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DHARAMPAL (1922-2006) authored several books that sought to present different aspects of the Indian society and polity from an Indian perspective. These rigorously documented books disrupted the scholarly consensus about the backwardness and dis-functionality of pre-British India and presented the picture of a society that in fact was highly sophisticated and advanced in its political ideas and arrangements and in its sciences, technologies and education systems. These works are of abiding interest and importance.

In the *Dharampal Classics Series,* we present his major works in their original authentic version and in an aesthetically rich format. The Series is being brought out by the Centre for Policy Studies, a research institute with which Sri Dharampal was associated for several years, and Rashtrotthana Parishat, an organisation that had the good fortune to host Dharampalji at Bengaluru on several occasions and to introduce him and his work to the Kannada readers.

The Beautiful Tree: Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century (1983) is the best known of Dharampalji's books based on the materials collected in the course of his extensive study in the British archives. It compiles documents of a survey of indigenous education ordered by Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, in 1822. The details of the indigenous schools and institutions of higher learning sent by the Collectors of 21 districts of the extensive Madras Presidency offer a fascinating picture of the extent, inclusiveness and sophistication of the then prevailing system of education in India. It also includes extracts from the reports of W. Adam (1835-38) and G. W. Leitner (1882) about indigenous education in Bengal and Punjab, respectively.

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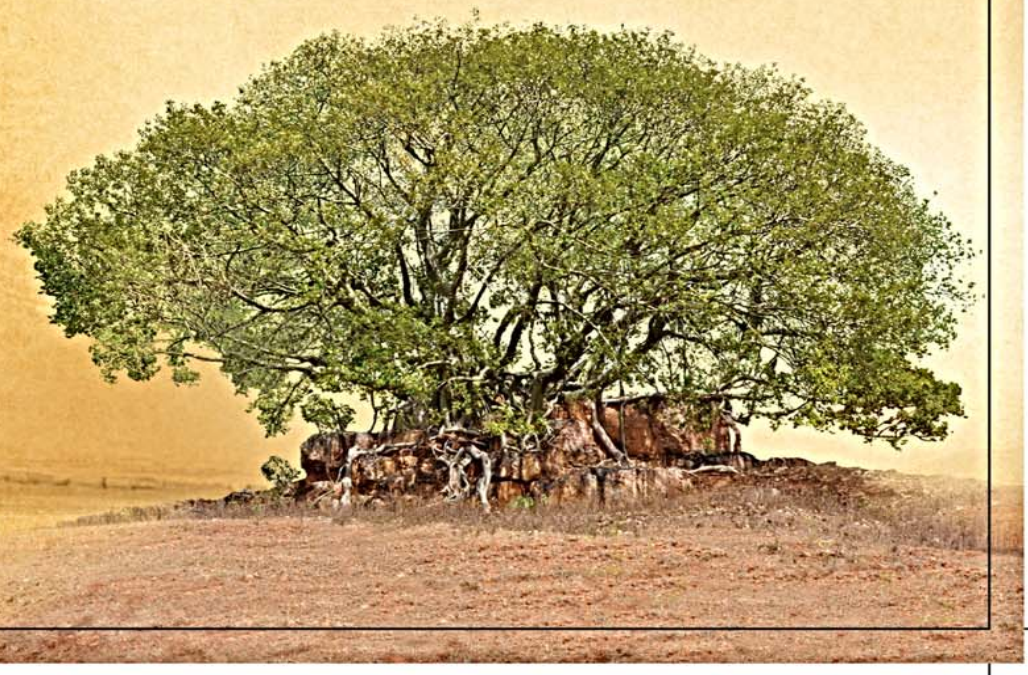

THE BEAUTIFUL TREE

Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century

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DHARAMPAL

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The Beautiful Tree

Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century

by Dharampal

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About Dharampal Classics Series

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In the Dharampal Classics Series, we are reprinting the original editions of the most significant of his works. We have tried to keep the text of the first published editions unaltered except for changing some punctuation mark where it seemed essential or introducing a footnote here or there to explain some reference, word or phrase. Where possible, we have compared the archival documents reproduced in these books with the originals and carried out the necessary corrections when necessary.

In the mid-nineteen-sixties, Dharampal began an extensive exploration into the British Indian archives, especially in the India Office Records collection. This archival research led to three of his major works. The present volume, *The Beautiful Tree: Indigenous Indian Education in the Eighteenth Century* (1983), is the last and the best known of these. In this volume, Dharampal compiles documents of a survey of indigenous education ordered by Thomas Munro, Governor of Madras, in 1822. The details of the indigenous schools and institutions of higher learning—sent by the Collectors of 21 districts of the extensive Madras Presidency that included the whole of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and parts of the current States of Kerala, Karnataka and Odisha—offer a fascinating picture of the extent, inclusiveness and sophistication of the then prevailing system of education in India. The book also includes extracts from the reports of W. Adam

(1835-38) and G. W. Leitner (1882) about the indigenous system of education in Bengal and Punjab, respectively.

Before this, in 1971, Dharampal published his other celebrated book: *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century*. In that work, he compiled several articles by early British officers, scholars and observers about the Indian sciences of astronomy and mathematics and the Indian technological practices in metallurgy, agriculture, architecture and medicine, etc. The book created a new appreciation of the sophistication and efficacy of Indian sciences and technologies before the coming of the British.

His second book based on the archival records, *Civil Disobdience and Indian Tradition* (1971), presented documents of an intense civil disobedience struggle, that raged in Benaras and several cities of Bihar for nearly two years between 1810 and 1811, against the imposition of a new house tax by the alien British administration. The people found the tax to be an innovation and therefore obnoxious. The book anchored the Civil Disobedience of Mahatma Gandhi in an older and, till recently, vibrant Indian tradition.

In this *Classics Series*, we are also publishing two of his other books. *Panchayat Raj as the Basis of Indian Polity* (1962) was the first book authored by Dharampal. It presented extracts from the Constituent Assembly Debates on finding a place for Panchayat Raj in the constitutional polity of Independent India. This passionate debate ultimately led to a mention of Panchayat Raj in the non-enforceable Directive Principles of the Constitution. The book gave an early indication of the deep interest Dharampal was to develop in the understanding of classical Indian polity and its subversion by the British.

Bhāratīya Chitta Mānas and Kāla (1993), the fifth book in this *Series*, is in a way the final book of Dharampal, though later he did author another couple of books based on his archival studies. In this small, but seminal book, he reflects on the peculiarities of the Indian consciousness, the Indian sense of time and the civilisational essence of being an Indian. The book thus lays down the philosophical perspective from which the whole of his corpus needs be to read.

CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES has been fortunate to have the honour of Sri Dharampal's association from its inception in 1990. Around that

time, Sri Dharampal spent several years in Chennai and, we along with several other colleagues, had the opportunity to closely work with him on many subjects. *Bhāratīya Chitta Mānas and Kāla* was written during this time. It was translated into English and published under the auspices of the Centre in 1993.

The historical event of the demolition of Babari structure at Ayodhya happened when Sri Dharampal was residing in Chennai. The Centre, at his initiative and with his blessings, invited several eminent persons of diverse persuasions to speak on the meaning of that momentous event. The lectures and the subsequent discussion on them were published by the Centre under the title *Ayodhya and the Future India*. Sri Dharampal's lecture, "Undamming the Flow", in this compilation remains relevant even today, especially now when the Ayodhya saga is coming to its culmination.

During his stay at Chennai, Sri Dharampal also began looking into the archival records of a survey of the Chengalpattu region that the British had carried out in the 1770s. The Survey disclosed an affluent, equitable and functional polity in which the locality raised its own resources and performed all the functions that we today expect from a provincial or national State. The Centre has continued to compile and analyse the voluminous data of that Survey and carry forward Dharampal's work in many other directions.

The Centre has initiated this *Series* to edit and publish authentic editions of Dharampal's major works as part of the celebrations of his centenary year that begins on February 19, 2021. The five volumes that we present now mark the beginning of the *Series*. We hope to compile and publish several other volumes of his works in the course of the centenary year.

We dedicate this *Series* to Sri Dharampal who taught us to look at India and the world in a new light.

J. K. Bajaj & M. D. Srinivas

February 19, 2021

Centre for Policy Studies

That does not finish the picture. We have the education of this future state. I say without fear of my figures being challenged successfully, that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, and so is Burma, because the British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that, and *the beautiful tree* perished. The village schools were not good enough for the British administrator, so he came out with his programme. Every school must have so much paraphernalia, building, and so forth. Well, there were no such schools at all. There are statistics left by a British administrator which show that, in places where they have carried out a survey, ancient schools have gone by the board, because there was no recognition for these schools, and the schools established after the European pattern were too expensive for the people, and therefore they could not possibly overtake the thing. I defy anybody to fulfill a programme of compulsory primary education of these masses inside of a century. This very poor country of mine is ill able to sustain such an expensive method of education. Our state would revive the old village schoolmaster and dot every village with a school both for boys and girls.

MAHATMA GANDHI AT CHATHAM HOUSE,
LONDON, OCTOBER 20, 1931

I have not left off the pursuit of the subject of education in the villages during the pre-British period. I am in correspondence with several educationists. Those who have replied do support my view but do not produce authority that would be accepted as proof. My prejudice or presentiment still makes me cling to the statement I made at Chatham House. I don't want to write haltingly in Harijan. You don't want me merely to say that the proof I had in mind has been challenged by you.

GANDHIJI TO SIR PHILIP HARTOG,
SEGAON, AUGUST 7, 1939

PREFACE

A GREAT DEAL of scholarly work has been published on the history of education in India, especially during the 1930s, and 1940s. In fact, writings on the subject, initially by British officials-cum-scholars, started to appear as early as the mid-nineteenth century. Most of these histories, however, relate to the ancient period, sometimes going as far as the tenth or twelfth century A.D., others deal with the history of education during British rule, and thereafter. Besides detailed scholarly works on specific ancient educational institutions like that at Nalanda or Taxila, there are more general works like that of A. S. Altekar[1] on the ancient period; for the later period, there have been several publications: besides the two volumes of *Selections from Educational Records*, published and recently reprinted by the Government of India itself[2], the work of S. Nurullah and J. P. Naik may be mentioned here.[3] The latter work is interestingly described by the two authors (thus indicating its time and mood) as an attempt at a "well-documented and comprehensive account of Indian educational history during the last one hundred and sixty years and to interpret it from the Indian point of view".[4]

Though perhaps less academic, but reaching a far wider audience is the voluminous work of Pandit Sundarlal, first published in 1938.[5] The

[1] A. S. Altekar: *Education in Ancient India*, 2nd Ed., Benares, 1944.

[2] National Archives of India: *Selections from the Educational Records*, I:1781-1839, II:1840-1859 by H. Sharp and J. A. Richey, Delhi, 1920, 1922 (reprinted 1965).

[3] Syed Nurullah and J. P. Naik: *History of Education in India during the British Period*, Bombay, 1943.

[4] *Ibid*, Preface, p.v.

[5] *Bharat mein Angreji Raj* (in Hindi), Allahabad, 1938. While its first edition published in 1929 was immediately banned by the British, it was again published in 1938 in three volumes (1780 pages), and has not only been republished again, but has become a classic of its kind, providing a detailed account (primarily derived from 18th and 19th century published sources) of British rule in India, and of its consequences up to 1860. The impact of it has been such that a large number of Indian freedom fighters, and the elder generation of Indian politicians, educationists, and others derive much of their knowledge of this period even fifty years after its publication, from Pandit Sundarlal's monumental work.

36th chapter of this celebrated work entitled, "The Destruction of Indian Indigenous Education", runs into 40 pages, and extensively quotes from various British authorities. These span over about a century, from the Dispatch from England of 3rd June 1814 to the Governor General in India to the observations of Max Mueller, and the 1909 remarks of the British labour leader, Keir Hardie. However, given the period in which the book was written and the inaccessibility of the detailed manuscript records, it was inevitable that the author had to base his work entirely on existing printed sources. Nevertheless, as an introduction, this chapter of *Bharat mein Angreji Raj* is a landmark on the subject of indigenous Indian education in the late 18th and early 19th century.

Very little, however, has been written on the history, or state of education during the thirteenth to the early nineteenth century. Undoubtedly there are a few works like that of S. M. Jaffar[6] pertaining to Muslim education, and a chapter or two, or some cursory references in most educational histories pertaining to the period of British rule and to the decayed state of indigenous Indian education in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Nurullah and Naik in their book[7] devote the first 43 pages (out of 643 pages) to discussing the state of indigenous education in the early nineteenth century, and in challenging certain later British views about the nature and extent of it.

Most of the discussion on the state of indigenous Indian education in the early nineteenth century, and the differing viewpoints which give rise to it, use as their source material: (a) the much talked about reports by William Adam, a former Christian missionary, on indigenous education in some of the districts of Bengal and Bihar 1835-38,[8] (b) published extracts of a survey made by the British authorities regarding indigenous education in the Bombay Presidency in the 1820s,[9] and (c) published extracts from another wider survey of indigenous education made in the Madras Presidency (from Ganjam in the north to

[6] S. M. Jaffar: *Education in Muslim India*, Peshawar, 1936.
[7] Syed Nurullah and J. P. Naik, *op. cit.*
[8] W. Adam: *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal (1835 & 1838) by William Adam*, edited by Anathnath Basu, Calcutta, 1941.
[9] *House of Commons Papers*, 1831-32, Vol.9, pp.421-430, 470-471.

Tinnevelly in the south, and Malabar in the west) during 1822-25.[10] A much later work on the subject, but more or less of a similar nature is that of G. W. Leitner pertaining to indigenous education in the Punjab.[11]

Amongst the above-mentioned sources, G. W. Leitner's work, based on earlier governmental documents and on his own survey, is the most explicitly critical of British policies, holding the British authorities responsible for the decay, and even the destruction of indigenous education in the Punjab, the area with which his book is concerned. However, though much less explicitly, and in language more suited to British officers and gentlemen (as later noted by Sir Philip Hartog, Leitner, though a British official, was 'not an Englishman')[12] the reports of Adam, as well as the reports of some of the collectors in the Madras Presidency[13] refer likewise to the decay of indigenous education in the areas of India with which they were concerned.

A few sentences in Mahatma Gandhi's long address at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London on 20 October, 1931, stating that literacy had declined in India in the past 50-100 years and holding the British responsible for it, provided a real edge to the observations of Adam, Leitner, and others and to the view which Indians had held for decades. It was then that all the above sources relating to indigenous education in the earlier part of the nineteenth century assumed their great importance. The person who, perhaps not only as an individual, but also as a representative of British rule in India, contested what Gandhiji had said was Sir Philip Hartog, one time vice-chancellor of Dacca University, and chairman of the 'auxiliary committee of the Indian Statutory Commission'. He asked Gandhiji for "precise references to the printed documents on which" Gandhiji's "statements were based",[14] and not finding satisfaction (during much of this period Gandhiji and his colleagues were in prison) Hartog, four years later, delivered a series of three lectures at the University of London Institute of Education with the aim of countering Gandhiji's statement. In 1939

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[10] *Ibid.*, pp.413-417, 500-510.
[11] G. W. Leitner: *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab since Annexation, and in 1882*, Calcutta, 1882; (Reprint: Languages Department, Patiala, 1973).
[12] Philip Hartog: *Some Aspects of Indian Education Past and Present*, OUP, 1939, Preface, p.viii.
[13] See reports of Madras Collectors reproduced in Annexures A-I to A-XXX.
[14] India Office Library: MSS EUR D 551, Hartog to Mahatma Gandhi 21.10.1931.

Hartog, after adding three memorandas and necessary references, got these published in book form.[15]

In thus countering Gandhiji and the earlier sources, Sir Philip Hartog was really not being original. He, in fact, was following a well-trodden British path in defence of British acts and policies in India; a path which had been charted some 125 years earlier by William Wilberforce himself later considered as the father of Victorian England, in the British House of Commons.[16] In his own time, Hartog had been preceded in a similar enterprise by W. H. Moreland who could not accept Vincent Smith's observation that "the hired labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahangir probably had more to eat in ordinary years than he has now".[17] It is this challenge which appears to have led Moreland from the life of a retired senior revenue settlement officer into the role of an economic historian of India.[18] Quite understandably, unlike the present generation to whom their role in India is dead and gone, the British, at least till the 1940s, burdened as they were with a sense of mission, naturally could not accept any reflection on, or criticism of, what they did deliberately, or otherwise, in India (or elsewhere) during the two centuries of their rule.

A major part of the documents reproduced in this book pertain to the Madras Presidency Indigenous Education Survey and were first seen by this writer in 1966. As mentioned above, an abstract of this survey was included in the House of Commons Papers as early as 1831-32. Yet, while many scholars must have come across the detailed material in the Madras Presidency District Records, as well as the Presidency Revenue Records (the latter incidentally exist in Madras as well as in London), for some unexplained reasons this material seems to have escaped academic attention. The recent Madras University doctoral theses pertaining to the various Madras Presidency districts covering this period do not also seem to have made any use of this data, despite the fact that some of them do make some occasional reference to matters of education.

The present work is not being presented, however, with a view to decry British rule. It should be seen rather as the continuation of an

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[15] Philip Hartog: *op. cit*. [16] *HANSARD*: June 22 and July 1, 1813.
[17] V. A. Smith: *Akbar: The Great Mogul 1542-1605*, Clarendon Press, 1917, p.394.
[18] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol.49, 1917, pp.815-825.

effort to comprehend, to the extent it is possible for this author, through material of this kind relating to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the reality of the India of this period, its society, its infrastructure, its manners and institutions, and their strengths and weaknesses. The present work touches on another aspect of this India in more or less the same manner as the author's two earlier books in this field, one on Science and Technology of the period,[19] and the other on the tradition of Civil Disobedience in the early 1800s.[20] Furthermore, an attempt has been made in the Introduction to situate the information on the indigenous Indian education of the period in its temporal context and, with that in view, brief mention is made of the state of education in England until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

During the past years a number of friends have taken interest in this material and offered me their valuable advice and opinion. I am grateful to all of them; without their support and encouragement this work may never have been completed. Even more so, I am greatly indebted to the University of Oxford for being kind enough to consult their University archives in order to answer some of my queries pertaining to the academic courses, etc., at Oxford at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Similarly I am much obliged to the India Office Library & Records (I.O.R.), and to Mr. Martin Moir in particular, for supplying me with copies of the Hartog-Gandhi correspondence. I am also obliged to the A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna, for offering me a senior fellowship of the Institute during 1972-73 and to the Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi, the Gandhi Seva Sangh, Sevagram, and the Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development, New Delhi, for interest in and support to this venture, as occasion demanded.

The text of the Madras Presidency material (included in the Annexures), though first consulted in the India Office Library, is taken from the records in the Tamilnadu State Archives (previously the Madras Record Office). For this facility, and for much kindness and consideration shown to me my thanks go to the Archives, and its fairly

[19] *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century: Some Contemporary European Accounts*, Dharampal Classics Series, Bengaluru, 2021.
[20] *Civil Disobedience and Indian Tradition: With some Early Nineteenth Century Documents*, Dharampal Classics Series, Bengaluru, 2021.

over-worked staff. The note by Alexander Walker, also reproduced here, is from the Walker of Bowland Papers in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. My sincere thanks go to the National Library for permission and facilities to consult these and other papers, as also to the Scottish Record Office, the University of Edinburgh, and the Uttar Pradesh State Archives, Allahabad, for similar permission and facilities.

Finally, I am honoured by the Ashram Pratishthan, Sevagram, for extending me an invitation to write this book in the Ashram, and for providing me the necessary facilities and for treating me as one of their own. Completing this work living near Gandhiji's hut has indeed been a great privilege.

* * *

The title of this book has been taken from the speech which Mahatma Gandhi had made at Chatham House, London, on 20 October, 1931. He had said: "…the British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that, and *the beautiful tree* perished."

The subtitle has also been chosen accordingly. Although the Madras Presidency data which forms the bulk of this book was collected during 1822-25, the educational system to which the data pertained was much older. It was still the dominant system during the 18th century after which it started decaying very rapidly. The Adam Reports reflect that decline in the fourth decade of the 19th century.

February 19, 1981 DHARAMPAL
Ashram Pratishthan
Sevagram

CONTENTS

Introduction

MUCH OF Indian historical knowledge has been derived, at least until recent decades, from the writings of foreigners. This applies to our knowledge about Indian education as well as to that relating to most other spheres. Unless the Indian source material is of an epigraphical or archaeological nature, the oral traditions, beliefs, or even contemporary Indian writings, if taken into account at all, do not, in themselves, seem to be relied upon by those who write history. The universities of Taxila and Nalanda, and a few others until recently have been more known and written about, primarily because they had been described centuries ago by some Greek, or Chinese traveller, who happened to keep a journal which had survived, or communicated such information to his compatriots who passed it down to modern times.

As it happens, there seem to be relatively few foreign accounts of India between about the 10th and 16th centuries A.D. Further, those which are known are more concerned with the exploits of those men to whom the writers, or chroniclers were attached. Moreover, as such chroniclers happened to be mostly from West Asia (which had a different style of narration), and not from Europe, or China, and further, were closely connected with the extension of Islam into parts of India, they have, consequently, received much less notice and celebrity unless, of course, what they said suited the 19th century writers of Indian history.

It is also probable that so much had already been written by the 8th or 10th century A.D. about the wealth, learning, and philosophies of India (and, furthermore, the organisation of its society, being basically not too different from contemporary society in its neighbouring areas) that the foreign travellers and chroniclers of this period had no special reason to write about such matters. It may also possibly be true, as is generally held by many scholars, that from the 8th or 10th century A.D. onwards India was on a visible, or imperceptible declining course, and that what the foreign visitor saw did not really catch his attention.

