

PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS OF INDIAN EDUCATION

(With Special Reference to Muslim Education)

BY

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To
Mr. Ahmedbhoj Fazalbhoj Currimbhoj
B. A. (Cantab), Bar-at-Law,
has this book been affectionately
Dedicated.

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PREFACE

This essay was first delivered in the form of a lecture at the Bombay Presidency Educational Conference held at Poona last year, under the chairmanship of Sir Akbar Hydari of Hyderabad State. His address was highly inspiring and dealt with a number of important aspects of Muslim Education. Sir Akbar's long association with the Usmania University, Hyderabad, and various other educational institutions, enabled him to offer several useful suggestions for the improvement of the present educational system.

The lecture was mainly intended to serve a three-fold purpose. In the first place, it was meant to remove a common misunderstanding about the aims and objects of education, which is generally believed to consist of information regarding certain facts and the theories for explaining them. This notion of education is partly due to the influence of pure science and partly due to the absence of religious and moral instruction in schools and colleges. Nothing can be farthest from the truth. The main object of education is to prepare a student to live the healthy and useful life of a citizen. It should primarily help a student to train

his impulses and emotions and to develop his character and personality. This significance of the term "education" is very often ignored by our educationists, hence a number of weaknesses in the present system of education.

In the second place, education of the masses has been totally neglected in India. This was partly due to the difficulty inherent in the nature of the village organisation in India and partly due to the neglect of the vernaculars of the country. I have suggested a number of hints which can help to remove these difficulties in the way of mass education to a considerable extent. If the Provincial Governments appoint a few psychologists to tour in the country in order to rouse the enthusiasm of villagers for primary education, to study special problems connected with different localities, and to suggest means for their solution, then this object can be easily achieved.

In the third place, I have attempted to show that the Muslims of India can organise a scheme of primary education round the teaching of the Qur'an, which they are under a religious obligation to promote and which will make up for the want of religious and moral instruction in the prevailing system of education. ✓

If this book succeeds to some extent in turning the attention of educationists to some of these suggestions and they take them up in right earnest, my labour will be more than compensated.

I am extremely thankful to my friend Dr. U. M. Daudpota, who took a good deal of trouble in going through the manuscript and correcting the proofs. He also allowed me to read through his useful unpublished manuscript on "Mass Education". I am also obliged to Prof. M. Abdur Rehman of Patiala who helped me by making a fair copy of this essay while I was indisposed.

M. M. ZUHURUDDIN AHMAD.

CORRIGENDA

PAGE	LINE	READ	FOR PRINTED WORD
1	1	civilisation	civilsation
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20	18	popularised	popuarised
30	22	the	he
36	11	mechanical	mechanical
39	heading line	Machinery.	Machinary
40	8	public	public
56	22, 25	pleasant	pleasent
61	22	hold	hod
62	17	imparted in these institutions	imparted
69	15	propagation	propagation
72	12	undetected	undectected
74	22	very	every

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

With the development of civilisation the problems of human life have become much more complicated than before. The term civilisation itself indicates the struggle of life on so many new fronts. Education of the rising generation is one of the most important problems of human life. It is believed to be the natural duty of every generation to prepare the next coming generation for fighting out their struggle of life on this planet when the parent generation will no more be here to watch their actual fight. Even the gregarious animals possess this instinct of instructing their new-born, mainly through the exhibition of their instincts of play and punishment. The tendency to educate the young generation, possessed by the human species, is proportionately more keen and intense than that of the animals and is expressed through a number of complex instincts. But the special characteristic of human institutions consists in their capability to convey their thoughts directly through the medium of spoken language or written character. For this reason the learning of a certain spoken language is believed to be the indispensable part of education, because without

first acquiring the knowledge of some language the imparting of thoughts becomes impossible. But it should be remembered that the learning of the language is not an end in itself. It is useful only in so far as it enables us to understand those who are our contemporaries, or who have been before us, while the real object of education is the preparation of the growing generation for living the life of ideal human beings, for fighting out the battle of life in the most successful manner. Most of the mistakes in our educational system arise on account of our failing to see clearly this end and purpose of education. We often forget that education is a means that enables us to live a successful life, a life of rich content. We often emphasise the unnecessary accidents of education and overlook many of its essentials. It is only this functional definition of education that can enable us to understand rightly what are the real requirements of a correct educational system.

For this purpose, education may consist either in preparing a human being as an individual or as a member of society for this coming struggle of his life. We should always remember that within a certain society the rise and progress of an individual depends upon the development of his personality. The habitual creation of certain modes of conduct in the individual organism is the

result of personal training. Sweet temperament, initiative, truthfulness and modesty are often the fruits of individual education. But the kind of education, which makes a person useful as a member of a certain society, is even to-day held to consist of those qualities which go to make a good fighting soldier. Courage, discipline, sacrifice and obedience are some of those essential qualities which go to make a man a good citizen during the time of peace and a good soldier on the battlefield.

This fact is very often forgotten by those who are overwhelmingly influenced by the idea of modern nationalism, that apart from *self* and the *nation* to which a person belongs we also belong to a certain *species*, to whose progress and development we owe a duty much greater than we owe either to the progress of the self or of the nation. This consciousness has not yet fully awakened in man, and is perhaps quietly waiting in the antechamber of the unconscious for the coming of a still greater war, to bleed humanity the more profusely, in order to take away its attachment to the so-called nationalism. The League of Nations had undertaken this task but failed to achieve its object, perhaps on account of reasons beyond its control. Is it because great concepts and great epochs do not take their birth without shaking fully and bleeding

profusely the mother that gives birth to them? A league of nations more happily situated, at some more opportune time, might have presented to us a code of law and a system of education prepared in the light of the ideals of the whole human race and enabled us to fuse different cultures and racial ideals into one common system. Only such a system could rightly claim to prepare the whole human species for a common struggle for capturing the citadel of ignorance, illiteracy, bigotry, superstition and fanaticism. Instead, the civil war in the camp of humanity continues to persist and perhaps with much greater force and intensity. and nations are fast preparing to sacrifice every man and every pie at the altar of nationalism. After the Great War, education in the West is being modified on these lines. The war has proved that a number of factories useful for a certain purpose during the peace can be converted into destructive plants for the production of ammunition during the war, so the Western nations are mainly emphasising the military training in the art of modern warfare. The kind of nervous tension prevailing in Europe at present is sure to burst forth in an armed conflict sooner or later.

Conditions in the West are bad from the point of view of education, but in India they are worse. India is a vast continent, populated by

people of different races, colours, religions and cultures. This variety of religions and cultures has created a conflict of ideals and practices and this conflict is one of the greatest hindrances in evolving a unitary and healthy system of education for the whole of the country on national lines. Individual education was given up in the West with the introduction of machinery and machine-labour and in India with the introduction of the Western system of education. Mass education on social and national lines, on the other hand, has suffered a great deal by the conflict of cultures and ideals. Every community is zealous to preserve its own culture and traditions and for this end does not hesitate to sacrifice the national ideals or political aspirations and legitimate claims of the other communities. Just as an uncalled for hatred and mental fear of attack always makes the weaker more alert and fierce, the other communities are forced to retaliate by becoming communal for the purposes of self-protection and self-preservation. Thus the vicious circle of communal hatred is becoming worse everyday and is hindering the formation of a greater and freer India. These inter-communal differences are a great barrier in building up a system of education for the whole of the country. The political concessions demanded by the Indian leaders are likely to intensify these differences

perhaps still further, by adding to those already existing the conflict of provinces, which factor will ultimately be one of the greatest barriers in the evolution of a national system of education by checking the free flow of ideas from one province to another. With the development of Female Education on Western lines the conflict of sexes will further add to the difficulty, unless a few bold Hitlers manage to send the ladies back to their hearth, away from the maelstrom of offices and factories. There is hardly any other country in the world that presents as many discordant factors among the different sections of its society as India and consequently there is no other country in the world whose educational system can safely be applied to Indian conditions. India has its peculiar difficulties of language, race, religion and culture, and therefore it requires a different treatment altogether to solve them. Unfortunately, either there is a tendency to incorporate Western methods into Indian systems or to go back to the ancient Indian systems of education prevalent in the days of the Brahmanic, Buddhistic or Mohammedan rule.

Both these views are incomplete, onesided and harmful to the national education of India. Western countries are comparatively free from inter-communal, racial, linguistic and political

conflicts and as such their systems do not provide any solution of our difficulties. Ancient Indian systems of education were applicable to and adequate for only the simpler age of the past, but cannot satisfy the requirements of modern students unless materially altered, which again means a new system on modern lines. Thus, those people who have come back from Europe with new ideals, with the intention of changing every old institution of India into an Oxford or a Cambridge, and those who have no experience of the new methods and stick to their old prejudices, are equally harmful to the cause of Indian education. Indian conditions, social, political and cultural are unique, so the system that can at once give an impetus to the cause of literacy in India must be unique too. We will now discuss a few of the important problems of education and will try to offer a solution whenever possible.

CHAPTER II

The Real Significance of the Term "Education"

Education is a general term of a very vast connotation. Every human being can be educated irrespective of his age, condition, status, profession, creed or circumstances. A child stands in need of it as much as an old man; a poor man has a right to it as well as a rich man, the former to acquire wealth and the latter to spend it, if for no other higher purpose; a teacher has as much right to impart his information to others as a pupil to assimilate and grasp the information imparted. Plato was the first philosopher to present a clear notion of the education of all the different sections of a society in his famous "Republic", but even then, perhaps, the notion was not broad enough to state the full connotation of the term. In a sense, every moment of our life is being spent in acquiring education and in laying down by us a store of useful knowledge for use in the life to come. Every moment of the present life that we are living is being spent in preparation for the coming moment. The general significance of the term "education" has often led me to the belief in the life hereafter, the life to come after the expiry of our physical organism. Without going so far, however, we can

safely say that most of our life consists in becoming educated. This may be either *self-education* or the education through suggestion by others. In a way all education is self-education, and consists in bringing out our hidden and potential powers of *self* to work in the actual life that we live. I perfectly agree with polemics of Socrates against the Sophists that education and knowledge cannot be imparted by the teacher to the taught, but that the teacher can only help to bring into play certain hidden forces of human nature by suggestion, by turning his pupil's attention towards the laws and processes of the working of the hidden tendencies of human nature. Thus, the main problem of education is that, granting that every human being is born with certain general tendencies and certain special aptitudes, how those tendencies can be helped to mature and the special aptitudes to develop. In the long run every individual will have to educate himself, but how and through what processes can he be helped to educate himself is the main problem of education. It is evident from the form of the problem as stated, that the main problem of education is psychological. It involves two processes, the study of the peculiarities of the mind of the taught and offering the best suggestions at those moments of the life of the taught when he is in the pliant mood to take the

suggestion and act up to it. To prepare the taught to form a general habit of accepting suggestions is to prepare him for self-education. Thus, a teacher should learn to hypnotise on a vast scale and his success lies in preparing the taught to be able to educate himself by a series of self suggestions at a later age. It is clear from this that anybody who takes to this profession must acquire sufficient knowledge of the science of Psychology with reference to the deep-lying springs of human nature.

