knowledge and reshaping the destiny of mankind in a way that takes cognizance of this knowledge. In keeping with his own fields of interest, he urged that Indians could certainly excel in the fields of Indian political and literary history and philology, which required no sophisticated equipment but the right frame of mind and objectivity of attitude but he would not have confined them to these fields. He would have been the first to decry the present day attitude among some scholars in his own field to be content with citing him as a source without taking note of facts that later discoveries have revealed.

Bhandarkar also, would have urged his

21. Ibid, p.393.

compatriots to venture further afield than confine themselves to these pursuits. He would have called for a full, and all-out effort to bring in modernization of society in a shortest time, tackling every sphere and every aspect of it, without quibbling and with clear understanding of the goals involved.

On the Meaning and Ends of Education- "The Liberalisation of the Mind."

The views expressed by Bhandarkar about objects and ends of education, afford evidence again of the integrated manner of Bhandarkar's thinking. The rationalist standpoint which education cultivates may extend in many directions and provide a basis for distinguishing essentials from non-essentials, and for determining that which has value as opposed to that which is of negligible significance and therefore to be disregarded or even discarded.

The first task in a discussion on the subject of education was to come to grips with what exactly is meant by education. Speaking on the occasion of 25th Anniversary of the occupation by Deccan College of its new premises²², Bhandarkar in seeking to set

22. "The Ends and Aims of College Education", 1894, Collected Works, Vol. I, pp. 461-475.

out the objects education looked for an indication in the etymological sense of the term which he found to be similar in English and in Sanskrit, and to imply a training of the faculties of the mind. He said:

...Young men have to be taught... to have clear ideas before them, to see the connection between them, and to produce from one proposition to another. They have to be taught to reason. We know how confused the ideas of an uneducated man are, what mistakes he makes as to their connection and how incompetent he is to arrive at a correct conclusion from a certain proposition.²³

Obviously, mere training in the art of deduction is not enough, as one could reason correctly from faulty premises and therefore Bhandarkar felt the need to add another object of education, which was to "teach... to observe correctly, compare and criticise, and arrive at correct premises or notions.' But this process again becomes intelligible only in the light of what Bhandarkar conceived to be a third object of education, "to liberalise the mind; to free it from the narrowness which the antecedents of a man induce into it."²⁴

23. Ibid., p. 462.

24. Ibid., p. 462.

He said:

... by education the mind is raised above the narrow sphere of thought in which it moves... (is placed) on a high platform from which it can look at things as they are, and not with the coloured eyes of prepossession or prejudice... 25

In addition, as education equipped a man with a basis on which evaluative judgements can be made, so that he can "perceive a graduation of worthiness" among the many springs of actions" that are to be found. It is the cultivation of a faculty of moral judgement, by which actions can be shaped "in accordance with truth and justice or the dictates of an enlightened or cultured conscience."²⁶

The course structure, the books prescribed and the relation between the teacher and the taught are means by which these objectives could be attained. In particular, Bhandarkar cited the change of curriculum made around that time in the Bombay University curriculum which introduced History, Philosophy and Physics courses into the

25. Ibid., p. 463

26. Ibid., p. 464

B.A. Syllabus²⁷. These he felt, were particularly well-calculated to serve the function of "the liberalisation of the mind". By the same token literature of English and Sanskrit were also able to convey thoughts and feelings which could be emulated by the student and Logic would aid clarity of thinking.

But Bhandarkar had reason to express dissatisfaction at the impact of education on young minds, especially as to any lasting effect, if the slowness of the progress of Indian society was to be measure of this impact. He said:

...if any effect has been produced in this respect, it does not go far beyond talk...and educated men are very little disposed to acknowledge the evil that permeates their society. Moreover, the

27. Bhandarkar explained the reasons why these changes had been sought and why he had supported Telang, as Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University in this matter. He said, "In practical life there are always political, moral, social and economic questions coming up, and every graduate has to form some opinion about them and advocate it in the press or on the platform. But for this hardly a great many were qualified...ignorance of sound thought on those subjects and the absence of mental discipline which a course of study in them imparts is one of the many causes of the wild talk and writing that we find about us." Collected Works, Vol.I, pp.433-434.

fact that we have not yet acquired the courage of our convictions argues that those convictions are very weak indeed. And the half-hearted and lethargic manner in which all our movements, political, social, religious and economical or industrial, are conducted and the fact that we do not find a succession of resolute or zealous workers in connection with them show that the new civilization with which we have come in contact has not, except in very rare cases, produced more than a skin-dep improvement in us.²⁸

Bhandarkar's analysis is that the nature of the impact education is to have on any society, how will depend ultimately on the attitude of the receiver. For it is this attitude of mind, the manner in which one looks at education and the benefits to be derived therefrom that determine the end result. Thus for instance, Bhandarkar asked:

In studying history, do (students) care to realize the manner in which a race has progressed from barbarism to civilization, and do they study the arts and institutions of that race with any degree of sympathy? Is philosophy studied with a keen interest in the problems, concerning human nature and the principles which are in operation in human society which it grapples with?²⁹

28. Ibid., p.468.

29. Ibid., p.470.

Thus he asked pertinent questions about the frame of mind that must exist and the nature of the approach to the materials to be studied. He saw as requirements of this attitude, a sincerity of purpose and a seeking of knowledge for its own sake, a disabusing the mind of any false sense of patriotism and a false race-pride which forces one to find every idea in one's own indigenous ancient sources, irrespective of whether the idea belongs to the realm of literature, history or philosophy.³⁰ Bhandarkar also saw an openness of mind as a prerequisite of the truly educable person. He said:

...You should keep your mind open to the influence which what is true, good and beautiful, whether it comes from a foreigner or from a native...³¹

On another occasion he had reiterated the same view. He said:

let us...learn from all the sources now available to us, indigenous as well as foreign...we need not (then) be afraid of the future.³²

Given all these prerequisites, Bhandarkar

30. Ibid., p.471

31. Ibid., p.474

32. Vol.II, p.616.

said:

And it is thus that you will be able to derive advantage from the dispensation of Providence in virtue of which we have been brought into connection with one of the foremost races of Europe, and improve your moral, social, economic, and political condition. In this way alone will you be able to raise your fallen country, and enable it to take its place in the community of nations.

33

Bhandarkar's ability to indulge in some plain speaking and to come down to brass tacks is evident in what he had to say about educational objectives. It was a quality which had impressed his contemporaries at Deccan College. J.N. Fraser, who was the professor of English Literature there in 1896 was impressed with Bhandarkar's "sturdy independence of character, (his) contempt for what is quibbling and mean... (and his) honest intention to encourage progress and reform³⁴". The same qualities had been evident in Bhandarkar's Convocation Address delivered by him as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay, 1894³⁵. For, instance he did not hesitate to state what he conceived to

33. Vol. I, p. 475.

34. J. Nelson Fraser, Deccan College: A Retrospect 1851-1901, Poona, Deccan College, 1902, p. 80

35. Bhandarkar, Collected Works, Convocation Address Vol. I, pp. 427-452.

to be the function of a University and the measure in which Indian universities had failed to live up to these expectation. He said:

A University...ought to be a body of men devoted to learning, engaged in the pursuit of truth, carrying on researchs and investigations, and communicating their knowledge to others by educating young men and by the publication of books and papers. Such a body should have a healthy public opinion of its own, the influence of which every one of its members...should feel...³⁶

On issues confronting the nation in its bid for progress, a hard-core public opinion on the part of the University itself and a pace-setting role which gives it a duty to communicate this public-opinion to the world at-large, are all implied in what Bhandarkar conceived to be the function of a University.

Bhandarkar's outspokenness in this Convocation address gave rise to the mistaken impression that he was a pessimist and it was no lesser a personage than Ranade who thought so. A careful consideration of issues Bhandarkar raised in this address show that he really spared no punches. He

36. Ibid.,p.438.

dwelt on the topic of what it means to be "a man of culture" or a truly educated person deserving the Sanskrit title of sista, giving it a broader interpretation than was generally conceded. He warned against misunderstanding and misapplication of European ideas, and he lashed out against false notions of self-respect and liberty of speech and patriotism. But like a doctor who has a cure to prescribe for a disease diagnosed as curable, he did not stop at pointing out weaknesses but went on to suggest how matters could be redressed, all as part of the regeneration of the nation.

Between Ranade and Bhandarkar there developed a controversy on an issue which had been of concern to many, in those times, namely, the reasons for the high mortality rate among university graduates. Ranade was inclined to blame the heavy burden that the university curriculum imposed upon its students as the main cause and in general suggested that changes needed to be made to reduce this burden. Bhandarkar, while agreeing that the strain was heavy, was absolutely opposed to any reduction in course requirements for a degree, and thought there was no choice but "to fit ourselves for the strain

which higher education imposes", among which he placed high on the priority list, "a thorough change in ... social ideas and customs"³⁷. He thought that modern times placed responsibilities on a people, far unlike those in the leisurely pace of times gone by, and made changes in styles of life imperative.

BHANDARKAR ON SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

(1) The Authority of Scriptural Support Insufficient.

Though Bhandarkar was himself instrumental in producing a document to bring all the force of Shastric support to back reform in the matter of child marriages and the Age of Consent debate, it is quite clear that he recognised the limitations of such efforts. He expressed this view when he was

37. Certain observations made by Bhandarkar in his Convocation Address were criticised by Ranade in his address delivered before the Graduates' Association of Bombay on 15th April, 1894, which subsequently was printed in the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha that same month. The topic of the address was "Why Graduates Die Young?"; see Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings, pp.294-315; Bhandarkar felt constrained to comment on Ranade's criticism. See Bhandarkar, "Rejoinder to Mr. Justice Ranade", Collected Works, Vol.I, pp.453-460.

speaking to the Madras Hindus Social Reform Association in 1894, where by his own admission, he had come to give encouragement to the practical work done by reformer, work which he thought showed "rare moral courage" and had all the makings of becoming a strong moral force in the nation and which needed to be encouraged. It was this latter aspect that had been able to drag him "about seven hundred miles away from my closet in Poona." On this occasion he said:

It has often been suggested that on the strength of the texts in the old books we should convince the orthodox leader of our society of the reforms we seek being sanctioned by the Sastras, and endeavour to introduce them with their aid and consent. But such a thing to my mind is an impossibility. Our old books do not constitute the real authority in religious matters that we obey. Custom has been and is our authority, custom is our religion. Texts creep into our religious books...sanctioning current customs and even when they do not do so, our Pandits, who in later days have developed a great deal of logical acumen, prove by means of their subtle arguments customary practice to be the only one sanctioned by our religious books. The later development of the Hindu religious law has preceded just on these lines. We must therefore begin the work of reform in spite of orthodox leaders, trusting simply to our awakened moral consciousness...

38

38. R.G. Bhandarkar, "Social Reform and the Programme of the Madras Hindu Social Reform Association", Chintamani, op.cit., Part IV, p.227.

Thus, it was customs and the evils that crept in under the guise of custom that Bhandarkar felt needed to be reformed, and he reflected the same dissatisfaction at the pace of progress in this area, as he did about educational matters. While in the past, "moral sentiments" had not been strong enough "to burst through the thick veil of custom and assert the claim of truth, justice and humanity", the pertinent issue, to Bhandarkar was whether and with what force it could be achieved now. He said:

The question now is whether with our minds liberalised by English education and contact with European civilization, we shall still continue to worship custom and be its slaves, and allow our moral sentiments to remain dead and unjust, and cruel social practices to flourish.

39

(2) The Moral Law as the Determinant of Social Evolution.

The very inevitability of the need for social reconstruction is seen by Bhandarkar as part of the law of social evolution, for those who aspire to greater and higher achievements and status. He held that "in order that our society may be able to hold its own in the competition and rivalry with other societies, which is inevitable, we must abide by the conditions of that law." Quoting an unidentified author on the subject, Bhandarkar said:

"That the moral law is the unchanging law of progress in human society is the lesson which appears to be written over all things. No school of theology has even sought to enforce this teaching with all the directness and emphasis, with which it appears that evolutionary science will in the future be justified in doing. In the silent and strenuous rivalry in which every section of the race is of necessity continually engaged, permanent success appears to be invariably associated with certain ethical and moral conditions favourable to the maintenance of a high standard of social efficiency and with those conditions only."⁴⁰

40. Bhandarkar, Presidential Address The Ninth Social Conference, Poona, 1895, Chintamani, op.cit., Part III, p.189.

Bhandarkar's comment on this quotation was:

If then social efficiency and consequent success are what we desire in our contest with other races, we must, because the law is immutable, endeavour to realise those ethical and moral conditions. We must cultivate a sense of justice and a love and sympathy for others... every scheme for bettering our condition is destined to fail if it does not make provision for the growth of these sympathetic virtues.

41

The same theme is reiterated in another Presidential address at the Ahmedabad Social Conference, 1902. Bhandarkar said:

...the great discovery of the nineteenth century- the law of evolution is receiving confirmation from every side. The law implies that there has been throughout the Universe a progress in the material as well as the spiritual world from the simple to the complex from the dead to the living, from good to better, from the irrational to the rational. This is the law of God, and if instead of obstinately holding on to what is bad and irrational, we move forwards to what is good and rational, we shall be obeying the law

of the Universe and cooperating with God. If, however, we continue to go down from what is bad to what is worse, from good to bad and from rational to irrational, we have been doing for so many centuries, we shall have to seek another Universe to live in.⁴²

41. Ibid., pp.189-190.

42. Bhandarkar, Presidential Address at National Social Conference, Ahmedabad, 1902, Collected Works, Vol.II, p. 537.

Thus in the ultimate analysis the issue of the reform of society centres around the moral law which alone governs the affairs of mankind. Whether the well-being sought is of a personal nature or on a national level, it only is possible when the great forces of truth, justice and sympathy reign in the hearts of men. Elaborating on this theme he said:

You will see that what is necessary in order that... reforms may come into practice is that there should spring up in our hearts a sense of justice, a keen sympathy for the suffering of their and love of one's own country and race, and an anxiety for their future well-being.⁴³

(3). A Matter of Deliberate Choice.

With a teaching that had overtones of the Socratic dictum "Virtue is knowledge", Bhandarkar continued:

If the feelings have been awakened in us with any degree of intensity, they cannot fail to realise themselves in some sort of action, and I believe that the contrary holds true that when no action follows, the feelings are either not awakened at all, or if really awakened, are very weak.⁴⁴

Bhandarkar had no patience with those advocates of the view that reform was a matter better left to the action of time, "thinking that all we desire will come into practice just as the rigidity of

43. Chintamani, op. cit., Part III, p. 183.

44. Ibid.

caste rules is being gradually lessened by railway travelling and such other circumstances." He said:

...time is not a force, it is simply a conception of the mind to connect events together and cannot work any changes...what time brings about is very often not under the guidance of reason or the higher feelings of our nature, and consequently very often degradation is the result and not elevation.

45

Changes in society must come about because men seek these changes deliberately and through conscious choice. When reforms are not the result of such inner convictions, or "motive spring" as Bhandarkar called them, reforms, if effected at all, are short-lived. Neither would he have advocated such reforms, that men merely drift into reforms which are not motivated by the guidance of reason under the principles known to mankind which are of the highest order. A society does not reform itself by accident.

(4) Continuity with the Past.

But Bhandarkar was no believer in radical action in the manner of the French Revolution and would not have advised haste in matters of social reconstruction. He was also very firm in his conviction that in reform matters, we must not "cut ourselves from a vital connection with the past." In his essay, "Social History of India"⁴⁶, Bhandarkar dwelt on life in ancient India, when most of the present-day evils were unknown. Perhaps it was deference to the criticism that changes sought to be introduced into society were alien, that Bhandarkar felt constrained to emphasise the matter. He said:

...we must therefore begin the work of reform... trusting...to the fact that it is not an entirely new thing we are going to introduce.⁴⁷

His acquaintance with Social Conference deliberations had left Bhandarkar with the impression that there was far too much talk about social reform and not enough of efforts or

46. This original paper was prepared by Bhandarkar for C.Yajnesvara Chintamani's Indian Social Reform (Madras, 1901), Part I, pp. 1-26.

47. Chintamani, Part IV, p.227.

"exertions" as he put it, to make them realities. What the situation demanded, he felt, was the kind of concern, that results in a kind of restlessness, for instance, characteristic for instance, of Cobden and Bright as they sought to bring to the English people an awareness of the injustice of the Corn Laws.

(5) The Priority of Claims of Social Reform.

And on the vexed question of the claims of priority of social as opposed to political reform, he was emphatic about his stand. In 1894 in Madras, he said, "There can be no advancement politically, I firmly assert, without social and moral advancement". He reiterated the same stand in 1902:

The political agitation that has been going on for so many years, has for its object the redress of certain grievances and the acquisition of new political powers. But the object of social reforms— with which I would associate moral reform is to render us fit for the exercise of these powers. The social movement therefore is of greater importance than the other in so far as it seeks to render the nation vigorous and free from social obstructions and restrictions.⁴⁸

48. Ehandarkar, Presidential Address, Bombay Provincial Social Conference, Sholapur, 1902, Collected Works, Vol. II, p. 518.

(6) The Idea of Universal Brotherhood.

When Bhandarkar attended the Vienna Oriental Congress in 1886, there was one impression amid a host of others that hit him most forcibly, and that was the evidence of international goodwill and "respect for human nature and brotherly sympathy for mankind." It was evident in the serious deliberations that had brought them together, in the external appearances and manners of the representatives of the many European nations gathered there who showed greater similarities and gave the appearance feeling that Europe was a single nation! This Idea of a universal brotherhood was, I thought, the most precious product of European civilization, more valuable by far than railways and electric telegraphs.⁴⁹

It was a matter of grave concern to Bhandarkar that while Indian life was concerned with the individual life, it had yet to develop a sense of corporate or national life. Like many atoms which exist separately, the question was how could they

49. "My visit to the Vienna Oriental Congress", Collected Works, Vol.I, pp.352-353.

"crystallised into a new and larger whole!" How could a sense of public duty be created? He said:

We cannot yet work with perseverance for objects that are to benefit not certain specific individuals, but the body public. The public, the body public, the country is to us an abstraction with whose wrongs and needs we have not sufficient sympathy, whose claims on our efforts we do not adequately recognize, and whose good is not the good of any individuals in particular with whom we can speak and talk, whose gratitude we can enjoy as our reward.

50

His despair over this state of affairs, his fear of the misuse of the representative form of government under these conditions, are among the reasons why he did not participate actively in political life. He said:

And I conclude by advising you that before asking for any political privileges, you should impartially examine whether you are fit for it, whether in fact, there is any probability of your using it to the lasting benefit of your country.

51

THE PRARTHANA SAMAJ -A NEW MEANING AND NEW RELEVANCE

A worship service marked the establishment of the Prarthana Samaj on March 31, 1867 with about sixteenth founder members present. By July 1867 the Samaj had been constituted into a formal body with its rules and regulations defined.

Major events in the 1860's which were precursors of the monotheistic movement, culminating in the establishment of the Prarthana Samaj included the founding of the liberal Induprakash in 1862, the establishment of the Ved Sabha in Madras around 1865 with its superficial similarities to the Brahmo Samaj, the founding of the Native Opinion by V.N. Mandlik in 1863 with N.M. Paramanand as its English Editor which occasionally carried articles of reform matters⁵² and the first visit of Keshab Chandra Sen to Bombay in 1864. They helped to create

52. Excerpts from an article that appeared in the Native Opinion, January 13, 1867 on "Murtipuja" are reproduced in D.G. Vaidya Prarthana Samaj Itihas, op.cit., pp. 28-31; Incomplete files of Native Opinion are to be found in the Mandlik Collection of Fergusson's College's Wadia Library.

the climate that made it possible for the new Samaj to be founded eschewing the secretiveness of the earlier Paramhansa Sabha, which had ended in a hurried dissolution. Though detailed information about the Paramhansa Sabha, established by Dadoba Pandurang around 1840 in Bombay is lacking, it appears to have had among its religious tenets the renunciation of idolatry and the abolition of caste. It also aimed at promoting widow-remarriages. The Sabha had branches in Poona, Ahmednagar, Satara, Belgaum, and Ratnagiri, with a total membership estimated at about a thousand.