However, from about 1500 A.D., and more so from about the close of the 16th century, travellers and adventurers of a new kind began to wander around parts of India. Since for centuries the areas they came from had had no direct links with India, and as they had come from wholly different climates and societies, to them most aspects of India—its manners, religions, philosophies, ancient and contemporary architecture, wealth, learning, and even its educational methods were something quite different from their own European backgrounds, assumptions and experience. It is not that the areas they came from, that is southern and western Europe, did not have wealth, philosophies, religions, or great historical architecture. As regards wealth itself, by then there were thousands of families possessing long-accumulated wealth not only amongst the nobility but also in the mercantile and banking classes in different parts of Europe. Moreover, from 1500 onwards vast amounts of gold and silver had begun to pour into Europe from the Americas.[1] Europe also had a 1500 years old religion, and the concepts, philosophies and world-view it gave birth to. However, to the European elite, the world of India had long appeared as something from quite another planet. Furthermore, by about 1500, a tradition of writing, of narration, of description, and even more importantly of printing had begun to spread through Europe. It is not surprising, therefore, that many such travellers, and adventurers, or plenipotentiaries of the various kingdoms of Europe belonging to the European religious or secular elite (as distinct from the sailors or soldiers who, though they made such travel possible, were mere hewers of wood and drawers of water) began to write about their observations and about what interested them to the extent and in the manner they comprehended what they saw, or also in line with what suited their varying audiences. For instance, there are fairly long contemporarily published accounts on the kingdom of the Samudrin Raja of Calicut[2], on the 'Banias of Surat'[3], on the Parsis[4], on

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[1] A. Del Mar: *History of Precious Metals from Earliest Times to the Present*, London, 1880; especially pp.174-175, 184-185.

[2] Accounts of Calicut began to be published in Portuguese, and soon after in other European languages from about 1500. One of the more detailed of these accounts was by H. Lopes da Castaneda, and it was translated and published in English under the title *The First Booke of the Historie of Discoverie and Conquest of East India, Enterprised by the Portingales*, in 1582.

[3] Henry Lord: *Display of two Foreign Sects in the East Indies,* London, 1630. [4] *Ibid.*

the courts of Akbar[5], and Jahangir[6], and of the poor daily food of the Indian, of "*Khichri*… eaten hot with butter".[7] Even the method of teaching in Indian schools received attention[8], and all these accounts date back to the 16th, and the early decades of the 17th century.

Prior to 1770, by which time they had become actual rulers of large areas, the British, on whose writings and reportings this book is primarily based[9], had rather different interests. Their interests then, as in the subsequent period too, were largely mercantile, technological, or were concerned with comprehending, and evaluating Indian statecraft and thereby extending their influence and dominion in India. Indian religions, philosophies, scholarship and the extent of education, notwithstanding what a few of them may have written on the Parsis, or the Banias of Surat, had scarcely interested them until then.

Such a lack of interest was perhaps partly due to their different expectations from India: but it seems that the main reason for this lies in the fact that the British society of this period, that is from the mid-sixteenth to about the later part of the eighteenth century had few such interests, and in such matters (religion, philosophy, learning, education) was somewhat introverted by nature. It is not that Britain had no tradition of education, or scholarship, or philosophy during the 16th, 17th, or early 18th century. It had much of all these and during this period produced figures like Francis Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton, Newton, etc. It had the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh which had their beginnings in the 13th and 14th centuries A.D. By the later part of the 18th century Britain also had around 500 Grammar Schools. Nevertheless, all this considerable learning and scholarship was limited to a very select elite, especially after the mid-

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[5] For instance see Richard Haklut's *The Principal Navigations &c.,* 3 volumes, 1598-1600, especially volume 2 for Ralph Fitch's account of his voyage to and travels in India, A.D. 1583-91.

[6] F. Pelsaert: *Jahangir's India*, translated and edited by W. H. Moreland, Cambridge, 1925.

[7] *Ibid,* pp.60-61: Pelsaert seems to be much put out by the fact that "Oxen and cows are not slaughtered… besides, their slaughter is strictly forbidden by the king on pain of death"; he then adds "this would be a desirable country if men might indulge their hunger or appetite as they do in our cold lands."

[8] Peter della Valle, 2.11.1623, in *The Travels of Sig. Pietro della Valle, a Noble Roman into East India*, London 1665, pp.110-11.

[9] See Annexures, especially A-I to A-XXX, C, and D-I to D-IV(h).

sixteenth century when the Protestant revolution led to the closing of most of the monasteries and the sequestration of their incomes and properties by the state.

According to A. E. Dobbs, before the Protestant revolution "the University of Oxford might be described as the 'chief Charity School of the poor and the chief Grammar School in England, as well as the great place of education for students of theology, of law and medicine'"[10]; and "where instruction was not gratuitous throughout the school, some arrangement was made, by means of a graduated scale of admission fees and quarterages and a system of maintenance to bring the benefits of the institution within the reach of the poorest."[11] Further, a very early statute of England while specifying that "No one shall put their child apprentice within any city or borough, unless they have land or rent of 20 shillings per annum: but they shall be put to such labour as their fathers or mothers use, or as their estates require"; nonetheless stated that "any person may send their children to school to learn literature".[12]

However, from about the mid-16th century a contrary trend set in. It even led to the enactment of a law "that the English Bible should not be read in churches. The right of private reading was granted to nobles, gentry, and merchants that were householders, but was expressly denied to artificers' prentices, to journeymen and serving men 'of the degree of yeomen or under', to husbandmen and labourers" so as "to allay certain symptoms of disorder occasioned by a free use of the Scriptures".[13] According to this new trend it was "meet for the plough-

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[10] A. E. Dobbs: *Education and Social Movements 1700-1850*, London, 1919, p.80, quoting *Oxford Commission, 1852, Report*, p.19.

[11] *Ibid*, p.83 [12] *Ibid*, p.104, f.n.l. quoting Statute 7 Henry IV, c.17.

[13] *Ibid*, p.105, quoting Statute 34 & 35 Henry VIII, c.l. This statute dating to 1542-43 A.D., consisting of just one Article after a preamble read, "…The Bible shall not be read in *English* in any church. No women or artificers, prentices, journeymen, servingmen of the degree of yeomen or under, husbandmen, nor labourers, shall read the New Testament in *English*. Nothing shall be taught or maintained contrary to the King's instructions. And if any spiritual person preach, teach, or maintain any thing contrary to the King's instructions or determinations, made or to be made, and shall be thereof convict, he shall for his first offence recant, for his second abjure and bear a fagot, and for his third shall be adjudged an heretick, and be burned and lose all his goods and chattels." The statute was entitled "An Act for the Advancement of True Knowledge". This restriction however may have completely been lifted by the time the "authorised version" of the Bible (King James's translation) was published in England in 1611.

man's son to go to the plough, and the artificer's son to apply the trade of his parent's vocation: and the gentlemen's children are meet to have the knowledge of government and rule in the commonwealth. For we have as much need of ploughmen as any other State: and all sorts of men may not go to school."[14]

After about a century and a half, that is from about the end of the 17th century there is a slow reversal of the above trend leading to the setting up of some Charity Schools for the common people mainly with a view to provide "some leverage in the way of general education to raise the labouring class to the level of religious instruction"; and more so in Wales "with the object of preparing the poor by reading and Bible study for the Sunday worship and catechetical instruction".[15]

After a short start, however, the Charity school movement became rather dormant; but about 1780 it was succeeded by the Sunday school movement.[16] However, "popular education" even at this period "was still approached as a missionary enterprise" and the maxim was "that every child should learn to read the Bible".[17]

"The hope of securing a decent observance of Sunday"[18] led to concentrated effort on the promotion of Sunday schools, and after some years this focussed attention on the necessity of day schools. From then on school education grew apace; nevertheless it is to be noted that as late as 1834 "the curriculum in the better class of national schools was limited in the main to religious instruction, reading, writing and arithmetic: in some country schools writing was excluded for fear of evil consequences".[19]

The major impetus to the Day School movement came from what was termed the "Peel's Act of 1802" which required the employer of young children "to provide, during the first four years of the seven years of apprenticeship, competent instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, and to secure the presence of his apprentice at religious teaching for one hour every Sunday and attendance at a place of worship on that day".[20] "But the Act was unpopular", and its "practical effect… was not great".[21] At about the same time, however, the monito-

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[14] *Ibid*, p.104, f.n.3, quoting Strype, Cranmer, i.127. [15] *Ibid*, p.33, f.n.l.
[16] *Ibid*, p.139. [17] *Ibid*, p.139. [18] *Ibid*, p.140. [19] *Ibid*, p.158.
[20] J. W. Adamson: *A Short History of Education*, Cambridge, 1919, p.243.
[21] *Ibid*, p.243.

rial method of teaching used by Joseph Lancaster (and also by Andrew Bell, and said to be borrowed from India)[22] came into practice and greatly helped advance the cause of popular education. The number of those attending school were estimated at around 40,000 in 1792, at 6,74,883 in 1818, and 21,44,377 in 1851. The total number of schools, public as well as private in 1801 were stated to be 3,363 and by stages reached a total of 46,114 in 1851.[23]

However, in the beginning, "the teachers were seldom competent", and "Lancaster insinuates that the men were not only ignorant but drunken".[24] As regards the number of years of schooling Dobbs writes that "allowing for irregularity of attendance, the average length of school life rises on a favourable estimate from about one year in 1835 to about two years in 1851".[25]

Regarding the English Public schools, their fortunes are said to have fallen strikingly during the eighteenth century. In January 1797 the famous school at Shrewsbury, for instance, did not have "above three or four boys", but after some major reorganisation it had about 20 pupils a year later.[26] The teaching in public schools like Eton consisted of writing and arithmetic (a number of English and Latin books were studied), while those in the fifth form also learnt ancient Geography, or Algebra. "Those who stayed at Eton long enough" also "went through part of Euclid".[27] However it was "not till 1851 that Mathematics became a part of the regular school work and even at that date those who taught the subject were not regarded as persons of full standing on the staff of masters".[28]

While school education, especially elementary education at the people's level was rather an uncommon commodity till around 1800, nonetheless, the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh were perhaps as important for Britain as Taxila and Nalanda were in ancient India as well as places like Navadweep were as late as the later

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[22] See Annexure C: Alexander Walker, Note on Indian Education, p.258 in this volume. Also, Adamson: *op.cit.*, p.246.
[23] *House of Commons Papers*, 1852-53, Volume 79, p.718, for the number of schools and pupils in them in 1818 and 1851.
[24] Adamson: *op.cit.*, p.232.
[25] Dobbs: *op.cit*., pp.157-8, also f.n.1, p.158.
[26] Adamson: *op.cit*., p.266.
[27] *Ibid*, p.226. [28] *Ibid*, p.226.

part of the 18th century.[29] Since many of those who began to come to India from Britain as travellers, scholars, or judges, especially after 1773, had had their education in one of these three universities[30], it may be relevant, before discussing the Indian position, to give a brief account of the courses studied and the number of students, in one of them around 1800. The university chosen here is that of Oxford, and it is assumed that this information is also fairly representative of studies at Cambridge and Edinburgh at this period.

The growth of the University of Oxford after England's rupture with Rome may be indicated from the following chronological list of professorships created there from 1546 onwards:[31]

1546	5 Professorships founded by Henry VIII: 1. Divinity, 2. Civil Law, 3. Medicine, 4. Hebrew, 5. Greek.
1619	Geometry and Astronomy
1621	Natural Philosophy
1621	Moral Philosophy (but break between 1707-1829)
1622	Ancient History (i.e., Hebrew, and Europe)
1624	Grammar, Rhetoric, Metaphysics (fell into disuse, replaced by Logic in 1839)
1624	Anatomy
1626	Music
1636	Arabic
1669	Botany
1708	Poetry
1724	Modern History and Modern Languages
1749	Experimental Philosophy
1758	Common Law
1780	Clinical Instruction
1795	Anglo-Saxon (i.e., language, literature, etc.)
1803	Chemistry

[29] Writing to the second Earl Spencer on 21 August 1787, William Jones described a serpentine river "which meets the Ganges opposite the celebrated University of *Brahmans* at *Navadwipa*, or *Nuddea*, as Rennel writes it. This is the third University of which I have been a member." (*The Letters of Sir William Jones*, by G. Cannon. 2 volumes, Clarendon Press, 1970, p.754.)

[30] The fourth British University, that of London, was established in 1828.

[31] The above information is abstracted from *The Historical Register of the University of Oxford 1220-1888*, Oxford, 1888, mostly from pp.45-65.

Regarding data relating to the beginning of the nineteenth century there were nineteen colleges and five halls in Oxford, at this period. There were then about 500 fellows in the colleges, a few of whom in each college were engaged in teaching. In addition there were nineteen professors in 1800, a total which had increased to 25 by 1854.

The main subjects which were studied at the beginning of the nineteenth century were theology and classics. Examinations were set in classics known as Literae Humaniores, which included Greek and Latin language and literature, moral philosophy, rhetoric and logic, and the elements of the mathematical sciences and physics. Lectures were also available on other topics, e.g. law, medicine and geology.

There was an increase in the number of students entering the University from about 1805 onwards. The number of students on the rolls during one year rose from about 760 in the early nineteenth century to about 1,300 in 1820-24.

The main sources of financial support of the colleges in Oxford were their endowments, mainly in land, and income from students. The proportion of income from each source varied from college to college. Taking a wider view of all the expenses of a University course including clothing and travelling, a parent who clothed his son and supported him at university and during the vacation could expect to pay from £600-800 for his four year course around 1850.[32]

While the British, as well as the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the French, directly or in the name of the various East India Companies they had set up in the late 16th and early 17th centuries were busy extending their bases, factories, fortifications and the like, and wherever possible occupying whole territories in the Indian Ocean area from 1500 A.D. onwards, the European scholars on their part were trying to comprehend various aspects of the civilizations existing in this area. Prominent amongst these, especially in the fields of the sciences and customs, manners, philosophies and religions were members of the several Christian monastic orders, the most well known being the Jesuits. There were some others with interests of a more political, historical or economic nature; and many took to narrating their own adventures, and occasionally misfortunes in the 'fabulous' and 'exotic' East. Due to the

[32] The foregoing four paragraphs are based on information supplied by the University of Oxford in November 1980 on request from the author.

widespread interest of the European elite much of this writing was published in one or more European languages soon after. Accounts and discussions which happened to be of a limited, but great scholarly or religious interest were copied by hand many times over.[33]

II

It was this great accumulation of material that from about the mid-18th century led to serious scholarly attention and debate on India, and areas of South East Asia as regards their politics, laws, philosophies and sciences and especially Indian astronomy. To an extent, it was this contemporary European interest, especially amongst men like Voltaire, Abbe Raynal and Jean Sylvain Bailly, that aroused a similar interest in Britain, more so amongst those connected with the University of Edinburgh, like Adam Ferguson, William Robertson, John Playfair[34] and A. Maconochie. In 1775 Adam Ferguson recommended to his former student, John Macpherson (temporarily to be Governor General of Bengal during 1784-85) "to collect the fullest details you can of every circumstance relating to the state and operation of policy in India… That you may the better apprehend what I mean by the detail… select some town and its district. Procure if possible an account of its extent and number of people. The different classes of that people, the occupations, the resources, the way of life of each. How they are related and their mutual dependencys. What contributions Government, or subordinate masters

[33] For instance, the doctoral thesis, *Etude sur le role des missionaries europeens dans la formation premiers des idees sur l'Inde*, presented in April 1980 at the Sorbonne, Paris, by Gita Dharampal, is based on an early eighteenth century manuscript which still has several copies extant. The manuscript is titled *Traite de la Religion des Malabars*, and its first copy was completed in 1709 by Tessier de Queraly, procurator of the Paris Foreign Mission in Pondicherry from 1699 to 1720, nominated Apostolic Vicar of Siam in 1727. Copies of this Mss. are to be found in the following archives: Paris (Bibliotheque Nationale 3 copies, Bibliotheque de L'Arsenal 1 copy, Bibliotheque Ste. Genevieve 1 copy, Archives Nationales 1 copy); Chartres (Bibliotheque Municipale 1 copy, formerly belonging to the Governor Benoit Dumas); London (India Office Libr. 2 copies in Col. Mackenzie's and John Leyden's collections respectively); Rome 1 copy (Biblioteca Casanatesa, containing Vatican collection). The thesis is published as *La Religion Des Malabars*, Immensee, 1982.

[34] See the author's *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century*: *Some Contemporary European Accounts*, Dharampal Classics Series, Bengaluru, 2021, for Prof. John Playfair's long article on Indian astronomy, pp.56-106.

draw from the labourer of any denomination and how it is drawn. But I beg pardon for saying so much of an object which you must know so much better than I do. The man who can bring light from India [i.e., of its material resources, etc.] into this country and who has address to make his light be followed may in a few years hence make himself of great consequence and here I shall conclude my letter…"[35]

A. Maconochie, on the other hand, first in 1783[36] and then again in 1788, advocated the taking of such measures by "our monarch, the sovereign of the banks of the Ganges… as may be necessary for discovering, collecting and translating whatever is extent of the ancient works of the Hindoos", and thought that if the British "procured these works to Europe, astronomy and antiquities, and the sciences connected with them would be advanced in a still great proportion." He further observed that "the antiquities of the religion and Government of the Hindoos are not less interesting than those of their sciences" and felt that "the history, the poems, the traditions, the very fables of the Hindoos might therefore throw light upon the history of the ancient world and in particular upon the institutions of that celebrated people from whom Moses received his learning and Greece her religion and her arts." Prof. Maconochie also stated that the centre of most of this learning, according to various accounts was Benares, where "all the sciences are still taught" and where "very ancient works in astronomy are still extant".[37]

Around the same time, though for more practical and immediate purposes of governance and more in line with Adam Ferguson, a similar vein of thought and some corresponding action had started amongst those who had been entrusted with the exercise of actual power and the carrying out of the policies and instructions from London, within India. It was such practical needs which led to the writing of works on Hindu and Muslim law, investigations into the rights of property, into the revenues of various areas, and to assist all this, to a cultivation of Sanscrit and Persian amongst some of the British themselves. The latter

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[35] Edinburgh University: Dc.177: Letters from Adam Ferguson to John Macpherson, letter dated 9.4.1775.

[36] Edinburgh: Scottish Record Office: Melville Papers: GD 51/3/617/1-2, Prof A. Maconochie to Henry Dundas.

[37] Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland: MS.546, Alex Abercomby forwarding a further memorandum from Prof. Maconochie to Henry Dundas, March 1788. The memorandum was communicated to Lord Cornwallis by Henry Dundas on 7.4.1788.

was felt necessary so as to enable the British to discover better (i.e., for themselves; to the Indians what was being discovered, whether then considered relevant or not, was already familiar), discard, choose, or select what suited their purpose most. In the process some of them also developed a personal interest in Sanscrit and other Indian literature for its own sake, or for the sort of reasons which Prof. Maconochie had in view. Charles Wilkins, William Jones, F. W. Ellis in Madras, and Lt. Wilford (the latter got engaged in some very exotic research at Varanasi) were amongst the more well known men of this category.

Apparently, three approaches seemingly different but in reality complementary to one another began to operate in the British held areas of India from about the 1770's regarding Indian knowledge, scholarship and centres of learning. The first resulted from growing British power and administrative requirements which (in addition to such undertakings that men like Adam Ferguson had recommended) also needed to provide a garb of legitimacy and a background of previous indigenous precedents (however farfetched) to the new concepts, laws and procedures which were being created by the British state. It is primarily this requirement which gave birth to British Indology. The second approach was a product of the mind of the Edinburgh enlightenment (dating back to around 1750) which men like Maconochie represented. They perhaps had a fear, born out of historical experience and philosophical observation and reflection (since what had happened in the Americas, how whole civilizations had got uprooted, in the previous two centuries was common knowledge amongst them) that conquest and defeat of a civilization generally led to its disintegration, and the disappearance of precious knowledge which it had. They, therefore, advocated the preparation of a written record of what existed, and what could be got from the learned in places like Varanasi. The third approach was a projection of what was then being attempted in Great Britain itself: i.e. an attempt to bring people to an institutionalised, formal, law-abiding Christianity and, for that some literacy and teaching became essential. To achieve such a purpose in India, and to assist evangelical exhortation and propaganda to extend Christian 'light' and 'knowledge' to the people, the preparation of grammars of various Indian languages became urgent. The task according to William Wilberforce was, "the circulation of the holy scriptures in the native languages" with a view to the general

diffusion of Christianity, so that the Indians "would, in short become Christians, if I may so express myself, without knowing it".[38]

All these efforts joined together also led to the founding of a few British sponsored Sanscrit and Persian colleges, to the publication of some Indian texts or selections from them which suited the purpose of governance. From now on Christian missionaries also began to open schools and occasionally they and some others at times, wrote about the state and extent of indigenous education in the parts of India in which they functioned. However, essentially the British interest was centred not on the people as such, or their knowledge, or education, or the lack of it, but rather in such ancient texts which served their purpose and in making the people conform to what was chosen for them from such texts and their new interpretations. The other interest (but initially till 1813 this was only amongst a section of the British) was in the christianisation of those who were considered ready for such conversions or, in the British phraseology of the period, for receiving "the blessings of Christian light and moral improvements". This latter was also expected to serve a more political purpose in as much as it was felt that it could establish some affinity of outlook and belief between the rulers and the ruled. A primary consideration in all British decisions, however, from the very beginning, continued to be the aim of maximising the revenue receipts of Government and of discovering any possible new source which had remained exempt from paying any revenue to Government.