Another point that I would emphasise with regard to the function of education in general is that its object and end consists in making a person useful to the society in which he is living or to the humanity in general, which feelings have not yet developed sufficiently to influence our theories of education. The function of education in general, therefore, is practical. Any system of education, which does not attach sufficient importance to this end, is defective in proportion to its neglect of this end. Cramming up of young mind with purely theoretical and useless information which may not be of any use for living the actual life, unless it is intended for specialisation which is as much a practical object as any other, should not be encouraged. From this point of view much of the classics, ancient mythology and

out of date arts is useless for the education of the young, although for the purposes of comparison, collection of past record and specialisation it may be of immense value at the higher stages of education.

Education in a limited sense is restricted to school or college life when the individual members of a society devote a certain period of their life exclusively to the acquiring of knowledge. From the point of view adopted above, the term cannot easily be restricted. The school and college education will at the most be one link in the total education of a person, may be a golden link, the most important of all, which helps a student to form the best habits of application, industry and self-education, but still only one of the many links. The others cannot be overlooked altogether. I mean to point out that the influences of society, home, play-ground and reading-room are not of small significance in educating the character or modifying the life of a person. I am emphasising these influences, so that the educationists may plan to co-ordinate all these factors in the service of the young generation of India, and in those cases where school or college lecture-rooms are not accessible, recourse may be had to such extra-tutorial sources of education as may be available. These are the potential sources of education in many

European countries as well as in America; but in India very little attention or practically no attention has been given to the use of these sources in the service of education of the young Indian mind. Perhaps, it is the poverty of the Indians that is responsible for the neglect of so many potential sources, but more likely it is the poverty of thought and want of sufficient attention to the educational problems on the part of the leaders, who are too busy with their sordid politics to attend to any other problem of the country. I am sure if any serious leader had taken up the educational problems in right earnest, he would have succeeded in moulding and modifying the Government Policy of Education to a great extent, as the declared policy of the Government of India has been the slow and progressive education of the masses. But communal selfishness in the case of some and extreme concentration on the political questions in the case of others has hindered the leaders from tackling some of the most important problems of education.

Accepting the term 'education' in the restricted sense of the school and college education, let us examine critically the present state of education in India and see if any practical steps can be suggested to improve it. But before we do this, it would be necessary to summarise the systems of education

prevalent in India before the British Rule, in order to understand the historical setting of the present day education.

CHAPTER III

Brahmanic Education

In the early days of the formation of the caste system in the Hindu society, instruction was confined to young Brahmans and was regarded mainly as a preparation for their vocation as priests. But near about the birth of Buddha the education of the young Kshatriyas and Vaisyas had also come under the control of Brahmans and the object of imparting instruction to them was to prepare them for their future life. This marks the growing influence of the priesthood.

The general scheme of the division of the life-period of one of the three castes of the "Dvija" (twice born) Hindus generally and of Brahmans particularly was as follows:—At the age of eight or before the age of eleven the "Thread Ceremony"

(something equivalent to our "Bismillah Ceremony") was performed, and the student was initiated into the family of a Guru. Pupils had to work for their Guru in his house and in his field, looked after his cattle and even collected alms for him. He also accompanied his Guru to different ceremonies and considered it to be his sacred duty to carry out his commands. In the leisure time the Veda was studied. This period usually extended to twelve years and was looked upon not only as a time of learning, but also of rigorous discipline. This period was known as the period of studentship or "Brahamacharya."

After he was discharged by the Guru, the pupil entered upon the second stage, that of a "Grihastha" or *householder* and usually lived in the house of his Guru up to the time of his marriage. Then, after having brought up a family and done his duty in the world he could enter upon the life of "Vanaprastha" or *forest hermit*, and later become a "Sanyasi" or *wandering ascetic* who after having separated himself from the world altogether and having attained the knowledge of Atma was only waiting for the *final emancipation*.

Rules relating to the social life and duties of teachers and students are contained in the *Dharma Sutra*. By a perusal of the "*Gautma*" which are considered to be the oldest existing

Dharma Sutra, we find that a student was initiated in the family of his Guru at an age between eight and twelve years, differently fixed for different castes (Brahmin seven or eight years, Khsatriya eleven, Vaisya twelve, the period in each case to be counted from the time of conception). It usually took twelve years to study one Veda in full and that was the minimum period of instruction. Instruction was given orally and consisted of learning some hymns of Vedas. The art of writing came to be known to Indians some eight centuries before Christ, and after that time writing was taught before reading. The student had to depend upon alms collected from the strangers or door to door or from one's own relations or those of his Guru. Giving alms to students was considered to be the best form of charity. Very strict rules of moral discipline were imposed upon the student, invariably observed by him at the risk of his being expelled from the service of his Guru. The Guru in return was to treat him as his own son and was under obligation to bestow the same affection, love and care upon him as upon his own son. In other words, it was *adoption* for the purpose of education.

The most important characteristic of this system of education was the personal touch between the teacher and the taught which explains how the

types of great teachers were repeated into Hindu society. The Guru was an exemplar for his students by his actual conduct and not by word of mouth only. Hence, this system prepared the student for actual life, the object of all education, much better than any modern system can claim to do. There was no love for *Alma Mater*, but for the Guru, whose feet must be kissed every morning and after every sermon. But this excessive respect for the Guru degenerated into Guru-worship on account of the loose conception of God among the Hindus, and the Islamic principle of *Fana fi'sh Shaikh* is simply a reflection of the Hindu System of Guru-worship. There were no regular buildings for schools but the classes were held in the open fields under the banyan trees, an ideal which Sir Rabindranath Tagore has attempted to revive in the Santiniketan. Such open air classes were very conducive to the physical and mental health of the students, but could not be possible in the thickly populated modern towns like Bombay and Calcutta.

In certain places of greater religious sanctity the greater centres of education were also established, for instance at Taxila, Ujjain and Benares. In such centres there were a number of *tois* or smaller institutions existing side by side with the seats of higher learning and usually constituted a

kind of University. Even to-day there exist a number of Sanskrit Pathshalas which are poorly attended except in places where the Brahman population is sufficient to create demand for the learning of a little Sanskrit and Astrology. They only serve the purpose of educating a certain class for professional ends and not for imparting instruction as in ancient days.

CHAPTER IV

Education Under Buddhism

The teachings of Buddha perpetuated the form of studentship under the Brahmans. As a matter of fact the Bhikshu System of Buddhistic Priesthood was formed on the lines of Brahmanic Studentship, with the only difference that the teachers or those people who were to become the official priests of Buddhistic Community, had a more austere and severe discipline to undergo, and had to continue their studies for a longer period than those who had to earn their own livelihood in later life. Buddhistic temples usually had teaching monasteries attached to them intended for the double purpose of imparting instruction and initiating the young into the official priesthood.

The Brahmans also having been influenced by the Buddhistic example had shifted from the open air banyan tree schools either to the temples or to the kutchas huts provided by their patrons in the busy mohallas of towns. Whenever a Brahman lectured to his pupils at the latter place, he usually also held the post of the family priest of his patron. It was in this way that the idea of patronage began to develop in the Brahmanic schools. Buddhistic rulers or chieftains, on the other hand, were moved by the zeal of propagating the religion of their adoption. They, therefore, extended their patronage very lavishly to the Buddhistic monasteries, which were, so to speak, the centres of the dissemination of the Buddhistic traditions.

In the Brahmanic Schools the girls were not usually admitted and education was believed to be the unique privilege of the male children. The reasons for this were mainly two-fold. Firstly, because the son was believed to be responsible for bringing about the salvation of the father's soul after his death through certain religious rites in which the women were not expected to take part. Secondly, because, the main object of female life was believed to be sacrifice and devotion to her husband, a very inferior place, consequently, having been assigned to her. It is a well known fact, however, that Buddha for the first time

consented to admit his aunt Mahaprajapati to join the order after having refused admission to her three times before. He permitted women to join, after this, with great sorrow and is reported to have said that the admission of women ruined his work and that the period of his reformation had on account of their admission been reduced to five centuries instead of ten. It was on account of this Buddhistic influence on Brahmanic thought that certain higher classes among the Hindus entrusted their girls to their priests for instruction, but the system of early marriage commonly prevalent amongst them did not allow the female education to progress to any appreciable extent, with a few exceptions that are remarkable for their isolation. Important centres of Buddhistic learning may be mentioned as Kanchipura, Nalanda, Dantapuri, and Vakramasita¹. At Nalanda and Vikramasita there were huge libraries containing selected works on Buddhistic religion and Buddha's traditions.

Education under Buddhistic monks influenced the general mass of the people, at least those who accepted Buddhism, and provided opportunities for popular education. Even those who did not intend to join the religious order stayed in the monasteries till they were twelve years of age and

1. Dr. S. C. Vidyabhusan : *Medieval School of Indian Logic*.

received instruction in reading, writing and simple rules of Arithmetic, besides religious traditions. Those who were intended to be monks studied Grammar, Metaphysics, Logic and more detailed ritualistic books from the very beginning. Those of the teachers who were eminent in learning and character were rewarded by having their images painted on the walls of the university. Thus, the modern system of putting the busts of eminent scholars in the universities first originated in the Buddhistic centres of learning.