On December 17, 1866, a meeting of some former members of the Paramhansa Sabha and some new men, in the home of Atmaram Pandurang prepared the way for the formal establishment of the Prarthana Samaj. Among those present were Atmaram Pandurang himself,

53. For a brief history and brief statement of the tenets of the Paramhansa Sabha see D.G.Vaidya, Prarthana Samaj Itihas, p.9ff., Baba Padamanji, Arunodaya, Bombay 3rd ed., 1955, pp.94-99. Baba Padamanji was a member of the Paramhansa Sabha and his account has an authenticity that comes from personal acquaintance; A.K.Priolkar, Rao Bahadur Dadoba Pandurang, Bombay, 1947, pp.250-262; Bhandarkar also had been a member of the Sabha. see Bhandarkar, "The Indian Caste System", a speech prepared for the Second Aryan, Brotherhood Conference, Bombay, 1915, Collected Works, Vol.II, pp.471-486; Also D.G.Vaidya, Ibid., p.17, footnote.

Tukaram Tatya Padwal, Narayan Mahadev Parmanand, Bhaskar Hari Bhagwat and Vasudev Babaji Nowrange and Bal Mangesh Wagle. Dadoba Pandurang, rather inactive in the Paramhansa Sabha itself, was not among those who founded the Parthana Samaj. He had become interested in the Swedenborgian New Church.⁵⁴

The early tenets of the Prarthana Samaj centered around the belief in One God, who was Formless and to whom no man-made form should be given and worshipped. Members promised to seek truth and goodness, in both word and deed, and to repent when they strayed from this path.⁵⁵ They were called "Ekeshvaries". The first secretary of the new Samaj was Bal Mangesh Wagle and its first president was Dr. Atmaram Pandurang who continued in the same capacity till 1898, the year of his death, after which Ranade became President. It was Wagle who pointed out that the establishment of the new Samaj rested on the need to find new meaning and new relevance in Hinduism.⁵⁶ Ranade came to

54. For a view of Dadoba's convictions in this connection, See M.G. Ranade, "R.B. Dadoba Pandurang and the Swedenborg School" QJPSS Vol. 1, No. 3, January, 1879, pp. 43-46; also M.G. Ranade, Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 57-65; and A.K. Priolkar, Dadoba Pandurang, pp. 311-323.

55. D.G. Vaidya, Prarthana Samaj Itihas, pp. 35-36.

56. Ibid., p. 51.

Bombay in 1868 as Professor of English and History at Elphinstone College and immediately joined the Prarthana Samaj. Bhandarkar also joined the Samaj one and a half years after it was founded, though he testified that he had subscribed to its aims and beliefs and purposes from its very beginning.⁵⁷

One of the most significant aspects of the association of Ranade and Bhandarkar with the Prarthana Samaj is that it fell to them to make the formulation of the tenets of the Prarthana Samaj on a basis which, while appealing to faith, also endorsed an appeal to reason.

Ranade's A Theists Confession of Faith⁵⁸ formulates 31 articles of Faith of Theism. It was Ranade's purpose to show not only that theistic arguments had a world-wide appeal, because they met the earnest religious wants of mankind and had

57. Ibid., p.55.

58. This essay, written in 1872, is included in the Kolaskar Collection of Ranade's Essays. For its Marathi version, see Vaidya, Itihas, op.cit., pp.58-61. Ranade's views on Theism are reiterated in his "Philosophy of Indian Theism", Jagadisan, ed., The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, pp.56-79;

Protop Chandra Mazumdar who spent six months in Bombay in 1872, he not only exerted a profound influence on the Prarthana Samaj but established the Bombay Theistic Association, Vaidya, Itihas, pp.96-100.

received acceptance from a considerable section of the world's population but also that the arguments of Theism must go beyond the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Man and renunciation of idolatry, as propounded by the Brahmo Samaj and as satisfying many Prarthana Samajists.

Ranade was convinced that the certainty that is to be reached about religious doctrines is not like mathematical certainty but rather of the type of certainty we have regarding facts of our own consciousness. Our limited vision cannot attain to more than the strength of practical or moral convictions, and there would always be some problems regarding the Universe that will be insoluble, such as, those of the origin of the world and of man and others that create perplexity, such as, those about the original of evil.

The Character of a Protestant Movement: Ranade's View.

Ranade saw the religion preached by the Prarthana Samaj as being of a protestant character, as a phase in a long line of protestant movements in India. He called the movement of Bhagavat Dharma by the name of Protestant Hinduism, and saw its earlier phase in the movement initiated by the

Saints of Maharashtra though protestantism was not confined to Maharashtra. He was also able to draw comparisons between these two different movements in Europe and India.

In Europe, Protestantism was generally identified by Ranade with protests against many practices, such as the supremacy of Latin as a vehicle of thought and expression, the excess of ascetic ideas among religious orders, the necessity of priestly intervention in all rites and ceremonies, image worship and excessive ritualism and all manners of fasts, pilgrimages, fasts, confessions and casuistry. Moreover he did not see the movement as once and for all having accomplished its task. He said:

The need for protest was not over with the century which produced Luther and Calvin, Knox and Latimer. The established faith has always and everywhere a tendency to grow too rigid and authoritative, too mechanical and formal to retain the celestial fire pure and burning.

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In India, as among the Jews, Ranade pointed

59. Ranade, "Hindu Protestantism", Address delivered at the Prarthana Samaj Mandir, 1895, The Wisdom of a Rishi, p.82.

out:

...prophet after prophet has risen among us, and in their lives and precepts have protested against and denounced certain habits of thought and principles of action which have an inveterate tendency to encrust the true spirit of our faith and give a human coating which obscures from view the essentially divine element.

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Ranade identified the following areas of protest made by the movement in Maharashtra:⁶¹

1. There was the protest against the supremacy of the old Sanskrit language as a vehicle of learning, and each poet in his own times, enriched the stock of vernacular treasures.
2. The prophets and saints protested against exaggerated importance of rites and ceremonies which detracted from their symbolical significance and made them ends in themselves.
3. There was a protest against the Yoga system of austerities and seeking after occult powers.
4. A relaxation of the strictness of caste restrictions and rules during this period was the result of protest against such rules.

60. Ibid., p.81.

61. Ibid., pp.83-86.

5. A protest against sacrifices of many kinds and the worship of cruel deities and performance of Shakti rites took place.
6. A protest against polytheism, though not against idolatry was also seen.

A detailed consideration of these lines of protests and the saintly men and women who were responsible for them is to be found in Ranade's Essay, "The Saints and Prophets of Maharashtra"⁶². Ranade's assessment of the movement is stated in these eloquent terms:

...the religious movement, which commencing with Dnyandev who lived in the fifteenth century, can be traced to the end of the last century as a steady growth in spiritual virtues. It gave us a literature of considerable value in the Vernacular language of the country. It modified the strictness of the old spirit of caste exclusiveness. It raised the Shudra classes to a position of spiritual power and social importance almost equal to that of the Brahmins. It gave sanctity to the family relations and raised the status of women. It made the nation more humane and at the same time, more prone to be held together by mutual toleration. It suggested and partly carried out a plan of reconciliation with the Mohomedans. It subordinated the importance of rites and

62. This essay forms part of Ranade's Rise of Mahratta Power, first published in 1900. see Publications Division reprint, New Delhi, 1966, pp.64-75; also The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, pp.88-107.

ceremonies, and of pilgrimage and fasts, and of learning and contemplation, to the higher excellence of worship by means of Love and Faith. It checked the excesses of polytheism. It tended in all these ways to raise the nation generally to a higher level of capacity of both thought and action.⁶³

In spite of this high praise, Ranade was aware of the slowness of the reformation in India, when compared with its counterpart in Europe and attempted to identify some of the reasons for the disparity between the two movements.⁶⁴

The political nature of the movement rather than its religious implications, the greater spread of knowledge, the concentration of ecclesiastical authority in the Pope as a central force against which revolt could take place and the fact that a culture only of a thousand years old offers less stranglehold on man's mind than one five thousand years old, were among the factors that Ranade found in Europe responsible for the faster pace of change and reform, than in India.

63. Wisdom, p.107; Rise of Mahratta Power, p.76.

64. "Luther Kal va Sadhyacha Kal Yanchi Tulana", Ny.Mu.Ranade Yance Dharmapar Vyakhyane, (Bombay, 1923), pp.243-49.

The Rational Basis of Theistic Belief: Bhandarkar's View:

65

We turn to Bhandarkar for a substantial contribution to the understanding of the philosophy of theism as interpreted by the Prarthana Samaj and especially its rational basis.

To Bhandarkar a rational and consistent religious faith can be arrived at, by employing the comparative and critical method, putting the method to the same use and with the same success as when it was applied "to determine historical and literal truth and to bring about a revolution in philology."

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65. Bhandarkar's Prarthana Samaj sermons and his religious writings were first published in 1909, with an Introduction written by N.V.Chandavarkar for the second Edition, 1911. See Prapannapralpit athva Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar Hyanche Dharma-par Lekh va Vyakhyane, Edited by D.G.Vaidya, Fourth Edition, Bombay: Bombay Book Depot, 1930. D.G.Vaidya considered the essay "Ishwarvishayak Dnyan", Ibid., pp.1-52, of particular significance in formulating the tenets of the Samaj; Vaidya (1877-1941) took over the editorship of the Samaj's Subodh Patrika in 1897 and edited it for almost thirty years. Vaidya's Sansar va Dharmasadhan (Dwarkanath Govind Vaidya Yanche Dharmapar Lekh va Vyakhyane) Edited and published by B.B.Keskar, Bombay:1935, must be considered to be on a par with Ranade's and Bhandarkar's sermons and writings as a source of Prarthana Samaj philosophy and religion.

He said:

...we expect similar results from the application of this method to religion, to find out how it is that God reveals himself to man, to determine what is essential and necessary in religion and what is accidental, to separate the truth that God himself has taught to man, from the error, with which, in his mental and moral weakness, man has mixed it up.

66

Bhandarkar found that a belief:

in some Invisible Power from which all that is visible has sprung, in something Infinite on which all that is finite rests in a Power on which he is dependent and which is beneficial,⁶⁷

to be universal, to exist everywhere and one that is as much "necessitated by man's apprehensive powers as the belief in an external world and in the constancy of nature."

Bhandarkar's view of Revelation is not the dogmatic view which holds that the essence of revelation consists in the communication of supernatural and infallible truths or dogmas. Rather he falls in line with the liberal or modern theists who hold

66. Bhandarkar, "Basis of Theism and its relation to the so-called Revealed Religions", being the substance of a lecture delivered at the Anniversary of the Prarthana Samaj- originally published in 1883 by the Cheap Literature Committee of the Theistic Association of Bombay, Collected Works, Vol. II, p. 604-605;

67. Collected Works, Vol. II, p. 605.

revelation to be "the guidance of human life to higher levels by divine power". God's purpose so acts on human history that men are given impulses which lead them to move toward God. This dynamic view treats experience as including many factors which are revelatory in the sense of being purposed by God in order to lead men to higher values. But these factors must be interpreted by reason, man's capacity to think for himself. God's Revelation is considered to be an ever-continuing process, making it imperative that each age in history find its own unique understanding of this Revelation. Bhandarkar explained:

...God's Revelation to man was made not only at a certain period in the world's history, but it began with the dawning of human intelligence and went on progressing through all the ages and it is going on still and will go on. God is ever communicating more and more of his truth to us as our powers of apprehension become purer and keener. The latest phase of His Revelation to man is that embodied in the movement which we here represent.

68

69

The Comparative Method, as applied to religion enables a comparison of different religions to be made

68. Ibid., p. 609.

69. The Position of the Prarthana Samaj in the Religious World", Collected Works, Vol. II, pp. 617-623.

and also a determination of significant ideas in them as well as a distinguishing of essential from accidental ideas. Also the study of the development of the thought of a single religion is made possible. The Prarthana Samaj tenets, arrived at in this manner, "acknowledge the influence and handwork of God in all religions" and "therefore imposes an attitude of sympathy towards all religious beliefs while hitherto antipathy... has been the general rule." Also, Bhandarkar said:

And the study of all these religions has had the effect of cleaning the religious vision so as to enable the leaders of the Samaj to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and has led them to adopt the highest form of truth that has hitherto dawned upon the human mind. It is in these two special sense that the dispensation followed by the Prarthana Samaj may be considered a New Dispensation.

70

The New Dispensation- A New Religion for a New Age.

The place of the tenets of the Prarthana Samaj, as outlined by Bhandarkar below, can be seen in the context of social change and the requirements of a new age. The theistic position is considered by him to be the religion for the new age, in which not only

has there been a meeting of different cultures of the world, but also a new understanding of the ideas and beliefs in religion has been gained through the application of the rational and critical method. The philosophy of religion and the psychology of religion have yielded greater insights into how the religion of men developed. The question from the point of view of advancement and progress is whether men's beliefs are going to keep pace with the new understanding of religion. What Bhandarkar has to say at length, is relevant from this point of view. He said:

Thus then here is a religion which God himself has placed before us in the fullness of time, when all the races of the world have come together and have been as it were comparing notes. The question is whether you will adopt this new Revelation, the main doctrines of which, however, are those of the most highly developed religions, which for this country may be considered to be those of the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita, and the teachings of the saints and prophets like Tukaram. Will you then accept the best portions of the Upanishads, the Bhagavadgita, and of the medieval saints, supplemented by certain ideas from Buddhism or from the Bible; or will you adhere to all the religions that go under the name of ordinary Hinduism, the religions which represent all stages of evolution... will you accept merely mechanical ceremonies which can have no connection with your moral advancement as your worship of God or take up the spiritual mode chosen by the Prarthana Samaj, which alone is calculated

to purify the heart and elevate it, and prepare you to perform your duties in life. The existing form of religion belonging as they do to the earlier stages of civilization are destined, if India is to advance, to disappear, and along with their disappearance, all that is good in the higher religions thought of the country is also in danger of disappearing, unless we deliberately choose it, and make it alone our religion. And the existing mechanical modes of worship must be entirely thrown away and the spiritual mode substituted to bring that moral reformation of the country which is so urgently needed.

71

Dimensions of Social Change Identified by Bhandarkar

The unique contribution made by a Sanskritist to understanding of the nature of social change needed in India in modern times has not received the recognition it deserves. The dimensions are conceived in the light of rational considerations alone.

The place of the critical approach, and the many uses to which the Critical, Comparative and Historical methods could be put, in the context of the modernization process, is given consideration by Bhandarkar alone. Other leaders were rationalists too, but did not stop to give these methods such major consideration.

Education is seen as a way to broaden horizons, rise above narrow perspectives and "liberate the mind" - a commonly-used nineteenth century expression.

Six aspects of social change are identified.

In matters of religious convictions, reason is given a place of priority, its function seen as that of sifting essentials from non-essentials. The study of the development of religions yields many insights which must form the basis of changing value and belief systems.

The liberal tradition is evident in all of Bhandarkar's views.

Chapter XII: Gopal Krishna Gokhale - The
Educative Process.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE.I - The Early Years.

Gokhale was born in the Ratnagiri District on May 9, 1866, making him ten years junior to Tilak. He took his B.A. in 1884 from Elphinstone College with Mathematics as his optional subject. He was blessed with a phenomenal memory and extraordinary retentive capacity stood him in good stead, in his later years when as a statesman and author of twelve major Budget and other speeches, he needed all manners of facts and figures at his finger tips. In addition it gave him "a marvellous command which he possessed over the English language as a medium for clear and incisive reasoning." In January, 1885 he accepted the position of a teacher in the New English High School, Poona, a decision that contrary to Parvate's assessment¹ must have been made because the young

1. T.V.Parvate, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, (Ahmedabad, 1959), p.14. Parvate feels that little impression was made on Gokhale by Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar and the Nibhandmala or the efforts of Agarkar and Tilak to arouse the people through the English High School or the Kesari or Mahratta. It does not seem possible that epoch-making events such as these could have failed to strike a cord in as sensitive a man as Gokhale, though his family concerns may have been an intense preoccupation at that time.

Jesuits as Tilak and Agarkar are often called, were associated with the School in the same capacities. It was also a decision that determined the course that his work took in its first phase, in the 1885-1902 period.

The success of the New English High School had given a filip to the cause of 'native educational enterprise' leading to the formation of the Deccan Education Society by the promoters of the New English High School and "sympathizers of private education", on October 24, 1884.

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Fergusson College was inaugurated on January 2, 1885, bearing the name of retiring Governor of Bombay, Sir James Fergusson, whose "liberal educational policy has given a new stimulus to the cause of private education in the Bombay Province." It was described as:

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2. The names of the promoters included those of Tilak, Agarkar, and Mahadeo Shivram Gole. Among the Patrons and Fellows of the newly formed Society were those of Ranade, Bhandarkar, K.T. Telang, V.M. Bhide, V.M. Mandlik, Sir James Fergusson, Sir W. Wedderburn, Principal W. Wordsworth and Prof. F.G. Selby; P.M. Limaye, The History of the Deccan Education Society, Poona, 1935, pp. 74-75.

... a fruit of the Renaissance that was sweeping over the land since the spiritual and intellectual contact with the West. The Indian mind aroused from the sleep of mediaevalism, was looking round, and seeking for a foot-hold in a world on new ideas and new values. The realisation had come, that so much in Indian ways of life and thought needed radical reform... If India was to live and move with the modern world... The Fergusson College was intended to be the seminary of Indian educational missionaries, who would carry the torch of enlightenment to the farthest nooks and corners of Maharashtra...

3

Gokhale was accepted as a life-member of the Deccan Education Society in June, 1886 at the age of twenty in recognition, no doubt, of his qualities of character and his capabilities. While he was drawn to the Deccan Education Society through a recognition of a kindred spirit in Agarkars this decision was also tantamount to "an act of self-sacrifice" since life-members served the Society on a meagre allowance of Rs.75- a month and were expected to give their services to the Society for at least a period of twenty years.

As a teacher at Fergusson College till 1902, he was called upon to teach a wide variety of subjects- English, Mathematics, History and Political Economy. Gokhale soon assumed greater

responsibilities for the Deccan Education Society, becoming almost its chief spokesman, and its chief fund-raiser, especially from 1893, though he did not serve the College as Principal at any time.

But these years also saw a growing disenchantment between the erstwhile companions of the Dongri jail. The records for the years 1886-1890 are "full of skirmishes, running fights and pitched battles" between them. A difference of temperament, amounting to incompatibility, a difference of opinion of problems of management of the institutions and, above all, a wholly irreconcilable position of the two, Agarkar and Tilak, on social and political questions, made a parting of the ways inevitable. ~~The~~

Agarkar and with him Gokhale, of course, were forced to sever their connection with the Kesari and Mahratta. Gokhale's contribution to them had been occasional ones, as for example the series on the General war in Europe he wrote for the Mahratta in 1886. The need to have a medium of communication to state the social reformer's position with all vehemence possible, and as needed to counteract conservative propaganda led

them to establish the Sudharak⁴ an Anglo-Marathi weekly in mid-October of 1888. Agarkar and Gokhale were associated together in this venture for four years.

In the Deccan Education Society itself matters were worsening, leading to Tilak's resignation on October 14, 1890. The ranks of life-members were divided with Apte, Agarkar and Gokhale ranged on one side and Tilak, Namjoshi and Dharap on the other.⁵

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4. Incomplete files of the Sudharak are to be found in the Mandlik Collection of the Wadia Library of Fergusson College for the years 1898-1904. The editor was Vinayak Ramchandra Joshi.
 5. Wolpert discusses the issues in the many controversies between the two groups, which among other things, led to Tilak's resignation. Gokhale, offered to resign if his withdrawal would 'induce Mr. Tilak to remain' but to no avail. One of the "issues" concerned his secretaryship of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and the place of "private work" by life members S.A. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India (Berkeley, 1962), pp. 28-61; also Limaye, op.cit., pp. 101-126.

Ranade and Gokhale.