III

The instructions regarding the collection of information about the extent and nature of indigenous Indian education and its contemporary state were largely the consequence of the long debate in the House of Commons in 1813 on the clause relating to the promotion of "religious and moral improvement" in India.[39] Before any new policy could be devised the existing position needed to be better known. But as generally happens in the gathering of any such information, and more so when such collection of data was a fairly new thing, the quality and

[38] *HANSARD*: June 22, 1813; columns 832, 833.
[39] *HANSARD*: June 22 and July 1, 1813: Debate on Clause No. 13 of the India Charter Bill, titled in *HANSARD* as "Propagation of Christianity in India."

coverage of these surveys varied from Presidency to Presidency and even from district to district.

The information which is thus available today, whether published, or still in manuscript form in governmental records as is true of the details of the Madras Presidency indigenous education survey, largely belongs to the 1820's and 1830's period. An unofficial survey made by G. W. Leitner in 1882 for the Punjab compared the situation there for the years before 1850, with that in 1882.

Before proceeding with the analysis of this information its main points may be high-lighted here in a few paragraphs.

The most well-known and controversial point which emerged from these surveys was an observation made by William Adam in his first report that there seemed to exist about 1,00,000 village schools in Bengal and Bihar around the 1830's.[40] This statement while it had no known backing of official records appears to have been founded upon impressions of various high British officials and others who had known the different areas rather intimately and over long periods. Similar statements had been made, much before W. Adam, for areas of the Madras Presidency by men like Thomas Munro, that "every village had a school"[41] and for areas of the newly extended Presidency of Bombay around 1820 by senior officials like G. L. Prendergast, "that there is hardly a village, great or small, throughout our territories, in which there is not at least one school, and in larger villages more".[42] Observations made by Dr. G. W. Leitner in 1882 show that spread of education in the Punjab around 1850 was of a similar extent.

Since these observations were made, they have been treated by some with the sanctity reserved for divine utterances, and by others, as blasphemous. Naturally, the first view was linked with the growth of a vocal Indian nationalism, though its exponents, besides prominent Indians of

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[40] W. Adam: *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal (1835 & 1838) by William Adam*, edited by Anathnath Basu, Calcutta, 1941, p.6.

[41] *House of Commons Papers*, 1812-13, Volume 7, Evidence of Thomas Munro, p.127.

[42] *House of Commons Papers*, 1831-32, Volume 9, p.468. This statement of Prendergast may however be treated with reservation as he made it in the context of his stand that any expenditure in the opening of any schools by the British was undesirable. Yet, its validity as a general impression of a senior British official, particularly as such an impression is corroborated by similar observations relating to other parts of India, should be beyond much doubt.

the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, have also included many illustrious Englishmen, like Keir Hardie, and academics like Max-Mueller. The second, the blasphemous view of them, was obviously held by those who in the later period were, in one capacity or another, concerned with the administration of India or those who felt impelled, sometimes because of their commitment to certain theoretical formulations on the development of societies, to treat all such impressions as unreal. It had become necessary, especially after 1860, that the men who after a long period in the British Indian administration or its ancillary branches had the ability to write should engage in the defence of British rule, and especially its beginnings, and consequently refute any statements which implied that the British had damaged India in any significant way.

Yet, while so much ink has been spilt on such a controversy, little attempt is known to have been made to place these statements or observations in their contextual perspective. Leaving Leitner's work, most of these statements belong to the early decades of the nineteenth century. The difficulty, however, for the later British administrator, to appreciate the substance of the controversy is quite understandable. For, as may be noted from the brief account given in the preceding pages, till about 1800 England had few schools for the children of ordinary people. Even many of the older Grammar Schools were at that time in poor shape. Moreover, the men who in this period wrote about India (whether concerning its education or its industry and crafts or the somewhat higher real wages of Indian agricultural labourers compared to such wages in England)[43] belonged to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century society of Great Britain. Therefore, quite naturally, when they wrote about a school in every village of India, while it may or may not have been literally true, in contrast to the British situation, it must have appeared to them so. And though they did not much mention this contrast in so many words, it may reasonably be assumed that, as perceptive observers it was such a contrast which led to these judgements.

The other points which emerge from these surveys, and which are based not on mere impressions but on hard data, is the nature of this Indian education, its content, the duration for which it ordinarily lasted,

[43] See, for instance, the discussion on relative Indian and British agricultural wages in the *Edinburgh Review*, Volume 4, July 1804, pp.323-324.

the numbers actually receiving institutional education in particular areas and most importantly detailed information on the background of those benefitting from these institutions.

However, it was but natural that the idea of a school existing in every village, dramatic and picturesque in itself as such statements were, attracted great notice and eclipsed the rest of the equally important details. Still, it is nevertheless unfortunate that the more detailed and hard facts have received hardly any notice or analysis. For, it is these latter facts which provide an insight into the nature of Indian society at that period of time. Deeper analysis of this data and adequate reflection on the results followed by required further research may help solve even the riddle of what has been termed "the legend of the 1,00,000 schools".[44]

According to this hard data, in terms of the content and proportion of those attending institutional school education, the situation in India in 1800 (and, it should be remembered that it is a greatly damaged and disorganised India that one is referring to) does not in any sense look inferior to what obtained in England then; and in many respects Indian schooling seems to have been much more extensive. The content of studies does not appear very dissimilar to what was then studied in England. The duration of study was more prolonged. The method of school teaching was the method which is said to have greatly helped the introduction of popular education in England but which had prevailed in India for centuries. School attendance especially in the districts of the Madras Presidency, even in the decayed state of the 1822-25, was proportionately far higher than the numbers in all variety of schools in England in 1800. The conditions under which teaching took place in the Indian schools were less dingy and more natural;[45] and it was observed that the teachers in the Indian schools were generally more dedicated and sober than their English counterparts. The only aspect, and certainly a very important one, where Indian institutional education seems to have lagged behind was with regard to the education of girls, which quite possibly may have been proportionately more extensive in England in 1800, and was definitely the case, a few decades later.

[44] P. Hartog: *Some Aspects of Indian Education Past and Present*, OUP, 1939, p.74.
[45] This, however, may have resulted more from a relatively easier Indian climate than from any physical and institutional arrangements.

However, the accounts of education in India do often state, though it is difficult to judge their substantive accuracy from the data which is so far known, that the absence of girls in schools was explained by the fact that most of their education took place in the home.

It is, however, the Madras Presidency and Bengal-Bihar data, concerning the background of the taught (and in the case of the five districts of Bengal-Bihar, also of the teachers) which presents a kind of a revelation: for the data reveals a picture which is in sharp contrast to the various scholarly pronouncements of the past 100 years or more, in which it had been assumed that education of any sort in India, till very recent decades, was mostly limited to the twice-born[46] amongst the Hindus, and amongst the Muslims to those from the ruling elite. The actual situation which is revealed was different, if not quite contrary. As will be noted in greater detail further on, for at least amongst the Hindoos, in the districts of the Madras Presidency (and dramatically so in the Tamil-speaking areas) as well as the two districts of Bihar, it was instead those termed Soodras, and the castes considered below them[47] who predominated in the thousands of the then still-existing schools in practically each of these areas.

The last point which this work briefly touches on concerns the conditions and arrangements which alone could have made such a vast system of education feasible. To an extent, though supported by considerable hard data, the conclusions to which this leads are still tentative, and in statistical terms somewhat speculative. It seems however, that it was the sophisticated operative fiscal arrangements of the pre-British Indian polity, through which substantial proportions of revenue had long been assigned for the performance of a multiplicity of public purposes, and which seems to have stayed more or less intact through all the previous political turmoils, which made such education possible; and it was the collapse of this arrangement through a total centralisation of revenue as well as political structure that led to educational as also to decay in the economy, social life etc. If this inference is at all

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[46] That is those belonging to the Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaisya *varnas*, but excluding the Soodras and castes outside the four *varna* division.

[47] It may fairly be assumed that the term other castes used in the Madras Presidency survey in the main included those who today are categorised amongst the scheduled castes, and many of whom were better known as 'Panchamas' some 70-80 years ago.

valid, a re-examination of the various currently held intellectual and political assumptions with regard to the nature of pre-British Indian society, and its political and state structure becomes imperative.

However, before discussing this last point any further it is necessary first to comprehend the various aspects of the educational data, and the controversy it gave rise to in the 1930's. As the detailed data of the Madras Presidency is the least known, and the most comprehensive, we shall examine that first.

IV

All the available papers connected with this survey, i.e., the instructions of Government, the circular from the Board of Revenue to the district collectors conveying the instructions and the prescribed form according to which information had to be compiled, the replies of the collectors from all the 21 districts of the Presidency, the proceedings of the Board of Revenue on the information received while submitting it to Government, and the Madras Government's proceedings on it are all reproduced at Annexure A-I to A-XXX. It would have been useful for a more thorough analysis, and for better understanding of the situation if the details from which the collectors compiled their reports could be found. A reference to the records of a few districts, preserved in the Tamilnadu State Archives does not, however, indicate any additional material having survived in them. If any Talook records still exist for this period it is quite possible they may contain more detailed data about particular villages, towns, colleges and schools.

In addition to the instructions conveyed in the Minute of the Governor in Council and the text of the letter from Government to the Board of Revenue, both of which were sent to the collectors, the prescribed form required from them details about the number of schools and colleges in the districts, and the number of male and female scholars in them. The number of scholars, male as well as female were further to be provided under the categories of (i) Brahmin scholars, (ii) Vysee scholars, (iii) Soodra scholars, (iv) scholars of all other castes and (v) Musalman scholars. The numbers under (i) to (iv) were to be totalled separately, And to these were to be added those under (v) thus arriving at the total number of Hindoo and Musalman scholars, in the district, or some part of it. The category 'all other castes' as mentioned

earlier evidently seems to have implied all such castes who may have then been considered somewhat below what may be termed the sat-soodra category, and included most such groupings which today are listed among the scheduled castes.

As may be noticed from the documents that while a reply was received from the collector of Canara, he did not send any data about the number of schools, and colleges, or any estimation of the number of those who may have been receiving instruction in the district, through what he termed private education. Apart from the statement that "there are no colleges in Canara", etc., he was of the view that teaching in Canara could not be termed 'public education' as it was organised on a somewhat discontinuous basis by a number of parents in an area by getting together and engaging the services of a teacher(s) for the purpose of teaching their children. The major difficulty for the collector, however, seemed to be that "the preparation of the necessary information would take up a considerable time", and that even if it were collected no "just criterion of the actual extent of schools as exist in this zillah could be formed upon it." He, therefore, hoped that his letter itself would be considered as a satisfactory reply. It may be added here that Canara, from about 1800 onwards and till at least the 1850's, even more than the northern areas of coastal Andhra, was the scene of continual opposition and peasant resistance to British rule. Besides, it also generally happened that whenever any such data was ordered to be collected (and this happened quite often) on one topic or another, the quality and extent of the information supplied by the collectors varied a great deal. To some extent such differences in these returns arose from the varying relevance of an enquiry from district to district. A more important reason perhaps was the fact that, because of the frequent change of collectors and their European assistants, many of them (at the time such information was required) were not very familiar with the district under their charge, and quite a number were for various reasons too involved in other more pressing activities, or mentally much less equipped to meet such continual demands for information.

The information from the districts, therefore, varies a great deal in detail as well as quality. While the data from about half the districts was organised talook-wise, and in some even pargana-wise, from the other half it was received for the district as a whole. Three dis-

tricts—Vizagapatam, Masulipatam and Tanjore—added one further category to the prescribed form provided by Government, viz. the category of Chettris or Rajah scholars between the columns for Brahman and Vysee scholars. Further, while some of the collectors especially of Bellary, Cuddapah, Guntoor and Rajahmundry sent fairly detailed textual replies, some others like Tinnevelly, Vizagapatam and Tanjore left it to the data to tell the story. A few of the collectors also mentioned the books used in the schools and institutions of higher learning in their districts, and the collector of Rajahmundry, being the most detailed, provided a list of 43 books used in Telugu schools and of some of those used in the schools of Higher learning as well as in the schools teaching Persian and Arabic.

TOTAL SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND SCHOLARS

According to the reports of the collectors, the following were the total number of schools and institutions of higher learning along with the number of students in them in their districts. Incidentally, the collectors of Ganjam and Vizagapatam indicated that the data they were sending were somewhat incomplete. This might also have been true of some of the other districts which were wholly or partly under Zamindary tenure.

Two of the collectors also sent detailed information pertaining to those who were being educated at home, or in some other private manner. The collector of Malabar sent details of 1,594 scholars who were receiving education in Theology, Law, Astronomy, Metaphysics, Ethics and Medical Science in his district from private tutors. The collector of Madras on the other hand reported in his letter of February 1826 that 26,963 school-level scholars were then receiving tuition at their homes in the area under his jurisdiction. More will be said about this private education subsequently.

The reports of the collectors were ultimately reviewed by the Government of the Presidency of Madras on 10 March 1826 and the Governor Sir Thomas Munro was of the view that while the institutional education of females seemed negligible, that of the boys between the ages of 5 to 10 years appeared to be a "little more than one-fourth" of the boys of that age in the Presidency as a whole. Taking into consideration those who were estimated as being taught at home he was inclined

DETAILS OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

	SCHOOLS		COLLEGES		TOTAL POPULATION‡	
	Number	Students	Number	Students	1823 Estimates	Remarks
Oriya Speaking						
GANJAM	255	2,977		*	3,32,015	Partial Returns
					(3,75,281)	*Privately in Agraharams
Telugu Speaking						
VIZAGAPATAM	914	9,715			7,72,570	Returns somewhat
					(9,41,004)	incomplete.
RAJAHMUNDRY	291	2,658	279	1,454	7,38,308	
MASULIPATAM	484	5,083	49	199	5,29,849	
GUNTOOR	574	7,724	171	939*	4,54,754	*Privately Taught
NELLORE	697	7,621	107	*	4,39,647	*included in schools total
					(8,39,647)	
CUDDAPAH	494	6,000		*	10,94,460	*Privately Taught
	3,454	38,801	606	2,592		
Kannada Speaking						
BELLARY	510	6,641	23	*	9,27,857	*included in schools total
SERINGAPATAM	41	627			31,612	
	551	7,268	23			
Malayalam Speaking						
MALABAR	759	14,153	1	75*	9,07,575	*Those privately taught given separately

	SCHOOLS		COLLEGES		TOTAL POPULATION‡	
	Number	Students	Number	Students	1823 Estimates	Remarks
Tamil Speaking						
NORTH ARCOT	630	7,326	69	418	8,92,292	
					(5,77,020)	
SOUTH ARCOT	875	10,523			4,55,020	
					(4,20,530)	
CHINGLEPUT	508	6,845	51	398	3,63,129	
TANJORE	884	17,582	109	769	9,01,353	
					(3,82,667)	
TRICHNOPOLY	790	10,331	9	131	4,81,292	
MADURA	844	13,781		*	7,88,196	*Privately in Agraharams
TINNEVELLY	607	9,377			5,64,957	
COIMBATORE	763	8,206	173	724	6,38,199	
SALEM	333	4,326	53	324	10,75,985	
MADRAS	322	5,699		*	4,62,051	*Privately,Gratis
	6,556	93,996	464	2,764		
TOTAL	11,575	1,57,195	1,094	5,431	1,28,50,941	
					(1,25,94,193)	

‡Varying population figures in parenthesis are those sent by the Collectors with the educational data.

"to estimate the portion of the male population who receive school education to be nearer to one-third than one-fourth of the whole".

CASTE-WISE DIVISION OF MALE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The more interesting and historically more relevant information, however, is provided by the caste-wise division of students, not only as regards boys, but also with respect to the rather small number of girls who, according to the survey, were receiving education in schools. Furthermore, the information becomes all the more curious and pertinent when the data is grouped into the five main language areas—Oriya, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Tamil which constituted the Presidency of Madras at this period, and throughout the nineteenth century. The following Table, on page 23, gives the caste-wise number of school-going male students in each district of the five language-areas.

It has generally been assumed that the education of any kind in India, whether in the ancient period, or just at the beginning of British rule was mainly concerned with the higher and middle strata of society, and in case of the Hindoos (who in the Madras Presidency accounted for over 95% of the whole population) it was more or less limited to the twice-born. However, as will be seen from the following tabulation the data of 1822-25 indicate more or less an opposite position. Such an opposite view is the most pronounced in the Tamil-speaking areas where the twice-born ranged between 13% in South Arcot to some 23% in Madras, the Muslims form less than 3% in South Arcot and Chingleput to 10% in Salem, while the Soodras and the other castes ranged from about 70% in Salem and Tinnevelly to over 84% in South Arcot.

To make the above tabulation more easily comprehensible the caste-wise data may be converted into percentages of the whole for each district. The following [Table on p.24] is the result of such conversion.

In Malayalam-speaking Malabar, the proportion of the twice-born was still below 20% of the total, but because of a larger Muslim population the number of Muslim school students went up to nearly 27%, while the Soodras, and other castes accounted for some 54% of the school going students.

In the largely Kannada-speaking Bellary, the proportion of the twice-born (the Brahmins and the Vysees) went up to 33%, while the Soodras, and the other castes still accounted for some 63%.

CASTE-WISE DIVISION OF MALE SCHOOL STUDENTS

DISTRICT	HINDOOS					Muslims	Total Students
	Brahmins	Chettris or Rajahs	Vysees	Soodras	Other castes		
Oriya Speaking							
GANJAM	808	—	243	1,001	886	27	2,965
Telugu Speaking							
VIZAGAPATAM	4,345	103	983	1,999	1,885	97	9,412
RAJAHMUNDRY	904	—	653	466	546	52	2,621
MASULIPATAM	1,673	18	1,108	1,506	470	275	5,050
GUNTOOR	3,089	—	1,578	1,923	775	257	7,622
NELLORE	2,466	—	1,641	2,407	432	617	7,563
CUDDAPAH	1,416	—	1,713	1,775	647	341	5,892
Kannada Speaking							
BELLARY	1,185	—	981	2,998	1,174	243	6,581
SERINGAPATAM	48	—	23	298	158	86	613
Malayalam Speaking							
MALABAR	2,230	—	84	3,697	2,756	3,196	11,963
Tamil Speaking							
NORTH ARCOT	698	—	630	4,856	538	552	7,274
SOUTH ARCOT	997	—	370	7,938	862	252	10,419
CHINGLEPUT	858	—	424	4,809	452	186	6,729
TANJORE	2,817	369	222	10,661	2,426	933	17,428
TRICHNOPOLY	1,198	—	229	7,745	329	690	10,191
MADURA	1,186	—	1,119	7,247	2,977	1,147	13,676
TINNEVELLY	2,016	—	—	2,889	3,557	796	9,258
COIMBATORE	918	—	289	6,379	226	312	8,124
SALEM	459	—	324	1,671	1,382	432	4,268
MADRAS							
(i) Ordinary Schools	358	—	789	3,506	313	143	5,109
(ii) Charity Schools	52	—	46	172	134	10	414
TOTAL	29,721	490	13,449	75,943	22,925	10,644	1,53,172

The position in the Oriya-speaking Ganjam was similar, the twice-born accounting for some 35.5%, and the Soodras, and other castes being around 63.6%.

It is only in the Telugu-speaking districts that the twice-born formed the major proportion of the school going students. In them the proportion of Brahmin boys varied from 24% in Cuddapah to 46% in Vizagapatam, of the Vysees from 10.5% in Vizagapatam to 29% in

CASTE-WISE PERCENTAGE OF MALE SCHOOL STUDENTS

DISTRICT	HINDOOS					Muslims
	Brahmins	Chettris or Rajahs	Vysees	Soodras	Other castes	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Oriya Speaking						
GANJAM	27.25	—	8.24	33.76	29.88	0.91
Telugu Speaking						
VIZAGAPATAM	46.16	1.09	10.44	21.24	20.03	1.03
RAJAHMUNDRY	34.49	—	24.91	17.78	20.83	1.98
MASULIPATAM	33.13	0.36	21.94	29.82	9.30	5.44
GUNTOOR	40.53	—	20.70	25.23	10.17	3.37
NELLORE	32.61	—	21.70	31.83	5.71	8.16
CUDDAPAH	24.03	—	29.07	30.13	10.98	5.79
Kannada Speaking						
BELLARY	18.01	—	14.91	45.56	17.84	3.69
SERINGAPATAM	7.83	—	3.75	48.61	25.77	14.02
Malayalam Speaking						
MALABAR	18.64	—	0.70	30.90	23.04	26.72
Tamil Speaking						
NORTH ARCOT	9.60	—	8.66	66.76	7.40	7.59
SOUTH ARCOT	9.57	—	3.55	76.19	8.27	2.42
CHINGLEPUT	12.75	—	6.30	71.47	6.72	2.76
TANJORE	16.16	2.12	1.27	61.17	13.92	5.32
TRICHNOPOLY	11.76	—	2.25	76.00	3.23	6.77
MADURA	8.67	—	8.18	52.99	21.77	8.39
TINNEVELLY	21.78	—	—	31.21	38.42	8.60
COIMBATORE	11.30	—	3.56	78.52	2.78	3.84
SALEM	10.75	—	7.59	39.15	32.38	10.12
MADRAS						
(i) Ordinary schools	7.01	—	15.44	68.62	6.13	2.80
(ii) Charity schools	12.56	—	11.11	41.55	32.37	2.42
TOTAL	19.40	0.32	8.78	49.58	14.97	6.95

Cuddapah, of the Muslims from 1% in Vizagapatam to 8% in Nellore, and of the Soodras and other castes from 35% in Guntoor to over 41% in Cuddapah and Vizagapatam.

SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO LANGUAGE OF TEACHING

Some of the districts also provided information regarding the language in which education was imparted, and the number of schools

where Persian or English were taught. The number of schools teaching English was only 10, the highest being seven in the district of North Arcot. Nellore, North Arcot and Masulipatam had 50, 40 and 19 Persian schools respectively, while Coimbatore had 10, and Rajahmundry five. North Arcot and Coimbatore had schools which taught Grantham (1 and 5 respectively) as well as teaching Hindi (16 and 14 respectively), and Bellary had 23 Marathi schools. The district of North Arcot had 365 Tamil and 201 Telugu schools, while Bellary had nearly an equal number of schools teaching Telugu and Kannada. The following Table indicates this data more clearly.

	LANGUAGE OF SCHOOLS*								
District	Gran-tham	Tamil	Tel-ugu	Kann-ada	Hindi	Mara-thi	Per-sian	Eng-lish	Total
RAJAHMUNDRY	—	—	285	—	—	—	5	1	291
MASULIPATAM	—	—	465	—	—	—	19	—	484
			(4,847)	—	—	—	(236)		(5,083)
NELLORE	—	4	642	—	—	—	50	1	697
BELLARY	—	4	226	235		23	21	1	510
ARCOT	1	365	201	—	16	—	40	7	630
	(8)	(4,506)	(2,218)	—	(135)	—	(398)	(61)	(7,326)
COIMBATORE	5	671	25	38	14	—	10		763

* The figures in parentheses indicate the number of students under the particular category of schools. This information is not available for all the above mentioned districts.

AGE OF ENROLLMENT, DAILY TIMINGS, ETC.

As mentioned earlier, the data varies considerably from district to district. Many of the collectors provided information regarding the age at which boys (and perhaps girls too) were admitted to school, the usual age being five. According to the collector of Rajahmundry "the fifth day of the fifth month of the fifth year of the boy's age is the 'lucky day' for his first entrance into school", while according to the collector of Cuddapah the age for admission for Brahmin boys was from the age of five to six and that for Soodras from six to eight. The collector of Cuddapah further mentioned two years as the usual period for which the boys stayed at school. Nellore and Salem mentioned 3 to 5 or 6 years, while most others stated that the duration of study varied from a minimum of five to about a maximum of 15 years. While some collec-

tors did not think much of the then current education in the schools, or of the learning and scholarship of the teachers, some thought the education imparted useful, and the collector of Madras observed that "it is generally admitted that before they (i.e. the students) attain their 13th year of age, their acquirements in the various branches of learning are uncommonly great."[48]

From the information given it seems that the schools functioned for fairly long hours, usually starting about 6 A.M., followed by one or two short intervals for meals etc., and finishing at about sunset, or even later. The following Table (on page 27) charts out the information which was received on these points from the several collectors. The functioning of these schools, their methods of teaching, and the subjects taught are best described in the annexed accounts of Fra Paolino Da Bartolomeo (A.D. 1796) and of Alexander Walker (ca. 1820).[49]

BOOKS USED IN SCHOOLS

The main subjects reported to be taught in these Indian schools were reading, writing and arithmetic. The following lists of books used in the schools of Bellary, as also of Rajahmundry may be worth noting and may to some degree indicate the content of learning in these schools.

Names of the Books in Use in the Schools in Bellary District[50]

A. *Most commonly used*
   1. Ramayanum 2. Maha Bharata 3. Bhagvata
B. *Used by Children from Manufacturing Classes*
   1. Nagalingayna-Kutha 2. Vishvakurma-Poorana
   3. Kumalesherra Kalikamahata
C. *Used by Lingayat Children*
   1. Buswapoorana 2. Raghavankunkauya

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[48] Annexure A-XI.

[49] Given at Annexures B and C. Further, in the Public Despatch to Bengal from London dated 3 June 1814, it was observed, "The mode of instruction that from time immemorial has been practised under these masters has received the highest tributes of praise by its adoption in this country, under the direction of the Reverend Dr. Bell, formerly chaplain at Madras; and it has now become the mode by which education is conducted in our national establishments, from a conviction of the facility it affords in the acquisition of language by simplifying the process of instruction." *House of Commons Papers* 1831-32, Vol.9, p.487.

[50] Annexure A-XIX.

AGE OF ENROLLMENT, DAILY TIMINGS AND DURATION OF SCHOOLING*

District	Age of enrolment	Daily Timings	Duration in school
GANJAM		6 AM to 5 PM	
VIZAGAPATAM		6-9 AM, 10-30 to 2 PM, 3 to 6 PM	
RAJAHMUNDRY	5th day of 5th month of 5th year of age		5 to 7 years
MASULIPATAM	At age five	6-9 AM, 11-6 PM.	7 years to 12 years
GUNTOOR		6-9 AM, 11-2 PM, 4-7 PM (afternoon for writing)	
NELLORE	At age five		3 to 6 years
CUDDAPAH: Brahmins	At age five or six	6-10 AM, 11-30 to 6 PM	2years
Sudras	At age of six to eight		
BELLARY	At age five		5 years to 10 to15 years
NORTH ARCOT	At age five		6 years and occasionally more
SOUTH ARCOT		6-10 AM, 12-2 PM, 3-7 PM	
TANJORE			5years
TRICHNOPOLY	At age seven		8 years
MADURA	At age five		7 to 10 years
COIMBATORE	At age five	6-10 AM, 2-8 PM 4 Holidays monthly, festivals	8 to 9 years
SALEM			3 to 5 years
MADRAS	At age five		8 years, Acquirement uncommonly great

* No mention is made about these aspects in replies from collectors of Malabar, Seringapatam, Chingleput, Tinnevelly and Canara.

3. Geereej Kullana 4. Unabhavamoorta
5. Chenna-Busavaswara-Poorana 6. Gurilagooloo, &c.

D. *Lighter Literature Read*
1. Punchatantra 2. Bhatalapunchavunsatee
3. Punklee-soopooktahuller 4. Mahantarungenee

E. *Dictionaries and Grammars used*
1. Nighantoo 2. Umara 3. Subdamumburee
4. Shubdeemunee-Durpana 5. Vyacurna
6. Andradeepeca 7. Andranamasungraha, &c, &c.

Names of the Books in Use in the Schools in Rajahmundry[51]

1. Baula Ramauyanum
2. Rookmany Culleyanum
3. Paurejautahpatraranum
4. Molly Ramauyanum
5. Raumayanum
6. Dausarady Satacum
7. Kroostna Satacum
8. Soomaty Satacum
9. Janakey Satacum
10. Prasunnaragara Satacum
11. Ramataraka Satacum
12. Bahscara Satacum
13. Bhoosanavecausa Satacum
14. Beemalingaswara Satacum
15. Sooreyanaraina Satacum
16. Narraina Satacum
17. Plahalauda Charetra
18. Vasoo Charetra
19. Manoo Charetra
20. Sunmuga Charetra
21. Nala Charetra
22. Vamana Charetra
23. Ganintum
24. Pauvooloory Ganintum
25. Bhauratam
26. Bhaugavatum
27. Vejia Valousum
28. Kroostnaleelau Velausum
29. Rathamathava Velausum
30. Suptama Skundum
31. Astma Skundum
32. Rathamathava Sumvadum
33. Bhaunoomaty Parenayem
34. Leelansoondary Parenayem
35. Veerabhadra Vejayem
36. Amarum
37. Sooranbhanaswarum
38. Voodeyagapurvem
39. Audepurvem
40. Gajandra Motchum
41. Andhranamasungraham
42. Coochalopurkeyanum
43. Resekajana Manobharanum

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

While several of the collectors observed that no institutions of higher learning were then known to exist in their districts, the rest reported a total of 1,094 such places which were enumerated under the term

[51] Annexure A-XX.

'colleges' (as mentioned in the prescribed form). The largest number of these, 279, were in the district of Rajahmundry with a total of 1,454 scholars, Coimbatore coming next with 173 such places (724 scholars). Guntoor had 171 (with 939 scholars), Tanjore 109 (with 769 scholars), Nellore 107, North Arcot 69 (with 418 scholars), Salem 53 (with 324 scholars), Chingleput 51 (with 398 scholars), Masulipatam 49 (with 199 scholars), Bellary 23, Trichnopoly 9 (with 131 scholars), and Malabar with one old institution maintained by the Samudrin Raja (Zamorin), with 75 scholars. In most other districts where no such institutions were known, the collectors reported that such learning—in the Vedas, Sastras (Law), Astronomy, Ganeetsastram, Ethics, etc.—was imparted in Agraharams, or usually at home. The data regarding such learning, but privately, from Malabar may be indicative of the extent of such learning in other districts also (discussed in a subsequent section). The following Table (p.30) indicates these and other details more clearly.

While in most areas the Brahmin scholars formed a very small proportion of those studying in schools, higher learning, being more in the nature of professional specialisation, seems in the main to have been limited to the Brahmins. This was especially true regarding the disciplines of Theology, Metaphysics, Ethics, and to a large extent of the study of Law. But the disciplines of Astronomy and Medical Science seem to have been studied by scholars from a variety of backgrounds and castes, and this is very evident from the Malabar data where out of 808 studying Astronomy, only 78 were Brahmins; and of the 194 studying Medicine, only 31 were Brahmins. Incidentally, in Rajahmundry five of the scholars in the institution of higher learning were Soodras, and according to other Madras Presidency surveys, of those practising Medicine and Surgery it was found that such persons belonged to a variety of castes, and amongst them the barbers according to British medical men were the best in Surgery.[52]

Besides the account provided by the Samudrin Raja regarding the functioning of the institution supported by his family in Malabar,[53] the

[52] These surveys began to be made from 1812 onwards, and their main purpose was to find out what number of such medical men were in receipt of assignments of revenue. Some details of the castes of these practitioners may be found in Madras Board of Revenue Proceedings of 17th September 1821, and of 9th March 1837, and other proceedings referred to therein.

[53] Annexure A-XXI.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING*

District	Number of Colleges/ Teachers	Total Students	Vedum (Theo-logy)	Sanscrit	Law	Astronomy (or Ganit Sastram)	Andhra Sastram (High Telugu Poetics)	Hindustani Music	Other details
RAJAHMUNDRY	279	1,454	1,033 (198)	—	358 (60)	49 (14)	14 (7)	——	Brahmans, 1,449
MASULIPATAM	49	199		66 (11)	98 (30)	35 (8)			All Brahmins
NELLORE	107	—	(83)	—	(15)	(8)	—	(1)	In text of letter on separate details
CHINGLEPUT	51	398	—	—	—	—	—	—	All Brahmins
NORTH ARCOT	69	418	298 (43)	—	117 (24)	3 (2)	—	—	All Brahmins
TANJORE	109	769	—	—	—	—	—	—	All Brahmins, mostly students of Vedums
TRICHNOPOLY	9	131	—	—	—	—	—	—	All Brahmins
COIMBATORE	173	724	(94)	—	(69)	(10)	—	—	All Brahmins
MALABAR**	1	75	—	—	—	—	—	—	All Brahmins
BELLARY	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
GUNTOOR	171	939	—	—	—	—	—	—	In text of letter some later proceed for further study to Banaras and Navadweepum
SALEM	53	324	—	—	—	—	—	—	All Brahmins
TOTAL	1,094	5,431							

* While all the above districts give the number of colleges, or teachers of higher learning, many of them do not provide details regarding the number of students in them, or the divisions of the institutions into various categories. The number of places of higher learning is shown in parenthesis. **Table on page 36 gives details of another 1,594 students of higher learning from all communities in Malabar.

collectors of Guntoor, Cuddapah, Masulipatam, Madura and Madras also wrote in some detail on the subject of higher learning. According to the collector of Madras: "Astronomy, Astrology, etc. are in some instances taught to the children of the poorer class of Bramins gratis, and in certain few cases an allowance is given proportionate to the circumstances of the parents or Guardians." (Annexure A-XI) The collector of Madura on the other hand mentioned that:

> "In Agrahrom Villages inhabited by Bramins, it has been usual from time immemorial to allot for the enjoyment of those who study the Vaidoms (Religion), and Pooraunoms (Historical traditions), an extent of Mauneom Land yielding from 20 to 50 fanams per annum, and in a few but rare instances to the extent of 100 fanams, and they gratuitously and generally instruct such pupils as may voluntarily be brought to them."[54]

The collector of Masulipatam made a similar observation and stated:

> If the boys are of Vydeea Bramins, they are, so soon as they can read properly, removed direct from schools to colleges of Vadums and Sastrums.
>
> The former is said to be the mother to all the sciences of Hindoos, and the latter is the common term for all those sciences, which are in Sanscrit, viz., law, astronomy, theology, etc. etc. These sciences are taught by Bramins only, and more especially Bramins holding Agraharams, Mauniums, Rozunahs, or other emoluments, whose duty it is to observe their religious obligation on all occasions.
>
> In most of the towns, villages and hamlets of this country, the Bramins are teaching their boys the Vadums and Sastrums, either in colleges or elsewhere in their respective houses.[55]

The more descriptive accounts however were from Cuddapah and Guntoor. The collector of Cuddapah stated:

> Although there are no schools or Colleges supported by public contribution, I ought not to omit that amongst Bramins, Instruction, is in many places gratuitously

[54] Annexure A-IX.

[55] Annexure A-XVI.

> afforded—and the poorer class obtain all their education in this way—at the age of from 10 to 16 years, if he has not the means of obtaining instruction otherwise a young Bramin leaves his home, and proceeds to the residence of a man of his own caste who is willing to afford instruction without recompense to all those resorting to him for the purpose. They do not however derive subsistence from him for as he is generally poor himself, his means could not of course give support to others, and even if he had the means his giving food and clothing to his pupils would attract so many as to defeat the object itself which is professed.
>
> The Board would naturally enquire, how these children who are so destitute as not to be able to procure instruction in their own Villages, could subsist in those to which they are strangers, and to which they travel from 10 to 100 miles, with no intention of returning for several years. They are supported entirely by charity, daily repeated, not received from the instructor for the reasons above mentioned, but from the inhabitants of the Villages generally. They receive some portion of Alms daily (for years) at the door of every Bramin in the village, and this is conceded to them with a cheerfulness which considering the object in view must be esteemed as a most honorable trait in the Native character, and its unobtrusiveness ought to enhance the value of it. We are undoubtedly indebted to this benevolent Custom for the General spread of education amongst a class of persons whose poverty would otherwise be an insurmountable obstacle to advancement in knowledge and it will be easily inferred that it requires only the liberal and fostering care of Government to bring it to perfection.[56]

The collector of Guntoor was equally descriptive and observed that though there seemed to be "no colleges for teaching theology, law, astronomy &c. in the district" which are endowed by the state yet:

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[56] Annexure A-XXVII.

> …these sciences are privately taught to some scholars or disciples generally by the Bramins learned in them, without payment of any fee or reward, and that the Bramins who teach are generally maintained by means of Mauniem land which have been granted to their ancestors by the ancient Zemindars of this Zillah, and by the former governments on different accounts, but there appears no instance in which the native Governments have granted allowances in money and land merely for the Maintenance of the teachers for giving instruction in the above sciences. By the information which has been got together on this subject, it appears that there are 171 places where Theology, Law and Astronomy, etc. are taught privately, and the number of disciples in them is 939. The readers of these sciences cannot generally get teachers in their respective Villages and are therefore obliged to go to others. In which cases if the reader belongs to a family that can afford to support him he gets what is required for his expenses from his home and which is estimated at 3 rupees per month, but which is only sufficient to supply him with his victuals; and if on the other hand his family is in too indigent circumstances to make such allowance, the student procures his daily subsistence from the Houses in the Village, where taught, which willingly furnish such by turns.
>
> Should people be desirous of studying deeper in Theology, etc., than is taught in these parts, they travel to Benares, Navadweepum[57], etc., where they remain for years to take instructions under the learned Pundits of those places.[58]

SOME BOOKS USED IN HIGHER LEARNING

The books used in these institutions may be assumed to have been the Vedas, the various Sastras, the Puranas, the more well known books on Ganita, and Jyotish-shastras, and Epic literature. Except in the report from Rajahmundry there is no mention of any books in the

[57] This observation of the Collector of Guntoor is corroborated by W. Adam wherein he mentions that at Nadia many scholars came from "remote parts of India, especially from the South". (W. Adam, *op.cit.*, p.78.) [58] Annexure A-XXIII.

reports from other districts. According to Rajahmundry some of the books used there were:

Names of the Books in use in the Colleges in Rajahmundry[59]

Vadahs, etc.

1. Roogvadum
2. Yajoorvadum
3. Samavadum
4. Sroudum
5. Dravedavedum or Naulauyarum

Cauveyams

1. Ragoovumsam
2. Coomarasumbhauem
3. Moghasundasem
4. Bhauravy
5. Maukhum
6. Nayeshadum
7. Andasastrum

Sastrums

1. Sanscrit Grammar: Siddhanda Cowmoody
2. Turkum
3. Jeyoteshem
4. Durmasastrum

Besides, as Rajahmundry had a few Persian schools[60] it also sent a list of Persian and Arabic books studied. These were:

1. Caremah Aumadunnanmah
2. Harckarum in Persian
3. Inshah Culipha and Goolstan
4. Bahurdanish and Bostan
5. Abbul Phazul Inshah
6. Calipha
7. Khoran

PRIVATE TUITION (or EDUCATION AT HOME)

Several collectors, especially the collector of Canara, who did not send any statistical returns at all, mentioned the fact that many of the boys and especially the girls received education at home from their parents, or relatives, or from privately engaged tutors; and many also stated higher learning being imparted in Agraharums, etc. However it was only the collectors of Malabar and of the city of Madras who sent any statistical data on the subject. The collector of Malabar sent such data with regard to higher learning, while the collector of Madras

[59] Annexure A-XX.

[60] It may be mentioned that Persian schools (in all about 145 in the Presidency) were predominantly attended by Muslims, and only a few Hindoos seem to have attended them (North Arcot: Hindoos 2, Muslims 396). However, quite a number of Muslim girls were reported to be attending these schools.

about the boys and girls who were receiving education in their homes. Both the returns are reproduced in the following Tables (pp.36-37).

Regarding the data concerning higher learning from Malabar it is possible that though such learning by private tutors did exist in most other districts, Malabar having a rather different historical and sociological background had such private learning to a far greater extent. As will be noted from the Table, those studying in this manner at this period (1823) were about 21 times the number of those attending the solitary college supported by the more or less resourceless family of the Samudrin Raja. This Malabar data also mentioned 194 persons to be studying medicine. As indigenous medical practitioners existed in every other district, perhaps in every village (and some of them were still in receipt of revenue assignments for their services to the community), it can logically be assumed that similar teaching in Medical Science existed in most other districts too.

What number and proportions in the various disciplines were thus educated privately in the other districts, however, is a speculative question. Still, it may not be too erroneous to assume that the number of those 'privately' studying Theology, Law, Astronomy, Metaphysics, Ethics, Poetry and Literature, Medical Science, Music, and Dance (all of which existed in this period) was perhaps several times the number of those who were receiving such education institutionally.

The data from Madras about the number of boys and girls receiving tuition at their homes is equally pertinent. In comparison to those being educated in schools in Madras, this number is 4.73 times. Though it is true that half of these privately tutored were from amongst the Brahmins and the Vysees, still those from the Soodras form 28.7% of this number, and from the other castes 13%. Furthermore, the Indian part of Madras at this period was more of a shanty-town and in comparison to the older towns and cities of the Presidency a relatively badly organised place, the status of its Indian inhabitants being rather lower in the social scale than their counterparts in other places like Madura, Tanjore, Trichnopoly, etc. It, therefore, may be quite probable that the number of those privately educated in other districts, if not some 4 to 5 times more than those attending school as in Madras city, was still appreciably large. The observation of Thomas Munro that there was "probably some error" in the figure of 26,903 being taught

DETAILS OF HIGHER LEARNING BY PRIVATE TUTORS IN MALABAR, 1823*

	Brahmin Scholars			Vysee Scholars			Soodra Scholars			All other castes		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Theology & Law	471	3	474	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Astronomy	78	—	78	18	5	23	176	19	195	496	14	510
Metaphysics	34	—	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	31	—	31
Ethics	22	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	31	—	31
Medical Science	31	—	31	—	—	—	59	—	59	100	—	100
TOTAL	636	3	639	18	5	23	235	19	254	658	14	672

	Grand Total No. 1 to 12 inclusive			Muslim Scholars			Total Hindoos & Muslims			Total Population		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Theology & Law	471	3	474	—	—	—	471	3	474			
Astronomy	768	38	806	2	—	2	770	38	808			
Metaphysics	65	—	65	—	—	—	65	—	65			
Ethics	53	—	53	—	—	—	53	—	53			
Medical Science	190	—	190	4	—	4	194	—	194			
TOTAL	1,547	41	1,588	6	—	6	1,553	41	1,594	4,58,368	4,49,207	9,07,575

* Annexure A-XXI.