Buddhism has disappeared from India, but has left considerable influence upon Indian philosophy, religious ideas and educational system. Although its curriculum was meagre and the books on Philosophy, Logic and Medicine, which were used as text books, were borrowed from the Brahmanic Schools, yet it had popularised the idea of education, destroyed the caste distinction for educational purposes, broken the monopoly of the Brahmans as teachers and cleared the way for female education. Whatever the other causes that contributed to the disappearance of Buddhism from Indian soil, one important cause was that Brahmanism assimilated all that Buddhistic influence had to give and consequently it ceased to attract the attention of those who had not yet accepted it. Buddha, who had persistently

refused to answer questions on divinity was installed as a God in different forms in the Hindu temples and his ideals were absorbed by Brahmanic civilization. In short, all that Buddhism claimed to teach could be taught as a part of Brahmanic Faith.

CHAPTER V

Mohammedan Education.

The first attempt made on a large scale to popularise education among the masses was made by the Prophet Mohamimed (peace be upon him!), through the teachings of the Qur'an. On occasions of festivals, ceremonials, prayers, sacrifices and greetings, it was the verses of the Qur'an that were to be repeated. Through the promises of reward in this world as well as in the next, the reading, repetition and assimilation of this book was encouraged. In his days, and in the days of his immediate successors it was the learning of the Qur'an which was held to be the criterion for the purpose of appointing the governors and state officials of the conquered provinces. They, in return, were instructed to spread the knowledge of the Qur'an to the people of the provinces governed by them and their promotion usually

depended upon their actual fulfilment of this expectation of the caliphs. It was with a view to assimilate the teachings of the Qur'an that many of the conquered people turned their attention to the learning of the Arabic language and not otherwise as it has been pointed out by some writers. The early Arab conquerors had a great zeal for spreading the Qur'anic teachings, whereas the adoption of the Arabic language by the conquered people was only the secondary by-product of the love and zeal of the early Companions of the Prophet.

When the Mohammedans conquered India the Arab Caliphate had practically exhausted its force and the Persian and Syrian influences had greatly affected the mind of the new converts. If Mohammed b. Qasim or his immediate successors had succeeded in conquering India, perhaps the history of India would have been differently written to-day. In that case the mother-tongue of India, like that of Egypt, would have been Arabic, and the Indian religion, Islam. Among the Arabs, before the Prophet, slaves were given special facilities for learning and education, sometimes, even more than the sons of their masters, perhaps because the sons were intended to be brought up more as soldiers and rulers than scholars. The Prophet, as I have pointed out above, by his love of knowledge

and emphasis on education had reversed the situation to some extent. But the institution of educating the slaves continued even after the Prophet's death, although the teachings of the Prophet had also borne fruit by producing great scholars like Hazrat 'Ali, Abdulla b. Abbas, Abdul Malik b. Marwan, Hajjaj b. Yusuf and Malik b. Anas. The first successful Mohammedan invader of India was Mahmud of Ghazna whose name has been inseparably associated with the love of Ayaz, his slave, whom he had specially trained in the courtesies of the court. Mohammed Ghorî who was the next conquerer of India had a number of educated slaves, one of whom Qutbuddin Ebak was left by him as the viceroy of India when he returned home after defeating the then ruling prince of Delhi.

Qutbuddin Ebak, the founder of the Slave Dynasty in India, was a very accomplished person and a very capable ruler. He ordered a number of Mosques to be built near Delhi and started schools in those mosques for the teaching of the Qur'an. He and his successors knew the benefits of education, therefore, they usually got their children and the children of other Mohammedans, who had come with them to India, educated. It is for this reason that we find highly accomplished and cultured rulers of this dynasty,

like Iltutmish and Razyā, occupying the throne of Delhi. The other dynasties of the Mohammedan Rulers similarly tried to popularise education among their subjects, particularly among the Mohammedans. The Hindus often acquired the knowledge of Persian voluntarily for the purposes of state service. The Mohammedan Rulers did not interfere in the educational system of the Hindus beyond helping them with money, often lavishly, because the Hindu system of education was identified with their religion or Dharma and the Mohammedan Rulers in every land have been very reluctant to interfere with the religious susceptibilities of the people, even to the smallest extent. The Mohammedans encouraged education among the Hindus, however, in three ways:— (1) by recognising certain great Hindu teachers and by giving them Jagirs or stipends from the treasury; (2) by giving Jagirs to the temples associated with their educational institutions; and (3) by translating the ancient Sanskrit books into Persian or Arabic so that they might easily be accessible to those who learnt Persian for political purposes.

It was in the days of the Moghul Rulers, specially after the reconquest of India by Humayun that Muslim Rulers began to pay attention to the education of the masses. Persian had become the language of the Court, while Arabic was confined

Firstly, it took a direct step towards the popularisation of education almost on the lines suggested by the Prophet for the dissemination of the Qur'anic knowledge. Secondly, it attempted in right earnest to solve a very difficult problem of to-day, viz. the question of compulsory primary education. Although there was no compulsion in the legal sense, yet the network of maktab in the towns and the social atmosphere had made it impossible for anybody to keep off his children from the maktab. It was only when such maktab became the seat of religious intolerance or were regarded by the public officers as the relics of the old and out of date system, that they ceased to play any important part in the life of the community. Thirdly, the question of the education of girls was practically solved by the Mohammedan system of education. Up to the primary standard when the sexual consciousness was not awakened, the girls and the boys were educated together, but for higher education the girls were segregated from boys and educated privately, while an arrangement for instruction in the household duties was in existence as a regular institution. The boys who could not go to the madrasah were usually sent to learn some craft or trade.

than a rule. Every Musalman mohalla of a large town had its own maktab either attached to the mosque or situated in the house of the leader or the chief-man of that mohalla. Sometimes there were more than one maktab in the same mohalla, one attached to the mosque where the children of the common folk went to take lessons and others situated in the houses of the leading men of the street. The teacher in the mosque-maktab was either paid a fixed salary out of the money raised by public subscription for the expenses of the mosque, or was dependant upon the voluntary presents from the parents of the children. The expenses of running the private maktab were borne by the person in whose house it was located, but it was open to the children of other neighbours with the formal permission of the patron who gave it freely and ungrudgingly, because of the expectation of the great reward for the spreading of the knowledge as taught by the Prophet. The curriculum in these maktab usually consisted of learning by heart the portions of the Qur'an necessary for compulsory prayers, writing practice on a wooden board and the learning of the primer and one or two books of Persian like the *Karima* of Sadi, the *Pandnama* of Attar, etc. The discipline in such Maktab was very strict and the teacher was expected to look

after the morals, regularity of time, particularly with regard to prayers, and training in the social manners like *adab* or respect to the elders. In certain cases the reading of the whole Qur'an was taught to the student if he was enthusiastic in acquiring knowledge. Figures and simple operations with them were also taught after the Qur'anic classes.

Madrasah, on the other hand, was the seat of higher learning, where Ethics, Mathematics, (including Arithmetic, Mensuration, Geometry and Astronomy), Physiognomy, Medicine, Principles of Government, Logic, Physics, Theology, History, Commentary on the Qur'an, Traditions and Literature, both poetry and prose, were taught. But every madrasah did not necessarily undertake to instruct in all these subjects. It all depended upon the ability of the head teacher or teachers in the madrasah, and the students often migrated from place to place in search of such teachers as had specialised in certain subjects. It should be noted in passing that in a maktab a pupil was taught first to read, whereas in the Brahmanic system he was first taught to write, the former system being more scientific from the phonetic point of view.

As a rule girls attended the maktab but rarely the madrasah. But the daughters of the

to introduce a system of education through a new medium which had no traditions worth the name and as such was free from the shackles of superstition and fanaticism. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a great Sanskrit scholar himself, was the leader of this group that was trying to anglicise the original Indian institutions, and it is not unlikely that some of his friends might have pressed this question with the object of doing away with any remnant of Moghul influence, although no such motive can be imputed to Raja Ram Mohan Roy himself. Some amongst them might as well have considered that their desire for the substitution of the English language for Persian and Arabic would be regarded as a pious act of expression of loyalty to the Government. Moreover, in 1833, the House of Commons, in renewing the Company's Charter had emphasised that "no native of the said Indian territory shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the Company". In order to pursue this policy, so emphatically laid down, it was necessary that the Company's native agents should be acquainted with the language, modes of thought and ideas of their masters, and it would save a lot of botheration and expense to the masters if the servants were to learn the language and the

more and more to the mosque and the pulpit. To some extent, the fact, that Humayun had conquered India with Persian forces and consequently could not avoid the Persian influences, was responsible for the adoption of Persian as the Court language. From this day onward the gulf between Arabian Culture, which was really Islamic, and Persian Culture under whose influence the Indian Muslim intelligentsia were being brought up, started widening in India. Arabic could not be totally neglected as it was the language of the Qur'an, but for all practical purposes it was thrown in the background to be used only on ceremonial occasions. Just as Akbar's many alliances with the Rajputs rang the death-knell of the Moghul Empire in India by creating internecine wars in the House of Timur, the restriction of Arabic to the Mosque purposes alone started the decay of the real Muslim Culture in India.

The general scheme of education in the days of Moghul Rulers was as follows:—There were two kinds of institutions—Maktab and Madrasah, —something like the schools and colleges of our own days, with the difference that the general standard of these two institutions was lower than that of our high schools and colleges and that specialisation in the colleges was an exception rather

A Mohemmedan student respected his teacher but not to the extent of the student in a Brahman School. In the Brahmanic system the student was practically grafted in the family of his Guru, whereas according to the Mohammedan system he retained his identity with respect to the family of his origin. Nor were there any special rules to stop a student from becoming the student of any other teacher in the latter system. The Brahmanic system of education had emphasised and perpetuated the caste system of Hindu Society, whereas Buddhistic and Islamic influences tried to loosen the tightness of the caste system. The ground of social distinctions had shifted from birth to voluntary profession.

