

LITERACY IN INDIA

R. V. PARULEKAR

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BY

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As an official of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, I wish to make it clear that any opinions expressed here are personal to myself, have not the sanction of the Authority I serve, and are not to be taken as indicating their policy.

—*R. V. Parulekar.*

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DEDICATED

TO

THE LATE

MR. NARAYAN ANANT DESAI

TOPIWALA

FRIEND AND PATRON

“Primary purpose of mass education is to banish illiteracy from the land. The quality of education is a matter of importance that comes only after illiteracy has been banished.”

—G. K. Gokhale.

P R E F A C E

The author of this book wrote a pamphlet called—*Mass Education in India*—in 1934. The main burden of his song then was that literacy in India was not progressing satisfactorily because the educational system in existence was sacrificing quantity to quality. Since then, much water has flowed under the bridge; and particularly since the advent of popular Governments in the country, there is not only a keen desire but even intense anxiety to remove the blot of illiteracy from the face of the Motherland. No apology is, therefore, needed if in the following pages an attempt is made to analyse the present position of literacy in India and to examine and discuss the many and varied problems relating to it.

It may well be emphasised here that this work is neither a dirge nor a satire on the Indian educational system. It aims at being constructive, and an attempt has been made throughout to understand the present state of Indian education in the light of the history of administration of education in India and its comparison with that of other nations of the world. Statistics have been freely called into aid; but their limitations have not been ignored. The writer has been at pains to scrutinise and re-examine the data where his conclusions seemed to differ from those which have so far been generally accepted, and it is his hope and belief that whether the conclusions reached are accepted or rejected, credit will be given for freedom from bias in the treatment of the subject. It is possible, of course, that the study of a subject over an extended period of time may create in one prejudices and prepossessions in certain directions leading to over-emphasis. This has been avoided so far as it could be done.

Bombay,
April, 1939.

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