NUMBER OF THOSE RECEIVING TUITION AT THEIR HOMES IN MADRAS DISTRICT, FEBRUARY 1825*

Brahmin Scholars			Vysee Scholars			Soodra Scholars			All other castes		
M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
7,586	98	7,684	6,132	63	6,195	7,589	220	7,809	3,449	136	3,585

Grand Total No.1 to 12			Muslim Scholars			Total Hindoos & Muslims			Total Population		
M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24,756	517	25,273	1,690	0	1,690	2,6446	517	26,963	228,636	233,415	462,051

* Annexure A-XXVIII.

at home in Madras city, which incidentally has been made much of by later commentators on the subject, does not however have much validity. If the number had been considered seriously erroneous, a new computation for the city of Madras, to which alone it pertained, would have been no difficult matter, especially as this return had been submitted to the Governor one whole year before this comment. It was perhaps required of Thomas Munro as head of the executive to express such a reservation and it undoubtedly was the sort of comment which the makers of policy in London wished to hear.[61] This draft however was followed by the remark that "the state of education here exhibited, low as it is compared with that of our own country, is higher than it was in most European countries at no very distant period." As may be guessed from the data pertaining to Britain the term "at no very distant period" really meant the beginning of the nineteenth century which had been the real start of the day schools for most children in the British Isles.

EDUCATION OF GIRLS

As mentioned earlier, the number of girls attending school was very small. Leaving aside the district of Malabar and the Jyopoor division of Vizagapatam district, the girls from the Brahmin, Chettri, and Vysee castes were practically non-existent in schools. There were however some Muslim girls receiving school education: 56 in Trichnopoly, and 27 in Salem. The Hindoo girls who attended school, though again not in any large number, were from the Soodra and other Hindoo castes and according to the collectors of Masulipatam, Madura, Tinevelly and Coimbatore most of them were stated to be dancing girls, or girls who were presumably going to be *Devdasis* in the temples. The Table on

[61] As in many other instances, it was unthinkable for the British that India could have had a proportionately larger number receiving education than those in England itself. Such views and judgements in fact were applied to every sphere and even the rights of the Indian peasantry were tailored accordingly. On the rights of the cultivator of land in India, the Fifth Report of the House of Commons stated: "It was accordingly decided, 'that the occupants of land in India could establish no more right, in respect to the soil, than tenantry upon an estate in England can establish a right to the land, by hereditary residence:' and the meerassee of a village was therefore defined to be, a preference of cultivation derived from hereditary residence, but subject to the right of government as the superior lord of the soil, in what way it chooses, for the cultivation of its own lands." (*House of Commons Papers*, 1812, Volume 7, p.105.)

pages 40-41 presents the district and caste-wise number of the girls attending school, or said to be receiving private tuition.

As will be noticed from the Table (on pages 40-41), the position in Malabar as also in the Jyopoor Zamindary of Vizagapatam district was much different. The relative numbers of girls and boys attending school in these two areas[62] were as below:

AREA	Brahmin	Vysee	Soodra	Other castes	Muslim	Total
Malabar						
Girls	5	13	707	343	1,122	2,190
Boys	2,230	84	3,697	2,756	3,196	11,963
Percentage of girls to boys	neg.	15.5%	19.1%	12.4%	35.1%	18.3%
Jyopoor (Vizagapatam)						
Girls	94	—	71	64	—	229
Boys	254	38	266	213	—	771
Percentage of girls to boys	37.0%	—	26.7%	30.0%	—	29.7%

In percentage terms of the total, the proportion of girls to boys in school was the highest, 29.7%, in the Jyopoor Zamindary of the Vizagapatam district, and even more surprisingly the proportion of Brahmin girls to Brahmin boys in school there was as high as 37%. Similarly, in Malabar the proportion of Muslim girls to Muslim boys in school being at 35.1% is truly astonishing.[63] Even amongst the Vysees, the Soodras and the other castes in Malabar the proportion of girls to boys was fairly high at 15.5%, 19.1% and 12.4% respectively; the proportion of the total being 18.3%. How two such widely separated areas (Malabar on the west coast while Jyopoor Zamindary being in the hilly tracts on the southern border of Orissa) had such a sociological similarity requires deeper study.

[62] Annexures A-XVII and A-XXI.

[63] While the caste-wise break up of the Madras Presidency school and college scholars has hitherto not been published, the separate figures for Hindoos and Muslims and those respectively divided into males and females were published as early as 1832 in the House of Commons Papers. Since then, it may be presumed that this data regarding the number of girls and boys in Malabar schools has been seen by a large number of scholars studying the question of education in India in the early nineteenth century. Curiously, however, there does not seem to be even a passing reference to this Malabar data in any of the published works. It seems to have been overlooked by Sir Philip Hartog also.

CASTE-WISE DIVISION OF FEMALE SCHOOL STUDENTS

DISTRICT	Brahmins	Vysees	Soodras	Other castes	Muslims	Total Female Students	Total Female Population	Other Details
Oriya Speaking								
GANJAM	0	0	2	10	0	12	1,79,111	
Telugu Speaking								
VIZAGAPATAM	99	0	73	131	0	303	4,58,152	
of above in Jyopoor	94	0	71	64	0	229	36,419	
RAJAHMUNDRY	3	0	6	28	0	37	3,44,796	
MASULIPATAM	1	0	1	29	2	33	2,40,683	Stated largely as dancing girls.
GUNTOOR	5	0	37	57	3	102	2,10,985	
NELLORE	0	0	55	0	3	58	4,06,927	
CUDDAPAH	0	0	68	39	1	108	5,15,999	
Kannada Speaking								
BELLARY	2	1	26	31	0	60	4,38,184	
SERINGAPATAM	0	0	14	0	0	14	16,761	
Malayalam Speaking								
MALABAR								
(i) School	5	13	707	343	1,122	2,190	4,49,207	
(ii) Private Higher learning								
(a)Theology and Law	3	0	0	0	0	3		
(b) Astronomy	0	5	19	14	0	38		

DISTRICT	Brahmins	Vysees	Soodras	Other castes	Muslims	Total Female Students	Total Female Population	Other Details
Tamil Speaking								
NORTH ARCOT	1	0	32	8	11	52	2,78,481	
SOUTH ARCOT	0	0	94	10	0	104	2,02,556	
CHINGLEPUT	3	0	79	34	0	116	1,72,886	
TANJORE	0	0	125	29	0	154	1,87,145	
TRICHNOPOLY	0	0	66	18	56	140	2,33,723	
MADURA	0	0	65	40	0	105	3,86,681	Stated largely as dancing girls.
TINNEVELLY	0	0	0	117	2	119	2,81,238	
COIMBATORE	0	0	82	0	0	82	3,21,268	Kykkala caste (Dancing girls.)
SALEM	0	0	3	28	27	58	5,33,485	
MADRAS							2,33,415	
(i)Ordinary school	1	9	113	4	0	127		
(ii)Charity school	0	2	0	47	0	49		
(iii)at home	98	63	220	136	0	517		
TOTAL	221	93	1,887	1,153	1,227	4,581*	60,91,593	

* Excluding those privately instructed in higher learning in Malabar (41), the total number of female school students is 4,540. This includes the 517 girls instructed at home in Madras.

V

The undertaking of the survey was welcomed by London in May 1825 when it wrote to Madras, "we think great credit is due to Sir Thomas Munro for having originated the idea of this enquiry". However, after receipt of the survey information and papers the reply Madras received ridiculed and altogether dismissed what had been reported to be functioning. In the Public despatch of 16 April 1828 Madras was told that "the information sent" while lacking in certain respects was "yet sufficiently complete to show, that in providing the means of a better education for the natives, little aid is to be expected from the instruments of education which already exist."

ADAM'S REPORT ON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN BENGAL AND BIHAR

Thirteen years after the initiation of the survey in the Madras Presidency a more limited semi-official survey of indigenous education was taken up in the Presidency of Bengal. This was what is known as the celebrated *Adam's Reports*, or to give the full title, *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal 1835 and 1838*.[64] It consists of three reports, the first dated 1st July 1835 being a survey of the available existing information regarding indigenous education and its nature and facilities in the various districts of Bengal (pp.1-126), the second dated 23 December 1835 being a survey of the prevalent situation undertaken by W. Adam in the Thana of Nattore in the district of Rajshahy (pp.127-208, pp.528-578), and the last dated 28 April 1838 being a survey of the situation in parts of Murshedabad, and the whole of the districts of Beerbhoom, Burdwan, South Behar and Tirhoot ending with Adam's reflections, recommendations and conclusions (pp.209-467).

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[64] Adam's Reports (W. Adam, *op. cit.*) were first published in 1835, 1836 and 1838. The three, together with some omissions, and a 60 page rather depressing and patronising introduction were published by Rev. J. Long from Calcutta in 1868. Still another edition of the whole (reintroducing the omissions made by Long and including Long's own introduction) with a further new 42 page introduction by Anathnath Basu was published by the University of Calcutta, in 1941. It is this last edition which is used in the present work. The reports, while never sufficiently analysed, have often been quoted in most works on the history of education in India.

Adam's Phraseology and Presentation

In spite of the controversies which Adam's Reports have given rise to, especially his mention of there being perhaps 1,00,000 village schools still existing in Bengal and Bihar in some form till the 1830's, the total impression produced by the reports is one of extensive decay, and their reading, especially because of Adam's evangelical moral tone, is a rather depressing business. Adam himself was no great admirer of the Indian teacher, or the nature and content of Indian education as he saw it. However, as Adam started from the view that the British government of the day should interest itself in the sphere of elementary and higher Indian education and also support it financially, he perhaps thought it necessary to use all possible argument and imagery to bring home this point. Perhaps under the circumstances it was necessary for him to dramatise the decay as well as the relative state of ignorance of the teachers, and the lack of books, buildings, etc., so that it evoked the desired sympathetic response. Furthermore, it may be mentioned that W. Adam initially had come to Bengal in 1818, as a Baptist Missionary, and though he left missionary activity after some years, and instead took to journalism, essentially he was a product of his contemporary British background in which the two main currents were either of evangelising India as advocated by a man like William Wilberforce, or to westernise it as intended by men like T. B. Macaulay and William Bentinck. As indicated earlier, both ideas were encompassed in the Charter Act of 1813. Additionally, the reports of Adam though not formal official documents were nonetheless sanctioned and financed by the orders of the Governor General himself. Naturally, therefore, while they may imply many things, as do some of the reports of the Madras Presidency collectors, they were nevertheless phrased in such a way as not to lay the blame directly on past government policy and action.

Varied and Valuable Sociological Data

The more important point which comes through Adam's voluminous writing, however, was his remarkable industry and the detail and variety of data which he was able to collect, firstly, from the post-1800 existing sources, and secondly, through his own investigations. While the controversy about his 1,00,000 village schools in Bengal and Bihar is finally forgotten, the material which he provided (regarding the caste composi-

tion of the pupils taught as well as the teachers, their average ages at various periods, and the books which were then in use in the districts he surveyed) will still have great relevance.

Selections Reproduced

Some selections from Adam's material are reproduced in the present work (Annexures D). These include: (i) descriptions of elementary education taken from the first and second reports, (ii) description of higher learning, from the first report, (iii) a section on medical education taken from the second report based on investigations in Nattore, Rajshahy, and (iv) some tabulations of the basic data for the five surveyed districts contained in the third report. This latter tabulation is given under the following heads:

(a) Elementary Schools and caste-wise division of students
(b) Elementary Schools and caste-wise division of teachers
(c) Books used in Elementary Schools
(d) Details of institutions of Sanscritic Learning
(e) Books used in Sanscritic Studies
(f) Details of institutions of Persian and Arabic Learning
(g) Books used in Persian and Arabic Studies
(h) Subject and District-wise duration of Study

The First Report: A Survey of Post-1800 material

In his first report, which is a general statement of the situation and a presentation of the data which he could derive from post-1800 official and other sources, Adam came to the conclusion, firstly, that every village had at least one school and in all probability in Bengal and Bihar with 1,50,748 villages "there will still be 1,00,000" villages that have these schools.[65] Secondly, on the basis of personal obser-

[65] W. Adam, *op. cit.*, pp.6-7. Incidentally the observation that every village had a school was nothing peculiar to Adam. As mentioned earlier many others before him had made similar observations, including Thomas Munro in his evidence to a House of Commons committee. Munro had then observed that "if civilization is to become an article of trade" between England and India, the former "will gain by the import cargo." As symptomatic of this high state of Indian civilisation, he also referred to "schools established in every village for teaching, reading, writing and arithmetic." When Thomas Munro made this statement he already had had 30 years of intensive Indian experience. (*House of Commons Papers*: 1812-13, Vol. 7, p.131).

vation and what he had learnt from other evidence, he inferred that on an average there were around 100 institutions of higher learning in each district of Bengal, and consequently he concluded that the 18 districts of Bengal had about 1,800 such institutions. Computing the number studying in these latter at the lowest figure of six scholars in each, he also came to the conclusion that some 10,800 scholars should be studying in them. He further observed that while the elementary schools "are generally held in the homes of some of the most respectable native inhabitants or very near them", the institutions of higher learning had buildings generally of clay with "sometimes three or five rooms" and "in others nine or eleven rooms", with a reading-room which is also of clay. These latter places were also used for the residence of the scholars, and the scholars usually were fed and clothed by the teachers, and where required, were assisted by the local people. After describing the method of teaching in both types of institutions and going into their daily routine, Adam then presented and examined the post-1800 data on the subject, district by district. The following Table (on pages 46-47 below) gives an abstract of this examination.

Survey of Nattore Thana

The second report was wholly devoted to Adam's study of the situation in the Thana of Nattore in the district of Rajshahy. It was like a modern pilot survey in which Adam developed his methods and fashioned his tools for the more extensive survey which was his primary aim. The results of this Nattore survey of 485 villages were tabulated, village by village, by Adam, and further details were provided for some of them in another tabulation. The population of this Thana was 1,20,928; the number of families 30,028 (in the proportion of one Hindoo to two Muslims); the number of elementary schools 27, and of schools of learning 38 (all these latter being Hindoo). In 1,588 families (80% of these being Hindoo) children occasionally received instruction at home. The number of scholars in elementary schools was 262 and education in them was between the ages of 8-14, while the scholars in schools of learning were 397, 136 of these being local persons and 261 from distant places, the latter also receiving both food and lodging. The average period of study in these latter institutions was 16 years, from about the age of 11 to the age of 27. However, while the number in

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING ACCORDING TO POST-1800 OTHER SOURCES WITH ADAM'S OBSERVATIONS

District or place		Population estimate	Hindu Muslim ratio	Institutions of Higher learning mentioned in Post-1800 accounts with Adams observations
Dinajpur	(p.16)	30,00,000 (1808)	3 to 7	Buchanan: 16 Adam: some mistake as Districts adjoin
Purnea	(p.16)	14,50,000 (1801) 29,04,380 (1810)	57 to 47	Buchanan: 119
Calcutta	(p.17)	2,00,000 (Approx.) (1822)		Ward (1818): 28, Scholars 173
Nuddea	(p.17)	7,64,430 (1802)	11 to 5	Ward (1818): 31, Scholars 747, Logic, Law.
	(p.78)			H. H. Wilson (1829): 25, Scholars 500-600
	(p.79)			Authorities (1816): 46, Scholars 380
(i) Koomaru Hutta	(p.81)			Ward: 7-8
(ii) Bhatpara	(p.81)			Ward: 7-8
24 Pergunnahs	(p.22)	16,25,000 (1801)		Hamilton (1801): 190
(i) Juyunugor	(p.22)			Ward: 17-18
(ii) Mujilee Pooru	(p.22)			Ward: 17-18
(iii) Andoolee	(p.22)			Ward: 10-12
Midnapore	(pp.50-51)	15,00,000 (1801)	6 to 1	Hamilton: None, Adam: 40
Cuttack(Puri)	(p.54)	12,96,365	10 to1	Stirling: Principal Street of 'Maths'

District or place		Population estimate	Hindu Muslim ratio	Institutions of Higher learning mentioned in Post-1800 accounts with Adams observations
Hugly	(pp.57-58)	15,00,000 (1801)	3 to 1	Ward (1818), Hamilton (1801): 150, Law
(i) Vansariya				Logic: 12-14
(ii) Triveni				Logic: 7-8
(iii) Gundulpara				Nyaya: 10
(iv) Bhudreshwuru				Nyaya: 10
(v) Valee				Nyaya: 2-3
Burdwan	(p.70)	14,44,487 (1813-14)	5 to 1	Hamilton: None; Adam: incredible
Jessore	(p.73)	12,00,000 (1801)	7 to 9	No information
Dacca Jalalpore	(p.85)	9,38,712 (1801)	1 to1	Hamilton:some; Portion population slaves
Backer Gerunje	(p.86)	9,26,723 (1801)	5 to 3	No information; Adam: some must exit
Chittagong	(pp.88-89)	12,00,000 (1801)	2 to3	No information; some Muslims Brahmanical
Tipera	(p.91)	7,50,000 (1801)	4 to 3	No information
Mymunsing	(p.92)	13,00,000 (1801)	2 to 5	Hamilton: 2-3 for each of 25 Purgunnahs
Sylhet	(pp.93-94)	4,92,945	3 to 2	No information
Rajshahy	(pp.103-104)	15,00,000 (1801)	2 to 1	No information; Adam: Expects several
Rangpur	(pp.106-107)	27,25,000	12 to 15	Adam: 41 in 9 Sub-divisions
Moorshedabad	(p.96)	10,20,572 (1809)	2 to 1	1801 estimate: 21; Adam: Expects more
Beerbhoom	(pp.98-100)	12,67,067 (1801)	30 to 1	Hamilton: Silent; Adam: Expects some

elementary schools was so low, these 485 villages nonetheless had 123 native general medical practitioners, 205 village doctors, 21 mostly Brahmin smallpox inoculators practising according to the old Indian method,[66] 297 women-midwives, and 722 snake conjures.

Survey of Five Districts

It is the third report of Adam which has the most data. In this Adam gives the findings of his surveys in part of the district of Murshedabad (20 Thanas with a population of 1,24,804 out of 37 Thanas with a total district population of 9,69,447), and the whole of the districts of Beerbhoom and Burdwan in Bengal, and of South Behar and Tirhoot in Bihar. In one Thana of each district, Adam carried out the enquiries personally and also gathered additional information, while in the rest it was done for him according to his instructions and proformas by his trained Indian assistants. Earlier Adam's intention was to visit every village in person but he found that "the sudden appearance of a European in a village often inspired terror, which it was always difficult, and sometimes impossible, to subdue" (p.214). He, therefore, and also to save time, gave up this idea of a personal visit to every village.

Language-wise Division

The total number of schools of all types in the selected districts numbered 2,566 and these schools were divided into Bengali (1,098), Hindi (375), Sanscrit (353), Persian (694), Arabic (31), English (8), Girls (6), and infants (1). The number of schools in the district of Midnapore were also given; it had 548 Bengali schools, 182 Oriya schools, 48 Persian schools, and one English school. The following Table (on page 49) gives the position, district-wise.

Four Stages of School Instruction

Adam divided the period spent in elementary schools into four stages. These according to him were, *first*, seldom exceeding ten days, the young scholar was taught "to form the letters of the alphabet on the ground with a small stick or slip of bamboo", or on a sandboard. The

[66] See Dharampal, *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century*: *Some Contemporary European Accounts*, *op. cit.*, pp.169-187, for an account of this old method.

NUMBER AND TYPE OF SCHOOLS

Type of school	Murshi-dabad (p.223) part Dist.	Beer-bhoom (p.224) whole Dist.	Burd-wan (p.225) whole Dist.	South Behar (p.226) whole Dist.	Tirhoot (p.226) whole Dist.	Total of Sur-veyed Dists	Midna-pore (p.222) whole Dist.
BENGALI	62	407	629	—	—	1,098	548
HINDI	5	5	—	285	80	375	—
ORIYA	—	—	—	—	—	—	182
SANSCRIT	24	56	190	27	56	353	—
PERSIAN	17	71	93	279	234	694	48
ARABIC	2	2	11	12	4	31	—
ENGLISH	2	2	3	1	—	8	1
GIRLS	1	1	4	—	—	6	—
INFANTS	—	—	1	—	—	1	—
	113	544	931	604	374	2,566	779

second stage, extending from two and a half to four years, was "distinguished by the use of the palm leaf as the material on which writing is performed", and the scholar was "taught to write and read', and commit "to memory the Cowrie Table, the Numeration Table as far as 100, the Katha Table (a land measure Table), and the Ser Table", etc. The *third* stage extended "from two to three years which are employed in writing on the plantain-leaf." Addition, subtraction, and other arithmetical rules were additionally taught during this period. In the *fourth*, and last stage, of up to two years, writing was done on paper, and the scholar was expected to be able to read the Ramayana, Manasa Mangal, etc., at home, as well as be qualified in accounts, and the writing of letters, petitions, etc. The following Table (on page 50) indicates the numbers, using the various materials on which writing was done in the surveyed areas.

Elementary Education for All Sections

The first striking point from this broader survey is the wide social strata to which both the taught and the teachers in the elementary schools belonged. It is true that the greater proportion of the teachers came from the Kayasthas, Brahmins, the Sadgop and the Aguri castes. Yet quite a number came from 30 other caste groups also, and even the Chandals had 6 teachers. The elementary school students present an

FOUR STAGES OF SCHOOL INSTRUCTION					
Material used	Murshidabad No. of Scholars	Beerbhoom No. of Scholars	Burdwan No. of Scholars	South Behar No. of Scholars	Tirhoot No. of Scholars
1st stage					
Ground Sand-board	71	372	702	1,506	250
2nd stage					
Palm-leaf	525	3,551	7,113	—	—
Wooden-board	35	19	—	1,503	172
3rd stage					
Plantain-leaf	3	299	2,765	—	—
Sal-leaf	—	98	—	—	—
Brazen-plate	9	—	—	42	55
4th stage					
Paper	437	2,044	2,610	39	30
Total	1,080	6,383	13,190	3,090	507

even greater variety and it seems as if every caste group is represented in the student population, the Brahmins and the Kayasthas nowhere forming more than 40% of the total. In the two Bihar districts they together formed no more than 15 to 16%. The more surprising figure is of 61 Dom, and 61 Chandal school students in the district of Burdwan, nearly equal to the number of Vaidya students, 125, in that district. While Burdwan had 13 missionary schools, the number of Dom and Chandal scholars in them were only four and as Adam mentioned, only 86 of the "scholars belonging to 16 of the lowest castes" were in these missionary schools while 674 scholars from them were in the "native schools" (p.241).