In 1887 the association between Gokhale and Ranade began in 1887. Early in their association, Gokhale impressed his guru with "his great powers and his readiness to do his best under all circumstances" and his intellectual and moral honesty.⁶

Part of Gokhale's training under Ranade came when he became Honorary Secretary of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and editor of its Quarterly Journal. Hoyland describes this training:

Ranade sent him straight to original documents, made him work through masses of Blue Books; gave him petitions and memorials to draft which entailed long and laborious research; was unsparing in his demand for articles and memoranda on all manner of subjects of public interest, which could be mastered only the hardest and most rigorous industry...

7

Under the impact of Ranade the style of Gokhale's writing for the Sudharak also underwent a change from the use of "showy... bombastic language" to "a simpler, more straightforward chaste style."

6. Letter from Ranade to Rao Bahadur G.V.Joshi, February 16, 1890, quoted in T.V.Parvate, op.cit.,p.25.

7. Hoyland, op.cit.,pp.14-15.

Ranade also counselled that whenever there was a conflict:

...criticism must be expressed in a moderate and constructive manner and thus Gokhale was trained to be not simply a critic of existing systems and institutions, but an organiser of something better to take their place...
8

The lasting effect of these qualities of moderation and constructiveness was as Paranjpye said:

...even in the dark days of rampant extremism, there was a perceptible number of young men who remained true to the principles of moderation mainly through the influence that emanated from Gokhale...
9

V.S.Srinivas Sastri, whose close association with Gokhale, made him admirably suited to the task of writing of a full-length biography of Gokhale, rather in the style of Morley's Life of Gladstone¹⁰ described the Ranade-Gokhale association thus:

8. Ibid., p.19

9. R.P.Paranjpye, Gopal Krishna Gokhale (Poona, 1918), p.3.

10. Letter from P.S.Sivaswami Ayyar to V.S. Srinivas Sastri, dated 13-2-29, quoted in P.S.Sivaswami Ayyar A Great Liberal, ed. K.A. Nilkantha Sastri (Bombay, 1965), pp. 746-7.

For fourteen years, the ample measure of ancient discipleship, Mr. Gokhale sat at the feet of his Guru, learning to read the world aright and mastering the great lessons of life, the progress and destiny of nations, the inner meaning of events, the far-off results of action, the discipline of failure, service and sacrifice, faith and prayer, the infinite play of human passion. But not alone the open book of nature and Man, other books, too, they read together. Nothing that was useful was overlooked. The ephemeral press was ransacked. Heavy tomes laid bare their treasures. Government publications, formidable in red, green and blue, had no terrors for this pair. Statistics in dread array yielded up their secrets. Earth has no fairer sight than the close communion of two such master-souls..."

11

Indian National Congress.

While still active both in the Sarvajanic Sabha and the Deccan Education Society it was to be expected that Gokhale would be drawn into the larger vortex of public activity through the Indian National Congress. Gokhale and Tilak both joined the Congress in 1889 and participated in its fifth session at Bombay that year. He also

11. V.S. Srinivas Sastri, "Gokhale- A Perfect Servant of India" Introduction, Speeches of the Honourable Mr. G.K. Gokhale C.I.E., 1st ed. (Madras, n.d.)

made his maiden speech on this occasion, supporting an amendment moved by Tilak regarding the manner in which members to the higher legislature should be elected. There-after he attended Congress sessions regularly except for a brief period following the Apology Incident.¹² The years brought him greater responsibility in organizational matters within the Congress. His many speeches and resolutions soon identified him as following in the best liberal traditions of Ranade, Surendranath Banerjee, Pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naorojee. In 1905 he became President of the 21st Session of the Indian

12. Much has been written about the 1897 Apology Incident. It took rare courage and intellectual and moral integrity, on Gokhale's part to, as he put it, "... accept full responsibility myself-both moral and legal for making the allegations" and to issue an Apology statement on August 1, 1897 which was carried by the Times of India and the Manchester Guardian. Later, a communique was also issued by him to the press on 7 January 1898 further elucidating the circumstances of his apology. As can well be imagined, criticism of his action can come from all sides. At the Amraoti session of the Indian National Congress, it was said, that there were some who did not want to sit with him on the platform. But there were Indians and Englishmen who rallied to his support and among them may be named Ranade himself who with Pherozeshah Mehta is believed to have drafted the Apology statement, Surendranath Banerjee, and D.E. Wacha and Vasudeo Govind Apte, editor of the Dnyanprakash, William Wedderburn, A.D. Hume, and W.C. Caine.

National Congress at Banares, a recognition of confidence of the people he had gained through his quiet and self-less work and one gained notwithstanding the trials, unpleasantnesses and distress of the previous years. As Congress President, Gokhale's qualities of statesmanship and powers of conciliation were strained to the utmost because there were already visible portends of things to come.

Part II - GOKHALE'S SOCIAL THOUGHT.

Major Speeches

After Gokhale's resignation from Fergusson College, to embark, as he confessed, upon "the stormy and uncertain sea of public life", he entered the period during which his major speeches were made. Shah has described Gokhale as the one leader "who stands out in the fog of Indian politics as the most important exponent of reason in public life and liberalism as the basis of a modern democratic welfare state...¹³" Gokhale's speeches in

13. A.B.Shah, Foreword, Gokhale and Modern India, Centenary Lectures, Edited by A.B.Shah and S.P.Aiyar, (Bombay, 1966), p. v.

the Provincial and Imperial Councils and the Indian National Congress bear evidence of his liberal thinking and his clear perception of the dimensions along which social change must take place. The tone of his speeches is inclined to be less homiletic than those of his guru but not less perceptive or outspoken. Though the scene of his many debates is a political one, his thinking is not restricted to that field but covered many issues that had to do with the modernization of Indian society. He was a statesman and economist of wide repute, but just as much of an educational philosopher and social reformer.

During the second phase of his life, Gokhale filled the position of being India's true representative and spokesman of the Indian point of view. Belying the popular appellation of "leader of the Indian Opposition", his careful analysis of Indian problems, based upon statistical data and humanitarian considerations, his skillful use of the art of persuasion and argument as a weapon to convince, which by the same token excluded any appeal to the passions

and prejudices or the employment of the argumentum ad hominem - the latter not unfamiliar to him in his own experiences in Poona- and his capacity to weigh the pros and cons of each issue under debate gave his speeches a measure of rationality and logic that has rarely been matched in the annals of political debate in India.

His Budget speeches¹⁴ assume importance because they constitute one of the best sources to discover what he had to say on major national issues and what he visualised as steps that needed to be taken to improve the existing state of the country. Under the existing constitutional arrangements then, any criticism of the existing state of affairs and any concrete suggestions for improvement "had to be packed into the speeches delivered from year to year on the Imperial Indian Budget¹⁵."

The Presidential address to the Indian National Congress, 1905, his major pronouncements and other speeches all fall within the period

14. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.1 contain all the Budget Speeches, 1902-1912.

15. J.S.Hoyland, Gopal Krishna Gokhale (Calcutta, 1933) p.65.

between 1902-1915. By contrast there is little that remains of his speeches and writings of the earlier period. The articles and memorials of the Sarvajanic Sabha carried no acknowledgement as to their authorship, and the articles written for the Sudharak by Gokhale seem to have been lost.

Here then is a leader who spans two centuries and whose utterances for the twentieth century came out of formative influences exerted on him in the nineteenth century, in which period also the direction of his future thinking was laid and his convictions well established. In the second period there are no departures in his broad thinking to suggest that he moved away from the philosophy of life and ideas of progress that he imbibed from his master, Ranade, during the first period.

In the years gone by, more than half a century ago, when Gokhale commanded a position of repute as a statesman both at home and abroad and held views that were given careful attention

by Indians and Englishmen alike,¹⁶ "concrete issues" have changed and concerns that occupied his mind have altered very much. Perhaps of all the changes that have taken place, nothing is more significant than the fact of Independence, by which act the nation became master of its own destiny, with the responsibility of charting its own future now resting squarely upon its own shoulders.

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16. Contemporary tributes paid to Gokhale even during his lifetime were eloquent and came from men of widely different affiliations and opinions which included H.W.Nevinson, M.A. Jinnah, J.Ramsay Macdonald, Sir J.Meston, and Lord Curzon among others. See Appendix 1, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, A Centenary Tribute, (New Delhi, 1966), pp.179-182. Presiding over the New Reform Club banquet in London on November 17, 1905, on the occasion on which Gokhale delivered an address on "The Needs of India", Sir Henry Cotton, K.C.S.I., said, "I know of no one gentleman who represents as well as Mr.Gokhale does the new spirit which is rising in India and as destined to effect such remarkable modification in the progress and future of the country", The Needs of India, a pamphlet reprinted from India, Nov.17, 1905; Lovat G.Fraser, Editor of the Times of India and leading journalist of his time who had frequently criticised Gokhale in his paper wrote to Gokhale: "We may not all agree with everything you say, but I do not think that there is anybody in the Presidency who does not feel proud that Western India now possesses a representative of so much distinction and individuality, whose voice commands at least the interested attention of the whole country", L.G.Fraser to G.K. Gokhale, 31st March, 1902, Gokhale Papers, micro-film Reel No.4.Sr.No.203; also see, S.Natarajan, History of the Press in India (Bombay, 1962), p.164, for another interesting episode between the two.

In this task of building a modern nation, there are insights to be gained from that tremendous legacy of liberal thinking that has come from nineteenth century leaders. Certainly there are to be found in writings and speeches of Gokhale, as there are in those of Ranade, Banerjee and other Indian National Congressmen of those times, basic ideas conceived in the liberal tradition that have a meaning and a message for a young nation now struggling amid contrary forces to modernize and to live up to the highest democratic principles it has chosen for itself. As S.P.Aiyar says, "It is Gokhale's constant appeal to "principles" (larger principles of liberalism) and to reason which impart to (his) writings a relevance that transcends his own times."¹⁷

Srinivas Sastri, who succeeded Gokhale as First Member of the Servants of India Society and who was a close associate of Gokhale and shared many ideas in common with him said:

...things have changed so much...new questions have come up; and ones have

17. S.P.Aiyar, "Political Philosophy of Gokhale, Gokhale and the Modern World, op.cit.,p.28.

either diminished in importance or passed away from the political field; emphasis and urgency have shifted so much...(but) the principles for which he lived, the cause to which he devoted his finest powers and the example he has left us are still capable of yielding benefits of a rare kind...18

Thus it is possible to extract or separate from Gokhale's writings, a fundamental outlook and certain modes of thinking that could serve as guidelines as to how a modernization process might be effectively achieved. Gokhale's understanding of issues of his time extended beyond the mere fact of the immediate, and yields a philosophy of life and action that has relevance for today.

Gokhale's Sense of Mission- The Regeneration of India.

The sense of singleness of purpose in Gokhale's mind- that of bringing to India all the benefits of modernization and the fulness and richness of life that such benefits make it possible for individuals and the society at large

18. V.S.Srinivas Sastri, Life of Gokhale, (Bangalore, 1937), p.3; for a comparison of the ideas of Sastri and Gokhale, see P.Kodanda Rao, "Gokhale and Sastri", A Centenary Tribute, op.cit., pp.125-141.

to have- is evident from one of his earliest public statements:

...I stand before you as a representative of the only part of this great Empire which is far behind the rest in its enjoyment of the blessings of what may be called modern civilization... and yet we were the first to emerge from barbarism... once the cradle and long the home of a noble religion, a noble philosophy and science and art of every kind... at present... steeped in ignorance and superstition and all the moral helplessness which comes from such darkness...there is, to my mind, nothing comparable to the work- the thrice blessed work- of regenerating ancient India... the situation is... perfectly unique in the history of the world.¹⁹

The Educative Process-a pre-requisite for
Regeneration.

In this unique task to Gokhale's mind the educative process was of paramount importance or as he described it, "the sheet-anchor of a people's progress"²⁰. The highest expectations" that may be

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19. "Female Education in India" a paper read at the Educational Congress held in connection with the Women's Section on Education at the Victoria Era Exhibition, London, 1897, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.177.
20. "Education in India", address delivered to the Bombay Graduate's Association, 11th April, 1896, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.165.

formed of the educative process, or its broad impact when conceived in terms of its function for the regeneration of a people or a society, Gokhale visualized would be in these terms:

...the general level of our intelligence (will) be raised and men become better citizens. Then will the culture of literature, the depth of philosophy, the widened horizon of history, the love of knowledge which science brings, be available to us... the will our young men leave the University, as they ought to do, burning with a zeal for everything that is great and noble and honourable, with the fire of earnestness that purifies whatever it touches. Then will they think high thoughts and dream noble dreams. Then will they cherish great ideals... ideals worthy of their manhood and their education- ideals for which they will live, ideals for which they will die.²¹

The Responsibility of the Educated Elite class in the Nation's Regeneration.

It was to the educated class, to the "students of today (who would) become the grown-up men of tomorrow" that Gokhale turned for "the future hope of the country". A special class, a privileged class that had come under the "ennobling

21. Ibid.. p. 174.

influence" of modern education, who in terms of numbers were utterly disproportionate to the vast population of the country, to them Gokhale assigned duties that extended beyond those "which you owe to yourselves; ... the duty which you owe to your fellow-students...(and) the duty which you owe to those in authority over you." Gokhale said:

The last duty that you owe to those who are in the wider world is to acquire a knowledge of their needs, observe their condition and observe their struggle, and to acquire an attitude of mind, so as to sympathize with those who are struggling, even though you are not immediately able to give them redress. There is a great deal of injustice and suffering in the wider world which requires to be remedied, and when it comes to you to play the part of grown-up men, it is expected you will contribute your share to remove these things.²³

The dimensions of public duty extended in many directions and Gokhale would not have presumed to name them all, a matter he was wont to emphasize in his many encounters with young students, time and again leaving the specific area of public duty for each educated person to decide upon as a matter of his personal choice and training. What he

22. Ibid., p. 221.

23. Ibid., p. 225.

emphasized was the need to understand one's duty to one's fellowmen, especially in view of the fact that the student was a privileged person, by reason of the education he had received. Certain responsibilities delved upon the educated individual just because of this education and there was no gainsaying this fact. Furthermore, he seemed to want to impress upon the young minds that there was a time and a place for everything, and the years spent in institutions of learning were for the purposes of the acquisition of knowledge and the tools with which perceptiveness and understanding would be made possible and the development of character and a spirit of discipline and cooperation.

Speaking to a group of students at Madras, Gokhale identified five areas in which he felt there was a need to make strides ahead, if the nation was to attain a position of pride and honour. The areas were the education and elevation of the masses and of women, and the creation of political awareness, the promotion of industrial development and the reassessment and restructuring

of religious institutions so that their form and spirit may be in keeping with modern times. Gokhale said:

There is the call of duty on all sides, whichever way you turn. There is a great deal of work to be done in this ancient land... I simply point out the responsibilities that lie on you... There is work to be done for the mass of your countrymen who are plunged in ignorance and superstition. This mass has been kept at a lower level of existence from which level it has got to be raised. Then there is work to be done for the elevation of the status of womankind of the land. A whole sex shut out from the intellectual life of a people. This is not good for any country. In religion many of the old institutions are existing only in form and the spirit seems to have fled from them. You have got to recognize that there is work to be done in this direction as well. Further, the whole country is on a low level in regard to political existence and that means arduous work for those who interest themselves in that question. Lastly, the industrial development of the country needs to be urgently attended to. In all these directions there is work to be done.

24

On another occasion he declared:

Influences are at work around us which bid everyone, "not sit or stand but go". The very air we breathe is laden with a longing for change. Old beliefs are crumbling. New adjustments of ideas have become necessary,

24. "Advice to Students", Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 188-189.

and amidst this general commotion which has been very properly called "unrest" it was not to be expected that our students alone should continue to stand where they did...25

In this context, it is not surprising that Gokhale felt the task of giving the right direction to the "ideals and aspirations" of these young minds to be a stupendous one, and that must "calls for our most earnest attention and our closest inquiry". He confessed that:

One of the most anxious..(and) one of the most important, problems confronting us today is how to supply the guidance at once wise and patriotic, to our young men, so that their lives may be directed into channels of high purpose and earnest endeavour in the service of the Motherland... to instill into young minds a due sense of proportion and of responsibility and a correct realization of the true needs of the country- this can never be an easy task...it is beset with extraordinary difficulties.

26

The role of the 'Average' Educated Person.

Gokhale's insight into the part that the average educated man and woman had to play in the life of a nation have a validity that extend beyond the times that he was referring to. It was an insight he had gained as on a visit to England

25. "Students and Politics", Ibid.,p.191.

26. Ibid.,p.

and one that he felt had meaning for the Indian situation. No one would deny the role of "great statesman, great generals and men of great learning, (or) man of wealth" and Gokhale was certainly conscious of the progressive force that these men provided. In fact, in 1896, reviewing the products that were coming out of the universities, he was greatly concerned about the evidence of a certain "intellectual decadence" and the failure of the universities to produce men of the calibre and ilk of Kr̥shna Shastri Chiplunkar, Kero Laxman Chhatre, Dadabhai Naoroji, Mama Paramanand or V.N.Mandlik, D.E.Wacha or G.V.Joshi. He said:

Where are the Ranades and the Bhandarkars in our ranks, the Telangs and the Mehtas, the Pandits and the Athalyses! Who among us possess the restless intellectual activity of the late Mr.Kunte? 27

However, Gokhale hastened to say:

Many of us are apt to imagine that those who loom largely in the eyes of the public are the only ones that lead really useful lives, we sometimes talk and write as though only one or two individuals were only doing useful work and the rest only vegetating. 28

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27. "Education in India", Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.173.
 28. "Advice to Students", Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.189.

Such a state of affairs was certainly not the case and the average educated man and woman was invested by Gokhale with the role of being the custodians of the strength and greatness of a nation. He said:

A nation's true greatness depends upon its average man and woman...It is in the life, thoughts and actions of the average man and woman that the solid strength of a nation lies. You may not be privileged to make any large contribution to the world's knowledge by research and scholarship, but every one... can lead better, more earnest lives on account of the education you have received... you will thus add to the moral energy of the nation.²⁹

It was also for the educated man to support and to provide an undergird to the efforts of men at the forefront of progress in the fields already named the political, social, religious, industrial and intellectual fields- without which their efforts would come to nought. Gokhale said:

Even striking personalities cannot by themselves do much; they require assistance, a large number of other men, some immediately behind them, some still further behind and some a long way behind them.³⁰

29. Ibid.

30. "Students and Their Duties", Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.231.

Using the analogy of the mighty Ganges, which gathers strength and which, "as stream after stream flows into it... gathers volume and breadth" to become a mighty river, Gokhale said:

It is the same thing in regard to public work and great movements. You want some striking personalities at the back... (but) unless a number of smaller men... come forward and cooperate with the striking personalities, a great deal of work will remain undone.³¹

But no apology is offered by Gokhale for using the word "smaller", for "no man need look upon himself as small, if he does his work in his own sphere". What needs to be emphasized is that while every individual cannot play "a great part" in the regeneration process, each one must Gokhale said:

do the work which suits us best according to our capacity (and intellect)...then we shall have done some work for our country as these tributaries have, by joining the mighty river enabled it to become really mighty.³²

Gokhale's Assessment of the Indian Educational System.

Ranade, Bhandarkar and Gokhale were all

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

critics of the Indian educational system as well as Government policy vis à vis, Indian Education.

On numerous occasions over the years Gokhale referred to what he considered to be the evils or defects of the system, which had the ultimate result of stunting growth and creating intellectuals and moral dwarfs. Perhaps his most eloquent statement on these matters is his 1896 speech.³³ He had hard condemnation for the system which permits a "fearful amount of cram- from the first Vernacular standard to the highest degree examination." The "dull, mechanical monotony-the same text-books, the same standards, the same methods of teaching" particularly at the primary level came in for criticism for which he held the Education Department responsible but he did spare the parents and the Municipalities for their complete unconcern about these matters. He spoke of the evil of guide-books and the need to reform the examination system. The defects in the system prevented education from having its rightful effect on a person. Gokhale said:

33. "Education in India", 1896, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 159-176.