CHAPTER VI

British Rule in India and its Educational Problems

In the days of the East India Company the general trend of the official opinion was to continue and develop the educational policy of India existing in those days. The foundation of the Madrasah and the Sanskrit College at Calcutta

was the result of such opinion. But the Christian Missionaries, long before Macaulay gave an effective direction to the present educational policy of India, were trying to anglicise the Indian public institutions. They believed that the only way to win India for Christ was to disintegrate the oriental system of education in India and to discourage the books in oriental languages. There were many reasons for the Missionaries to hold a belief like this. (1) The ignorance of their own traditions would make the Indians an easy prey to their preaching. (2) It would facilitate their Mission work and save them a lot of cost required for learning the vernaculars of India if the original systems of education were to continue. (3) The Christian Missionaries were anxious to present the reformed Christianity of Europe rather than the real Christianity of Christ, which, when presented through oriental languages and by reference to original authorities, did not exist anywhere. (4) They, perhaps, believed that the presentation of a new religion in the language of the rulers would be much more effective than in the language of the ruled.

Their voice was unexpectedly echoed from another quarter, from the Hindu intelligentsia, some of whom honestly believed that the only way to remove Hindu superstitions and prejudices was

notables were often provided with higher education by their parents by engaging learned teachers to carry on their education at home. The ladies of the royal family were almost always provided with the means of carrying on their higher education under special scholars. The famous names of Gulbadan Begum, the daughter of Baber, who wrote the memoirs of her brother, "Humayun-Nama", Nur Jahan, the wife of Jahangir and her niece Mumtaz Mahal, the favourite wife of Shah Jahan, Jahan Ara, the eldest daughter of Shah Jahan and Zebun-Nisa, the eldest daughter of Aurangzeb, are well known to every student of Indian history.

Another institution meant for the benefit of women was that young girls after acquiring the primary education in some maktab were often entrusted to certain elderly ladies of the mohalla for teaching them the household duties like sewing, cooking and caring for young children. Such elderly ladies were either paid by the parents of the girls or did this work voluntarily in return of the services rendered by the young girls. Modern schools for the purpose of teaching domestic arts to ladies are usually run on the model of that institution.

Mohammedan education was an advance upon the ancient Brahmanic system in many ways.

ideas of their masters, rather than otherwise. But the masters forgot that for an effective government it was necessary that the servants should remain in close touch with the ideas and aspirations of their countrymen and with the life of its masses. The experience of nearly one century of the present system of education has shown that the system conceived in 1835 has resulted in the segregation of the Indians associated in the work of the Government from the masses. Neither trusted by their masters nor by the masses they form a class by themselves. An Indian District Magistrate, for instance, would be as much distrusted by the Indian population as a European officer or perhaps more.

A little later we find Sir Syed Ahmed advocating the same policy for the Mohammedans. The Hindus, he thought, had stolen a march over the Mohammedans in supporting the Western system of education in India. The Government, he knew, was committed to give the new system a fair trial. There was no other alternative left but that the Mohammedans should also take to it seriously if they wanted to take part in the government of their country and to compete with their sister communities. For this purpose he laid the foundation of the famous Aligarh College in 1875, with a view to centralise the fast disappearing Muslim culture. He perhaps had the vision

to see that the new system of education was bound to disintegrate the oriental civilisation and therefore his object in laying the foundation of this institution was to preserve the Muslim culture and to graft on it successfully the rising civilisation of the West. How far the Aligarh institution has justified the expectations of its founder is very difficult to judge. The institution has produced a number of successful administrators, lawyers, and scholars, but it is not easy to say whether they really imbibed anything of their own culture. In the second decade of this century when the Government discovered that one of the causes of the disturbance of the political equilibrium of the country was the inequality of balance in the education of the different communities, it decided to open fresh institutions with the ideals of Sir Syed Ahmed, and the Islamia Colleges at Calcutta and Madras and Ismail College at Andheri are the results of this policy. The Hindu University of Benares was conceived much later than Aligarh College but with the same ideas as those of Sir Syed Ahmed to preserve the Hindu culture.

Another reason that weighed with the Company's Government for the introduction of the system of education on the British lines was to facilitate the flow of English capital for the development of the material resources of the country and to train

the Indians for this essential work. For this purpose it was necessary that the English capitalist should be attracted to India to spend his money for the development of Indian resources. It was difficult to attract him unless he was ensured (1) to be able to talk with and check the accounts of his Indian employees, (2) to get help from Indian labour, particularly of specialised character and (3) the possibility of the continuation of the guarantee of security by British Government. The best way to assure a British capitalist in all these respects was to introduce a new scheme of education in India based mainly on the lines of Western schools.

Another idea, which perhaps was the chief motive of Macaulay in supporting the system, was the slow political conversion of the Indian mind to the English way of looking at things. Macaulay and Trevelyan both believed that education on modern lines in the English language would achieve by gradual reform what any other method could not do without a revolution. The only way to create a fusion between the ancient Indian cultures and modern civilisation was, they believed, through the identification of the Indian aims and objects of life with English ideals. After the survey of one century's work of educational policy we are in a position to say that Macaulay was perfectly right

in holding that belief. Those people who have benefitted by this system of education get all their stock of ideas from European sources which often indicate the paucity of original thought. Even in Europe the fruit of this system is the creation of a mechanical mentality. The conditions in Europe, however, are much more helpful for creating original thought and a strong personality than in India, where it has only helped to create a wider gulf between the educated classes and the masses and a mechanical imitation of Western mentality.

CHAPTER VII

Educational Machinery of the Government

In order that India might reap the fullest benefit of the present educational system, it was believed to be necessary that the whole educational machinery should be handled by the Government authorities. Without controlling the educational institutions it was impossible to find capable and useful people for the service of the State. The two forms

of institutions that were existent at that time were Pathshalas or Maktabas and Madrasahs. The new institutions started by the Government according to the Bentinck-Macaulay policy on modern European lines were thrown open to all communities. In theory they were expected to have nothing to do with the religious beliefs and traditions of any community. Side by side with such Government institutions there were other institutions started by the missionaries, on practically the same lines, in different parts of the country. The missionary institutions were subsidised by the Government and were looked upon by people as semi-Government institutions, although they had nothing in common save the common educational policy. Almost all the missionary institutions had hostels attached to them, because it was here that the work of proselytising could be carried on more effectively than in the lecture rooms. As the students of modern institutions were more successful in obtaining Government jobs, the demand for such institutions began to increase very rapidly. But the products of such institutions, when they entered their respective professions in life, had usually shaken off their religious traditions. They neither belonged to the conservative party of the community, nor could they be easily absorbed in the ideal society of European Civilisation. Even after accepting

the faith of their conquerors they were still looked down upon as upstarts. Thus, with no culture and no institution to fall back upon, they were still new to modern civilisation, while in most cases they readily acquired the vices of modern civilisation rather than its virtues. This system of education, as represented by such people, proved to be a disintegrating force by itself. Instead of concentrating the whole force of the young mind on certain important questions relating to the general welfare of the country, it helped them to form a separate camp by themselves.

When the number of students grew in large proportion it was evident that the Government could not absorb all of them in service. Those of them, who were left over after the selection of the intelligent lot, could not be useful to the society as they had learned very little besides the mannerism of the West. The only course open to them was to agitate for the sake of getting appointments in the Government offices which they believed to be their rightful sphere. Perhaps, this accidental result of their educational policy was not envisaged by the pioneers of the present system of education in India. Another presupposition that was implied in the discussion of the early pioneers was an erroneous belief concerning the stability of the present civilisation. The term civilisation is

very vague and implies different principles at different epochs. The different theories with regard to the existence and the stability of society have been changing from day to day. Between the French Imperialism, the Russian Bolshevism and the Italian Fascism there is very little in common beyond the national greed and the love of conquest. When the Indian policy of education was being discussed, the idea of material civilisation had just emerged and was believed to be permanent and determinate. In a sense the present educational policy has, by bringing the Indian young mind into direct communion with European thinkers, helped to foment the present political discontent to some extent. Unless, therefore, a definite national policy of education is thought out and made practicable for Indian masses, the infiltration of the new social doctrines of modern Europe is likely to inflame the young Indian mind to revolution and bloodshed at any time. Nor is it possible for the Government to give up its control of education at this critical juncture. The acceptance of any suggestion like that of the Thomas Committee, Bombay, to hand over the charge of all Government Educational Institutions to the public is sure to prove destructive and is likely to explode early the young mind of India charged with Utopian social theories of the West. Nor is it possible for the Government to hand over

the charge progressively. In the first place, it would mean to shake off all responsibility from the shoulders of the Government for a policy to which it had committed itself a century before and to which it had been sticking through thick and thin. In the second place, in a country like India mainly populated by poor cultivators no amount of public support or public money can make sufficient provision for their education. From the earliest days Indian people have been accustomed to depend upon the support of their rulers for their progress and well-being. Moreover, the heavy taxes and costly living leave very little scope for the private endeavour of the people to help the charitable cause of education for their countrymen. There are only two courses open to the Government, either to overhaul completely the whole system of education as prevalent or to take charge of all institutions whether run by the public or Government or missionaries, and to run them on uniform lines by concentrating the control in the hands of expert educationists. The other alternative of handing over all the educational institutions to the public is not feasible from the point of view of the Government.

CHAPTER VIII

Primary Education.

The ideal of any system of education is cent per cent literacy. This ideal is hardly possible to achieve even in the most enlightened countries. In India the idea of mass education came rather late. For various reasons mass education was neither useful nor practicable from the Government point of view. Where the social unit is a small village it becomes very costly and uneconomical to start primary schools in every village. Nor could mass enlightenment be of any use to missionaries, who could convert only such people as had a sufficiently developed intellect to understand the logical intricacies and metaphysical subtleties of their argumentation in support of the present Christian Faith. To a simple and plain villager, knowing only a little of writing and reading, the complicated network of Christian doctrines is not easily clear. For these reasons neither the Government nor the missionaries, who were the pioneers of higher education in India, paid any attention to the education of the masses:

It was Gokhale who first emphasised, in an effective manner, the necessity of primary

education and started a vigorous campaign for compulsion by Government in this direction in 1910. The Government had now begun to feel the necessity of taking up the education of masses seriously but the financial difficulties stood in the way of changing its policy altogether. Moreover as it was the class of educated people that often started political agitation, the Government also realized the need of undertaking the task of primary education in right earnest. Unfortunately, however, the old systems of Maktab and Pathshala were ruined and to start new schools with the Western ideals was not financially possible. In a poor country like India no great reliance can possibly be placed on the voluntary help from the villagers. Thus, there are only three alternative ways open to the Government in which they can make primary education a success. (1) By starting schools in comparatively bigger villages and by forcing pupils from the surrounding villages to attend such schools. (2) By reviving the old system of Maktab and Pathshala and to aid such institutions, while their main burden may be borne by those local communities that are anxious to preserve their culture. (3) By adopting as a policy, that only those residents of the villages may be chosen for patelship or other honours, who are prepared to spare some of their time

for the education of the children of the village either honorarily or in return of a small honorarium. Before any such scheme is adopted by the Government on a large scale, a commission of educationists should be appointed to survey the village conditions in different provinces and suggest the details of some uniform scheme, with such modifications as may be considered necessary in the light of the varying local conditions. A survey of India has been made for the economic, metallurgical, administrative and political purposes, but never for the purpose of settling permanently and uniformly a policy of primary education in India.