Teaching of Accounts

Regarding the content of elementary teaching Adam mentioned various books which were used in teaching. These varied considerably from district to district, but all schools in the surveyed districts, except perhaps the 14 Christian schools, taught accounts and most of them taught both commercial and agricultural accounts. Below is a district-wise detailed statement on this point. (Table on page 51).

The age of admission in elementary schools varied from 5 to 8 years and that of leaving school from 13 years to 16.5 years.

TEACHING OF ACCOUNTS					
Type Accounts	Murshedabad No. Schools	Beerbhoom No. Schools.	Burdwan No. Schools	South Behar No. Schools	Tirhoot No. Schools
1. Commercial	7	36	2	36	4
2. Agricultural	14	47	5	20	8
3. Both	46	328	609	229	68
Total	67	411	616	285	80
4. Christian Instruction	—	1	13	—	—
Total all schools	67	412	629	285	80

Institutions of Sanscritic Learning

The schools of Sanscritic learning in the surveyed districts (in all 353) numbered as high as 190 in Burdwan (1,358 scholars) and as low as 27 in South Behar (437 scholars). The teachers (355 in all) were predominantly Brahmins, only 5 being from the Vaidya caste. The subjects predominantly taught were Grammar (1,424 students), Logic (378 students), Law (336 students) and Literature (120 students). Others, in order of numbers studying them were Mythology (82 students), Astrology (78 students), Lexicology (48 students), Rhetoric (19 students), Medicine (18 students), Vedanta (13 students), Tantra (4 students), Mimansa (2 students), and Sankhya (1 student). The duration of the study and the ages when it was started and completed varied a great deal from subject to subject, and also from district to district. The study of Grammar started at the earliest age (9 to 12 years) and of Law, Mythology, Tantras, etc. after the age of 20. The period of study ordinarily lasted from about 7 to 15 years.

Institutions Teaching Persian and Arabic

Those studying Persian (which was treated more as a school subject than one of higher learning by Adam) numbered 3,479, the largest, 1,424, being in South Behar. The age of admission in them ranged from 6.8 years to 10.3 years, and the study seemed to have continued for some 11 to 15 years. Over half of those studying Persian were Hindoos, the Kayasthas being predominant.[67]

[67] This, as may be noticed, was quite at variance with the Madras Presidency districts where Persian was not only studied little, but the students of it were mainly Muslims. Interestingly, Adam mentions (p.149) that amongst the Muslims

Arabic was being studied by 175 scholars, predominantly Muslims, but 4 Kayasthas, 2 Aguris, 1 Teli, and 2 Brahmin were also students of Arabic. The books used in Persian learning were numerous and an appreciable number for the study of Arabic.

Finally, the teachers in all types of institutions were largely in their thirties.

DR. G. W. LEITNER ON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE PUNJAB

Some 45 years after Adam, Dr. G. W. Leitner, one time Principal of Government College, Lahore, and for sometime acting Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab prepared an even more voluminous survey of indigenous education there.[68] The survey is very similar to that of W. Adam; Leitner's language and conclusions, however, were more direct and much less complementary to British rule. Incidentally, as time passed, the inability of the British rulers to face any criticism grew correspondingly. The British perhaps had really begun to believe in their 'divinely ordained' mission in India, and other conquered areas.[69]

At any rate, Leitner's researches showed that at the time of the annexation of the Punjab (1849) the lowest computation gave "3,30,000 pupils in the schools of the various denominations who were acquainted with reading, writing and some method of computation", against "little more than 1,90,000" pupils in 1882. Further that 35-40 years previously "thousands of them belonged to Arabic and Sanskrit colleges, in which oriental Literature and systems of oriental Law, Logic, Philosophy, and Medicine were taught to the highest standards". Leitner went into great

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"when a child… is four years, four months, and four days old", he, or she is on that day usually admitted to school.

[68] *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab since Annexation and in 1882* (Published Calcutta, 1882; Reprinted, Patiala, 1973).

[69] Perhaps the idea of their being divinely ordained was really a much older English assumption. In *A Brief Description of New York Formerly Called New-Netherlands*, published in 1670 , referring to the indigenous people in that part of North America, Daniel Denton observes: 'It is to be admired, how strangely they have decreast by the Hand of God, since the English first settling of those parts; for since my time, where there were six towns, they are reduced to two small villages, and it hath been generally observed, that where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the Indians either by wars one with the other, or by some raging mortal Disease.' (Reprint, Cleveland, 1902, p.45).

detail, district by district, basing himself on earlier official writings and then carried out a detailed survey of his own regarding the position in 1882. A few brief extracts from this work, pertaining to his general statement, the type of schools which had existed earlier, and the list of books used in the Sanscritic schools are included amongst the documents reproduced in this work (Annexure E).

VI

In the documents reproduced in this work, or in others of the eighteenth or early nineteenth century on the subject of education in India, while there is much on the question of higher learning, especially of Theology, Law, Medicine, Astronomy, and Astrology, there is scarcely any reference to the teaching and training in the scores of technologies, and crafts which had then existed in India. There is also little mention of training in Music, and Dance. These latter two it may be presumed were largely taken care of by the complex temple organisations. The major cause of the lack of reference about the former, however, is obviously because those who wrote on education—whether as government administrators, or as travellers, as Christian missionaries, or as scholars—were themselves uninterested in how such crafts were taught, or passed from one generation to another. Some of them evidently were interested in the particular technology, or craft as indicated by the writings on the manufacture of iron and steel, the fashioning of agricultural tools, the cotton and silk textiles, the materials used in architecture, and buildings, the materials used in the building of ships, the manufacture of ice, paper, etc. But even in such writings, the interest lay in the particular method and technology and its technological and scientific details, and not in how these were learnt.

Yet another cause for the lack of information on the teaching of techniques and crafts may possibly lie in the fact that ordinarily in India most crafts were basically learnt in the home, and what was termed apprenticeship in Britain (one could not practise any craft, profession, etc., in England without a long and arduous period under a master craftsman, or technologist) was more informal in India, the parents usually being the teachers and the children the learners. Another reason might have been that particular technologies or crafts, even like the

profession of the digging of tanks, or the transportation of commodities were the function of particular specialist groups, some of them operating in most parts of India, while others in particular regions, and therefore any formal teaching and training in them must have been a function of such groups themselves. Remarks like that "it is extremely difficult to learn the arts of the Indians, for the same cast, from father to son exercises the same trade and the punishment of being excluded from the cast on doing anything injurious to its interests is so dreadful that it is often impossible to find an inducement to make them communicate anything",[70] appear to indicate some organisation of individual technologies at group levels. However, to know anything regarding their teaching, the innovations and improvisations in them, (there must have been innumerable such instances even if these were on a decline), it is essential to have much more detailed information on such groups, the nature of these technologies, and what in essence constituted a formal, or informal apprenticeship in the different crafts. On this so far we seem to have little information.

The following indicative list of the crafts listed in some of the districts of the Madras Presidency (collected in the early 19th century records for levying tax on them) may however give some idea of their variety.

TANKS, BUILDINGS, ETC.

Stone-cutters	Wood Woopers (wood cutters)
Marble mine workers	Bamboo cutters
Chunam Makers	Wudders (Tank diggers)
Sawyers	Brick-layers

METALLURGY

Iron ore collectors	Copper-smiths
Iron manufacturers	Lead Washers
Iron forge operators	Gold dust collectors
Iron Furnaces operators	Iron-smiths
Workers of smelted metal into bars	Horse-shoe makers
Brass-smiths	Gold-smiths

[70] See letter of Dr. H. Scott to Sir Joseph Banks, President, Royal Society, London, 7.1.1790 in *Indian Science and Technology in the Eighteenth Century*, *op. cit.*, p.285.

TEXTILES

Cotton cleaners
Cotton beaters
Cotton carders
Silk makers
Spinners
Ladup, or Penyasees
Cotton spinners
Chay thread makers
Chay root diggers (a dye)
Rungruaze, or dyers
Mudda wada, or dyers in red
Indigo makers
Dyers in indigo
Loom Makers
Silk weavers
Fine cloth weavers
Coarse cloth weavers
Chintz weavers
Carpet weavers
Sutrenze carpet weavers
Cumblee weavers
Cot tape weavers
Thread Purdah weavers
Gunny weavers
Pariah weavers (a very large number)
Mussalman weavers
Barber weavers
Boyah weavers
Smooth and glaze cloth men

OTHER CRAFTSMEN

Preparers of earth for bangles
Bangle makers
Paper makers
Fire-works makers
Oilmen
Soap makers
Salt makers
Earth salt manufacturers
Salt-petre makers
Arrack Distillers
Collectors of drugs and roots
Utar makers, druggists

MISCELLANEOUS

Boat-men
Fishermen
Rice-beaters
Toddy makers
Preparers of earth for washermen
Washermen
Barbers
Tailors
Basket makers
Mat makers
Sandal makers
Umbrella makers
Shoe makers
Pen painters
Carpenters
Dubbee makers
Winding instrument makers
Seal makers
Chucklers

From the foregoing it may be observed that the major common impression which emerges from the 1822-25 Madras Presidency data, the reports of W. Adam on Bengal and Bihar of 1835-38, and the later

Punjab survey by G. W. Leitner is that of a sense of widespread neglect and decay in the field of indigenous education within a few decades after the onset of British rule. If studies of the detailed data pertaining to the innumerable crafts, technologies and manufactures of this period, or for that matter of social organisation were to be made, the conclusions in all probability will be little different. On the other hand, the descriptions of life and society provided by earlier European accounts (i.e., accounts written prior to the onset of European dominance) of different parts of India and the data on Indian exports relating to this earlier period, notwithstanding the political turmoil in certain parts of India, on the whole leaves an impression of a society which seems relatively prosperous and lively. The conclusion that the decay noticed in the early 19th century and more so in subsequent decades originated with European supremacy in India, therefore, seems inescapable. The 1769-70 famine in Bengal when, according to British record, one-third of the population actually perished, may be taken as a mere forerunner of what was to come.

In the context of some historical dialectic, however, such a decay might have been inevitable, perhaps even necessary and was to be deliberately induced. For instance, Karl Marx, as such no friend of imperialism or capitalism, writing in 1853 was of the view that, "England has to fulfil a double mission in India: one destructive, the other regenerating—the annihilation of the old Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundation of Western society in Asia."[71] However, it is not India only which experienced this phenomenon of deliberate destruction. Other areas of the world, especially the Americas and Africa seem to have experienced such destruction to an even greater extent. The nearly total annihilation of the aboroginal people of the Americas after their subjugation by Europe from 1500 A.D. onwards, who by modern scholars are estimated to have been in the range of 90 to 112 million around 1500 A.D.[72] (far more numerous than the estimated total population of Europe then) but dwindled down to

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[71] First published in *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1853; also recently quoted by Iu.I. Semenov 'Socio-economic Formations and World History,' in *Soviet and Western Anthropology*, edited by Ernest Gellner, Duckworth, 1980.

[72] *Current Anthropology*, Volume 7, No. 4, October 1966, pp.395-449, "Estimating Aboriginal American Population", by Henry F. Dobyns.

merely a few million by the end of the 19th century, is an occurrence of far greater import. It is possible that while differing in extent and numbers similar destruction and annihilation had occurred in different parts of the world through conquest and subjugation at various times during human history. Further, quite possibly no people or culture in the world can altogether claim innocence for itself from any participation at one time or another in such occurrences. Nonetheless, whatever may be the case regarding the world before 1500 A.D., the point is that after this date ancient functioning and established cultures in most areas of the world, if not wholly eliminated, had largely become depressed and had come under a great cloud with the expansion of European dominance, requires little proof. It is obvious.

During the latter part of the 19th century, impressions of decay, decline and deprivation began to agitate the mind of the Indian people. Such impressions no doubt resulted from concrete personal, parental and social experience of what had gone before, but were perhaps somewhat exaggerated at times. By 1900 it had become general Indian belief that India had been decimated by British rule in all possible ways; that not only impoverished[73], it had been degraded to the furthest extent; that the people of India had been cheated of most of what they had; that their customs and manners were ridiculed, and that the infrastructure of their society mostly eroded. One of the statements which thus came up was that the ignorance and illiteracy in India was caused by British rule and that conversely at the beginning of British political dominance India had had extensive education, learning and literacy. By 1930 much had been written on this point in the same manner as had been written on the deliberate destruction of Indian crafts and industry, and the impoverishment of the Indian countryside. However, to many of the expanding strata of westernised Indians (whether Marxists, Fabians, or capitalist-roaders, their views on India and the contempt for it almost

[73] Writing as early as 1804, William Bentinck, the young Governor of the Madras Presidency, wrote to the President of the Board of Control, Lord Castlereagh, that "we have rode the country too hard, and the consequence is that it is in the most lamentable poverty." (Nottingham University: Bentinck Papers: Pw Jb 722). In 1857-58 a military officer wrote to Governor General Canning, "it may be truly said that the revenue of India has hitherto been levied at the point of the bayonet" and considered this to be the major cause of the Mutiny. (Leeds: Canning Papers: Military Secretary's Papers: Misc. No.289).

equalled that of William Wilberforce, James Mill, or Karl Marx) such charges seemed far-fetched, and even if true, irrelevant.

It is in this background that during his visit in 1931 to attend the British-sponsored conference on India (known as the Round Table Conference) Mahatma Gandhi was invited to address the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London. In this address Gandhiji also briefly dwelt on the causes of illiteracy in India and what he said seemed to have made sparks fly.

The meeting held on 20 October, 1931 under the auspices of the Institute, is reported to have been attended by influential English men and Englishwomen drawn from all parts of England and was presided over by Lord Lothian.[74] The subject on which Gandhiji spoke was 'The Future of India', but before describing this future he dealt with issues like (i) the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh problem, (ii) the problem of untouchability, and (iii) "the deep and ever deepening poverty" of the 85% of the Indian people who lived in the villages. From this he moved on to the problems which required urgent attention and how "if the Congress had its way" they would be dealt with. Amongst the foremost he placed "the economic welfare of the masses" and the provision of adequate occupations for those requiring them. Then he turned to possible solutions to the problems of sanitation and hygiene, and of medical assistance which he felt not only needed packets of quinine, etc., but more so milk and fruit. From this he moved on to education, and from that to the neglect of irrigation and the need for using long-known indigenous methods and techniques to achieve it. In conclusion he stated that while he had told them "what we would do constructively", yet "we should have to do something destructive also". As illustrative of the required destruction he mentioned "the insupportable weight of military and civil expenditure" which India could ill afford. Regarding the former he stated that "if I could possibly have my way, we should get rid of three-quarters of the military expenditure". Regarding civil expenditure he gave an instance of what he meant. He said, "Here the Prime Minister gets fifty times, the average income; the Viceroy in India gets five thousand times the average income", and added that "from this one example you can work out for yourselves what this civil expenditure also means to India".

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[74] *International Affairs*, Vol. X, London, November 1931, pp.721-739; also *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 48, pp.193-206.

But to revert back to Gandhiji's observation on education. The two main points he made were (i) "that today India is more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago", and (ii) that "the British administrators" instead of looking after education and other matters which had existed "began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that and the beautiful tree perished". He stated all this with conviction and a sense of authority and said that he was "without fear" of his "figures being challenged successfully".

The challenge came immediately however from Sir Philip Hartog, a founder of the School of Oriental Studies, London,[75] a former vice-chancellor of the University of Dacca and member and chairman of several educational committees on India set up by the British between 1918 and 1930. After questioning Gandhiji at the meeting itself, a long correspondence ensued between them during the next 5-6 weeks, ending with an hour long interview which Philip Hartog had with the Mahatma. In the interval Philip Hartog was referred to some of the sources which Gandhiji had relied on, including two articles from *Young India* of December 1920 by Daulat Ram Gupta: (i) The Decline of Mass Education in India, and (ii) How Indian Education Was Crushed in the Punjab. These latter were largely based on Adam's reports and G. W. Leitner's book and some other officially published material from the Punjab, Bombay and Madras. These, however, did not seem sufficient proof to Philip Hartog, and he repeatedly insisted that Gandhiji should withdraw the statement he had made at the Chatham House meeting. Gandhiji promised that after his return to India he shall look for such material which Hartog could treat as substantiating what Gandhiji had said, and promised that "if I find that I cannot support the statement made by me at Chatham House, I will give my retraction much wider publicity than the Chatham House Speech could ever attain".

Another important point which according to Hartog emerged during Hartog's interview with Gandhiji was that Gandhiji said that "he had not accused the British Government of having destroyed the indigenous schools, but they had let them die for want of encour-

[75] See, P. J. Hartog, "Origins of the School of Oriental Studies ", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, Vol. I, 1917, pp.5-25.

agement". To this Hartog's reply was "that they had probably let them die because they were so bad that they were not worth keeping".

In the meantime Hartog had been working and seeking opinion including advice and views of the historian E. J. Thompson. Thompson agreed with Hartog that Gandhiji could not possibly be right and that he himself also did not "believe we destroyed indigenous schools and indigenous industry out of malice. It was inevitable". He nonetheless felt that, with regard to general education, "we did precious little to congratulate ourselves on until the last dozen years".[76] In a further letter Thompson elaborated his views on the subject, on how little was done until after 1918, and thought that it seemed to him that the "very hopelessness of the huge Indian job used to oppress" even those who had had often "first class record of intellect" in places like Oxford "before entering the ICS". He further mentioned that "I am reading old records by pre-mutiny residents, they teem with information that makes you hope that the Congresswallah will never get hold of it". Somehow the correspondence between Hartog and E. J. Thompson ended on a sour note, and perhaps did not provide Hartog the sort of intellectual or factual support he was actually looking for. At any rate, after the interview with Gandhiji, Hartog finally despatched his rebuttal of Gandhiji's statement (as intended from the beginning) for publication in *International Affairs*.[77] In this he concluded that "the present position is that Mr. Gandhi has so far been unable to substantiate his statement in any way" but "he has undertaken to retract that statement, if he cannot support it".

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[76] A graphic image of the more privileged products of this British initiated education was given by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy as early as 1908. Coomaraswamy then wrote: "Speak to the ordinary graduate of an Indian University, or a student from Ceylon, of the ideals of the *Mahabharata*—he will hasten to display his knowledge of Shakespeare; talk to him of religious philosophy—you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that not only has he no religion, but is as lacking in philosophy as the average Englishman; talk to him of Indian music—he will produce a gramophone or a harmonium and inflict upon you one or both; talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery—he will tell you that they are uncivilised and barbaric; talk to him of Indian art—it is news to him that such a thing exists; ask him to translate for you a letter written in his own mother-tongue—he does not know it. He is indeed a stranger in his own land." (*Modern Review*, Calcutta, Vol. 4, Oct. 1908, p.338).

[77] Vol. XI, January 1932, pp.151-152.

Within a few days of reaching India, Gandhiji was in the Yeravda Prison. From there he wrote to Hartog on 15 February 1932 informing him of his inability at that moment to satisfy him but mentioned that he had asked Prof. K. T. Shah to look into the matter. K. T. Shah's long and detailed letter reached Hartog soon after. In it K. T. Shah also referred to the various known writings on the subject including those of Max Mueller, Ludlow, G. L. Prendergast, and the more celebrated Thomas Munro, W. Adam, and G. W. Leitner, already referred to in the foregoing pages. For Bombay, Shah quoted G. L. Prendergast, a member of the Council in the Bombay Presidency (briefly referred to earlier) who had stated in April 1821 that:

> I need hardly mention what every member of the Board knows as well as I do, that there is hardly a village, great or small, throughout our territories, in which there is not at least one school, and in larger villages more; many in every town, and in large cities in every division; where young natives are taught reading, writing and arithmetic, upon a system so economical, from a handful or two of grain, to perhaps a rupee per month to the school master, according to the ability of the parents, and at the same time so simple and effectual, that there is hardly a cultivator or petty dealer who is not competent to keep his own accounts with a degree of accuracy, in my opinion, beyond what we meet with amongst the lower orders in our own country; whilst the more splendid dealers and bankers keep their books with a degree of ease, conciseness, and clearness I rather think fully equal to those of any British merchants.[78]

Knowing of what Hartog considered as sufficient proof, Shah began his letter by saying that he "need hardly point out that at the time under reference, no country in the world had like definite, authoritative, statistical information of the type one would now recognise as proper proof in such discussions" and that "all, therefore, that one can expect by way of proof in such matters, and at such a time, can only be in the form of impressions of people in a position to form ideas a little better and more scientific than those of less fortunately situated, or less well-endowed,

[78] Also in *House of Commons Papers*: 1831-32, Vol. 9, p.468.

observers". Shah finally concluded with the view that "the closer enquiry of this type conducted by Leitner is far more reliable, and so also the *obiter dicta* of people in the position to have clear impressions", and felt that "even those impressions must be held to give rather an underestimate than otherwise".

But Shah's long letter was a wasted effort as far as Hartog was concerned, and constituted perhaps a further provocation. In his reply Hartog told Shah that "your letter does not touch the main question which I put to Mr Gandhi", and concluded that "I am afraid that I am altogether unable to accept your conclusion with regard to the history of literacy in Bengal during the past 100 years, of which there remains a good deal to be said".