...the object of all studies must be two-fold - the knowledge which you gain, which you can never call your own till it has been properly assimilated and the culture that you derive from such assimilation. Now, in the case of most of our students there is no real effort at assimilation and consequently not much culture in reality.

34

Female Education- A Prerequisite for Creation of a Climate for Social Change.

It has been suggested that for personal reasons³⁵ Gokhale was unable to join the rank of active social reformers and that though he was in entire sympathy with the platform of the Social Reform Party, "he did not take the position of an advocate of any items of social reform propoganda, except uplift of the depressed classes³⁶."

It would be hard to find evidence to support this view wholly because Gokhale was as eloquent a champion of the needs and rights of the weaker sex as he was of the weaker sections of society. He spared no words when it came to sponsoring the cause of women's education. Perhaps the fact that

34. Ibid., p.171

35. D.V.Ambekar, Gopal Krishna Gokhale: A Biographical Sketch, A Centenary Tribute, op.cit.,

p.4.
36. T.V.Parvate, op.cit.,p.49.

his thoughts on the subject were being given expression in a country where there was no "necessity of vindicating the dignity of female education" and where the cause of universal education had long been espoused the Utilitarians, allowed Gokhale a certain measure of outspokenness on the subject. In any case, his excellent 1897 London speech on Female education seems to have gone largely unnoticed.³⁷ Gokhale explained the peculiar situation in which the Indian woman was caught, at least, in contemporary times. He said:

A wide diffusion of female education in all its branches is a factor of the highest value to the true-well being of every nation. In India it assumes additional importance by reason of the bondage of caste and custom which tries to keep us tied down to certain fixed ways of life and fixed modes of thought, and which so often cripples all efforts at the most elementary reforms... almost every single act of our daily life is regarded as regulated by some religious notion or another...the slightest departure from the accepted ideas in these matters is understood to increase the difficulties in the path of our salvation. And, naturally these ideas have a far stronger hold on

37. A.R.Kamat, "Gokhale as an Educationist", A Centenary Tribute, op.cit., pp.90-108, ignores his thoughts on female education.

the minds of women than of men... their turn of mind is intensely religious- a result due in no small measure to their being shut out from all other intellectual pursuits.³⁸

Gokhale acknowledged the fact that women had been held in an exalted position in Vedic times and had had access to the highest of intellectual pursuits.³⁹ In times since British rule began, also, some sections of the female population were allowed a rudimentary, unorganized type of education. But for the most part, the education of women for centuries had been a sadly neglected matter.

Gokhale said:

The last seven centuries of darkness, have however, so effectually done their work that anyone who reminds the Indian people of this past state of things and asks them to make an attempt to return to it, runs the risk of being set down as an innovator.

40

Despite the formidable difficulties in the way of giving "women the freedom to acquire knowledge and secure that culture of mind that knowledge brings", at the present time, there were, he felt,

38. "Female education in India", London, 1897 Vol. 3, pp. 176-77; also see speech made by Gokhale at the Alexandra Girls' English Institution, Bombay, 1912; Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 252-56.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 179

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-81.

two counts which made a change in the status of education for women imperative.

Firstly, women, as human beings had a right to the claim of education, the freedom to avail themselves of this opportunity should they so desire. Gokhale declared:

Education, enlightened freedom and an honoured position in society, these-and not enforced seclusion and ignorance-are the rightful inheritance of Indian women.

41

Gokhale is claiming for women the right to be educated. The notion of rights of the individual is implicit in liberal thought. By drawing out this implication, Gokhale was referring to a dimension that had not appeared in the thought of liberal leaders of Maharashtra in a noticeable way. More consideration had been given to the notion of duties and responsibilities than to that of rights, or what matters constitute one's rights as a human being.

Gokhale, in this connection also went on to cite some of the forces in society that have exercised an inhibiting influence on the education of girls.

He quoted from the Hunter Education Commission's Report which had identified some of these forces:

The social customs of India, in regard to child-marriage and the seclusion in which women of the well-to-do classes spend their married life... create difficulties which embarrass the promoters of female education at every step. The duration of the school-going age for girls is much shorter than that for boys. It usually terminates at nine and seldom extends beyond the eleventh year. At so early an age a girl's education is scarcely begun.⁴²

Gokhale also quoted Telang who had summed up the problem in these words:

In discussing this matter, we seem sometimes to move in a vicious circle. We cannot successfully raise the age of marriage for girls among large portions of our community without a wide spread of female education. And, on the other hand, any considerable spread of female education is hardly possible until the age of marriage is raised...the way to meet it is at one and the same time to push on female education to the extent it is possible, under the present conditions, and to extend the limits of

42. Ibid., p.179; Mrs.Margaret Wilson, wife of Dr.John Wilson, and known in her own right as promoter of the education of girls, called the prejudices against female education "powerful and obstinate". The Bombay Darpan living upto its liberal ideals, had no hesitation in publishing a letter from Mrs.Wilson on the subject, which however, true in fact, could not have but offended the sentiments of a large section of the population in those times. Memoirs of Mrs.Margaret Wilson(Edinburgh and London, MDCCCLVIII), pp. 241-42.

of marriageable age in the same way...
 as every advance is secured... further
 advance will become more and more easy.

43

Gokhale's phenomenal memory allowed to quote statistics with great facility and on the occasion in England, when speaking on the subject of educational facilities for girls, he was able to trace the history of female education in Bombay Presidency, starting with its beginnings, made by the American Missionary Society in 1824 and the Scottish Missionary Society in 1829 down to the year of 1897 when he quoted statistics pertaining to five provinces for a number of schools and number of pupils in attendance. When the figures were looked at, in terms only of a "beginning made" in the education of girls, at the primary level, there was some reason for satisfaction, but when it came to secondary or higher education of women, the paucity of facilities was staggering.⁴⁴

Secondly, women's education was seen by Gokhale as part of social reconstruction and the process of modernization. Emancipation from the "thralldom of old world ideas" and assimilation of

43. Ibid., p.185.

44. Ibid., pp.182-185.

those dimensions which would have to be imported to made modernization possible, would only come with education, and in this case, with the education of women. Gokhale said:

It is obvious that, under the circumstances, a wide diffusion of education, with all its solvent influences, among the women of India, is the only means of emancipating their minds from (the) degrading thralldom to ideas inherited through a long past...such an emancipation... will facilitate more than anything else, our assimilation of those elements of Western civilization without which all thoughts of India's regeneration are mere idle dreams, and all attempts at it are foredoomed to failure. The solution seems simple enough and yet no problem in India is surrounded with greater difficulties or required more delicate and patient handling.⁴⁵

Gokhale's Advocacy of Primary Education.

One can understand the supreme place given to popular education by Gokhale when one finds that he ranked it with three other great achievements of the Western world, namely, "the application of science to industrial processes, the employment of steam and electricity to annihilate distance, and the rise of democracies."⁴⁶ It is little wonder, then, that the promotion of education became a

45. Ibid., p. 178

46. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.73.

cause close to his heart, when he began his public career and even after he had ceased to be actively connected with teaching. The former had begun with his election to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1889. To that august body, in 1901-02 he expressed a sense of impatience with those who asked what good primary education could do to the mass of Indian people. He pointed what must have seemed to him too obvious to need clarification. He said:

...taken in the mass it means for the bulk of the community a higher level of intelligence, a greater aptitude for skilled labour and a higher capacity for discrimination between right and wrong.⁴⁷

On this occasion he reiterated views he had expressed before the Welby Commission, 1897, on the subject of education, particularly the need for enhanced budgetary provision for primary education.⁴⁸ In the Imperial Legislative Council to which he was elected in 1901 to fill the seat vacated by Pherozeshah Mehta, and which he held for the thirteen years, time and again one finds Gokhale

47. Financial Statement, 1901-02, Bombay Legislative Council, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 1, p. 455.

48. Welby Commission, Written Evidence, April 12th and 13th, 1897, Ibid., pp. 501-02.

returning to a consideration of this subject and viewing it from different aspects. In his very second Budget Speech, 1903, he summarised the views of Professor Tews of Berlin whose essay on Popular Education and National Economic Development had shown the close relationship that exists between general education and economic and social prosperity, making "the fostering of all educational institutions.. one of the most important national duties of the present." Gokhale said:

It is obvious that an ignorant and illiterate nation can never make any solid progress and must fall back in the race of life. What we therefore want, and want most urgently- is first of all a widespread diffusion of elementary education- an effective and comprehensive schools for the masses- and the longer this work is delayed, the more insuperable will be our difficulties in gaining for ourselves a recognised position among the nations of the world.

50

In the same speech, armed with statistics taken from the Reports of the United State Commissioner of Education for the years between 1897 and 1900 about public expenditure on primary education and particularly expenditure per capita of

49. Budget Speech, 1903, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. I, p. 40.

50. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

51
 population in the major countries of the world,
 he showed how "hopelessly behind every other civi-
 lised nation on the face of the earth we are in
 the matter of public education." He further said:

It is sad to think that, after a hundred years of British rule, things with us should be no better than this, and unless the work is taken up with greater confidence and greater confidence and greater enthusiasm, there is small hope of any real improvement in the situation taking place. In other countries, national education is held to be one of the solemn duties of the State... Here it has so far been a more or less neglected branch of State duty.

52

Taking into account the susceptibilities of the Indian situation for a compulsory education scheme, Gokhale in his 1906 Budget Speech suggested that:

The first step is to make education free in all schools throughout the country, and that can be done at once... The next step will be to make this education compulsory for boys in the Presidency towns, and perhaps in a few other leading towns. When the minds of the people have been accustomed to the idea of compulsion in the matter of education, the area of compulsion may be extended, till at last, in the course of twenty years or so from now, we have in our midst a system of compulsory and free primary education throughout the country, and that too for boys and girls.⁵³

51. Ibid., pp. 42-43; Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 159-162

52. Vol. I, p. 44.

53. Budget Speech, 1906, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. I, pp. 105-106.

While Gokhale may have grossly underestimated the period of time that it takes to break old habits of thought and action and create new perspectives and new modes of behaviour in a unawakened people, there is no mistaking his enthusiasm for the cause or his optimism that it can be accomplished in a foreseeable future, nor his insight that it was only through education that there was hope for the salvation for a nation. In 1907 he pointed with alacrity to the experiment of compulsory education introduced by Sayajirao Gaikwad, Maharaja of Baroda(1863-1938) in Amreli District of Baroda state in 1893 and extended to the whole state in 1900.⁵⁴

In 1911, Gokhale sponsored an Elementary Education Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council. Though it was defeated, it indicated one of the major areas in which change is needed, if the modernization process was to be undertaken in a country with any sense of earnestness.

Gokhale's single plea was:

The great thing is to make a beginning in introducing compulsion. Once a beginning

54. Budget Speech, 1907, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.I, p.121; also Vol.3, p.95; also Philip W. Sergeant, The Ruler of Baroda, London, John Murray, 1928, pp.197-209.

is made, the public mind in the country will be rapidly familiarized with the idea of compulsion, and it will then not take more than 20 years at the outside to have a system of universal education in the country in full operation.⁵⁵

The Merits of Western Education- Development of the Concepts of Liberty and Free Institutions.

Throughout Gokhale's speeches on educational matters there is reflected a concern for the future of Western education in India, because he was convinced that a "wide diffusion" of it was bound up in large measure with the best interests of the people. He placed Western education among the "beneficent agencies" which British rule had introduced into the country and desired that the "fullest advantage" being taken of it.

The major function of Western education was described by him in these terms:

To my mind, the greatest work of Western education in the present state of India is not so much the encouragement of learning as the liberation of the Indian mind from the thralldom of old-world ideas and the assimilation of all that is highest and best in the life and thought and character of the West.⁵⁶

55. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.I, pp.122-3.
56. "Officialization of Universities", Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.11.

It is easy to see the reasons for this high esteem in which Western education was held. He felt that "the whole attitude of mind of those who had received, or are receiving Western education- and with them were the best of their countrymen"- had undergone a fundamental change because of a new dimension that had been added to their thinking. In Indian civilization which was of a very high order, an awareness of "the profound principle of liberty as a factor in human progress", that love of liberty and appreciation of free institutions which one finds to be so striking a characteristic of the West" had been missing. Speaking in 1905, he said:

The Indians were a civilized race long before the ancestors of Englishmen knew what civilization was. The genius of the race, however, showed itself in the fields of religion, philosophy, science and art. Their people did not develop a love of free institutions; they paid no attention to political questions...but now...under new influence... the more people came to understand the dignity of free institutions the greater progress in this direction.⁵⁷

57. "An Indian View of Indian Affairs", address to the Fabian Society, London, 1905, Gokhale Speeches, Vol2, p.327; p. 381.

This purpose could be achieved through the medium of the new education because English literature and history is "permeated with ideas of the value and dignity of freedom, of constitutional liberty." Already the educated classes, after "fifty years or more" of their study of these disciplines had made significant advances in four different fields those of local self-government, the spread of higher education, the development of a powerful Press, and the Public Services.⁵⁸

In his time he estimated the number of those who had come under the influence of English education to be about a million in a group of about fifteen million who could read and write, and thought them to be the natural leaders of the people, with access to the minds of the mass of the population and to be a pace-setting group. "What the educated Indian thinks today", he said

58. "The Needs of India" Address at the New Reform Club, London, November 15, 1905, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, pp. 334-335.

the rest of India thinks tomorrow."⁵⁹

From R.P.Paranjpye, comes a vital indication of what Gokhale thought to be the purpose of a study of history. Paranjpye related that:

...He did not much care for the history of India, as he thought that more lessons can be learnt from the history of Europe, both ancient and modern, which presents a well-marked evolution of the democratic idea, than from any detailed account of the numerous dynasties of rulers that ruled India- for this, he thought, was very nearly what the history of India practically amounts to...⁶⁰

From D.E.Wacha there comes the observation that Gokhale had equipped himself with a "broad study of history in all its several aspects" before

59. Gokhale Speeches, Congress Presidential Address, 1905, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, pp.205-6; Gokhale seemed to have shared all the horror that Plato evinced, of a country's having to draw its leadership from those who had not undergone a period of training and discipline. His concern for the masses was seen in the extensive educational facilities he sought for them. But he was firm in the view that only when they were brought under the influence of education they be expected to provide leadership or make for high national efficiency. Gokhale was not a mass leader in the sense that Gandhi was and his views on the state of unreadiness of the masses for participation in public life are at variance with Gandhi's views.

60. R.P.Paranjpye, op.cit., pp. 18-19.

he launched on his actual public career.⁶¹ And in Gokhale's own list of priorities "a good knowledge" of History- Ancient and Modern stood at the top of the disciplines in which he wanted to become proficient.⁶²

A greater measure of Gokhale's regard for the value of a study of History came in 1911 when as a Member of the Bombay University Senate, he vehemently opposed the move to drop the paper in the History of England, Political and Constitutional in the B.A. curriculum from the Compulsory group and include it in the Voluntary group of "History and Economics."

61. D. E. Wacha, Reminiscences of the Late Hon. Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale (Bombay, 1915), pp. 6-10.

62. Gokhale said; "By the grace of Sree Guru Dattatraya, I will endeavour, humbly but firmly, to acquire or achieve the following:

1. I will practise Yoga regularly.
2. I will acquire a good knowledge of:
 - (a) History- Ancient and Modern.
 - (b) Philosophy - Ancient and Modern.
 - (c) Astronomy
 - (d) Geology.
 - (e) Physiology
 - (f) Psychology

Now, no more "ology".

(g) French...

3. I will try to become a preacher of the highest philosophical religion and I will preach this religion to the whole world." Gokhale Papers, microfilm, Reel No.4, Sr.No.203, dated 5 Feb., 1898.

There are only scattered references to be found in his speeches to the content of the English courses taught by him. Among the poets and novelists that must have formed part of the content of his courses, the following compilation can be made from actual references cited: Bacon's Advancement of Learning, Scott's Bride of Lammermoor, De Quincey's The Confessions of an Opium Eater, Southey's Life of Nelson, Thomas Gray's The Elegy Written in a Country Church-yard, the Works of Scott, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Milton and Robert Browning, Burke and John Bright.

It is left to one's imagination to visualize how Gokhale would have handled the teaching for instance of Bacon's Advancement of Learning (1605) which was considered to have marked the beginning of the English language becoming "the vehicle of an important treatise in Philosophy" or the early "revolutionary sympathies of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey" but it would not be far-fetched to speculate that literature as a vehicle for liberal ideas and values so close to his heart would have been as much a part of the teaching of the course as literature forms.⁶³

63. D. B. Mathur, "Gopal Krishna Gokhale and the Impact of the West", The Indian Journal of Political Science, Vol. XXII (October-December, 1961) No. 4, pp. 301-311.

Another nineteenth century leader, Surendra-nath Banerjea, who was a champion of Indian unity amid its manifold diversities, saw the role of "English education" as he termed it, to be one of "the mighty revolutionary agencies" to bring about such unity. Banerjea said:

The question might be asked how is English education helping the cause of Indian union. I have mentioned that one of the obstacles to national unity is the diversity of dialects that prevails in India. English education partly removes this difficulty supplying a common medium of communication between the educated classes...nor is this all. English education has uplifted all who have come under its influence to a common platform of thoughts feelings and aspirations. Educated Indians whether of Bengal, Madras, Bombay or the North Western Provinces are brought up under the same intellectual, moral, and political influences. Kindred hopes, feelings and ideas are thus generated. The educated classes throughout India are thus brought nearer together.⁶⁴

64. Surendra Nath Banerjea (1848-1926), Address on Indian Unity, delivered at a meeting of the Students' Association, Calcutta on March 16, 1878. Quoted in K.P. Karunakaran, Modern Indian Political Tradition, (New Delhi, 1962), pp. 38-39. Mahatma Gandhi, it is well known was only not enamoured by "modern Civilization" which he considered to be synonymous with Western or European civilization, but was of the opinion that English education alienated the educated classes from the masses. See Karunakaran, pp. 308-09 and p. 314. Among the many differences between the points of view of Gokhale and Gandhi, their assessment of the value of English education must be considered to be an important one. In fact, the differences of perspectives and viewpoints between the two seem to be so great as to make the appellation "My Political Guru" given by Gandhi to Gokhale something of an enigma.

Ranade and Gokhale - Some Shared Beliefs.

1. The Indo-British Connection as Providential.

Ranade's firm conviction that the hand of God that was to be seen in the historical fact of the British connection with India was shared by Gokhale. By temperament Gokhale was less inclined to the use of the language and idiom of theism when compared with Ranade, but even from scattered references made by Gokhale it is evident that he believed the connection to be providential.⁶⁵

65. In the absence of any clear indication from Gokhale about his own religious convictions, there have been a plethora of statements from his contemporaries and others on the subject. The matter seems to have a greater significance that it might have with a leader in a different age or with contemporaries whose other views were less well-known. But Ranade's strong theistic position had been known through his Prarthana Samaj sermons and there have been a tendency to make a natural inference that the guru's convictions were shared by Gokhale. Tilak also had through his Gita Rahasya provided a creed of action (see D. Mackenzie Brown, "The Philosophy of Bal Gangadhar Tilak-Karma Vs Jnana in the Gita Rahasya", Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 17, 1958, pp. 197-206). Sastri related that at a condolence meeting for Charles Bradlaugh, Gokhale as main speaker on the occasion, in a "fit of excessive candour" proclaimed himself an agnostic and the appellation seems to have persisted. Sastri also said that "Nobody knew precisely his views on religion and other profound matters... Once he told me that he did not think it proper to speak about his views on the great mysteries of life and death. A man's religion must be entirely his personal and private property." (V.S. Srinivas Sastri, Life of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, op. cit., p. 31) In any case "agnosticism" is not incompatible with a belief in some unseen power and Gokhale's writings do testify to such a belief if judged by the few scattered references to the divine. One fact seems certain, that he had no use for taboos, or ceremonies or for ridiculous ideas of pollution.

See reverse.

Both Ranade and Gokhale agreed about the immediate and long-term beneficial of the British connection, though neither man hesitated to point out the injustices and short comings of the bureaucracy or to advocate reforms or changes that seemed imperative for their times. Both men equally rejected Anglophile and Anglophobe reactions.