CHAPTER IX

Vernaculars.

Whatever may be the importance of a common medium of instruction for higher education, primary education can only be imparted in the vernacular of the people. In India, like the variety of races, colours and cultures, the variety of vernaculars is no less conspicuous. From the days of the Aryan conquest of India,

perhaps even from earlier days, the people have spoken different dialects. During the days of the Aryans, the literary language was different from the spoken dialect. Every fresh conqueror of India brought his own language to be added to the languages already existing. In the days of early Mohammedan rulers, Arabic, Persian and Turkish were added to the already existing number. With this medley of languages and dialects the necessity of having a *lingua franca* for the whole of India was badly felt. This necessity was satisfied by the slow emergence of the language known as Urdu, which had Persian character but freely derived its vocabulary from almost all the dialects of India, mainly from Hindi, the dialect of the Hindu community in Upper India where Urdu had taken its birth.

With the advent of European powers in India the Portuguese, the French and the English languages were added to the existing list. But as the power of the Portuguese and the French waned, their languages also became limited to their respective territories, while English began to be regarded as the language of the rulers. In 1835, there were two alternatives before the Government, either to continue the prevailing system of education by adopting Urdu, then practically regarded as the language of the whole Indian

Empire, as a medium or to launch an absolutely new scheme of education through the medium of the English language which at that time was learnt by very few persons. Macaulay, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and, later, Sir Syed Ahmed supported the second alternative without thinking that in the first place it was a very costly experiment, in the second place it was bound to prove destructive both for Mohammedan as well as Hindu culture in the long run, in the third place it was always likely to stand as a barrier in the way of mass education, and in the fourth place the vernaculars, including the *lingua franca*, were sure to be thrown in the background thereby. It is true that no other vernacular excepting Urdu could be adopted as suitable for a uniform policy of education, for the whole of India, which the Government proposed to follow. The objection against Urdu that it was not rich enough to provide expression for every kind of thought was only due to the ignorance of philology on the part of the supporters of the new scheme. Languages like all human institutions grow slowly and only gradually absorb the new systems of thought and the new technique and terminology. That is as true of English as of Urdu, which was second to none in the possibility of growth and in the absorption of new ideas. In fact, it had much greater potentiality

to grow than any one of the European languages firstly, because it was quite a young language and thus had not many grammatical traditions to fetter its growth; secondly, because it had a very large number of feeder languages consisting of different provincial dialects, in addition to the Arabic, Persian and other modern European languages.

The experiment of imparting public instruction through the medium of Urdu even in the higher grades has been successfully carried out in Hyderabad under the able guidance of Sir Akbar Hyderi. I am quite confident that if this experiment had been started by the Government of India a century back when they chose to fix up English as a medium, the result of the Government educational policy would have been much healthier than at present, both from the point of view of the Government and the masses.

In the present circumstances, the only way to introduce the vernaculars is by slowly altering the medium of instruction in the lower classes and after the ground has been well prepared to change the medium slowly in the colleges and universities, somewhat similar to the experiment of introducing the vernaculars as a medium of instruction and examination up to the Matric

Standard by the university of Calcutta. But if the ultimate object is to develop an Indian Nationalism and mass education is to be spread with a view to this ideal, then the only one vernacular, which is suitable to become a medium is Urdu. The introduction of provincial vernaculars, on the other hand, is likely to disintegrate the unity of Indian Nationalism much more than any foreign language. Language plays a very important part in the unification of a nation, but unfortunately this fact is often overlooked by the provincial enthusiasts.

CHAPTER X

Female Education.

I have pointed out above how Buddha first permitted women under pressure to join his system of Bhikshus. In the days of the Muslim Rule the girls upto the primary standard were educated side by side with the boys and after completing their maktab education they usually worked with some elderly lady of the mohalla in order to receive instruction in the

household duties. Those of them that had brains, interest and money for higher education received private lessons from the specially appointed teachers. But when the modern system of education came into existence the girls being unable to continue their education for such a long time slowly began to withdraw from the schools, and as the old primary schools were going out of use female education suffered a great deal. The destruction of the old system and the unsuitability of the new one, on account of the long period required for its completion, was, I believe, the main cause of the backwardness of female education specially among the Muslims who are very conscientious and sensitive with regard to the honour of their women. The purdah system prevalent among the Muslims has often been severely criticised for being a great hindrance in the progress of female education. I agree that the purdah system, prevailing in certain Indian families has no Qur'anic sanction for its existence excepting the customary force, and is really a great obstacle not only in acquiring knowledge but also in living the life of a free human being. Is it not a curious fact that Islam which stood for the freedom and honour of women should be used as a shield for tyrannising over them? They are often treated no better than goods and chattels

and yet we expect them to perform the functions of good teachers and ideal mothers! But the critics of this institution go to the other extreme without offering any practical suggestions. Our problem is to guard zealously the honour of our women and to give them freedom of thought, action and movement, so far as it is possible consistently with the safety of their honour. Many people do not know that the segregation of women was preached by Islam for the purpose of ensuring them their due honour and respect and not for the purpose of enslaving or imprisoning them behind the harem-walls. The seclusion of grown-up girls was intended as a safeguard against the disrespect and immodesty shown by the perverted Arabs of the pre-Islamic days towards the slave girls of doubtful reputation or public women. The covering or the wrapper round the body and the neck of the freewoman was intended to stand as a symbol of her freedom, chastity and modesty. Acts of disrespect and incivility towards women wearing a wrapper were more severely punished and more strictly watched. The present form of purdah is a luxury which can hardly be enjoyed except by the rich few. The general body of poor Muslim women can never afford to sit idle at home and subsist by the labour of their male relatives. Evidently, such a course, as cannot be universally practised by all human

beings alike, could never have been contemplated by a universal religion like Islam. Even to-day thousands of poor Muslim women go to Mecca to perform the pilgrimage and move about freely with uncovered faces, performing the ceremonies of the Haj without any disapprobation from any religious authority at Mecca.

Perhaps you would like to hear my views about the purdah enjoined by Islam. There are two kinds of verses in the Qur'an which lend support to the view of those who believe in purdah. In one place the Qur'an enjoins, "Say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts,"¹ But the Qur'an has laid down the same injunction for men also, saying "Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks, and guard their private parts".² Thus, the Qur'an enjoins on both the sexes to be modest and chaste.

The second injunction which is really believed to be the authority for purdah is only for women. They are asked to cover their ornaments; and since men are not expected to wear ornaments, this injunction is not applicable to them. The Qur'an says: "Tell the believing women not to display their ornaments

¹ The Qur'an, XXIV — 31

² Ibid, XXIV — 30

except what appears thereof and let them wear their head coverings over their bosoms and not display their ornaments except to their husbands etc." ¹ Islam is very particular about chastity and regards it as one of the greatest virtues of moral life. The object of Islamic teachings is to create peace in the mind, the family and the society of its followers. Adultery being a vice that often disturbs the social peace, Islam has attempted to close all avenues of approach to this vice. The Qur'an says: "And go not near to fornication, for surely it is an indecency and an evil way" ² Islam, therefore, desired to stop the possibility of indecent and illegal sexual attraction. There are certain parts of the woman's body including her ornaments which specially appeal to the sexual instinct of man. Islam wanted such parts to be carefully covered, so far as they could be covered without inconvenience. Islam enjoined women to cover such parts and their ornaments when they went out in society with the exception of face and hands that could not be covered without hindering their movement. Such purdah evidently cannot be any hindrance to the education of women unless from education we understand a number of accidents

1. The Qur'an, XXIV—31.

2. Ibid, XXVII—32.

inseparably associated with the Western System of education.

In any case, upto the age of puberty boys and girls can be educated together as in the days of Muslim Rulers, but for the higher education separate female high schools and colleges may be started in important centres of the country. Those women who desire to continue their education with the boys in high schools and colleges may be allowed to do so. I hope that the enthusiastic Muslim educationists would attempt to arrange for the education of their girls and women consistently with the high ideals of chastity enjoined by Islam.

Female education is indispensable for the progress of a nation. The real education of a child starts much earlier than his going to school and if he is growing on wrong lines from the cradle, no amount of bending him in any other direction later would set him right. The education of the mothers, therefore, is the primary charge on the educationists of the country. Very often those passions of the parents, which are the real support of human life and the foundation of human society and its progress, become sources of the destruction and disruption of the young life. An unduly excessive love of the mother is often the cause of the shipwreck of the young life in the

stormy sea of existence. Excessive love often gives rise to false ideas about the world and helps to form injurious habits of carelessness, indolence, idleness and selfishness. It is only the right kind of education by the mother that can save the life of the young one by giving him true notions about the real world around him. For this purpose, the mothers must be taught to abhor ignorance, superstition and the expression of inordinate love, as these evils often prove great impediments in the progress of the education of the young.

CHAPTER XI

Education and Physical Training.

A healthy mind can exist only in a healthy body. To arrange for the physical development or at least physical health of a student is the primary duty of an educationist. Different schemes have been thought out for the realisation of this end as a part of the educational machinery. Physical culture, games, sports, excursions, scouting and

military training have been encouraged. Medical inspection of schools and colleges has been instituted by universities. This practice is excellent for checking the health of students, provided that the whole thing does not end with the compilation of statistics, and steps are taken for their physical improvement on the basis of such reports. In towns particularly, the physical health of students must be carefully watched and the first occasion should be taken to refer a student to the proper medical authority if he is steadily losing his health.

Physical culture usually indicates a number of systematic and regular exercises meant for the symmetrical development of the different parts of the body in a handsome proportion.