Though it is not fair to compare individuals and to speculate on the motivations which move them, it does seem that at this stage Sir Philip Hartog had a similar feeling to that of W. H. Moreland after reading Vincent Smith's observation in his book on *Akbar the Great Mogul* that "the hired landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahangir probably had more to eat in ordinary years than he has now".[79] In reviewing the book Moreland had then said, "Mr Vincent Smith's authority in Indian History is so deservedly great that this statement, if allowed to stand unquestioned, will probably pass quickly into a dogma of the schools; before it does so, I venture to plead for further examination of the data".[80] And from then on, Moreland seems to have set himself the task of countering such a 'heretical view, and of stopping it from becoming a dogma of the schools'.

Whatever the motivation, Philip Hartog set himself the task of proving Gandhiji wrong on this particular issue. The result was presented in three 'Joseph Payne Lectures for 1935-36' delivered at the University of London Institute of Education under the title, *Some Aspects of Indian Education: Past and Present*.[81] The lectures, along with three Memoranda: (A) Note on the statistics of literacy and of schools in India during the last hundred years, (B) The Reports of

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[79] Vincent Smith, *Akbar the Great Mogul*, Clarendon Press, 1917, p.394.
[80] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 49, London, 1917, pp.815-25.
[81] Philip Hartog's lectures were announced in the London *Times* (March 1, 4, 6, 1935) and two of them reported in it on March 2 and 5. On 2nd March, the *Times* reported that Sir Philip Hartog, "submitted that under successive Governor

William Adam on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar 1835-38, and the legend of the '1,00,000 schools', and (C) Dr. G. W. Leitner and Education in the Punjab 1849-82, were published in early 1939 by the Oxford University Press under the above title. In Memorandum 'A' using the low figures sent by A. D. Campbell for the district of Bellary, Hartog questioned Thomas Munro's calculation that "the proportion of males educated in schools was nearer one-third than one-fourth", and suggested "that Munro's figures may have been over-estimates based on the returns of collectors less careful and interested in education than Campbell". Hartog's conclusion at the end was that "until the action taken by Munro, Elphinstone, and Bentinck in the three Presidencies, the British Government had neglected elementary education to its detriment in India. But I have found no evidence that it tried to destroy or uproot what existed". In a footnote Hartog further observed that "in Great Britain itself it was not until 1833 that the House of Commons made a grant of £30,000 for the purposes of education". Further, he praised various Indian personalities, and more so India's quaint mixture of "most ancient and most modern".

In his Preface, after referring to "the imaginary basis for accusations not infrequently made in India that the British Government systematically destroyed the indigenous system of elementary schools and with it a literacy which the schools are presumed to have created", Hartog observed "when Mr. Gandhi, in an address given at the Royal Institute of International Affairs on 20 October 1931, lent his powerful support to those accusations, and challenged contradiction, it was obviously necessary to re-examine the facts".[82]

It may be fair to observe that despite his considerable learning and

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Generals, from Warren Hastings to Lord Chelmsford, an educational policy was evolved as part of a general policy to govern India in the interests of India, and to develop her intellectual resources to the utmost for her own benefit." It is interesting, however, to note that the *Times* while it gave fairly constant though brief notices to Gandhiji's 1931 visit to England, and some of the public meetings he addressed and the celebration of his birthday, the meeting at Chatham House did not reach its pages. It was not only not reported the next day, October 21, 1931, but was also not announced along with various other notices of various other meetings, etc., on the morning of October 20. Possibly it was a convention not to report any meetings at Chatham House in newspapers.

[82] The book of Lectures was reviewed in the *Times Literary Supplement* under the caption "Mr. Gandhi Refuted". Complimenting Hartog the review stated: "There

experience, Hartog seemed to have lacked imagination, a sense of history, and was far too committed to the dogmas of pre-1939 Britain. His immigrant Jewish background may have accentuated such an outlook further. Whatever the reasons, it seemed inconceivable to Hartog that late eighteenth, or early nineteenth century India could have had the education and facilities which Gandhiji and others had claimed, as it had been inconceivable to William Wilberforce, 125 years earlier, that the Hindoos could conceivably have been civilised (as was stated by many British officers and scholars who in Wilberforce's days had had long personal experience of life in India) without the benefits of Christianity. It should therefore not be surprising that to Hartog, as also to Edward Thompson, and before them to an extent even to W. Adam, and some of the Madras Presidency Collectors, it was axiomatic that these Indian educational institutions amounted to very little and that the Indian system had "become merely self-perpetuating, and otherwise barren".

Besides Gandhiji's statement two other facts seem to have had quite an upsetting effect on Philip Hartog. The first, already referred to, were the writings of G. W. Leitner, but the second seems to have hurt him even more. This latter was a statement concerning what Hartog called "what of the immediate future". In this context Hartog noted that, "an earnest Quaker missionary has predicted that under the new regime [evidently meaning the post-British regime] there will be a Counter-Reformation in education, which will no longer be Western but Eastern;" and he observed, "thus India will go back a thousand years and more to the old days… to those days when she gave out a great wealth of ideas, especially to the rest of Asia, but accepted nothing in return". Such a prospect was galling indeed to Philip Hartog, burdened as he was, like his illustrious predecessors with the idea of redeeming India morally as well as intellectually, albeit by the western road.

As Gandhiji was the prime cause of this effort, Hartog sent a copy of his lectures to him and wrote that he had "little doubt that you will find that a close analysis of the facts reveals no evidence to support the statement which you made at the Royal Institute of International

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are many deserved criticisms of past British administrators in this particular field, but other charges dissolve into thin air when exposed to the searching analysis Sir Philip Hartog has applied to a statement of Mr Gandhi… Sir Philip took up the challenge at once… he shows how facts were distorted to fit an educational theory."

Affairs', adding that Gandhiji "will therefore feel justified now in withdrawing that statement".

Gandhiji replied some months later and it was a classic reply. In it he said "I have not left off the pursuit of the subject of education in the villages during the pre-British period. I am in correspondence with several educationists. Those who have replied do support my view but do not produce authority that would be accepted as proof. My prejudice or presentiment still makes me cling to the statement I made at Chatham House. I don't want to write haltingly in Harijan. You don't want me merely to say that the proof I had in mind had been challenged by you!"

There the matter ended as far as Gandhiji was concerned, but on September 10, 1939 after learning of Gandhiji's statement regarding the War in Europe, Hartog wrote to Gandhiji a very grateful letter saying "I cannot wait to express to you my profound gratitude, shared, I am sure by an innumerable number of my fellow countrymen, all over the world, for the attitude you have taken up in regard to the present War at your interview with the Viceroy, reported in the *Times*".

Hartog's book of lectures led to much immediate writing in India on the subject, even a new edition of the complete Adam's Reports was published by the University of Calcutta. Yet, what was written produced the same data and analysis all over again and in the main covered the same ground, and advanced more or less the same arguments as had already been advanced by K. T. Shah in his long letter to Philip Hartog in February 1932.[83]

VII

The significance of what Gandhiji said at Chatham House in October 1931 has, however, to be understood not in the literal way in which Philip Hartog treated it but what it really implied in the context of Mahatma Gandhi's whole address. The upshot of what he had stated at the meeting was the overall disruption and decline of the society and people of India during British rule. That a great decay had set in by the 1820s, if not a few decades earlier, in the sphere of education was admitted by the Madras Presidency survey, as well as by W. Adam as regards Bengal and Bihar. In 1822-5 the number of those in ordinary

[83] The text of Hartog-Gandhi correspondence is given at Annexure F.

schools was put at over 1,50,000 in the Madras Presidency. Evidently the inference that the number was appreciably, perhaps a great deal higher some 20 or 30 years previously, cannot be ruled out. At any rate, nowhere was there any suggestion that it was much less before, than in 1822-25. The population of the Madras Presidency in 1823 was estimated at 1,28,50,941, while the population of England in 1811 was estimated at 95,43,610. From this it may be noted that while the differences in the population of the two are not that significant the number of those attending the various types of schools (Charity, Sunday, Circulating) in England was in all in the neighbourhood of around 75,000 as compared to at least double this number in the Madras Presidency. Further, more than half of this 75,000 in English schools consisted of those who attended school at the most only for 2-3 hours on a Sunday.

However, after about 1803, every year a marked increase took place in the number of those attending schools in England, with the result that the maximum of 75,000 attending any sort of school around 1800 rose to 6,74,883 by 1818, and 21,44,377 in 1851, i.e., an increase of about 29 times in a period of about fifty years. It is true that the content of this education in England did not improve much during this half century. Neither did the period spent in school increase from more than an average of one year in 1835 to about two years in 1851. The real implication of Gandhiji's observation, and of the information provided by the Madras Presidency collectors, W. Adam and G. W. Leitner is, that in India for the following 50-100 years what happened was, if not exactly the opposite of that in England, such that it gave rise to a situation of relative collapse and stagnation. It is such a feeling and the intuition of such an occurrence which made Gandhiji, firstly, to make his observation in London in October 1931, and secondly, not agree to withdraw it eight years later. Gandhiji seemed to be looking at the issue from a historical, social, and a human viewpoint, while men like Sir Philip Hartog, as so commonly characteristic of the specialist, were largely quibbling about phrases, picking holes in what did not fit the prevailing western theorisations of social and political development.

Yet, as statistical comparisons were what Sir Philip Hartog and many others in his time wanted, and these to a large extent can settle this debate, some comparison of the 1822-25 Madras school-attending scholars may be made here with the Madras Presidency data pertaining

to the 1880s and 1890s. Because of incompleteness of earlier data for Bengal and Bihar, and also for the Presidency of Bombay[84] such a comparison does not seem possible for these areas, much less for the whole of India.

According to the 1879-80 Report of the Director of Public Instruction for the Madras Presidency, the total number of educational institutions of all types (including colleges, secondary, middle and primary schools, and special, or technical institutions) then numbered 10,553. Out of these, the primary schools numbered 10,106. The total number attending them was 2,38,960 males, and 29,419 females. The total population of the Presidency at this time is stated as 3,13,08,872. While the number of females attending these institutions was evidently larger in 1879-80 compared to 1822-25, the proportionate numbers of males was clearly much reduced. Using the same computation as used in 1822-25 (i.e., one-ninth of the total population treated as of school-going age) those of this age amongst the male population (taking males and females as equal) would have numbered 17,39,400. The number of males in primary schools being 2,18,840 the proportion of this age group in schools thus turns out to be 12.58%: this proportion in the decayed educational situation of 1822-25 was put at one-fourth, i.e., at 25%. If one were to take even the total of all those in every type of institution, i.e. the number 2,38,960, the proportion in 1879-80 rises only to 13.74%.

From 1879-80 to 1884-85 there was some increase however. While the population went down slightly to 3,08,68,504 the total number of male scholars went up to 3,79,932, and that of females to 50,919. Even this larger number of male scholars came up only to 22.15% of the computed school-age male population, and of those in primary schools to 18.33%, still much lower than the 1822-25 officially calculated proportion. Incidentally, while there was an overall increase in the number of females in educational institutions, the number of Muslim girls in such institutions in the district of Malabar in 1884-85 was only 705. Here it

[84] The available material on the survey of indigenous education in the Presidency of Bombay has been brought out in a valuable book by R. V. Parulekar: *Survey of Indigenous Education in the Province of Bombay 1820-30,* Bombay, 1945. This survey, however, appears to have covered only certain parts of the Bombay Presidency.

may be recollected that 62 years earlier in August 1823 the number of Muslim girls in schools in Malabar was 1,122 and at that time the population of Malabar would have been below half of that in 1884-85.

Eleven years later in 1895-96, the number in all types of educational institutions increased further. While the population then had grown to 3,56,41,828 the number of those in educational institutions had increased to 6,81,174 males, and 1,10,460 females. It is at this time then that the proportion (taking all those males attending educational institutions) rose to 34.4% just about equal to the proportion which Thomas Munro had computed in 1826 as one-third (33.3%) of those receiving any education whether in indigenous institutions, or at home. But even at this period, i.e. 70 years after Munro's computation, the number of males in primary education was just 28%.

Coming to 1899-1900, the last year of the nineteenth century, the number of males in educational institutions went up to 7,33,923 and of females to 1,29,068. At this period the number of school-age males was calculated by the Madras Presidency Director of Public Instruction as 26,42,909 thus giving a percentage of 27.8% attending any educational institution. Even taking a sympathetic view of the later data, what clearly comes out of these comparisons is that the proportion of those in educational institutions at the end of the nineteenth century was still no larger than the proportions estimated by Thomas Munro of the number attending the institutions of the decaying indigenous system of the Madras Presidency in 1822-25.

Yet, considering the temptations which there must have been for the late nineteenth century British authorities (as they also exist in the state system in our times) to show their achievement in rather brighter hues and thus err on the side of inflating figures, it may be assumed that if anything, this later data may be treated with some scepticism as to its veracity, while the data of 1822-25 in the climate of that period could not in any sense be considered as inflated, rather, as pointed out by many, the reverse may have been its attribute.

From the above, it may be inferred that the decay which is mentioned in 1822-25 grew in depth during the next six decades. In this period most of the indigenous institutions more or less disappeared and any surviving remnants absorbed by the late 19th century British created system. Further it is only after 1890 that the new system begins to

equal the 1822-25 officially calculated proportions of males in schools quantitatively whatever may have been its quality in comparison to the indigenous system.

The above comparison of the 1822-25 Madras indigenous education data with the data pertaining to the 1880s and 1890s also seems to provide additional support, if such support were necessary, to the deductions which G. W. Leitner had come to in 1882 pertaining to the decline of indigenous education in the Punjab in the previous 35-40 years.

VIII

The point which, during this prolonged debate was seldom touched upon and about which in their various ways, the Madras Presidency collectors, the reports of Adam, and the work of Leitner provided a variety of clues, pertains to the question of how all this education, the 1,00,000 schools in Bengal and Bihar, and a "school in every village" according to Munro and others, were actually organised and maintained. For, it is ridiculous to suppose that any system of such wide and universal dimensions could ever have maintained itself without the necessary conceptual and infra-structural supports over any length of time.

It is customary in modern India to quote foreigners in most matters reflecting on India's present, or its past. One school of thought uses all such foreign backing to show India's primitiveness, the barbaric, uncouth and what is termed 'parochial' nature of the customs and manners of its people, and the ignorance, oppressions and poverty which Indians are said to have always suffered from. To them India for most of its past had lived at what is termed, the 'feudal' stage or what in more recent Marxist terminology is called the 'system of Asiatic Social organisms'. Yet to another school, India had always been a glorious land, with minor blemishes, or accidents of history here and there, but all in all remaining a land of 'Dharmic' and benevolent rulers; for yet others subscribing to the observations of the much-quoted Charles Metcalfe, and Henry Maine, it has mostly been a happy land of 'village republics'.

Unfortunately, perhaps due to their British oriented education, or may be because of some deeper causes (like the scholastic and hair-splitting tendency of Brahmanical learning), Indians since the past cen-

tury have become too literal, too much caught up with mere words and phrases, and seem to have lost practically all sense of the symbolic nature of what is said, or written.[85] It is, therefore, not surprising that when Indians think of 'village republics', what occurs to them is not what the word 'republic' implies in substance, but the visual images of its shell, the elected assembly, the system of voting, etc.

What Charles Metcalfe, and especially Henry Maine wrote on this point was primarily on the basis of the earlier British information, i.e. what had been derived from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century British travellers, administrators, etc., as well as from the writings of other Europeans before them. What it implied was, and quite naturally the British had no particular reason to spell it out for the Indians, that the 'village' (it is immaterial how they defined it), to an extent, had all the semblance of the State, it controlled revenue and that it exercised authority within its sphere. How this 'village' State was constituted, whether in the manner of an oligarchy, or by the representation of the various caste, craft, or other groups within it, or by representation of all families, or in some other manner, while important in itself as a subject for exploration, was not its basic element. The basic element of this 'village republic' was the authority it wielded, the resources it controlled, and dispensed, and the manner of such resource utilization. Notwithstanding all that has been written about empires—Ashokan, Vijayanagar, Mughal, etc. and of 'oriental despotism'—it is beyond any doubt that throughout its history, Indian society and polity has basically been organised according to non-centralist concepts. It is not only recent research which brings out this point. The eighteenth and early nineteenth century European reports, manuscript as well as published writings also bear evidence to it. That the annual exchequer receipts of Jahangir did not amount to more than 5% of the computed revenue of his empire, and that of Aurangzeb with all his zeal for maximising such

[85] Judging from their products, this, in a certain sense, may apply even more to the writings on India by most non-Indians. But quite understandably their writings on various aspects of Indian society and polity will obviously be influenced, if not wholly determined, by their respective cultural and educational ethos. Even when some of them may comprehend India better as men like Alexander Walker in the early 19th century and Prof. Burton Stein today seem to do, it is not really for them to map out such perception and awareness of his own society for the Indian. Such a task can only be undertaken by India itself.

receipts did not ever exceed 20%, is symptomatic of the concepts and arrangements which governed Indian polity.

It can of course be argued that it is such a non-centralist polity that made India politically weak, or rather, soft in the military sense, given that only heirarchical and centralist states are politically and militarily strong and viable. This may all be true and is worthy of serious consideration. Nonetheless, the first requisite is to understand the nature and functioning of Indian society and polity especially as it functioned two or three centuries ago. Further, its various dimensions and contours, strengths and weaknesses need to be known, and not only from European writings but much more so from Indian sources, from the traditions and beliefs of various areas, communities, groups, etc., with special attention being paid to their own images of the society of which they were a part.

It is suggested here, and there is voluminous data scattered in the British records themselves which confirm the view, that in terms of the basic expenses, both education and medical care, like the expenses of the local police and the maintenance of irrigation facilities, had primary claims on revenue. It was primarily this revenue which not only maintained higher education but also, as was sometimes admitted in the British records, the system of elementary education.[86] It is quite probable that in addition to this basic provision the parents and guardians of the scholars, according to their varying capacities, also contributed a little by way of presents, occasional feeding of the unprovided scholars, etc., towards the maintenance of the system. But to suppose that such a deep-rooted and extensive system which really catered to all sections of society was maintained on the basis of tuition fees, or through not only gratuitous teaching but also feeding of the pupils by the teachers, is to be grossly ignorant of the actual functioning of any system, or society.

According to the Bengal-Bihar data of the 1770s, and 1780s, the revenues of these areas were divided into various categories, in addition to what was called the 'Khalsa', i.e., the sources whose revenue

[86] Public Despatch to Bengal, 3 June 1814 (*House of Commons Papers* 1831-32, Vol.9, p.487): "We refer with particular satisfaction upon this occasion to that distinguished feature of internal polity which prevails in some parts of India, and by which the instruction of the people is provided for by a certain charge upon the produce of the soil, and other endowments in favour of the village teachers, who are thereby rendered public servants of the community."

was received in the exchequer of the ruling authority of the province, or some larger unit. These categories together i.e., excluding the Khalsa, seem to have been allocated the major proportion of the revenue sources (perhaps around 80% of the computed revenue of any area) and two of these categories were termed 'Chakeran Zemin', and 'Bazee Zemin' in the Bengal and Bihar records of this period. The former, 'Chakeran Zemin', implied such recipients of revenue who were engaged in the administrative, economic, accounting activities, etc., and were remunerated by assignments of revenue; while the latter, 'Bazee Zemin', meant those who according to the British, were in receipt of what were termed "religious and charitable allowances". A substantial portion of these religious allowances was obviously assigned for the maintenance of religious places, largely temples of all sizes and celebrity, but also mosques, Dargahs, Chatrams, Maths, etc. Another part was assigned to the Agrahrums, or what perhaps were also termed 'Brahmdeya' in South India as well as in Bengal. Yet, other assignments were given over to a variety of individuals, to great and other pundits, to poets, to joshis, to medical practitioners, to jesters, and even for such purposes as defraying the expenses of carrying Ganga Water in areas of Uttar Pradesh to certain religious shrines on certain festivals.[87]

Regarding the extent of such assignments from Hedgelee in Bengal, it was stated in 1770 that "almost one-half of the province is held upon free tenure" under the 'Bazee Zemin' category.[88] The number of these 'Bazee Zemin' (one may reasonably assume the term included individuals, groups, as well as institutions) in many districts of Bengal and Bihar were as high as 30,000 to 36,000 recipients for the district. According to H. T. Prinsep,[89] in one district of Bengal around 1780, the applications for the registration of 'Bazee Zemin' numbered 72,000.

The position in the Madras Presidency was not very different, even

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[87] The revenue records of all areas, especially of the years 1770-90 for the Bengal Presidency and of 1801-20 for the Madras Presidency, provide very extensive information regarding such assignments. The information regarding assignments for the purpose of carrying Ganga water to religious shrines is taken from *Mafee Register* for 1847 for the district of Hamirpur and Kalpi in the Uttar Pradesh State Archives at Allahabad.

[88] I.O.R. Factory Records: G/27/1, Supervisor Houghly to Murshedabad Council, 10.10.1770, p.88.

[89] In a note dated *circa* 1830.

after all the disorganisation, dispossession and demolition of the period 1750-1800 during which the British made themselves masters of the whole area. As late as 1801, over 35% of the total cultivated land in the Ceded Districts (the present Rayalseema area and the Kannada District of Bellary) came under the category of revenue free assignments, and it was the task of Thomas Munro to somehow reduce this quantity to a mere 5% of the total cultivated land. The reduction intended in the Ceded Districts was also carried out in all other districts earlier in some, and later in others, and in some the dispossession of such vast numbers of assignees of revenue took a long time.