Identifying the more positive aspects of the British connection, Gokhale said:

I freely recognize- what the late Mr. Ranade so often used to impress upon our minds-that though there may be less field for personal ambition and less scope for the display of individual talent under the present regime, there is ample compensation and more than that in the blessings of peace and order well established, in the larger possibilities of enlightenment and progress secured to the mass of our countrymen, in the higher ideals of civic and national life to which we have been introduced, and in the rousing of the moral energies of our people.⁶⁶

On a different occasion, Gokhale pointed out that: some Indians...felt deeply grateful for introducing into India the liberal thought of the West with its protest against caste or sex disabilities and its recognition of men's dignity as man- a teaching which they regarded as of the highest value

66. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.I, p.441.

in serving both as a corrective and stimulant to their old civilization.⁶⁷

There is also a larger context in which Gokhale viewed this relationship between the two countries. He said:

With the commencement of the twentieth century, the relations between East and West may be regarded as having entered on a new phase... East and West may now meet on more equal terms than was hitherto possible.⁶⁸

Gokhale even suggested that a Universal Races Congress may be called where representatives of all races, 'with developed types of civilization might meet each other...to further the causes of mutual trust and respect between Occident and Orient.'

2. Vision of the Future.

Gokhale's vision for the future of his country was no less optimistic than Ranade's and was stated in equally stirring language and embodied the same principles of liberalism found in the Deccan Sabha Manifesto. Gokhale said:

...let me say that I recognize no limits to my aspiration for our motherland. I want our people to be in their own country what other

67. "East and West in India", Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 382.

68. Ibid., p. 380.

people are in theirs. I want our men and women, without distinction of caste or creed, to have opportunities to grow to the full height of their stature, unhampered by cramping and unnatural restrictions.⁶⁹

Gokhale's concept of nationalism is broad-based and comprehensive.⁷⁰ Political considerations would form only a part of a larger world of achievements, in which advancement on other fronts were also needed. In addition to the more obvious advancement in science and industry, generally held to be concomitant with

69. Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 217.

70. Also made in the same year in another statement is a broad definition given of Swadeshism. Gokhale said, "Swadeshism at its highest is a deep, passionate, fervent, all-embracing love of the motherland, and that this love seeks to show itself, not in sphere of activity only, but in all; it invades the whole man, and it will not rest until it has raised the whole man". ("The Swadeshi Movement", 1907, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 223, 1907). This broad concept represented the views of the Moderates, though Gokhale himself had confessed to a dislike of the term itself. See "The Seditious Meetings Bill", Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 32. Sir Henry Cotton had characterised Gokhale's views as "conspicuously moderate". For Nehru's un favourable remarks on the use of the term, see "Autobiography", Allied Publishers, 1962, pp. 30-31, p. 388.

the affluency and modernity of a nation, Gokhale saw that a way ahead would have to be forged in the fields of "religion, literature and the arts." In other words, there could be no resting on one's laurels, achieved in the past. Efforts to make every facet of culture meaningful in a modern context would also be necessary.

When Gokhale conceived of unlimited opportunities for people to grow to the height of their potentialities, unhampered by any restrictions that were of an inhibiting nature, he was adding the concept of secularism to his vision for the future. He had acclaimed, in the Preamble to the Servants of India Society's Constitution, evidence of a growing feeling of common nationality in the country in which common hopes, and aspirations and traditions were coming to the forefront, as also the feeling "that we are Indians first and Hindoos, Mahomedans, Parsees or Christians afterwards."

3. Progress on Many Fronts At Once.

Gokhale, in the same manner as Ranade, conceived of society as having likenesses to a biological organism, in which the parts are interdependent. It is known that Herbert Spencer was one

of the most influential Western thinkers in nineteenth century Asia. In Japan he was considered to be the most influential social and political thinker of the 1880's.⁷¹ Evidence of the influence of Spencer on Gokhale's thinking is seen from the description of society that he made. He said:

...I believe the life of a people-whether in the political or social or industrial or intellectual field- is an organic whole, and no striking progress in any particular field is to be looked for unless there be room for the free movement of the energies of the people in all fields.⁷²

The implications of this firm belief are a far more extensive notion of 'progress' than a preoccupation with political and industrial matters. The establishment of free and representative institutions and treatment on equal terms was only the beginning of the coming to grips with the problem of modernization. There must be industrial progress, too, and his Budget speeches never failed to impress that the economist in Gokhale was as greatly concerned about this matter as he was about political affairs.

His view on social reform as being continuous

71. Michio Nagai, "Herbert Spencer in Early Meiji Japan", Far Eastern Quarterly, Vol. XIV, 1954-55, No. 1, pp. 55-64.

72. Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 3, p. 11.

with political reform implied in his broad view of progress. He would have neither made an artificial separation between the two, nor would have subscribed to the view that one is the precondition of the other. Advancement must necessarily be on all fronts at once and Gokhale was thus as much a champion of social reform as his liberal-minded contemporaries.

A Critique of Society from the Liberal Standpoint.

Gokhale, as champion of the cause of wronged or oppressed, had harsh words with which to condemn the inequalities and injustices inherent in the caste system. He pointed these out in the following words:

I think all fairminded persons will have to admit that it is absolutely monstrous that a class of human beings, with bodies similar to our own, with brains that can think and hearts that can feel, should be perpetually condemned to a low life of utter wretchedness, servitude and mental and moral degradation, and that permanent barriers should be placed in their way so that it should be impossible for them to overcome them and improve their lot. This is deeply revolting to our sense of justice. I believe one has only to put oneself mentally into their place to realize how grievous this injustice is. We may touch a cat, we may touch a dog, we may touch any other human being, but the touch of these human beings is pollution! And so complete is now the mental degradation of these people that they themselves see nothing in such treatment to resent,

that they acquiesce in it as though
nothing better than that was their due.⁷³

Gokhale's argument did not rest there but also viewed the problem in the light of the highest humanitarian considerations implicit in any attempt to bring in modernization. Pointing out that the main difference between the caste system and the class system was one of elasticity, Gokhale said that the former was "rigid or cast-iron like..", while the latter being "an elastic institution" permitted any person to rise in the social scale to a position of absolute equality with others and to reach a high status. Gokhale agreed with the view that "castes are eminently suited for the preservation of society, but that they are utterly

73. "Elevation of Depressed Classes" Dharwar Social Conference, 1903, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3, p.260. This speech was first published in 1903 under the title, "Treatment of Indians by the Boers and Treatment of the Low Castes in India by Their own Countrymen, A Speech by the Honourable Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Member of the Legislative Council of India at Dharwar Social Conference April, 27, 1903 with Additional Remarks showing the Selfishness, Injustice, Cruelty and Fraud of the Caste System, which is also the Chief Cause of India's Semi-Civilization, London and Madras, 1903, Great Indian Questions of the Day No.11, 1st ed. A copy of this rare document is to be found in the Jayakar Granthalaya, Poona University.

unsuited for the purpose of progress" and continued:

...if you want to stand where you were a thousand years ago, the system of castes need not be modified in any material degree. If, however, you want to emerge out of the slough in which you have long remained sunk, it will not do for you to insist on a rigid adherence to caste.⁷⁴

To Gokhale the principle of equality was a significant dimension of the modernization process, which again inherently implied a duty to work for those conditions that make such equality an actuality. He said:

...Modern civilization has accepted greater equality for all as its watchword, as against privilege and exclusiveness, which were the root ideas of the old world. And the larger humanity of these days required that we should acknowledge its claims by seeking the amelioration of the helpless condition of our downtrodden countrymen.⁷⁵

And finally on the grounds of "National self-respect, Gokhale had a third principle on which he would seek that the weaker sections of society be helped to attain a position of strength and a higher state of existence. When a large section of a society is forced to remain in a sub-human state, it proves a drag on the total society for the reason

74. Ibid.p.262.

75. Ibid.,p.262.

that this section is unable to pull along with the rest along the path of progress because it has no way to understand the concept of progress, hampering every effort of the whole society to move ahead. But this was only one side of the problem. The other aspect was that in the task of nation building a large section of energy remains unharnessed. Thus Gokhale asked:

...How can we possibly realize our national aspiration, how can our country ever hope to take her place among the nations of the world, if we allow large numbers of our countrymen to remain sunk in ignorance, barbarism, and degradation? Unless men are gradually raised to a higher level, morally and intellectually, how can they possibly understand our thoughts or share our hopes or cooperate with us in our efforts? Can you not realize that so far as the work of national elevation is concerned, the energy, which these classes might be expected to represent, is simply unavailable to us?... I think there is not much hope for us as a nation unless the help of all classes, including those that are known as low castes, is forthcoming for the work that lies before us.⁷⁶

It is little wonder that Gokhale thought that the resolution he was asked to move at the Dharwar Social Conference where he expounded his views, was tame. He saw the path to "elevation" of under

76. Ibid., p. 262.

privileged groups lay through education and employment opportunities but that this was not enough. Dedicated young people whose "grooves of life" are not fixed must be seized of the problem on a priority basis. Certainly, he was also at pains to point out to his countrymen, that charity begins at home and that the right to condemn injustices practiced in South Africa could only come when gross injustices at home were abolished and that the equality sought elsewhere must be first practised by them. One expects that Gokhale was equally forceful in his articles in the Sudharak in the 1888-1892 period, but this a matter for speculation. The earliest clear statement from him that exists on any social reform matter is the 1897 London speech on Female Education, followed by the 1903 speech on the Elevation of the Depressed Classes made at the Dharwar Social Conference.

Gokhale's Three Dimensions of Public Life.

The expression which Gokhale used in his Preamble to the Constitution of the Servants of India Society, that "public life must be spiritualized" has come to be identified with certain requisites of character and dedication that men in public life

must exhibit. In the onward progress of the nation, he visualized the leadership being provided by a core of dedicated men, who through their liberal convictions would "come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work undertaken. Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side." These men he felt must be possessed by a "fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence that nothing can shake⁷⁷." The seven vows that were to be taken by members of the Society⁷⁸ while applicable immediately to those joining the Society, certainly also indicated the kind of selfless concerns and sense of dedication men in public life must possess. Aiyar sees in Gokhale's concept of public life an element of "Self-effacing idealism" derived from the Hindu tradition and forming" probably the only indigeneous

77. Original Constitution of the Servants of India Society, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, p. 182.

78. Ibid., p. 183.

element in his political thought.⁷⁹

Gokhale dwelt on the conditions and spheres of public life, as he saw it in the Indian situation. First of all, public life must be for "the benefit of public" and secondly "it must be a life shared and participated in by a very large number of people."⁸⁰ He delineated the three spheres of public life as national public life, political public life and social and humanitarian public life.⁸¹

The first sphere, Gokhale felt had potential for the future because it involved the relations of the nation to other countries.

With regard to the second sphere, Gokhale thought that progress in India would proceed along the same lines as in the West where it had been concerned with securing liberties, widening the bonds of freedom and discharging efficiently those responsibilities that come with political liberties.

79. Gokhale and the Modern World, op.cit.,p.7 and pp. 33-34.

80. Public Life in India, Bombay:The National Literature Publishing Co.1922. There is no indication as to where and when this speech was delivered by Gokhale.

81. Ibid.,p.4.

Social Change- Assessment of Accepted Standards of Social Justice.

It is in Gokhale's thoughts about the third dimension, that of social and humanitarian public life, that we have a clear statement of the rational, purposeful and brisk manner in which social problems must be tackled. Gokhale said:

...we have first of all to consider what are the standards of social justice accepted by the people whose case we are considering ... we have got to analyse what relations of the different classes of the community are to one another... and how far those who are better placed understand and try to perform their duty to those who are less favourably circumstanced than themselves.

82

The first task in any problem is thus one of assessment of the nature of the actual situation as it pertains to man's relations to his fellow-men. Given the Indian situation this was no mean task. Nineteenth century leaders from Roy to Ranade had attempted the very same thing- identification of social evils and mistaken notions of social justice that countenanced such evils.

Social Change- Clear Conception of Liberal Ideals.

Gokhale again, in the context of discussing the social and humanitarian sphere of public life indicates that a clear conception of the nature and meaning of ideals to be established are a prerequisite to the achievement of any kind. He said:

...if we understand correctly the value of the dignity of man as man, if we understand the value of social freedom, if we understand the injustices and the disabilities placed upon any section of the score of birth or sex, if we understand all these things correctly, if we are fired by that enthusiasm which always comes from a keen sense of injustice, if we put our shoulders to the wheel and try to set those matters right, then I shall say we shall have done something in the social and humanitarian sphere. A beginning has been made and there is an awakening in this land, such as there never was. We are at any rate, ashamed of many of the social injustices which we deplore on all sides of us; only we do not take up with energy, necessary energy, the work to remove those injustices..83

A Plea for Intellectual Honesty.

In his usual outspokenness Gokhale did not hesitate to say that "the strength and character of India is largely determined by the strength and character of public life in India." While he deprecated "undue pessimism", he wanted a realistic and honest appraisal of "defects and deficiencies"

83. Ibid., pp.6-7.

because "unless we understand these things, these defects will not be set right." To those who were easily self-satisfied, Gokhale counselled:

...Think of the future that lies before you; think of the vast space that has to be covered before you can hold your heads up among the civilized people of the world; think of the vast amount of work that lies before you before you can really claim to be human beings possessed of any self-respect. Do this and then you will see that there is not that room for easy self-congratulation..⁸⁴

84

Egoism versus Altruism.

The development of a public spirit, is a prerequisite for a strong public life and Gokhale's "self-effacing idealism" surfaced again when he defined public spirit as the "subordination of considerations of personal gain and personal comfort to the good of the community you want to serve."⁸⁵ There must be a preparedness "to subordinate our own personal judgement in the consideration of public matters to what is necessary for the common good." Gokhale felt that "unless we are prepared to subordinate our judgement, common action becomes impossible, and unless there is common action,

84. Ibid., p.9

85. Ibid., p.11

effective action becomes impossible. Thus "co-operation and discipline" are a pre-requisite of the success of a public movement. Gokhale said:

In matters of conscience, a man is justified...is bound to stand up, as one against the whole world if necessary. But in matters of judgement, we must learn to subordinate our judgement to the judgement of those above us, of leaders of public movements, who are entrusted with the responsibilities of leading us. For this we shall have to cooperate with one another better; we shall have to recognize the value of discipline better than we have been doing in the past.

86

Public Life- A Plant of Slow Growth.

All nineteenth century leaders of innovation and change belonging to liberal school of thinking were conscious of the fact that in a traditional society the process of change is not that one can be hurried along and that in the nature of the case it would be a slow and gradual one and one involving "steady and strenuous work". Gokhale reiterates this view when he said that public life in India

...is a plant of new growth...and you must not, therefore expect a very tender plant to have that strength which you find in more sturdy growths.

87

86. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

87. Ibid., p. 9.

But on the other hand he was very sure that the "plant" needed greater care and tending than it was getting. He said:

it (the plant) does not receive at our hands the sustenance which it requires or that sustenance which it is our duty to give to it.⁸⁸

A Method of Change- The Power of Reason, Gentle Persuasion and Constitutional Agitation.

The many memorials and representations prepared so untiringly and patiently by Gokhale under the aegis of Ranade for the Sarvajanic Sabha and later the Deccan Sabha and the many public meetings he lent support to in the cause of some grievance that needed the attention of the Government are all eloquent testimony to his firm conviction in the power of argument and gentle persuasion. This particular feature of his thinking takes on added significance when it is considered that in his own times agitation had become very much part of the scene in Poona. A firm believer in the appeal to the intellect, he was pained at the use of methods that roused the passions and whetted the appetites, thus making man succumb to the rule of their lower nature.

88. Ibid., p.9.

In his mind there was no question that whatever be the provocation or even the injustices that must be tolerated, the only method in which reliance could be put was that of "constitutional agitation."

He described the method in these words:

Constitutional agitation was agitation by methods which they were entitled to adopt to bring about the changes they desired through the action of constituted authorities... Thus defined, the field of constitutional agitation was a very wide one... But there were two essential conditions- one, that the methods adopted were such as they were entitled to employ, and secondly that the changes desired must be obtained through the action of constituted authorities by bringing to bear on them the pressure of public opinion.⁸⁹

The Role of the Press in Social Change.

Gokhale conceived of the Press as a powerful body to build up the pressure of public opinion, and was as vehemently opposed to the misuse of the privileges of the freedom accorded to the Press by the Anglo-Indian Papers as he was a champion of the liberty of the Press when it was sought to be curbed in the case of Indian papers through the amendment of the Official Secrets Act of 1889. He said:

The Press, is in one sense... a custodian of public interests, and any attempt to hamper

89. "The Work Before Us", Allahabad, 1907, Gokhale Speeches, Vol. 2, pp. 217-18.

its freedom by repressive legislation
is bound to affect these interests.⁹⁰

In point of fact, Gokhale deplored the weakness of the Indian Press as a source of moulding public opinion. In the context of his own times, he saw the vigilance of the Indian Press as the only check that operates from outside, feebly, it is true, but continuously, upon the conduct of the Government.⁹¹ What greater role he would have assigned to the Press in creating a climate for change, by bringing to the public form issues that needed to be debated upon and viewed from all aspects, with inconsistencies revealed and rational bases formulated, can only be imagined. We have an indication of his thinking in what he said at a later juncture about the actual achievements of the Indian Press. He said:

...our Press has been in the main a potent instrument of progress. It has quickened our

90. "The Official Secrets Act", 1903, Gokhale Speeches Vol.2, p.12; R.P. Paranjpye wrote to Gokhale; "your fine speech on the Official Secrets Bill is being praised by everybody. Even the Kesari was for once obliged to praise it though of course it mixed a little venom in it as it referred to "your usual moderation" with the same sentence". R.P. Paranjpye to G.K. Gokhale, 18 December, Gokhale Papers, microfilm, Reel No.9, No.402-1.

91. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, p.12

national consciousness; it has spread in the country ideas of justice and equality not only between man and man but also between class and class; it has stimulated our public spirit; it has set high standards of public duty.

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In independent India Gokhale would have given the Press a continuing and expanding responsibility in this matter, asking it to throw all its weight in with progressive forces that would seek to restore the legitimate rights of man and spread the creed of modernization on the basis of convincing men of the nation's inherent need that these forces must triumph. He would also have expressed concern at the role the Press might be tempted to play acting as a negative force in this matter, by espousing the cause of obscurant and traditional forces, in the same manner as he was filled with anxiety at the way in which the press had contributed to unrest in his own times.

Gokhale's Legacy- Modernization of Indian Society-
A Synthesis of Two Cultures.

Social thinking in India, to Gokhale's mind had

92. "The Press Act", 1910, Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, p.62

gone through three phases. In 1911,⁹³ he pointed out, and there may have been autobiographical overtones in what he said, that Western education had led to a "reexamination of the whole of their ancient civilization- their social usages and institutions, their religious beliefs, their science, their art, in fact their entire conception and realization of life." The second phase was a rediscovery of their own culture and civilization, accompanied by a justifiable pride in it. The third phase was the realization that the path to modernity lay in a "combining of what is best in the West with what is best in the East."

Using an idiom that represents a true measure of the modernization process, Gokhale's vision of the future was described in these terms:

...I believe whole heartedly in a great destiny for the people of my land. We still retain many of those characteristics which once placed us in the van of the world civilization- the depth of our spirituality, our serene outlook on life, our conceptions of domestic and social duty. And other races that have from time to time come to make their home here and have brought their own treasure into the common stock. The India of the future will be compounded of all these elements reinforcing one another, but a long

93. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.2, p.332.

process of discipline and purification and real adjustment is necessary, before she gathers again the strength required for her allotted task.⁹⁴

Unlike Ranade, Gokhale does not advocate a return to the past. He is emphatic that:

...the past really never returns... and even if the past could return, I think it would not be desirable that it should return, for things are not what they were a century or even half a century ago.⁹⁵

In summation, Gokhale leaves us these thoughts that have relevance for today: The educative method ranks as the foremost method of creating that openness of mind that is at the basis of social change. While the whole educational system and the curricula must be geared to the modernization process, those disciplines that transmit a greater understanding of liberal and humanitarian principles must be given a place of priority. Gokhale, more than any other leader of his time, puts great faith in the educative process as an instrument for bringing about modernization, because of its potential to make changes in in convictions and beliefs.