Like so many other goods of doubtful utility our markets are flooded with a number of costly courses claiming to teach the physical culture in the most efficient manner. There are so many of my friends who have spent hundreds of rupees on such rubbish expecting to be initiated in the art of body building through some photos of the teacher. Unfortunately, there is so much possibility of cheating even in this direction. But if every institution employs a good instructor for this purpose the money paid to him would certainly be well spent.

The movements of boy scouting and military training are parts of one and the same method of body-building. Militarism being the foundation of modern nationalism there is no escape from it. Any nation that wants to survive must be prepared to defend itself against its enemies. A thorough knowledge of the use of modern instruments of attack and defence is a national necessity. So the tactics and practices necessary for military purposes must be taught to students at any cost and must be made compulsory for all students.

Military training is useful from another point of view. It creates a habit of discipline and obedience which no amount of any other kind of training can possibly create. A number of virtues, like courage, preparedness for coming eventualities, forbearance and patience can only be cultivated on the battlefield.

Games and sports are also very useful as a part of military training. Human play like the playfulness of all the other animals can be useful only as a training in the instinctive and inherited modes of attack and defence. But as human nature can be modified more easily by free ideas, so the military training of men should involve more of intellectual training for apprehending and responding to the actual situations. So, those games which involve equally the exercise of the

intellect as well as the muscles are preferable to the merely physical games, and prepare better for the warfare, which is the end of all kinds of games and sports.

Another institution which can be very useful for education is to take students away from the congested and thickly populated areas into the very heart of nature. Excursions, Outings, Sight-seeings and Tours to the places of historical importance for gaining knowledge or only for the purposes of a change from the monotony of the lecture-room have a very great value from the educational point of view. The capability of our nervous system to be modified in certain definite ways which is the chief aim of all education, mainly depends upon two factors, (1) psychological and (2) environmental. The continuation of attention to the objective stimulus is the necessary condition of all knowledge, but such continuity is not possible without variety and periodical change in the objects of attention. It has been admitted by all authorities on Education that pleasant environments are more conducive to the modification of the mind by suggestion and by assimilation of the facts ascertained at the pleasant moments of life. Excursions and outings are helpful to produce the conditions of the mental attitude necessary for acquiring knowledge. If such excursions

or educational tours are conducted under the able guidance of sympathetic psychologists, who can draw the attention of students to the salient features of the facts observed without boring them, they acquire a still greater educative value. The direct study of nature by going to the heart of it is psychologically known to stimulate the faculty of imagination. Great Poets and Philosophers have always translated, in language, such of their feelings and inspirations as they felt by their direct communion with the open, sincere and undeceiving world of nature around them. Excursions, therefore, even if undertaken for the purposes of enjoyment and change have a great influence upon the young mind. Their value for education can hardly be exaggerated; consequently they must be encouraged and freely resorted to by every educational institution.

CHAPTER XII

Social and Moral Education.

The present system of instruction both in Europe and India attaches very little importance to the direct training in social or moral education. Only recently a question has been raised with regard to the sex education of the boys and the girls. There is no doubt that acquaintance with a subject takes away the novelty and inquisitiveness with respect to that subject. The idea involved in the introduction of sex-education is expected to take away the sanctity and importance that we attach to the sex-relations. Like so many other biological necessities of life the sexual desire would as well be regarded as a mere instinct, in no way distinguishable from other instinctive necessities of eating, drinking and sleeping. It should be remembered, however, that the sexual instinct is an *instinct of expansion in time*, while the instincts of hunger, thirst or sleep are only *instincts of persistence* through time or at the most *expansion in space*. I mean, the result of the sexual instinct is the multiplication of personal types, while that of the latter instincts is only to help the physical organism to expand in space or to preserve through time what it already

possesses definitely. The sex instinct, therefore, touches the deeper springs of human life and consequently requires greater control, which is facilitated by imparting sex knowledge to some extent. But unlike experiments in dietary, sex knowledge cannot safely be experimented upon without shaking the peace of society. Therefore, care should be taken to safeguard against the sexual attractions at the time of imparting this kind of knowledge to either sex. I believe, that sex knowledge would prove useful only in those educational institutions where one sex is being educated exclusively.

The place to learn the social rules of conduct which we call *etiquette* is home and not school. The phrase "rules of conduct" is very vague and connotes a graded series of actions starting from the trifling ceremonies of the table to some of the highest moral precepts. For educational purposes the distinction between the purely social injunctions and the real moral rules is very important. An educationist must learn to eliminate the frivolous formalities and emphasise the necessary forms of conduct. As the object of education is to prepare an individual for social service in the life to come, he must be taught to habituate himself to those modes of conduct which are on the whole conducive to

the welfare of his society and also to that of the human species. The best course to prepare a young mind for such an end is to educate his instinct of sacrifice for others, to encourage his social instincts and to suppress his anti-social tendencies. Corporeal punishment should be totally avoided, if possible, as this kind of punishment often helps to stiffen the anti-social tendencies in the young mind. The best way to achieve this end is to create repeated occasions on which a student may be moved to share his comforts and material goods with others. No doubt this is rather a lengthy and irksome course as compared with the shorter route through corporeal punishment, but unfortunately the police and jail methods with the young do not in the long run succeed in bringing about the desired end. If punishment is required at all, it should be awarded in the form of deprivation of comforts rather than lashes. In certain cases, however, social disapprobation may be a better substitute for physical punishment and the teacher should try to make his young pupils susceptible to the social opinion so far as possible. In the case of extremely sordid conduct, indicating extreme moral turpitude, the punishment by cane may not be grudged. But I suggest that the Government, University, or any other body controlling a certain

educational institution, must take the help of an educational psychologist for the purpose of correcting a student's conduct before the final step of physical punishment is taken.

CHAPTER XIII

Religious Education.

The system of education prevalent in India is extremely deficient from the point of view of religious education. The decision of the Government to exclude all sorts of religious education from the schools under their control was partly necessitated by the fear of an open conflict among the votaries of different religions in India and partly by the declaration of the religious policy by Queen Victoria, not to interfere with the religious beliefs of the people of India. Another reason for the complete exclusion of religious education was perhaps the prevalence of materialism in Europe in the last century, when the educational institutions in India were being established on the Western model. The hold of religion on the mind of the Western people was

becoming very slack and strong reaction against the formalism and fanaticism of Christianity was appearing in the Scepticism of Hume and the Agnosticism of Spencer. These people were the torch-bearers of education; necessarily, therefore, their attitude towards religion was incorporated in their theories of education. The same views about the religious education were accepted by the Government of India and a complete separation between religious belief and educational training came to be established as a convention.

It was primarily to preserve the religion of the community intact that the denominational institutions like Aligarh and Benares were established in India. But the way in which religious instruction was imparted half heartedly and superficially as a voluntary appendix to the compulsory curriculum, failed to touch and affect the real motives and springs of conduct. Religion may be looked at from two points of view, either from the *ceremonial* and *formal* point of view or from the *spiritual* point of view. Ceremonially, religion does not differ from the minor rules of conduct, but from the spiritual point of view it controls, guides and modifies all the activities of human life. The religious education as

imparted in the denominational educational institutions is nothing more than the initiation of the young into the mere dead ceremonies of a certain faith. But ceremonies and forms if they do not proceed from the force of the inner faith are of no use for the spiritual development of the soul. Nor can the inner faith modify and influence the organic habits, without allowing the subjective feelings to express themselves through bodily movements. Subjective feelings are passing phenomena, but if they are allowed to be associated with their appropriate corresponding bodily movements, then they leave a permanent trace on our organic body in the form of the habitual modification of our nervous system. Thus, the ceremonial aspect of religion is also important, provided it is an expression of the deep-seated *spiritual urges*. Such urges are usually the result of the direct communion of the human soul with the Divine Spirit. Fortunately, on this point there is no difference of opinion among different systems of religion. Human soul can subjectively derive spiritual satisfaction from any system, but the difference in the various systems of religion lies in the more or less completeness in the unification of the synthesis of the subjective and the objective content of religious thought. This kind of unification is

one of the necessary conditions of the development of human will and personality, specially when the unity of the object of worship or adoration in the terms of religious technology is the perfect Ideal, the Highest Good, or the *summum bonum* or, in other words, when the religious object of worship is identical with the ethical ideal.

Absence of religious instruction makes the present system very defective. In order to make an educational system really useful, it must involve some kind of instruction in religion. The more deeply a young mind imbibes the true spirit of religion and develops the religious consciousness within him, the greater the possibility of the development of his personality and the greater the chances of his making sacrifices for the good of others, which is the real end of education in the general sense.

In one or more than one of the following ways can the system of religious instruction be introduced in the present educational system. (1) By appointing real religious thinkers as teachers in various institutions to discourse on the various aspects of the science of religion and making the attendance in such periods compulsory. The Government may pay for the religious teacher of one community which is in majority in a certain

locality, while the payment for the teachers of other religions, if required, should be arranged by the members of those communities, if they desire to have an instructor for teaching the tenets of their religion. The money spent for any such scheme will be well spent and will be compensated by the development of the character and the personality of the young generation. The members of those communities which desire to teach their religion may be asked to contribute towards the payment of such teachers. In primary schools, religious instruction, specially the ethical side of it, must be made a part of the curriculum, because the masses, for whom the primary education is intended, will attach no importance to any education which does not include religious knowledge. (2) Any teacher working in an institution may be asked to take up voluntarily the work of religious instruction to the boys of a certain community. The reward that the religious enthusiasts expect in return of the service to the cause of their faith would be a sufficiently strong motive to take up the voluntary work. I am confident that in this way the Government will be able to find out a number of voluntary teachers and can make up the deficiency in the present system without much extra cost.

To make arrangements for the religious instruction of Muslims is a very easy task. The bare

teaching of the Qur'an with meaning and with the reference of the verses to their revelation and their application to actual life by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) is enough to give the working knowledge of the fundamental truths and tenets of Islam. I believe that a person, who understands the Qur'an from beginning to end, will be in a position to answer any question about religion, and will not require any further information for solving any problem of the science of religion.