The returns from the various districts of the Madras Presidency, especially during the years 1805-1820, provide much information on the varied nature of these revenue assignments (or grain, or money allowances), which in some measure had till then continued to be permitted, or disbursed to a variety of institutions, and individuals in the several districts. Such information usually got gathered whenever the government was contemplating some new policy, or some further steps concerning one or more categories of such assignees, or those to whom any sort of allowances were being paid. As illustrative of such information, a return from the district of Tanjore of April 1813, relating to the money assignments, which by this time were mostly minute, received by 1,013 big and small temples[90] and by 318 individuals and institutions, is reproduced at the end of the present work (Annexures G). These payments amounted at this time to a total of Star Pagodas 43,038 for the temples, and Star Pagodas 5,930 to the individuals, annually. A Star Pagoda was valued at about three and one-half rupee.

What was true of Bengal, Bihar and the Madras Presidency applied equally to other areas in India, whether in the areas of the Bombay Presidency, or of Punjab, or in the Rajasthan States. The proportions allocated to particular categories, as far as the British record indicates also seem fairly similar, and it may not be far wrong to assume that about a quarter to one-third of the revenue paying sources (not only land, but also sea-ports, etc.) were according to some ancient practice assigned, till the British overturned it, for the requirements of the social and cultural infrastructure.

[90] The total number of *maths* and temples in Tanjore about this time was around 4,000.

Further still, the rate of assessment which was paid by cultivators of the revenue assigned lands, till the British completely took over, was fairly low. According to the supervisors of the Bengal Districts in the 1770's and early 1780's, the rate of assessment charged by the 'Bazee Zemin' revenue assignees was around one-quarter to one-third of the rate which the British had begun to demand from the lands which were treated as 'Khalsa'[91] and which category was just swallowing up practically all the other categories. A more or less similar phenomena obtained in the various districts of the Madras Presidency even as late as the 1820s.[92] Moreover, though it may seem unbelievable, the area which constituted Malabar had, till about 1750, never had a land tax.[93] It had a variety of other mercantile and judicial taxes, but land in Malabar, according to British investigators themselves never paid revenue of any kind till its peace was wholly shattered by the Europeans, Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. Even during Tipu's period the actual receipts from Malabar were fairly small.

The major dispossession of the various categories of revenue assignees (starting from those who had assignment for the performance of military duties, and who formed the local militias, and going on to those who performed police duties, etc.) started as soon as the British took over *de-facto* control of any area, i.e. in Bengal and Bihar from 1757-58 onwards. The turn of the 'Chakeran Zamin' and the 'Bazee

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[91] I.O.R. Factory Records: G/6/4. Proceedings of Burdwan Council on Beerbhoom, 24.5.1775.

[92] The problem of peasants deserting sirkar lands (i.e. lands paying revenue to Government) because of the exorbitant rate of Government assessment even in the 1820s was of such frequency that it was deliberated upon by Thomas Munro as Governor of Madras in November 1822. At that time Munro observed that "it would be most satisfactory if the sirkar ryots were induced to give a voluntary preference to the sirkar land" and felt that the rest of the village community paying revenue to Government should not "allow a ryot to throw up sirkar land liable to adjustment merely that he may occupy Enam land which is liable to none." But if such "inducement" did not work Munro was of the view, that "if necessary, measures for the protection of the rights of Government may be directed more immediately to the Enamdars, either by taking their Enams or by resuming them." (Tamil Nadu State Archives: Board of Revenue Proceedings: Volume 930, Proceedings 7.11.1822, pp.10292-296).

[93] For fairly detailed information on Malabar, see the voluminous Report of Commissioner Graeme, 16.7.1822 in TNSA: Revenue Consultations, especially volume 277A.

Zamin' came slightly later but by about 1770 they had also begun to be seriously affected. By about 1800, through various means, a very large percentage of these had been altogether dispossessed, and most of the remaining had their assignments greatly reduced through various devices. One of the devices used was the application of the newly established enhanced rate of assessment even to the sources from which the assignees had received the revenue. This device, to begin with, implied a reduction of the quantity of the assigned source in accordance with the increased rate of assessment. The next step was in most cases to reduce the money value itself with the result that the assignee—whether an individual or an institution—even when allowed a fraction of the previous assignment, was no longer able because of such steep reduction to perform the accompanying functions in the manner they had been performed only some decades previously. Those whose assignments were completely abrogated were of course reduced to penury and beggary, if not to a worse fate. Naturally, many of the old functions dependent on such assignments like teaching, medicine, feeding of pilgrims, etc., because of want of fiscal support as also due to state ridicule and prohibitions, had to be given up.

There are references in the annexed reports from some of the Madras Presidency collectors to certain revenue assignments here and there, and to daily cash or grain allowances received by some of those who were occupied in imparting Sanscritic learning, or Persian, and in some instances even education at the elementary level. A few other collectors also made reference to certain revenue assignments which used to exist in the area but were said to have been appropriated by Tipoo, and that, when the British took over these areas, they formally added such revenue to the total State revenue. The various area reports of the period 1792 to about 1806 make much mention of dispossession of revenue assignees by orders of Tipoo in the area over which he had control. But at the same time it is also stated that through the connivance of the revenue officers, etc. such dispossession during Tipoo's reign was, in most cases, not operative at all. What Tipoo might have intended merely as a threat to opponents, became a *de-facto* reality when these areas came under formal British administration.

But in most areas which the British had conquered either on behalf of the Nabob of Arcot, or on behalf of the Nizam of Hyderabad, or

administered in the name of the various Rajas of Tanjore, most such dispossession was pre-1800. The process started soon after 1750 when the British domination of south India began, gathering momentum in the early 1780s when the revenues of the areas claimed by the British to be under the nominal rulership of the Nabob of Arcot were formally assigned over to the British. One major method leading to such dispossession was by slashing down what were termed 'District charges', i.e., the amounts traditionally utilised within the districts, but which, for purposes of accounting, were shown in the records of the Nabob. The slashing down in certain districts like Trichnopoly was up to 93% of the 'district charges' allowed until then, a mere 19,143 Star Pagodas being allowed in place of the earlier 2,82,148 Star Pagodas.[94]

It is the report from the collector of Bellary which is most known and mentioned in the published records on indigenous education.[95] It is long and fairly comprehensive, though the data he actually sent was much less detailed. In it he actually, to the extent a collector could, came out with the statement that the degeneration of education "is ascribable to the gradual but general impoverishment of the country"; that "the means of the manufacturing classes have been greatly diminished by the introduction of our own European manufactures", that "the transfer of the capital of the country from the native government and their officers, who liberally expended it in India, to Europeans, restricted by law from employing it even temporarily in India, and daily draining it from the land, has likewise tended to this effect", that "in many villages where formerly there were schools, there are now *none*", and that "learning, though it may proudly decline to sell its stores, had never flourished in any country except under the encouragement of the ruling power, and the countenance and support once given to science in this part of India has long been withheld". In elaboration he added that "of the 533 institutions for education now existing in this district, I am ashamed to

[94] Letter of May 27, 1782 from the Committee of Assigned Revenue to Lord Macartney cited in *The Works of Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, Vol. I, London, 1834, p.351.

[95] Annexure A-XIX. Philip Hartog, who made much play of this reply as mentioned earlier, used it to throw doubt on the educational data from the other districts. It is possible that because of his contrary concerns, he was not able to comprehend this report fully.

say not one now derives any support from the State", but that "there is no doubt, that in former times, especially under the Hindoo Governments, very large grants, both in money and in land, were issued for the support of learning"; that the "considerable *yeomiahs* or grants of money, now paid to brahmins in this district… may, I think, be traced to this source", and concluded with the observation that:

> "Though it did not consist with the dignity of learning to receive from her votaries hire, it has always in India been deemed the duty of Government to evince to her the highest respect, and to grant to her those emoluments which she could not, consistently with her character, receive from other sources; the grants issued by former Governments, on such occasions, contained therefore no unbecoming stipulations or conditions. They all purport to flow from the free bounty of the ruling power, merely to aid the maintenance of some holy or learned man, or to secure his prayers for the state. But they were almost universally granted to learned or religious persons, who maintained a school for one or more of the sciences, and taught therein gratuitously; and though not expressed in the deed itself, the duty of continuing such gratuitous instruction was certainly implied in all such grants".[96]

The Collector of Bellary, A. D. Campbell, it may be mentioned was an experienced and perceptive officer, previously having held the post of Secretary of the Board of Revenue, and was perhaps one of Thomas Munro's favourites. It may be said to Munro's credit that in his review

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[96] Bellary was part of the Ceded Districts and was administered from 1800-07 by Thomas Munro. As mentioned earlier, it was here that Munro seemed outraged by 35% of the total cultivated land being still assigned for various local purposes, and expressed his determination to reduce it to as low as 5% of the total revenue of the Ceded Districts. Munro at that time also advocated the imposition of an income-tax of about 15% on all those (revenue assignees, as well as merchants, artisans, labourers and the rest) who did not pay land revenue. The Madras Government accepted his recommendation and this tax, under various names, (*Veesabuddy*, *Mohtarpha*, etc.) was imposed not only in the Ceded Districts but also in many other districts of the Madras Presidency. It is this background of exorbitant taxation and the cutting down of all expenses, even on the repair of irrigation sources, that largely led to the conversion of Bellary and Cuddapah into the latter day arid and impoverished areas. Quite naturally then the educational returns from Bellary were low.

of March 10, 1826 he did admit in his oblique way that indigenous education "has, no doubt, been better in earlier times". The fact that it got disrupted, reduced and well-nigh destroyed from the time the British took over *de-facto* control and centralised the revenue, was obviously not possible even for a Governor as powerful as Thomas Munro to state in formal government records.

Such illustrations as the above can be multiplied ad infinitum. It only requires searching the records pertaining to the early period of British rule in different areas of India. This with much industry and in a fairly objective manner, Leitner tried to do for the Punjab. For Gandhiji an intuitive understanding of what could have happened was enough, and thus as shown earlier he could reply to Hartog that, "my prejudice or presentiment still makes me cling to the statement I made at Chatham House".

At the meeting at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in October 1931 Mahatma Gandhi was of the view that instead of supporting the indigenous system, nay even allowing it to continue, the British administrators on the contrary, began to root it out, and as a consequence it perished. The result was that there was greater illiteracy in India from thereon. Some weeks after this observation in the account of his interview with Gandhiji, Philip Hartog stated that Gandhiji had told him that "he had not accused the British Government of having destroyed the indigenous schools, but they had let them die for want of encouragement". To this Hartog's comment was "that they had probably let them die because they were so bad that they were not worth keeping". That a century earlier the ruling authority in London also considered them 'bad', perhaps intolerable, is obvious from its April 1828 comment that the papers of the Madras survey were "sufficiently complete to show, that in providing the means of a better education for the natives, little aid is to be expected from the instruments of education which already exist". (*House of Common Papers,* 1831-32, Vol.9, p.508.)

IX

Whatever may be the historical assessment of the content of the reported indigenous system of education, it is beyond controversy that in the early decades of the nineteenth century it was under great stress. The

much-quoted A. D. Campbell, collector of Bellary, whose long letter has been used by Hartog to show how 'bad' the Indian system was and a century earlier was used by London to establish that reading and writing were acquired "solely with a view to the transaction of business", and that "nothing whatever is learnt except reading, and with the exception of writing and a little arithmetic, the education of the great majority goes no farther", had as mentioned earlier, also indicated what seemed to him the primary cause of this stress. He had come to the conclusion that the major cause of it was "the transfer of the capital of the country from their native government and their officers, who liberally expended it in India, to Europeans restricted by law from employing it even temporarily in India, and daily draining it from the land". Further, Campbell had stated that, "there is no doubt, that in former times, especially under the Hindoo governments, very large grants, both in money and land, were issued for the support of learning". The term 'former times' often used in this period, it may be mentioned usually referred to the time before the formal establishment of British authority and not of a time centuries earlier. As indicated earlier, views similar to those expressed by Campbell were later shared by G. W. Leitner in respect of the Punjab, and in an indirect way by W. Adam in his reports on Bengal and Bihar.

The question of content however is crucial because it is that which led to indigenous education being termed 'bad' and hence to its dismissal, and in Gandhiji's phrase to its uprooting. Yet it was not the apparent content 'the mere reading and writing and a little arithmetic' which was of any consequence in such decisions. For, the school education in contemporary England, except in the sphere of religious teaching, covered the same ground, and perhaps much less thoroughly. As mentioned earlier, the average period of schooling in 1835 England was just about one year, and even in 1851 only two. Further, as stated by A. E. Dobbs "in some country schools writing was excluded for fear of evil consequences".[97]

While the limitless British hunger for revenue so forcefully described by A. D. Campbell starved the Indian system of the resource base it was its cultural and religious content and structure which seem

[97] A. E. Dobbs, *op. cit.,* p.158.

to have led to a deliberate uprooting of it. For the relatively undisturbed maintenance and continuance of British rule, it was imperative to somehow uproot the Indian indigenous system. It is such imperativeness which made Macaulay, Bentinck, etc. to deliberately neglect large-scale school education, as desired by men like Adam, till a viable system of Anglicised higher education had first been established in India.

The imperativeness of such a step was, in 1813, publicly and powerfully expressed by William Wilberforce when he depicted Indians as being "deeply sunk, and by their religious superstitions fast bound, in the lowest depths of moral and social wretchedness".[98] T. B. Macaulay expressed similar views using different imagery, in his comment that the totality of Indian knowledge and scholarship did not even equal the contents of "a single shelf of a good European library", and that all the historical information contained in books written in Sanscrit was "less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgement used at preparatory schools in England".[99] To Macaulay all Indian knowledge, if not despicable, was at least absurd: absurd history, absurd metaphysics, absurd physics, absurd theology.

A little later Karl Marx seems to have had similar impressions of India despite his great study of British state papers and other extensive material relating to India. Writing in the New York Daily Tribune on June 25, 1853 he shared the view of the perennial nature of Indian misery and approvingly quoted an ancient Indian text which according to him placed "the commencement of Indian misery in an epoch even more remote than the Christian creation of the world". According to him Indian life had always been undignified, stagnatory, vegetative, and passive, given to a brutalizing worship of nature instead of man being the "sovereign of nature" as contemplated in contemporary European thought. And therefore Karl Marx concluded, "whatever may have been the crimes of England" in India, "she was the unconscious tool of history" in bringing about what Marx so anxiously looked forward to, India's westernisation.

The complete denunciation and rejection of Indian culture and civilisation was, however, left to the powerful pen of James Mill. This he did in his monumental three volume *History of British India*, first

[98] *HANSARD*: June 22, 1813.
[99] Minute on Indian Education, February 2, 1835, see H. Sharp, *op. cit.*, pp.109-110.

published in 1817, and thenceforth an essential reading and reference book for those entrusted with administering the British Indian Empire. As Mill's *History*, from the time of its publication, has till recently provided the framework in the writing of most histories of India, the relevance of his judgments on India and its people cannot be gainsaid.

"The same insincerity, mendacity, and perfidy; the same indifference to the feelings of others; the same prostitution and venality" were according to Mill the conspicuous characteristics of both the Hindus and the Muslims. The Muslims however were perfuse, when possessed of wealth, and devoted to pleasure; the Hindus almost always penurious and ascetic; and "in truth, the Hindu like the eunuch, excels in the qualities of a slave". Furthermore, similar to the Chinese, the Hindus were "dissembling, treacherous, mendacious, to an excess which surpasses even the usual measure of uncultivated society". Both the Chinese and the Hindus were "disposed to excessive exaggeration with regard to everything relating to themselves". Both were "cowardly and unfeeling". Both "in the highest degree conceited of themselves, and full of affected contempt for others". And above all both were "in the physical sense, disgustingly unclean in their persons and houses".

Compared to the people of India, the people of Europe even during the feudal ages, notwithstanding the vices of the Roman Church and the defects of the schoolmen, were according to Mill superior in philosophy. Further, the Europeans "were greatly superior, notwithstanding the defects of the feudal system, in the institutions of government and in laws". Even their poetry was "beyond all comparison preferable to the poetry of the Hindus". Mill felt that it was hardly necessary to assert that in the art of war "the Hindus have always been greatly inferior to the warlike nations of Europe". The agriculture of the Europeans "surpassed exceedingly that of the Hindus", and in India the roads were little better than paths, and the rivers without bridges; there was not one original treatise on medicine, considered as a science, and surgery was unknown among the Hindus. Further still, "compared with the slavish and dastardly spirit of the Hindus" the Europeans were to be placed in an elevated rank with regard to manners and character, and their manliness and courage.

Where the Hindus surpassed the Europeans was in delicate manufactures, "particularly in spinning, weaving, and dyeing"; in the fabrica-

tion of trinkets; and probably in the art of polishing and setting the precious stones; and more so in effeminate gentleness, and the winning arts of address. However in the arts of painting, sculpture and architecture, the Hindus in no way excelled Europe. Further, "the Hindu loom, with all its appurtenances, is coarse and ill-fashioned, to a degree hardly less surprising than the fineness of the commodity which it is the instrument of producing". The very dexterity in the use of their tools and implements became a point against the Indians for, as James Mill proclaimed, "A dexterity in the use of its own imperfect tools is a common attribute of rude society".

These reflections and judgments led to the obvious conclusion, and Mill wrote, "Our ancestors, however, though rough, were sincere; but under the glossing exterior of the Hindu lies a general disposition to deceit and perfidy. In fine, it cannot be doubted that, upon the whole, the gothic nations, as soon as they became a settled people, exhibit the marks of a superior character and civilization to those of the Hindus".[100]

As to James Mill so also to Wilberforce, Macaulay, and Karl Marx and the thought and approaches they represented (for it is more as spokesmen of such thinking and approaches that they are important in the context of India rather than as outstanding individuals), the manners, customs and civilization of India were intrinsically barbarous. And to each of them India could become civilised only by discarding its Indianness, and by adopting "utility as the object of every pursuit"[101] according to Mill, by embracing his peculiar brand of Christianity for Wilberforce, by becoming anglicised according to Macaulay, and for Marx by becoming western. Prior to them, for Henry Dundas, the man who governed India from London for twenty long years, Indians not only had to become subservient to British authority but also had to feel "indebted to our beneficence and wisdom for advantages they are to receive", and in like manner "feel solely indebted to our protection for the countenance and enjoyment of them"[102] before they could even qualify for being considered as civilised.

Given such complete agreement on the nature of Indian culture and institutions, it was inevitable that because of its crucial social and cultural role, Indian education fared as it did. To speed up its demise it not

[100] James Mill: *History of British India*, London, 1817, Vol. I, pp.344, 351-352, 466-467, 472, 646. [101] *Ibid,* p.428. [102] Revenue Despatch to Madras: 11.2.1801.

only had to be ridiculed and despised, but steps also had to be taken so that it was starved out of its resource base. True, as far as the known record can tell, no direct dismantling or shutting up of each and every institution was resorted to, or any other more drastic physical measures taken to achieve this demise. Such steps were unnecessary, the reason being that the fiscal steps and ridicule performed the task far more effectively.

An official indication of what was to come was conveyed by London to the Madras Presidency when acknowledging the information that a survey of indigenous education had been initiated there, much before the papers of the survey were sent to London. In this acknowledgement, the London authorities expressed their appreciation of this initiative and also approved of the collectors having been cautioned "against exciting any fears in the people that their freedom of choice in matters of education would be interfered with". However this approval was followed by the observation: "But it would be equally wrong to do anything to fortify them [i.e. the people of the Madras Presidency] in the absurd opinion that their own rude institutions of education are so perfect as not to admit of improvement". The very expression of such a view in the most diplomatically and cautiously worded of official instructions as the despatches from London to its subordinates in Bengal, Bombay and Madras generally were, was a clear signal. Operatively it implied not only greater ridicule and denunciation of the Indian system but further that whatever residual fiscal and state support, which might have still remained with the educational institutions, was no longer to be tolerated. Not surprisingly, the indigenous system had little option except to stagnate and die.

The neglect and uprooting of Indian education, the measures which were employed to this end, and its replacement by an alien and rootless system (its products so graphically described by Ananda Coomaraswamy) had several consequences for India. To begin with it led to an obliteration of literacy and knowledge of such dimensions amongst the Indian people that recent attempts at universal literacy and education have so far been unable to make an appreciable dent in it. Next it destroyed the Indian social balance in which, traditionally, persons from all sections of society appear to have been able to receive an optimum schooling which, amongst others, had enabled them to par-

ticipate openly and appropriately and with dignity not only in the social and cultural life of their locality but, if they wished, ensured participation at the more extended levels. It is this destruction along with similar damage in the economic sphere which led to great deterioration in the status and socio-economic conditions and personal dignity of those who are now known as the scheduled castes, and to only a slightly lesser extent to that of the vast peasant majority encompassed by the term 'backward castes'. The recent movements embracing these sections, to a great extent, seem to be aimed at restoring this basic Indian social balance.

And most importantly till today it has kept most educated Indians not only ignorant of the society they live in, the culture which sustains this society, and their fellow beings but yet more tragically for over a century it has induced a lack of confidence, and loss of bearing amongst the people of India in general.

What India had in the sphere of education two centuries ago and the factors which led to its decay and replacement are indeed a part of history. Even if the former could be brought back to life, in the context of today, or of the immediate future, many aspects of it may no longer be apposite. Yet what exists has little relevance either. An understanding of that which existed and of the process which created the irrelevance India has today, in time, could however help devise what best suits India's requirements and the ethos of its people.