95. Ibid., p. 91.

The power of reason and gentle persuasion is rated above those employing agitation or making an appeal to the emotions. The Press was given a powerful and responsible role in the creation of social change.

In modern society the claims of individuals as individuals must be recognised. The notion of the rights of men, appear in Gokhale's thinking, side by side with the notion of duties.

The nature of society as an organic whole, implies that progress and advancement must be achieved on many fronts at once. Though Gokhale's main arena of action was in the fields of politics and economics, he also gave major consideration to the dimensions of social change.

The place of every citizen, each according to his own station and its duties, is given recognition, in the context of the process of modernization.

Moral Character, singlemindedness of purpose, selfless service and the placing of the common good above that of one's personal good, as well as other measures of the high quality of public life needed in the process of modernization, are given prominence.

No chauvinist, Gokhale is unhesitating in identifying ideals and principles that must be incorporated into the culture, for the creation of a modern society.

In the final analysis, each generation and each individual has his share of the work carved out for him, in the reconstruction of a society, on which succeeding generations and individuals can continue to build. But for each one:

As for us, it will be enough to have laboured for such an end- laboured even when the end is not in sight. For...I think there is not only profound humility but also profound wisdom in the faith which says:

"I do not ask to see the distant scene: One step enough for me."

96

96. Gokhale Speeches, Vol.3,p. 101; Gokhale's quotation is from the famous Christian hymn, "Lead Kindly Light" composed by John H.Newman, (1801-1890).

Chapter XIII: Kashinath Trimbak Telang -Vacillation
between two view points?

KASHINATH TRIMBAK TELANG-(1850-1893)Early Training.

Unlike his contemporaries Telang was born in Bombay in a Saraswat Brahmin family, whose ancestors had moved from Goa to Bombay in the early years of the nineteenth century. At nine he entered the Elphinstone School to commence his study of English. A classmate, Jamsetjee Ardeshir Dala, later recalled that Telang was a voracious reader and subscribed to a lending library of sorts run by a Hohri at the foot of the main staircase of the School.¹

Telang's association with Mama Paramanand began in 1861, when Mama was his teacher. The association continued into future years, with Mama continuing in the role of a spiritual guide, even when Telang had risen to a high position.²

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1. V.N.Naik, Kashinath Trimbak Telang, The Man and His Times, Madras, G.A.Natesan and Co., p.12; Naik's biography of Telang is the only substantial one in English if the various obituaries and memorial addresses are discounted. Among them are found contributions by Ranade, Chandavarkar, D.E.Wacha, and Sir Raymond West. In Marathi, S.N.Karnatki's Namdar Nyaya Murti Kashinath Trimbak Telang, (Bombay, 1929) is the only substantial work.
 2. P.B.Kulkarni, Mama Parmanand ani Tyanche Kal Khand, Bombay, 1966, pp.225-246.

Passing his Matriculation in 1864 at the age of fourteen, Telang went on to take a B.A. at nineteen with History, Political Economy, Logic and Sanskrit as his subjects. Later he secured a Master's degree in Languages and a Bachelor of Law degree. From 1869 to 1872 he was a Fellow of the Elphinstone College. By 1872 he had qualified as an Advocate of the High Court of Bombay and was ready to follow in the footsteps of Ranade and Bal Mangesh Wagle. He appears to have declined the offer of a judicial appointment in the mofussil.

While as a student, he showed qualities of mind such as industriousness, concentration, powers of comprehension and retentiveness—qualities which had impressed his classmates as testified to by Ambalal Desai³, it was after he had passed his B.A. that his real education is said to have commenced, Telang undertook an arduous course of study⁴, which led him through a whole range of texts. Among them were

3. V.N. Naik, Telang, pp. 15-19; another interesting sidelining on Telang's student days during 1866-67 is seen in his avid interest in the speeches of Gladstone made in the House of Commons, which on occasion the students would have their professor of Mathematics Prof. Candy, read out loudly. Telang's later oratorical skills are attributed in some measure to these reading sessions.

4. N.V. Chandavarkar, "Mr. Justice Telang as a Student", a lecture delivered in 1900, Speeches and Writings, pp. 212-221.

Chilingworth's Religion of the Protestants,
Jowett's Translations of Plato's Dialogues,
Strasoo's Criticism of the Bible. The reading of
a text was followed by analysis of the line of
thought in it, particularly the pros and cons of
the argument, after which he is said to have spent
time reproducing them in his own language. When
the works like the Bhagwat Gita and the Shankar
Bhasya were the subject of study, he would translate
them into English verse. In this manner, he became
familiar with the writings of Mill, Spencer, Huxley,
Tyndall, Fitz-James Stephens, and many of the
literary works of the English language, among them
those of Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and Carlyle. One
of the results of Telang's self-imposed study
habits was that it gave him the kind of tools
needed to sift evidence, to distinguish between
fact and fiction and to judge what materials really
constituted proof and what may be considered to be
history as incontrovertible fact as opposed to
history which was taken to be so because people

believed it to be so.⁵ Telang seems to have been aware of the lack of this training among the educated and the resultant prevalence of popular forms of credulity. One occasion he is reported to have used the platform of the Hindu Union Club to dwell on the subject of the real implications of proof.

The Influence of Wordsworth.

Another result of his vast reading, especially, we are told, of the Shankar Bhasya⁶ and the writings of Spencer and Mill and Huxley was to breed in him a healthy scepticism, an attitude of mind that was prone to honest doubts and consequently an attitude that abandoned dogmatic and

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5. A specimen of Telang's historical writings is to be found in "Gleanings from Maratha Chronicles, a paper read by him before the Deccan College Union on 17th September, 1892. Telang and Ranade had hoped to bring out a History of the Marathas in three volumes but Telang died in 1893 and Ranade was able to complete only twelve chapters of this work which was published as Rise of Maratha Power in 1900; See, Rise of Maratha Power, Appendix, New Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Classics of Indian History and Economics series, 1966, pp.117-146 for Telang's essay.
6. See Telang, Select Writings and Speeches, Vol.II, pp.319-335 for Telang's paper, "Gleanings from the Shariraka Bhasya of Shankaracharya" in which some indications of his scepticism are apparent.

and superstitious beliefs and relied on appeal to one's reason. Chandavarkar is of the opinion that Telang's scepticism did not lead him to agnosticism for a variety of reasons, among which are to be counted the profound influence of Bhandarkar and Mama Parmanand, both ardent Prarthana Samajists and the impact of the poetry of Wordsworth which gave him new perspectives on life. Telang was inclined to be reticent about his own religious views. As Chandavarkar said, "He did not talk effusively on the subject of religion as he did on other topics" but a glimpse of Telang's sentiments on the deeper aspects of existence is afforded by his words:

...After all is said and done, though there is much that is mysterious about life and human destiny, you cannot get rid of one fact, to which Wordsworth has given the best expression when he says "There is not a man that lives who hath not known his godlike hours, and feels not what an empire we inherit as natural beings in the strength of nature". You feel, inspite of all your doubt and uncertainties, that there is something in you which is not human, and that something calls for faith.⁸

7. Chandavarkar, op.cit.,pp.217-219.

8. Quoted in Chandavarkar, Ibid.,p.333.

In another glimpse afforded by Chandavarkar, Telang said:

...there is, I confess, nothing comparable about Wordsworth's lines about Tintern Abbey, That is a gem of a poem. I don't know how often I have read it, and the more I read it, the more I get to like it.

9

Wordsworth's favourite characterization, one of the key words in his thought, was the word "Presence". Many times the inner life of Nature is referred to as "Being", "Soul", "Active Principle" and "Presence". In the Tintern Abbey, Wordsworth spoke of Nature as "a presence", a "something far more deeply interfused", a "motion and a spirit". It was because of the "sense sublime" that Wordsworth could:

In nature and the language recognize of the
sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse.
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

While many interpretations of what Nature came to mean to Wordsworth are possible, the religious bearing of his Theory of Nature can not be overlooked. Tintern Abbey itself, it was held by some critics, to be evidence of Wordsworth's

pantheistic belief. But clear evidence also exists to show that his convictions were more of a theistic nature and that he conceived of Nature as the dwelling place of Divinity, the meeting place of God and man. As one critica said:

In his thinking Wordsworth began with Nature, and it was out of Nature that he built up his faith. It was not that he ruled out the more intimate and compelling approach of God to men, which we associate with the term Revealed religion- we know that he did not. Rather, he felt constrained to stress that sphere of revelation in which he found himself most at home. Connecting as he did, every phenomenon with God, his poetry became "one long protest against the banishment of God from His Universe.

10

Wordsworth's The Excursion deals with "Man, Nature and Society" and the eighth and ninth books touch upon the social problems of England, those following upon the Industrial Revolution. A humanitarian approach to these problems which included "a system of universal education, supported by the State, a consequent spread of economic justice, an enrichment of social life, the inculcation of morals and the establishment of religion" are advocated by

10. Cornelius Howard Patton, The Rediscovery of Wordsworth, (Boston, The Stratford Company, 1935), p.81.

11
Wordsworth.

It is little wonder that Telang found Wordsworth to have an appeal for him, that he felt he was in the presence of a great moral teacher whose message was how to be at peace with the world by holding communion with nature and who endowed his followers with "the passions that build up our soul" until we recognise "grandeur in the beatings
12
of the heart."

An Openness of Mind.

Telang's philosophy of life encompassed another dimension, that of wanting to learn the best from all cultures and religions, without prejudice or hypocrisy. On one occasion he told Chandavarkar:

I am glad you are reading that book (the Bible), it is a pity we do not study it as much and as often as we should. I don't know who said, it, but I remember reading somewhere that the Bible is a library in itself. Europeans are trying to acquaint themselves with our religious literature. I think we should follow their example and try to acquaint ourselves with their...

11. Ibid., p. 132.

12. Chandavarkar, op. cit., p. 330. Chandavarkar himself did not escape from the influence of Wordsworth, as can be discerned from twelve lectures he delivered to the Sunday classes of the Students' Brotherhood, Bombay on Wordsworth's Prelude, Chandavarkar, Ibid., pp. 425-523.

I remember the time when the older generation of our students read the Bible more carefully than is now the case. Take our friend Ranade, for instance. He has the Bible at his fingers' ends as it were. Now-a-days we are too much for our books; we think we have nothing to learn from the West. I should be the last to undervalue the study of our own religious literature. In fact, it is our duty to study it, but I should always like to see it combined with a study of other religions, for it is only in that way that we may hope to correct what is bad, while retaining what is good in that religion...

13

A concomitant result of the early training period in Telang's life was the cultivation of a broadness of understanding and approach, so that any form of narrowness or one-sidedness of views was rejected and in its place an attempt to be fair to see all sides of the issue, substituted. Like his compatriots and close associate Bhandarkar, he condemned "petty patriotism" and a false sense of pride of race or caste. A catholicity of interests and taste added to these many qualities gave him, as Chandavarkar described it, "a liberal mind and a liberal heart".

13. Chandavarkar, p.331.

"An Apostle of Progress".

14

Sir Raymond West, in an obituary notice, spoke of having been impressed by Telang's "high aims and his passionate desire for the moral elevation of his countrymen" and of an inner nature that was in a great degree "that of a meditative Saint enamoured of purity and holiness, and filled with longing and aspirations for the progress of mankind but especially the Hindus, towards perfection in knowledge, wisdom, and purpose¹⁵." Telang's singleness of purpose, his wide range of information and his penetrating intelligence coupled with a sincerity and sense of

14. Sir Raymond West "Mr. Justice Telang" *Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland Journal* (1894), pp. 103-147. Reprinted in K.T. Telang, *Select Writings and Speeches*, Vol. II, Appendix A, pp. 530-579; other memorial notices were: John Adams, "The Late Hon. Justice K.T. Telang" *India*, Vol. IV New Series, London, The British Committee of the Indian National Congress, 1893; D.E. Wacha, "The Late Mr. Justice Telang", Address at the Hindu Union Club on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the death of Mr. K.T. Telang, 19th September, 1903, G.A. Natesan and Co., Madras, n.d.; Wacha also wrote the Introduction to the first volume of Telang's Select Writings and Speeches, pp. I-XXIX.

15. Select Writings, Vol. II, p. 530.

conviction gave Telang an honoured place in society and as West described it, "Telang became an evangelist; they (his countrymen) looked to him for guidance in all the graver occasions of national social life"¹⁶. Telang had established rapport with Indians and Europeans alike. Sir Raymond said, "He multiplied the points of union at which human brotherhood greets fellowmen, and drew us nearer by one step to a sense of imperial (wider) identity"...

West's brief memorial in the Journal in which it first appeared was testimony to the fact that he was considered by them to be "an apostle of progress", and they felt that it was by "his work and the example of him and his like that India must be regenerated, and the moral endowments of her children made nobly serviceable for the general welfare of mankind."¹⁷

A glimpse of Telang as a proponent of modernization is afforded by what West had to say of his work as a member of the Bar where it was very noticeable that with "the mingling of deference to

16. Ibid., p.531.

17. Ibid., p.531.

the "Bench" he showed there also was "complete independence and tenacity of purpose." West said:

In all matters of Hindu Law, Telang was, by general acknowledgement, facile princeps of the Bombay Bar. His thorough scholarship in Sanskrit enabled him to refer with ease to the original sources, to compare and criticise them. He was, when not retained, as Counsel on several occasions consulted by the Judges as to the right interpretation of those enigmatic texts which having been framed under archaic influences lend themselves with almost equal inexactness to antagonistic applications in the affairs of modern life. He felt very strongly that in Hindu Law, as elsewhere, life implies growth and adaptation. He hailed with warm welcome, the principle that custom may ameliorate, as well as fix, even the Hindu Law, and it was refreshing sometimes to hear him arguing for "modernisation", while on the other side an English advocate, to whom the whole Hindu system must have seemed more or less grotesque, contended for the most rigorous construction of some antique rule.

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Telang's appointment as Judge of the Bombay High Court in 1889 gave him an opportunity to make contributions to the evolution of Hindu Law to suit the conditions of a modern society and his judgements in matters relating to the law of succession to Stridhan property and the partition of ancestral estate under a joint family system are

cases in point.¹⁹

Phase of Public Life.

In 1884 Telang was nominated a member of the Legislative Council of Bombay by Sir James Fergusson's government, a position he held for about five years through the reign of Lord Reay. During this period he made a number of speeches, among which those on the Land Revenue Code Amendment Bill of 1885, the Talukdar's Act and the Hereditary Officers' Act were considered to be of importance. The speech made on the City of Bombay Municipal Bill, 1887, was of significance because it was partly responsible for making primary education a statutory duty of the Municipality.²⁰

But Telang's public addresses were not confined to the legislative Council. From 1872 to the time of

19. V.N.Naik, Telang, pp.35-36; Telang's review in the Indian Antiquary of February, 1882, of V.N.Mandlik's work on Hindu Law, containing a correct edition of Yajnavalkya's Smriti and Nilakantha's Vyawaharamayukha in Sanskrit, with translations into English and an Introduction in which the Sources of Hindu Law are discussed, with a Series of Appendices relating to Decisions of British Tribunals on special matters", gives an indication of Telang's own critical scholarship, Select Writings and Speeches, Vol.II, pp.385-404.

20. Telang's Legislative Council Speeches, with an Essay on His Life by Sir Raymond West. Edited by D.W.Pilgamker, Bombay, Indian Printing Press, 1895.

his premature death in 1893 he had participated actively in the public life of Bombay, taking positive stands on many burning issues of those times. In 1877 Telang had discussed the question of Free Trade and Protection in paper read at the Saxon Mechanic's Institute.²¹ It was a brilliantly argued paper, in which Telang pointed out the merits of a policy of Protection for the Indian situation. This was a theme that Ranade was to reiterate later, in 1892, in his Deccan College address on Indian Political Economy. Through the columns of the Induprakash, Telang had criticised the Vernacular Press Act of 1876 in a series of articles, protesting the injustice of the Act. He wrote:

...We hold that such restriction on the freedom of the press are unjust, inexpedient and utterly powerless to produce the ends desired. Nay, they are very powerful agents for bringing about the very results which they are designed to avert.²²

Other repressive measures of Lord Lytton's rule also came in for hard criticism from Telang. Telang made history when he spoke at the public meeting in the Town Hall, called in Bombay on 28th April, 1883 to give support to the Ilbert Bill. The

21. Telang, Select Writings and Speeches, Vol. I, pp. 97-181.

22. Naik, op.cit., pp. 100-101.

Bill sought to introduce an amendment in the Criminal Procedure Code which would give native magistrates the power to try European criminals. The proposed Bill had created remarkable fury in Bengal especially among the Anglo-Indian community. Telang's speech was in the nature of a reply to the objections raised to the Bill by Sir Fitz-James Stephen in a letter to the London Times, and is noted for its cool collected arguments, and its point by point rebuttal of the Fitz-James Stephen position²³. On the occasion of a public meeting held on 29th of November, 1884 to honour Lord Ripon, on his retirement as Viceroy, Telang's Speech cited the differences between the rule of Lord Ripon's predecessor and his own rule and spoke of the many ways in which Lord Ripon rule had up-²⁴held the spirit of Liberalism.

Whatever the nature of the issue under discussion and the occasion or place of discussion, Telang impressed his contemporaries with his dignity of bearing, criticism that was free from bitterness and rancour, and a certain diplomacy and tack in handling people and arguments. No abuse crept into

23. Select Writings, Vol. I, pp. 191-201.

24. Ibid., pp. 202-209.

his arguments. Sir Raymond West observed:

...Telang showed remarkable sagacity and judgement in taking up his positions... maintained them with great dialectic skill...and assiduous student of Bright speeches...he could infuse into his own addresses, on great occasions, an earnestness and patriotic fervour clothed in unaffected language not unworthy of the great tribune. No word of enmity or spite, no mean imputation of base motives ever escaped his lips. He could address a surging crowd on a proposed Salt Tax, or Licence Tax, without being carried away by his own eloquence from the region of loyalty and moderation.²⁵

Having "absorbed a large part of the thought and interests of his times" and endowed with a capacity to see issues in their true perspective, to compare and to criticise as needed, he was able to provide a leadership to his countrymen that was rational, and sober. He did not hesitate to make demands of the Government that were the just due of the people and while he conceded that "we believe, we cannot yet rule ourselves, and we believe that we cannot get any foreign rulers as good as the English... we are extremely anxious that our rulers should do everything which they can reasonably and properly can and may do, to keep the people at large contented²⁶...

25. Select Writings Vol.II, pp.547-48.

26. Naik, p.103.

The Aims of Education.(1) Higher Education as a Force in Social Progress.

Telang took time off from his legal practice to serve on the Hunter Education Commission for many months in 1882 as an Independent non-official members.

His Minute of Dissent²⁷ discussed such matters as the fixing of the minimum of school fee by the Director of Public Instruction, the relative importance of Higher and Primary Education, the question of moral and religious instruction in schools and colleges and the attitude of the state towards education in general.

Telang shared the sentiments of other liberals of his time about the benefits to be derived from Western education. For the same reason, he was against an increase in fees in an effort to make secondary or higher education self-supporting. "The greatest benefit of English education" he declared, "was to the seeds it had sown for all kinds of reform" and he wanted these benefits to be spread far and wide.

27. Minute recorded by Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Sect. IV of Dissents and Minutes Recorded by Members of the Commission, dated High Court, Bombay, 25 September, 1883, Report of the Education Commission.

Enhanced fees would not only prevent this from happening but would discourage private efforts, and thus be harmful on a long-term basis to the spread of education itself, as also not serve that purpose for which western education was given such a high place in a modernization process.

Telang is not a proponent of mass education in the same vigorous way that Gokhale proved to be. In his Minute, he discussed the relative places of higher education and primary education and could not subscribe to the claims of the latter over the former.