In this connection I would advise my brethren to take immediate steps to arrange for the teaching of the Qur'an in all the Government or other institutions, if there are any Muslim students to take advantage of such arrangements. Muslims can even arrange for the primary education of their boys and girls along with the Qur'anic education without any Government help, although for higher education they cannot dispense with the Government aid altogether. They are under a religious obligation to teach the Qur'an to their children, and side by side with the teaching of the Qur'an, an arrangement for the study of the vernacular of the locality or Urdu and Arithmetic can be made without further expenses. Unfortunately, the Muslims have neglected the teachings of the Qur'an, which is the main cause of their degradation, moral and otherwise, and it is high time now that they should

decide to make some arrangement for the Qur'anic teaching on a large scale.

CHAPTER XIV

Adult Education.

Adult education has been greatly neglected in India. In villages, there was little possibility of organising it on any large scale, but in big towns, where some definite scheme of Adult Education could easily be launched, no serious attempt has ever been made in this direction. Of late an attempt has been made in this direction in Bombay, but it is yet too early to expect tangible results. In India, where the major portion of the population is overworked and underfed, any scheme of Adult Education, which requires some amount of leisure, is not easy to conceive and execute. The small proportion of the well-to-do people can acquire education on their own initiative and at their own expense even if no organisation exists for the general public for this purpose. No compulsion is possible for this form of education, unless some enthusiastic dictator, like Mustafa Kamal of Turkey, takes it

into his head to educate the whole nation, old and young, within a specified period, directing the total attention and energy of the state into this channel. If Mahatma Gandhi had devoted himself to the furtherance of some national scheme of education, specially Adult Education, instead of preaching the political doctrines of doubtful value, he would have been more serviceable to the country. His enthusiasm, in that case, would have infused new life into the country, and the masses would have directly benefitted from his lofty ideals.

The two things that are necessary for the progress of Adult Education are (1) enthusiasm on the part of the public and (2) a thorough organisation on the part of its promoters. As compulsion in no form can be useful, the first question is to rouse the enthusiasm for learning in the mind of those, who work during the daytime for their livelihood. In India, every earning member has to bear, or at least to share, the responsibility of a number of persons besides himself. Joint Family System, early marriage, and general religious altruism are mainly the causes of the individual extension of responsibility. So every moment that a person can spare, he desires to utilise for earning bread for his children, family and sometimes even for the distant relations dependant upon him. Therefore, to create

enthusiasm in the minds of an economically backward people for learning, which may hold out no prospect of immediate economic gain, is not an easy job. All modern inventions like Radio, Cinema films, lantern lectures, educational tours, moving libraries and museums can usefully be pressed into the service of Adult Education.

The first two means have, so far, been used for enjoyment only, and are thus associated with the lighter side of life. But there is nothing to prevent their being used for more serious ends like the education of the grown-up; only special programmes and special films will have to be prepared for using them as a means to education or propagation of useful information. It should be noted, however, that in one respect they cannot be said to be a good means for providing culture and true education to masses, which largely depend upon the personal touch of the teacher and the taught. It has already been pointed out at length that man is an imitative animal and that his education consists more in imbibing good and useful habits than in merely gathering information. Radio and Cinema may provide considerable information but they do not bring about the reformation in the habitual mode of behaviour in the persons educated.

Lantern lectures and Educational Tours are better than the two means mentioned above, so far as they bring the teacher and the taught together and give them an occasion for personal contact, though only for a short while. Lantern lectures can be useful for showing sights and inventions which may ordinarily be out of the reach of the villagers, to whom many commonplace things of the town are often wonderful novelties and possess real informative and educative value.

Tours of educationists and psychologists organised by the Government or by the public can be made educationally useful for creating taste and enthusiasm in the mind of villagers as well as townsmen. So far, the function of the Educational Department of the Government has been believed to check, supervise, inspect and guide the existing educational institutions. I believe, the greater need of the people consists in preparing them mentally to understand the value and utility of education for the purposes of individual as well as social progress; in creating enthusiasm and interest for the further development of the mind and body in every member of the nation, irrespective of age, means, circumstances and vocation. The masses should be made to understand that none is too old, or too poor, or too rich to be above the necessity of the further development of self, which is equivalent

to real education; and that the usefulness of a person to society increases in proportion to his greater educational discipline. For this reason, the Government should create a department in every province, the sole function of whose officers should be to tour from village to village and rouse the enthusiasm of the people for educating themselves as well as their children. It is only in this way that the country can be prepared for taking advantage of the Compulsory Primary Legislation. Without this kind of preparation, Gokhale's emphasis on compulsion with regard to the Primary Education was misplaced. The sooner the Government or the educationists of the country create such a department, the sooner will the country be prepared for solving its economic and political problems. But the persons appointed for this purpose must be psychologists, able to understand, sympathise with and ultimately guide and control the feelings of the people. The Government and the public have still to realise fully the value of the science of psychology for education.

The utility of the moving libraries and museums for Adult Education can hardly be exaggerated. Countries in America and Europe have been utilising them for decades now. But they cannot be of very great use to the

villages of a country like India, for various reasons. In the first place, the difficulty of transport from one village to another is considerable. In Europe and America, this difficulty does not exist. There the means of transport are ample and the whole country possesses a network of rails and roads. The conditions in India, however, are different. For several months in the year certain villages are inaccessible due to floods. This accounts for the fact why much of the village crime goes undetected. When, therefore, the villages are not easily accessible for legal purposes it is still more difficult to reach them for purely educational ends. This difficulty, however, can easily be surmounted either by overhauling the whole system of village situation or by connecting them by means of chains of roads that may keep them accessible throughout the year. I personally believe that the first alternative is better. From the point of view of the ultimate welfare of the country the reorganisation of the village location is an urgent necessity. The village, in India, has always been regarded as a unit of administration by every government. Consequently, its situation was always accepted as inevitable. But this is a fact that the original founders of villages never selected the

sites for them from any economic or hygienic point of view, while the sites even for big towns were chosen for political or tactical purposes. It is this absence of a hygienic outlook in the original selection of sites for villages and towns that accounts for so much disease, epidemic, floods and visitation of other climatic and natural calamities. Thousands of villages are every year practically washed away by floods or obliterated by epidemics and the gasping nation accepts them as a heavenly punishment without ever learning any lesson from them. After the floods have subsided or the epidemics have disappeared the survivors come back to occupy their deserted huts, as if nothing had happened and nothing was likely to happen in future. Next year again the rivers rise and the epidemics rage and they are forced to fly for their lives. The constant occurrence of the phenomenon is a clear proof of the fact that either the people are too poor or perhaps too conservative to give up their old notions and past associations with thatched huts, or they have no sympathetic guide to educate them in this respect, while on account of their ignorance they are themselves unable to understand such things. A sympathetic government would regard it as its first duty to protect the life of its people by guiding and helping them to avoid such natural calamities. There are two ways in which this can be done;

either by overhauling the whole village organisation, by fixing up safer places for village localisation and by helping the villagers to shift to more protected places, or by educating the villagers in respect to matters hygienic, moral and educational. After such reorganisation of villages, perhaps, moving libraries and museums may come to possess a very great educational value for adult villagers.

Besides want of transport there are certain other difficulties in the way of utilising libraries for Adult Education in India, specially in villages. An average Indian villager is ignorant and poor and has no leisure for reading books. He works throughout the day and often in the night to draw his meagre sustenance from the fields. The uncertainty of the weather and depredations of the wild animals often add to his care, vigilance and consequently to his work. Unless, therefore, he learns to minimise his work, economise his time in order to gain a little leisure for the study of books, the circulation even of the best books in villages cannot be every useful. It is only after a certain amount of education has been acquired, certain habits of spending time on study have been formed, that Moving Libraries and Museums can be useful to Indian villages.

In towns however, such libraries and museums can be of immense use. In America and Europe

these institutions are organised by the public. But in India, where the people are very poor and where little is left to them after the payment of various taxes and necessary expenses, the Government must take an initiative in all educational schemes. If not directly, the Government must indirectly encourage public enterprise in this direction. It will require years before rich members of the public awaken to the necessity of educating their indigent brethren, regardless of the recognition of such services by the Government. The Government, therefore, can help the cause of education very much by encouraging and recognising individual efforts in this direction.

There are two other institutions prevalent in the villages of India, the Friday Sermon or Khutba among the Muslims and the Katha among the Hindus, whose value for education has never fully been realised by the public. Unfortunately, neither of them, in its present form, is anything more than an address from an ignorant preacher to an ignorant audience. Very often the preacher reads passages from a Sanskrit or an Arabic book. The sermon, in either case, is a combination of words equally unintelligible to the speaker as well as to the congregation. Even when the sermon is translated in the vernacular it is nothing more than a narration of old myths and legends which

only serve to make the people more superstitious. If these Kathas and Khutbas were organised by respective communities for educational purposes, they would be very useful as a means of moral instruction and can supplement the secular education to a very great extent.

With the Muslims, however, the problem of adult education is easy to solve. As I have stated under Primary Education, it is a part of their religious duty to organise the teaching of the Qur'an for all, irrespective of their age and circumstances. Round this centre they can easily organise the scheme of Adult Education. Even if a Muslim has learnt the recitation of the Book at an early age, lectures for its fuller interpretation and commentation can always be successfully organized. The interpretation and elucidation of the Qur'an will provide the best form of moral, religious and spiritual education and will easily make up the want of the moral and spiritual elements in the present day secular education. With a little effort, the Muslim Community can very well utilise Friday Sermons, public lectures on the Qur'an and other religious lectures in the mosques as the best means of educating its members, specially the adults who have entered upon life. In their case the religious performance of certain duties like congregational prayers provides a compulsory

means of imparting information to them and educating them in a body. The slackening of this mosque discipline has put back the clock of Muslim progress by centuries and has made the possibility of the revival of their moral and religious fervour remote. The sooner they revive the practice of the compulsory congregational prayers the sooner will they come back to the life of real progress.

CHAPTER XV

Professional Training.

Education prepares us for the coming life. It teaches us how to live a useful life with relation to the other members of society. One important aspect of life is economic. How to get at the means which sustain our physical organism is an important problem of education. All kinds of education help us directly or indirectly in solving this problem, and adjusting our economic relations with other members. But professional education does this more

directly. Every society has its peculiar demands and each profession claims to supply some of them. The demands of a society are determined by its physical environment, social standards, political theories, moral ideals and spiritual progress. Different societies are at the different stages of physical, social, political, moral and spiritual development, and at each stage the various demands are differently adjusted. Thus the demands of a society at a certain stage are the result of the adjustment of these different values. Economic values are determined by the resultant of all these different valuations. The professions legally sanctioned by a certain society are calculated to satisfy the legitimate demands of that society. The demands of a society differ according to the difference of the adjustment and resultance of different elements. Consequently a profession perfectly legitimate in one society may be illegal and prohibited in another. For instance, the profession of money-lending perfectly legal in England and India may completely be forbidden in Russia. Baniyas and Jews may see no harm in usury and interest, while to Muslims it may appear as completely abominable. Russian Government suppresses the institution of interest purely on economic and political

considerations, while Islam forbids it on moral, social, and spiritual grounds. Elucidation of Law before the Court is believed to be the best and the most honourable profession in Europe and India, while to charge fees from the litigants is totally forbidden by the Islamic Law.

There are certain professions, however, which are permitted in almost every society. Such professions are those that satisfy the bare necessities of human life, like cooking, sewing, building, etc. Trade is permitted in almost all the societies, if not to individuals as such, then to the state or societies as a body. Traders can control all the artisans and as such can have great importance in the eyes of the State. They are often the pioneers of the extension of the political sphere of a nation or an empire; consequently, they are always encouraged and helped by their state. But modern states having been warned by their own tricks in the past, now strictly control the trade of other nations within their own sphere of political influence. In spite of all such restrictions on the career of a trader it is certainly the best and the most paying profession. Inasmuch as trade does not depend upon mechanical training, no special knowledge

can be useful for this profession. But certain psychological conditions of mind, like initiative, originality, courage, good temperament coupled with thorough information about the nature, production, marketing and valuation of a commodity of trade are indispensable for success in a particular line.

All professions from economical point of view are productive. Production, however, may be either of material goods or of goods of any other kind. Even intellectual professions are ultimately productive of material goods. The difficulty arises mainly with relation to the religious vocations. It has been a hotly debated question whether the profession of a priest is productive of any goods. Undoubtedly, it satisfies the spiritual or at least mental need of certain members of society. But this demand may not exist in two kinds of society, (1) where the people have given up the consideration of religious questions altogether, and (2) where each individual member can satisfy the demands of his spirit by his own knowledge or practices. In other words, a society would not require the services of the priest either because its members are absolutely godless or because every member of it is extremely godly. Russian Bolshevism has dispensed with

priesthood on account of the first reason and Islam for the second. No society can persist in its godless career for a very long time. The deep-laid spiritual instincts of human life are bound to assert themselves sooner or later. Even when the official creed of a certain society is irreligiousness, there is a number of individuals to whom religion is the dearest and the most valuable of possessions. Religion, as I have pointed out under "Religious Education," has two aspects—the formal or ceremonial and the spiritual. Priesthood can be useful for the former but not for the latter, which is exclusively the result of the relation and communion of the human soul with God. Prophets, saints, seers and spiritual thinkers may be of some help and guidance in the development of the spirit, but priests are often of little use in this respect. As the common folk, who constitute the major portion of a society, are unable to appreciate the real value of the services of prophets, saints and seers, they are never considered as members of a profession. These people themselves regard their services, on a plane different from an economic one, too valuable to be measured in the terms of money. Consequently, they have to be paid in the terms of power, love, respect and veneration, and

in fact these payments are of a much higher value than any coins of gold or silver. In a country like India where all people believe firmly in one religion or another, and where the masses are generally ignorant, the profession of a priest is very paying. Priesthood thrives where people go by appearances and believe religion to be equivalent to the performance of certain rites and ceremonies. Even criminal cheating and deception is often practised under the garb of priesthood, as it is the line of least resistance. It is high time that some true saint or seer should save the people of this country by preaching to them the principles of a true religion and thus extricate them from the clutches of priesthood.

The variety of professions in a certain country is directly proportionate to the complexity of the mode of living of its people *i. e.*, the stage of the development of the material civilisation of that country. The variety of professions offered is also, to some extent, dependent upon a country's capacity of producing and supplying the commodities for its own use. Industrial centres that produce commodities for other countries afford much better occasions for professional employment for its people. India, unfortunately, is neither a centre of production for the commodities of foreign

demand, nor does it possess a material civilisation of its own developed to a high degree. Consequently, the choice of professions offered in this country is very limited.

Again, the possibility of being employed in the administrative or clerical government services, deterred the young Indian minds from acquiring professional training for a pretty long time. Naturally, the majority of the posts in the technical professions had to be filled up by foreign experts. It was only when the capacity of the Government to absorb all the educated youth was practically exhausted that the people turned their attention towards technical institutions. But as the rush was great, even technical education began to prove unremunerative within a short time. India was not an industrial country, nor were its industries likely to develop very fast. Moreover, a certain number of foreign experts employed in Indian industries could not be suddenly sent away. The main industry of the country, the Agriculture, was being neglected both by the Government, and by the people, because they had their attention temporarily fixed on more lucrative but unsteady industries. It was only when the capacity of all other industries to absorb the young educated men was exhausted, that the Government and the people turned towards

Agriculture, completely neglected by them so far. Unfortunately, even after this awakening, the step taken to improve this industry was wrong. Agricultural Colleges were started, on the lines of Western Agricultural Institutions, without thinking that institutions of this type could not solve the Indian difficulty for various reasons. In the first place, Indian peasants were too poor to afford the costly machinery, the use of which was taught in agricultural colleges. In the second place, the holdings in India were too small to enable the use of big plants or expert specialists economically. In the third place, the presence of the money-lender in villages was a great menace to the cultivators, and left nothing with them to enable them to accumulate sufficient money for the purchase of costly machinery. So long as this evil is not substituted by a lesser evil of Co-operative or Money advancing Banks, improvement in the condition of Indian peasants is an empty dream.

It follows from this that the correct way to develop the industry of Agriculture was not to start Agricultural Colleges or Model Farms and thus enable a few experts to earn a decent salary, but to train the masses residing in distant villages in the improved methods of sowing, reaping, breaking and preparing the land, taking

advantage of the changing seasons and the rotation of crops in accordance with the nature of the land, the use of the various kinds of manures, etc. An average Indian peasant continues to be as ignorant, superstitious, inactive, uningenious, and poor as before, following the same old methods of tilling the soil which were followed by his forefathers in the days of the Aryan conquest of India, while Agricultural Colleges are turning out graduates by thousands. These graduates can hardly be absorbed anywhere excepting in the Government Department of Agriculture or in the offices of some big landlords, where their knowledge gets soon rusted, and within a few years they forget all about the real agricultural problems that they had learnt in their college days.

The best course to remedy this state of affairs is to arrange for the practical and useful agricultural education of the sons of the peasants while they are in the primary schools. As for the adult agriculturists some arrangement can be made through one of the methods discussed by me under "Adult Education". By organised touring lecturers, lantern lectures, moving libraries, moving museums, the agriculturists can very well be educated.

Agricultural Exhibitions and Cattle-fairs organised by the Government in various districts

or the sub-divisions of districts have a very great educative value for the peasants. On account of their natural love of novelty, they are often attracted from distant villages to visit such exhibitions and fairs. But they do not possess any permanent educative value for the ignorant villagers, because they view the exhibits superficially without an effort to understand their use for the purposes of practical farming. They go there with a fair mentality, for the sake of amusement. If, therefore, a systematic arrangement is made to explain the novel exhibits to the ignorant villagers, who visit such fairs, these two institutions can be of very great help in their education.

All that has been said with regard to the teaching of agricultural knowledge to the masses holds generally true also about the education of the various crafts. So far attention has wrongly been concentrated on the education of a few specialists and experts. It was for this reason that the engineering colleges and other higher technical institutions were started in the various towns of India. A few engineers and technical experts were earning thousands and amassing huge wealth in the banks while the craftsmen in the village remained as poor and ignorant as before. So long as the village craftsmen are not educated in their trades, and the village is not recognised

as a unit for educational purposes, the industries of the country are never likely to develop and the economic independence can never be achieved.

CHAPTER XVI

Summary.

What is, then, to be done to remove the appalling ignorance of the masses? The immediate step to be taken is to shift the centre of attention for educational purposes, from the town to the village, from the expert to the amateur. The village or a group of villages should be made the unit of the educational organisation, reorganising, if possible, the whole village system including their locality.

Primary education, through the local vernaculars, must be made compulsory, both for boys and girls and they can safely be co-educated in the primary schools without any risk of loss of the modesty of the girl students. The village honours should be reserved for those who can voluntarily serve the cause of village education.

The village primary educational organisation should also include mass instruction in the practical and useful agricultural matters. The village craftsman should be educated, and the education of the necessary crafts should form a part of the optional curriculum of the village primary schools.

Moving Libraries and Museums, Touring Psychologists, Lantern Lectures, Exhibitions, Cattle-fairs and, if possible, Radio and Cinema-shows must be organised by the Government for the benefit of the poor ignorant villagers.

Through legislation, or otherwise, the poor peasant must be saved from the clutches of the money-lender, and, if necessary, some lesser evil substituted for the Bania. The villagers should be taught to be frugal and to eschew all those useless and expensive customs which lead to their indebtedness.

Moral and spiritual education is necessary for any perfect system of education. So, some kind of arrangement must be made for such instruction in order to supplement the purely secular, and consequently egoistic, trend of the present system of education.

Starting with the primary education through the local vernaculars the Indian Vernacular Urdu must progressively be made the chief

medium of instruction in schools, colleges and universities. Its progressive introduction in higher education will, no doubt, in the beginning have a disruptive influence, but in the long run it is bound to prove a very useful means of bringing about a uniform national system of education. Here I must warn those who are supporting the introduction of the local vernaculars in the higher education, may they be Bengalis, Deccanis or Madrasis, that they are thereby helping to set back the development of a uniform national scheme of education, which can only mature through a common medium of communication throughout the country, for which purpose I believe Urdu to be the most suitable language, because of its being easily understood in every part of the country.

Again, educationists must not miss the main purpose of education which consists in the formation of character. Correct information of facts forms a necessary part of education but should not be regarded as its sole aim. It is the cultivation of correct habits and strong will that make a person successful in life.