He said:

I unreservedly accept the view that without mass education the country will never be able to enjoy to the full the fruits which it has a right to expect from the higher education. For that purpose, you must bestow brains, as Mill has it, on those who have only hands. And in my judgement the time has now come when with that view mass education must be pushed onward...28

Telang, however, was no supporter of primary education at the cost of higher education. In his opinion, and it was an opinion in which both Mr. Justice West and Mr. Wordsworth concurred as can be seen from the evidence they gave before the Commission, primary education could not be fostered by starving out higher

education. Telang said:

I hold an equally strong opinion that, without the higher education, mass education cannot be of much avail, even if it can be secured. And the argument so often urged, that for the money spent on giving high education to one student, you might give primary education to more than one hundred, is to my mind utterly futile, and unworthy of even a moment's consideration.²⁹

In seeking encouragement and support from the State for education at all levels, Telang is emulating the views of Matthew Arnold on education with respect to the situation in England vis à vis that on the Continent. Telang quoted Arnold with great approbation. As inspector of Schools in 1851 in England, Arnold had been to the Continent on special mission in 1859 and 1865 to study the question of public education there. His reports and observations form the topic of his official works among which are Popular Education in France (1861) A French Eton (1864) Schools and Universities on the Continent (1868). Telang quoted from the last two named works in his Minute of Dissent. For instance, he quoted Arnold who said:

We have nearly all of us reached the notion that popular education is the State's duty to deal with, Secondary and superior instruction, many of us still think, should be left to the care of themselves... In all these

29. Ibid.

(European) countries the idea of a sound civil organisation of modern society has been found to involve the idea of an organisation of secondary and superior instruction by public authority or by the State.³⁰

However, when all was said and done, Telang still placed a premium on higher education to create the kind of climate needed in a country to bring about advancement on a national level on many fronts. He said:

In my opinion the whole religious, social, political and industrial advance of the country depends upon the steady adherence to that enlightened policy as regards high education which had probably been the most generally approved portion of British Indian policy in the past.

31

(2) Moral Instruction.

The Education Commission's recommendations for collegiate education regarding the place of moral instruction were as follows:

That an attempt be made to prepare a moral text-book based upon the fundamental principles of natural religion, such as may be taught in all Government and non-Government colleges.

That the Principal or even one of the Professors in each Government and aided college deliver to each of the college classes in every session a series of lectures on the duties of man and a citizen.³²

30. Arnold, Schools and Universities on the Continent, quoted in Telang, *Ibid.*, p.609.

31. *Ibid.*, p.609

32. Report of the Education Commission, Recommendations for Collegiate Education, Paras 8 and 9.

These recommendations regarding moral education in the colleges was one of the most important ones on which Telang had different views, than those stated by the Commission and these views are given expression to in his Minute of Dissent.

Telang dwelt at length on the particular assumptions that seem to have been made, by the Commission when it resolved to make these recommendations which clearly formed a "new departure in our system of academical instruction". These assumptions concerned the injurious effects of "the system hitherto in vogue" and Telang was not able to subscribe to the view that there was any mass scale "straying away from the path of honour and virtue."

When considered on its own merits, however, as calculated to be beneficial to the system of education and when conceived as a strengthening force for that system, moral instruction may have certain redeeming features at certain levels of education but Telang was unable to see that this applied to the collegiate level. Telang felt that "lectures on the duties of a man and a citizen" would probably be useful at the primary school level; at the secondary school level they would be "innocuous", "but in a collegiate inst-

tution they would probably be neither useful nor innocuous". He said:

At the earliest stage of a student's life, ignorance of what is right is probably an important force, and then to correct that ignorance, moral lessons are a perfectly appropriate agency...when a student has advanced to a secondary school, much of that ignorance...has presumably given place to knowledge, But still the habit of analysis and criticism is in a very rudimentary condition, and such lessons will, in all probability, do little harm.³³

At the collegiate level however, such lectures may have a reverse effect than was intended. The purpose of collegiate education being one of cultivating "the intelligence so as to enable it to weigh arguments and form independent judgements", at this stage "it is almost entirely unnecessary to instruct the intelligence, while it is of great use to discipline the will and cultivate the feelings". Telang went on to say that the "proposed lectures... will have little or no effect in this direction... while in individual cases their effect...may be the reverse of that which is desired- something like that of the Cambridge scholar...whose first doubts about the divine character of Christianity were said to have been roused by a study of Paley's Evidences".³⁴

33. Telang, Minute of Dissent, p.611.

34. Minute, p.611.

In Telang's view:

That sense of moral responsibility in man which impressed Kant with the same awe as the starry heavens, can receive no strengthening from lectures on the duties of man, any more than the awe which the starry heavens inspire can be produced by lectures on the rings of Saturn or the phase of the moon.

35

Telang's own prescription for a strengthening of the sense of moral responsibility leaned as much in the direction of a training of the effective and conative faculties as also considering it to be a rational, intellectual phenomenon, deriving guidelines from a study of science, philosophy and literature. He said:

Such strengthening must come from the emotions and the will being worked upon by the histories of great movements, the lives of great men, and the songs of great poets. It must come from the training of the will and emotions by the actual details of academic life, by the elevating contact with good professors and fellow-students, by constant engagement of the attention on the ennobling pursuits of literature, science, and philosophy; by the necessity so often felt "to scorn delight and live labourious days."³⁶

Moral Text Books.

In keeping with his general viewpoint that the theory of moral education as adopted by the Commission was erroneous in principle, Telang also could not accept

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

the recommendation regarding the preparation of moral text-books for the reason that it would tend "to withdraw attention from the necessity of making not one or two hours of academic life, but the whole of it, a period of moral education".

Religious Instruction or Secular Education?

Telang has occasion to touch upon the ticklish question of religious education instruction in the Indian educational system because the issue was raised before the Commission, and a demand made for it by some witnesses.

While sympathising with the demand, Telang said he saw no way to suggest any feasible means of satisfying it. He said:

...There are only two possible modes, which can be adopted in justice and fairness...either you must teach the principle common to all religions under the name of Natural religion, or you must teach the principles of each religious creed to the students whose parents adopt that creed.³⁷

37. Telang, Minute, p.612; for a discussion of the question of religious instruction in government aided schools, which was an issue on which the Education Commission made certain recommendations and which Telang also had touched upon in his Minute, See Minute, pp.616-617; Nurullah and Naik op.cit., pp.245-251.

The difficulties of these alternatives were great, "no less great in India than they had been in England when attempts were made to circumvent the 1806 legislation that permitted training in the public schools of in what might but termed social morality but not any form of dogmatic religious instruction, and Telang has no ready-made solution of the problem.

Telang's Ambiguous Stand on Social Reform.

Telang epitomises the type of leader whose liberal convictions did not emerge in clear-cut and unambiguous stands taken on social reform issues. He seemed to have been caught between tradition and modernity, in social matters at least, and while subscribing to the latter point of view, was not able to reject, either in thought or action those forms of tradition that were in conflict with it. From the Indian National Social Conference debates, it has already been observed that equivocal stands on social reform was by no means an uncommon feature of those times.

An analysis of Telang's thinking on specific social reforms yields data, which support this assessment of him. While his analytical bent of mind was

able to see all aspects of an issue at times it appears to have been difficult for him to have come out clearly in favour of one side or the other unequivocally when the issue had its two sides well-ranged in opposition to each other. Such an impression is gained from those of his speeches that have been preserved in his collected writings. It was also the impression made upon his own contemporaries. The Dnyanodaya, in an obituary notice said, "it was a cause for dis-satisfaction that it was sometimes difficult to know clearly what his (Telang's) opinion on social matters were. In this connection it has to be said his opinions were not cast with one side or the other. He was neither religious-minded nor was he an atheist."³⁸

Telang's choice of words also gave rise to much misrepresentation and he was one of the liberal minded leaders of nineteenth century Maharashtra, around whom much difference of opinion grew.

38. Dnyanodaya, September 7, 1893, Vol.52, No.36 p.287.

Telang's views on Malabari's Notes.

His position on Malabari's Notes on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood is a case in point. Malabari had solicited opinions from men in public life on his reform proposals and Telang's views are instructive.³⁹ While conceding that the infant marriages are "mischievour enough in all conscience" he considers "the mischief of it is in reality more of a theoretical than a practical character". He said "It is theoretically absurd, no doubt, that a boy and girl should be tied up in wedlock at a time of life, when they are probably unable to understand ... the responsibilities of the status on which they are about to enter". But when judged by its practical results- "by their fruits you shall judge them"- Telang saw no particular cause for dissatisfaction in this system of marriage than, for instance, that obtaining in England.⁴⁰ Even judged from the purely practical viewpoint, it is amazing to think that Telang could see no wrong in this social institution.

Again, Telang, identifying the "principal

39. K.T. Telang, "Reply to Malabari's note on Infant Marriages and Enforced Widowhood in India", Select Writings, Vol. I, pp. 239-258.

40. Ibid., pp. 240-241.

source of mischief" in this matter as the early consummation of marriage, felt that in Bombay some small measure of reform had been already seen, and that allowing it to grow on its own steam, would be, by far, the best method. He said:

...and as this reform will come by way of development from within, it will save all the difficulties that must needs be encountered, if the limits are fixed which can only be more or less arbitrary...⁴¹

The question seemed to him to be of superficial importance because, he pointed out, no Shastra as such enforces consummation on a girl under twelve years of age, except insisting, as understood popularly, that girls should not remain unmarried after attaining puberty. And when such is the case, what really stands in the way of reform is another matter altogether. Here Telang's astuteness is to be commended for identifying the real obstacle to reform, for he clearly saw the stranglehold that custom has on family practices and that in the ultimate analysis, it was opposition to reform from the family, that was the real obstacle, especially when the strength of family

⁴¹. Ibid., p.241.

ties in Indian society were considered. He said:

The man who wants to initiate this reform finds his difficulties...in those nearest and dearest to him, in his family and among his relations.⁴²

And by legislative enactment these "evils...would not be affected at all, or affected only to a very trifling extent".

His reactions to Malabari's proposed remedial measures, are somewhat at variance with Ranade's unhesitating approval of them. Telang confessed to having an unlimited faith in the "education of public opinion" as a great social force and approved of the use of the schoolroom and the curriculum towards this end. He said:

...the best, results may be expected from educating and refining public opinion. It may be a slow process, but I feel no confidence that upon any other courses recommended the process can be other than slow. We must work as ardently as if our efforts were to be crowned with success at once. But on the other hand, we must be content to take the fruits as they come in the fulness of time, and not be impatient or despondent if the customs which have stood for several centuries do not at once fall of a heap at the blast of our trumpets.

43

42. Ibid., p.243

43. Ibid., p.252

But by the same taken, he would not agree, as suggested by Malabari, to the exclusion of married students from University examinations at a certain age, for this would deprive school and college students of that very education that might in time be instrumental in eradicating social evils. Since, moreover these students, were in a sense not responsible for their own early marriage and did not have at present the means to stop it, the measure would be unfair to them. Neither did he think, given the present state of society, could one foretell what evils would be forthcoming once the proposed remedial measure took effect. He fully supported the education of girls as a firm step in bringing about reform. He said:

...I look forward more particularly to female education as our greatest help in the solution of all these social problems...it is in the spread of education among our girls, not the limitation of university honours or official leaves and fishes to certain classes of our boys, that I am inclined to look for the remedies of existing evils.

44

Telang's Position on Social Legislation-The Age of Consent Bill.

The reform of Infant marriages as one of the matters needing early attention had already become apparent in the Sarvajanic Sabha Journal article, "Over-Population and Marriage Customs, which appeared in 1878, and which has been considered in an earlier section. Publication of Malabari's Notes on 1884, as has also been seen, evoked responses of a great variety, from official and non-official sources. In that year, 1886, Telang had been among those who opposed state action, whether legislative or executive, in respect of the social problems raised by Malabari. At that same time Ranade had given his unstinting approval to social legislation and had also prepared a document, State Legislation in Social Matters⁴⁵ as a commentary on Malabari's Notes, coming out again in full support of social legislation, and answering point by point the many objections raised by the orthodox group. Ranade had even suggested that the minimum age of marriage for girls should be fixed at twelve and for boys at ¹⁶eighteen.

45. The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, pp. 108-127.

46. Ibid., p. 126.

Matters pro and con continued to be debated during the intervening years before 1890, when the death of Phulmanibai of Calcutta really brought things to a head. Sir Andrew Scoble first moved on January 9, 1891 a Bill to raise the marriageable age of consent from ten to twelve. The Bill proposed an amendment to section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, and the public excitement and agitation generated throughout the country by the proposed legislation far surpassed anything seen in these last decades of nineteenth century. Sir Andrew Scoble, introducing the Bill, cited the right of the State to legislate on matters where the protection and safety of its subjects was involved, and in this particular case he found the proposed legislation not to be contrary to Shastric injunctions. Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, the only member of the Council to oppose the Bill at its first reading argued that if only protection of children from physical force was the motive it would give them no greater protection than was afforded by existing legislation. Moreover, the Bill would have the effect of alienating the orthodox section of the population who would construe

it as interference in religious matters.⁴⁷ K.L. Nulkar was mistakenly reported by the Bombay Gazette to have been among the opponents of the Bill but it was later made known that he had given it full-hearted support. Nulkar was of the opinion that the kind of physical force that is involved in these early marriages would to some extent be ameliorated by the present proposed legislation. Answering the arguments of Sir Romesh Chunder, he expressed the view that the Shastras are not always clear and unequivocal on such matters and that there were times when even the Shastras needed to be set aside. As for opposition to such legislation, he did not think it would be long-lasting. The Bill itself was not really in the nature of introducing a reform as such but rather aimed at remedying certain flaws in the implementation of justice by the law courts.⁴⁸

Over the next few weeks the debate continued

47. Dnyanodaya, January 15, 1891, Vol. 50, No. 3, p. 18

48. Dnyanodaya, January 22, 1891, Vol. 50, No. 4, p. 26.

unabated, and the newspapers were full of little else. That vituperative language was not eschewed is clear from what the Dnyanodaya had to say:

There are many regrettable features in connection with the discussion (of the Scoble Bill), and we sincerely trust it may soon end. The subject is a delicate one and the press and public speakers might regard the proprieties of speech a little more without damaging the cause of their respective sides.

49

On February 6, 1891, a meeting of the lawyers (vakils) of Poona to consider the matter of the Scoble Bill showed that eleven were for it and twenty eight against it.⁵⁰ Newspapers reported that meetings were being held in many district towns. The meeting on February 22 at Javer Baug, Bombay, was clearly for the Bill. Javerilal Umiashankar Yajnik presided, and those present included Dr. Pandurang, N.G. Chandavarkar, Daji Abhaji Khare and Telang. But the Poona meeting called by the reformers, however, to gain support for the Bill had a sad and infamous ending.⁵¹ Only those who were in favour of supporting the Bill were

49. Dnyanodaya, February 12, 1891, Vol. 50, No. 7, p. 50

50. Dnyanodaya, February Ibid., p. 55

51. An account of the event as reported by the Dnyanprakash, appeared in the Dnyanodaya, March, 5, 1891, p. 74.

invited to attend, but many non-supporters seemed to have gained entrance to the hall where the meeting was to take place. Among them were Tilak, Nam-joshi and Dharap. However, before the meeting could begin, a gang of enraged young men gathered outside the Krida Bhavan where it was being held, turned violent and attacked the reformers with slinging of mud and stone-throwing. The Dnyanodaya construed the event to be "unintended service to the passing of the Bill because it said, "it is the weak in argument that ever thinks of using bricks and stones for arguments".

The debate on the Bill continued in the Council into the third week of March, 1891, and was then enacted. The Viceroy in a speech made on the occasion, of the passing of the Bill refuted the argument that the Bill was a breach of the Queen's Proclamation of 1857. He said:

If that interpretation is to cover the case now under discussion, we must read the Queen's Proclamation as a contract that whenever the requirements of public morality, of the public welfare, moral or material, are found to be in conflict with the alleged requirements of any of the various religious prevailing in this country, religion is to prevail and consideration, affecting public health, public morality, and the general

convenience of the Queen's subjects are to become of no account. The contention... is a preposterous one...⁵²

Telang and Bhandarkar were both active supporters of the Bill though in Telang's case there was a reversal of his earlier views. They took the fight in to the opponents' camp by producing carefully prepared documents, bringing all their erudition in Sanskrit to bear, in exposing the falsity of the position that religion was in jeopardy. Telang's Notes on the Age of Consent Bill appeared in the columns of the Induprakash around January, 1891 and consisted of different sections dealing with separate objections raised by the orthodox against the Bill. The first two Notes demonstrated that the Age of Consent Bill was not a breach of the Queen's Proclamation.⁵³ The second and third Notes dealt with the religious aspect of the Bill and showed that the Raghuwandana, on which Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter had based his arguments were a comment only three hundred years old like the Dharma Sindhu⁵⁴ of Western India. The fifth Note dealt with Tilak's

52. Quoted by the Dnyanodaya, March 26, 1891, p.97

53. Telang, Select Writings, Vol. II, pp.448-454.

54. Ibid., pp. 455-465.

position and answered the many objections he had and the rest of the Notes were in essence a reply to Pandit Sasadhur Tarkachundamani. Scoble's final remarks before the passage of the Bill are an eloquent tribute to these men. He said that he was convinced that the balance of argument and authority was in favour of the Bill,

"yet" even if it were not so, were I a Hindu I would prefer to be wrong with Professor Bhandarkar, Mr. Justice Telang and Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao than to be right with Pandit Sasdhur Turkachundamani and Mr. Tilak.

56

Telang's Stand on Social Reform vis a vis Political Reform.

In Telang's reply to Malabari, his arguments on social reform had given the impression that he belonged to the class of people whom he, himself, had described as the "let-aloneists" it is not the same impression one gets from his Social Conference pronouncements or his part in the Age of Consent Bill controversy, when he actively sponsored social reform.

The position he took before the Students'

55. Ibid., pp. 465-484 Tilak's position is discussed at length by Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale, pp. 49-61.

56. Quoted in Wolpert, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

Literary and Scientifica Society at its meeting in Bombay in February, 1886 was that any attempt to separate and compartmentalize issues pertaining to reform was to treat matters artificially and inadequately, because, not only did all reform issues have interlinks since they belonged to one and the same people, but to ask that reforms be achieved in one sphere and not in another was to look at matters unrealistically. He said:

...I consider religious, moral, social and political reforms, and all other reforms whatever, to form one integral system. You may divide them for conveniences sake, and label the divisions with the names mentioned. But in ultimate analysis, the divisions are mainly divisions of convenience, and the spirit which manifests itself in all directions indicated by those divisions, is one and the same. If that spirit is genuine, it must, I think sooner or later manifest itself in all these directions, now here now there, now with greater force and now the less.

57

Telang claimed to see no particular merit in the argument used by the proponents of the social reform as preceding political reform, that "slavery at home is incompatible with political liberty". For

one thing he thought, this "slavery" is really not a conscious slavery- male tyrants and female slaves- but the kind of slavery which is sub-servient to ancient custom and covers all alike- men, women, widows and widowers, children and adults alike. Moreover there was such resistance to the removal of the shackles of customary practices from the very persons who are its victims, that the expression "household slavery" had become a misnomer. Under these conditions, Telang saw no objection in treating these two kinds of reforms as compatible and working for both simultaneously⁵⁸. It is a point of view that differed vastly from that of Bhandarkar and to a lesser extent from Ranade.

"The-Line-of-Least-Resistance"

Having held the opinion that reforms on many fronts needed to be pursued at once, we find Telang veering around to the position that more energy should be devoted to political reform than to social matters. He turned to the lessons to be derived from both Maratha and English history to demonstrate that politically there can be advance-

53. Ibid., pp.272-274.

ment while socially conditions could remain backward.⁵⁹

His own predilections in favour of political reform was part of the principle of "the-line-of-least-resistance", which came to be associated with his thinking and action.

The principle, in his own words ran thus:

...Secure first the reforms which you can secure with the least difficulty, and then turn your energies in the direction of those reforms where more difficulty is to be obtained. You will thus obtain all that vigour which the spirit of reform must derive from success, and thus carry out the whole work of progress with greater promptitude than if you go to work the other way.

60

With a government that had all the intention of granting political rights, "when we show that we deserve them and shall use them well", it was better to concentrate on political reform. Obtaining social reform was more difficult as Telang pointed out:

We have an ancient nation, subject to strong prejudices; not in anything like full sympathy with the new conditions now existing in the country; attached...to its own religious notions with which the proposed social reforms are closely, intimately and at a number of points intertwined...61

59. Ibid., pp. 275-285

60. Ibid., p. 288

61. Ibid., p. 288.

It was quite clear to Telang, that direction in which the line of least resistance ran favoured political reform. Political reform used the method of argument, of logic, of reason. In the case of social reform, with arguments one could not storm the fortress of feeling and tradition with which it is so intimately associated. It is "a long patient, toilsome, process of diverting the feelings, or to express it differently, making the soil unfit for the growth of these misplaced sentiments"⁶². Moreover, the modes of action required to do this work, to disarm opposition of "conciliate those opposed to us" are methods learned in political activity and after being used there could profitably be used for social reform.

Thus Telang's ultimate conclusion is:

...it is not possible to sever political from social reform altogether; that the two must go hand in hand, although the march may not in the case of both be with absolute equal celerity.⁶³

The orthodox seized upon Telang's line-of-least resistance principle, to claim his support and authority for their own point of view and in particular concerning their inaction in social reform matters on

62. Ibid., p.299

63. Ibid., p.289.

the grounds of its secondary importance. Chandavarkar described this result in these words:

...the connection in which he had used the expression and the meaning he meant to give and did give to it were lost on the public mind, and it came to be understood by many as an apology for inaction in matters of social reform. Since then that expression has impressed itself so strongly with the charm of Mr. Telang's name upon the minds of many well-educated and intelligent gentlemen, that I have known them grow earnest, on the subject of social reform, but as ready and earnest to put off the day of action on the ground that they have the authority of the line of least resistance theory propounded by so great and good a man as he. It has become a cant of the day an article stolen from the market place- and I know of instances where it has even covered a multitude of sins,⁶⁴

To some extent the expression, as such, was open to misrepresentation and Ranade himself had raised doubts on this score. On Telang's own admission, what he wanted to emphasize was "the ordinary tendency of individuals and societies to move forward avoiding conflict and inconvenience as far possible, and not to lay down... (it) as a principle of action."⁶⁵

Even into our own contemporary times, such a

64. Chandavarkar, "The Telang School and the Line of Least Resistance, Speeches and Writings, p.26.

65. Ibid., p.27.

misrepresentation of Telang's views seems to have persisted. Ambedkar dwelt at length on the issue of how social reform must precede political reform and in the process Telang came in for some caustic criticism. Ambedkar, while not questioning the right to self-government, asked how a democratic form of government could exist without a democratic form of society. The fundamental rights of men could not be protected by law, if they were first not protected by society. He pleaded for a Social Conscience, that "calm incorruptible legislator of the soul, without whom all other powers would meet in mere oppugnacy" as the only safeguard of rights, fundamental or non-fundamental.⁶⁶

Keer reiterated the same view about Telang's position namely, that he favoured political reform over social ones.⁶⁷

Contemporaries of Telang, with shared liberal views hailed him as a sympathizer of social reforms and Ranade was foremost among them to do so. Ranade saw him as an all-India figure, as "India's

66. Ambedkar, B.R., Ranade, Gandhi and Jinnah, Jullundur Bheem Patrika Publications, 1964, pp.24-27.

67. Dhananjay Keer, Lokmanya Tilak, (Bombay), p.58.

representative, the type I may say of new India⁶³. Ranade went on to name the work done by Telang and others of the same views. The Telang School of Thought and Action. He named two characteristics that distinguished the School. Ranade thought that a "sturdy hopefulness... the golden mean between stolid indifference to change and sanguineness of temper which desires to accomplish the work of centuries in as many decades and the work of decades in as many years and the work of years in as many days", was one of its distinguishing feature. The second distinguishing feature was their understanding of the totality problem, "the liberation that has to be sought is not in one department of life, or in one sort of activity, or in one sphere of thought; but

63. Ranade, "Men of Faith and Hope", The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi, p.22. Ranade's eloquent tribute to Telang is paid in a commemoration address at a meeting of the Hindu Union Club in 1895. The correct year of this address would appear to be 1893 and not 1895 as cited, *Ibid.*, p.36. Ranade referred to the fact that a five year period had elapsed since Telang's death (1893) and Wacha made a reference to Ranade's 1893 speech at the Hindu Union Club. D.E.Wacha, *The late Mr. Justice Telang, Tenth Anniversary Address, Hindu Union Club.*, p.45. Wacha strikes a note of sympathy and understanding for Telang's predicament which must have to him been a source of great personal conflict, p.81.

it is an all round work in which you cannot dissociate one activity from another."

Telang's action- a pivot of controversy.

To what extent is a reformer, with known and definite views on a particular social reform issue, in which he has also joined the progressive group obliged to practice what he preached? If he fails to live up to what he has stated to be the correct mode of behaviour for modern and new times, does he invite the censure of reformers and anti-reformers alike? Does his action cause a set-back to the work of the reformers. All these questions came to the forefront when Telang allowed his daughter to be married at the age of eight. The event took place in the early months of 1893 which is also the year of his death. The circumstances surrounding the event are known from a letter written by Telang to Mama Parmanand. An ailing wife, to whom the husband's refusal to consent to the early marriage of his daughter is a cause for an aggravation of the ailment. The social pressures on the wife and mother and other female members of the family to abide by customary practices is impossible to imagine now. The father, not the reformer gives in, and explains his position to his life-long friend

and guide from his student days. Telang wrote to Mama Parmanand:

...I was bound...to look at certain private and merely domestic considerations... the pressure brought upon me (by his wife's mother and mother of the proposed bridegroom) to bear was manifold... the whole was too much for me...I felt myself obliged to give way and to withdraw my refusal.⁶⁹

That Telang succumbed is not so surprising after all. Almost a decade earlier, in replying to Malabari, he had cited the family, "those nearest and dearest to him, in his family and among his relations" as a certain obstacle to reform.

The public issues involved are of a different order. Chandavarkar, spoke of Telang's own anguish and his complete awareness of the fact that the work of social reform would suffer because of his actions, not to mention also the fact that other reformers, Nulker, Bhandarkar and Ranade would be pained by his actions.

Telang told Chandavarkar:

I know what I have done will pain my friends... You know under what circumstances I have had to act as I have done. I do not feel strong enough to write to my friends. You must explain it all to them when you next go to Poona; but tell them this, that no one feels more than I do that I have not done the right thing. I plead guilty to the charge. I have no defence; and I must calmly bear what is being said in the papers...⁷⁰

69. Letter of K.T. Telang to N.M. Parmanand, dated 26-1-93
 Mama Parmanandaani Tyencha Kalkhand, pp.504-505.
 70. Chandavarkar, Speeches and Writings, p.334.

**Chapter XIV: Gopal Ganesh Agarkar - The Rational
Basis of Social Reconstruction.**

THE RATIONAL BASIS OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTIONGopal Ganesh Agarkar (1856-1895)

Agarkar was born in Satara District in 1856. His early life was one in which there was a hard struggle to secure an education. In 1875 he passed the Matriculation examination and was able to pursue higher education at Deccan College by dint of sheer perseverance. His intellectual capabilities made it possible for him to support himself through the winning of prizes and scholarships. The hardships of these early years took their toll of his health and a brilliant man with ideas far in advance of his times was destined to have a very short public career.

Agarkar passed his B.A. in 1878. A Dakshina Fellowship allayed financial worries for a time and allowed him to work for an M.A. in Philosophy. This period must be considered the most formative period for the development of his thinking. Mill and Spencer, as part of the required reading for the course and as authors whose popularity in these times was immense, exerted a profound influence on Agarkar's thinking, evidence of which would be seen in his views as propounded through the Sudharak. In addition, Agarkar

came under the spell of Gibbon, and Morley and writers on the French Revolution. Thus Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, Turgot and Condorcet, and the works of Comte all became part of the reading that left their mark on him.

Agarkar received his M.A. in 1881. The details of his early association with Tilak and their adventure in the Dongri Jail are too well known to need reiteration. This is also true of their association with Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and the starting of the New English High School in 1879 and the starting of the Kesari and Marhatta in 1880-81.

The early idealism generated by their common pursuits in seeking ways to serve the nation tended to obscure the fundamental differences in their temperaments and their almost opposing standpoints on the means and ends of social change. Even the legacy of Chiplunkar's Nibhandmala, was not considered to be an unmixed one, leaving Agarkar the task of correcting some notions.¹

1. M.D. Altekar, "Gopal Ganesh Agarkar", Manoranjan Agarkar Ank, 1916, p.11.

Agarkar has been called a "social revolutionary"² and a "radical liberal"³. It was an appellation earned by him as much for the stand he took in all the controversies created by the unique situation of his times as well as for his ideas and convictions per se. It is these latter that have relevance for a philosophy of social change for today. On the liberals of the nineteenth century, Agarkar, writing in the language and idiom of the region, was the one whose impact was least felt on a nation-wide basis, for this reason.

In August, 1888, Agarkar and Gokhale made the following public statement in announcing the starting of the Sudharak which would commence publication in October of that year. They said:

Sheer physical force, as an instrument of political, social or moral conversion, has ceased to exist; and the days of intellectual persuasion have come. Those therefore that want to contribute what little they can to a right understanding of the many problems lying before the Indian public, need offer no apology for availing themselves of one of the best means of intellectually reaching the people- the Newspaper... The very name of the journal sufficiently indicates its nature and its purpose. Even countries like China- so well known for ultra-conservative tendencies- have begun to realize the fact that if they

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2. G.P.Pradhan, in Rationalists of Maharashtra, (Dehra Dun, 1962), p.29.
 3. G.P.Pradhan ed. Agarkar Lek-Sangraha (New Delhi, 1960), p.16. It was Acharya Jawdekar who described him as a "radical liberal".

want to hold their own in the universal struggle for survival, they must adopt the essential principles as also the methods of work of European Civilization...there has, of late, become visible a tendency not only to conceal or cover our national faults, but to misinterpret and misrepresent even what is best in Western Civilization. It is to combat this tendency, to point out our faults, and to impress upon the minds of our countrymen the idea that in a modified adoption of the many essential elements of Western Civilization lies the real salvation of our country, that we are going to start our paper...⁴

Agarkar's lack of hesitation in coming to grips with the essentials of the matter under discussion was not designed to endear him to the hearts of many of his readers. The best description of this trait comes from one of his own articles: "What is proper I shall say and what is realizable I shall do."⁵ In fact, in his own times, he was a controversial figure, whose views did not gain widespread acceptance, till a manner of a rediscovery of Agarkar took place in 1916.

Agarkar's views are significant for their statement of the rationale of social change. He is very clear in his mind that in social change, whether

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4. Quoted in P.P.Gokhale, Agarkaranshi Olak, (Satara, n.d. c.1945), p.22; the full Marathi and English public announcements of Sudharak reproduced. Ibid., pp. 20-22.
5. Pradhan, Lek-Sangraha, p.123.

this change pertains to religious or social or political matters, the first and foremost task consisted of identifying the philosophical principles on the basis of which the changes were to be made and the reconstruction of society take place. It was these principles that set the pace and direction of social change and ensure an uninterrupted course of achievement.

In a preliminary way, the task is undertaken in "Amche Kay Honar?"⁶ Changes in the world, or the fact of change, is an accepted or acknowledged fact of existence and since the process cannot be halted, it would profit men to direct that change, so that maximum happiness is achieved for himself and others.

Throughout Agarkar's writings there is evidence of his deep concern for the future of the nation, not in a pessimistic sense but rather with great optimism, not only that it may rise to great heights, but also keep up with advancement and progress comparable to that of other nations.

A recurring theme in his writings is the view that religion belongs to that state of man's development when the power of reasoning is not awakened, and

6. Ibid., pp. 1-32

and has not achieved its full stature. He was anxious to stimulate his readers into using the rational method in viewing religious practices and in understanding how religious beliefs originate, what forms they take, the manner in which they are transmitted from generation to generation and the limits and extent to which practices may be carried. The mystical aspects of religion are discussed in Dharma Kalpana Ali Kothun⁷ In Solvachi Mimansa,⁸ Agarkar dwelt on the notions of ritualistic purity and pollution.

Agarkar's stand on social change came from ideas derived from Mill's Essays on Liberty and The Subjection of Women as well as Spencer's Sociology and Ethics. Reason and the freedom of human effort was to be the basis of value-judgements passed on social institutions and modes of thinking. The individual was a "sacred entity" and was to be accorded equality of opportunity and status, so that his best potential may be realized. Authority, tradition and social sanction, he held, could not be the basis of behaviour and thought.

7. Lek-Sangraha, pp. 33-43
8. Lek-Sangraha, pp.232-6

Agarkar's Sudharak articles, the journalistic style of which limits abstract formulation of first principles, is permeated with what really amounts to a critique of society. They contain much sarcasm, employed to expose or to ridicule, in an attempt to set men rethinking and reevaluating their way of life.

The bases of social reconstruction were to be the principle of liberalism and secularism. In Agarkar's understanding of these concepts, there are reflected many dimensions that were shared by other liberals in Maharashtra. The old and accepted ways are to be eschewed and place made for changing values needed for changing times. The "bhavidharma" was conceived in terms of the increase of happiness of all. In his article Tarun Sushikshitas Vijnapan⁹ he dwelt on the strife between the old and the new and pointed out that it was inevitable that the whole of society would perforce come under the influence of the new.

He urged an open mindedness regarding the acceptance of assimilation and ideas that were being spread through the new education, though he was careful to point out that this did not imply a shedding

of one's ancient heritage¹⁰. But neither was there any suggestion of humiliation in accepting what appealed to one's reason, whatever the source of the ideas. It was the new education that had set the nation on the path of social reconstruction by bringing awareness of social wrongs.¹¹

He clearly favoured social legislation as a way to secure the happiness and well-being of a society.¹² He repudiated the suggestion that legislation in social matters implied being forced against one's will in these matters, and while he would have been in favour of spontaneity in these matters on the part of the members of society, he expressed the opinion that most educated persons had a wrong notion of what spontaneous action meant.

Agarkar was a great champion of women's rights and his many essays on diverse aspects of the subject are written in unambiguous terms. A society's claim to being called advanced or not is, among other things, determined by the position that is held by its women. The education of girls and changes in marriage customs

10. "Sudharak Kadhanyaca Hetu", Ibid., p.132.

11. "Samajik Stityantare", Nibhand Sangraha" Part I, p.128

12. "Swatantryachya Vritha Valgana", Ibid., p.123 and "Samajik Sudharana ani Kayda", Nibhand Sangraha, Part II, pp.75-77.

were among the reforms he suggested. He even went to the extent of showing that Shastric support could be found for raising the Age of Consent¹³.

The ultimate basis of social reconstruction were the moral principles of Justice and Mercy and the recognition of the worth of the individual human being. Agarkar's criticism of the caste system left no doubt in the minds of his readers that, seen in the light of these principles, it had to be changed. Fearlessly outspoken, Agarkar's role in creating a climate for social change, through the columns of the press achieved what perhaps what his unique contribution to the liberal movement of his time- the new ideas were taken to the home and hearth of the common man. He conceived of progress as having many aspects to be pursued at once¹⁴, in which social reform would take precedence over political reform and in which the old and irrelevant would be discarded to make place for the new and relevant. The determining of relevance and irrelevance would be a function of reason. With great astuteness, Agarkar was quick to

13. "Samati Billas Dharmashastra Badhak Nahi",
Nibhand Sangraha, Part II, pp.219-226.

14. Nibhand Sangraha, Part II, p.74.

point out the inconsistencies of human behaviour where preaching and practices followed different paths, or where there was a basic dichotomy between external behaviour and inner convictions.¹⁵

Ranade and Agarkar were both inspired by the same ideals and had the same visions for Indian society. However, in Ranade, the commitment to the liberal ideal was a spiritual commitment, conceived in terms of one's conscience. To Agarkar the commitment was a rational one, conceived in secular terms.

15. "Vallabhopasana" "Nibhand Sangraha" Part I, pp. 114-15.

Chapter XV: Summary and Concluding Remarks.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In his History of Western Philosophy¹, Bertrand Russell raised these questions: "What has been the influence of political and social circumstances upon the thoughts of eminent and original thinkers, and conversely, what has been the influence of these men upon subsequent political and social development?" Are the actions of a society to be attributed to the teachings of a particular leader or thinker? Were his ideas the stimuli to which the changes in societal behaviour was a response? Or conversely, are thinkers or theorists, to be considered as "passive products of their circumstances" and as having hardly any influence upon the course of events? Are ideas, as Russell described it, "the froth on the surface of deep currents, which are determined by material and technical causes" and "social changes are no more caused by thought than the flow of river is caused by the bubbles that reveal its direction to an onlooker?"

The present study has seen ideas as the

1. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York, 1965), pp. 596-7

primary cause of social change. It has concentrated on an analysis of the ideas which stimulated changes in societal behaviour in nineteenth century Maharashtra. It has shown that these ideas themselves were the result of ideas derived from a confrontation with the philosophy of liberalism.

A preliminary discussion of social change and its relation to modernization explores the implications of these terms, particularly the fact that they are not value-free terms. Consideration of the intrinsic worth of the modernization process is followed by an delineation of five aspects along which modernization must take place. The growth of literature on modernization in various disciplines reveals that it has been an area of major interest in the nineteen-sixties.

The conceptual problems related to modernization have merited detailed consideration, making it possible to discover the relevance of the essentials of Indian thought to modern times.

The role played by the new educational system, modern Marathi literature and the missionaries in bringing about a new awareness for the need for social change is discussed.

The major organizations through which ideas of social change, conceived in the liberal tradition, were spread, are considered at length. Thus the deliberations of the Indian Social Conference, which became the meeting place for liberal-minded individuals inspired by a new vision for the nation reveal their concerns and the directions along which social change must take place. From the twentieth century viewpoint, their concerns may seem shallow but the real impact of their thinking and activities is the climate for social change that they created. In the same manner the organizations in Poona and Bombay- the Sarvajanic Sabha, the Deccan Sabha, the Servants of India Society, the Students' Literary and Scientific Society and the Hemant Vyakhyan Series are shown to have promoted ideas of social change.

The unique contribution made by charismatic leaders of the nineteenth century to social change and to the creation of a modern society has been discussed, at length, both from the point of view of the particular situation in which each leader moved and made his response, as also from the point of view of the relevance of his ideas to the

modernization process. The leaders found the need to use both "existential" and "normative" ideas- a distinction made by Talcott Parsons². The former, used for describing or analysing existent entities, were necessary for describing the state of society. The latter, which concern those ideals that are to be brought into existence, were utilized to indicate the dimensions along which changes in society must take place.

Ranade felt that there must be a spiritual commitment to the liberal ideal and discussed the dimensions of this commitment as well as the nature of the liberal ideals. Bhandarkar was convinced that the critical and rational method must be utilized with greater vigour than hitherto if advancements were to be made in the modern age. Gokhale, unlike Ranade and Bhandarkar, was outside the Prarthana Samaj and brought a secular approach to bear in his viewing of what changes needed to be made. He was a great admirer of the English

2. Talcott Parsons, "The Role of Ideas in Social Action", Social and Political Movements, Gary B. Rush and S. Serge Denisoff (New York, 1971), p. 272.

educational system and saw the potential of the educative process in creating a modern society. Agarkar gave reason a supreme place, in thinking about and in deciding the dimensions of social change and in the process of doing so, produced a critique of society that was unequalled by the others.

Throughout the study, an attempt is made to relate the liberal ideas found in nineteenth century Maharashtra to the modernization process, and to show that it was these men who really gave evidence of perceptiveness and foresight in marking the path along which the nation must travel in its bid to become a modern society. Their ideas have a continuing relevance even to the present.

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