



eCOMMONS

Loyola University Chicago
Loyola eCommons

Master's Theses

Theses and Dissertations

1954

An Analysis of the Problem of Illiteracy in India

Teresa K. Kalathiveetil
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation

Kalathiveetil, Teresa K., "An Analysis of the Problem of Illiteracy in India" (1954). *Master's Theses*. Paper 1064.
http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/1064

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).
Copyright © 1954 Teresa K. Kalathiveetil

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM OF
ILLITERACY IN INDIA

by

Teresa K. Kalathiveetil

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfilment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

January

1954

LIFE

Teresa K. Kalathiveetil was born at Ochanthuruth, Cochin, South India, May 5, 1928.

She was graduated from Lady of Mount Carmel Girls' High School, Ernakulam, May, 1944, and from St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, affiliated to the Madras University, May, 1948, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

From 1949 to 1951 the author conducted post-graduate work at the Presidency College, Madras, affiliated to the Madras University, and procured the degree of Master of Arts in Economics in May, 1951.

The writer began her studies at Loyola University in October, 1951.

PREFACE

The following thesis is an analytical study of the "Problem of Illiteracy in India", which describes the problem and presents an analysis of the causes that have contributed to the high rate of illiteracy in India. The times call for a wholly new attitude toward illiteracy, new means to provide literacy education and for extensive reforms. This thesis does not intend to elaborate on the solutions of the problem of illiteracy or the future goals. Emphasis will be placed on the present condition in India as far as literacy is concerned, and the causes that have led to these conditions. The data used have been derived from documentary research in many books and reports.

The most complicated and difficult phases of the problem are those that are connected with the social, economic and linguistic difficulties of the country. In keeping with the purpose of the thesis I will attempt to show how illiteracy is related to the above mentioned problems. By way of comparison I have also stated very briefly the latest facts available about world illiteracy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. WORLD ILLITERACY - A brief statement of recent available facts	7
A. Extent of Illiteracy	7
B. Dangers of Illiteracy	12
C. Campaign for literacy	16
D. UNESCO and its two-pronged drive	20
III. ILLITERACY IN INDIA	25
A. Historical Background of Illiteracy	25
B. Extent of Illiteracy	33
C. Causes of Illiteracy	37
1. Social	37
(a) Caste System	37
(b) Position of Women	45
2. Political	51
3. Economic	64
4. Linguistic	72
5. Educational	79
D. Evaluation	88
IV. THE NEW PLANS AND OBJECTIVES OF INDIA'S PRESENT GOVERNMENT	92
A. Basic Education	93
B. Compulsory Education	96
C. Adult Education	99
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	105
BIBLIOGRAPHY	109

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I	THE PERCENTAGE OF WORLD ILLITERACY	8
II	PERCENT LITERATE, AGE 10-PLUS, 1891-1941	33
III	PERCENT LITERATE, AGE 10-PLUS, BY SEX 1891-1941.	48
IV	EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS - BRITISH INDIA	54
V	NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS AND ENROLMENT (BRITISH INDIA)	55
VI	GROWTH OF EXPENDITURE ON PRIMARY EDUCATION ANALYSED UNDER TWO MAIN SOURCES, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE (IN ROUND NUMBER OF RUPEES)	56
VII	PER CAPITA ANNUAL INCOME OF VARIOUS COUN- TRIES	67
VIII	DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGES IN INDIA	73
IX	ENROLMENT IN INDIAN SCHOOLS	79
X	AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF PASSING PUPILS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES	82

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Paradoxical though it may appear in an age of aviation, radio, and nuclear physics, it is nevertheless a fact that more than half the world's population cannot read or write. While in some parts of the world the percentage of illiteracy is slight, in others the reverse is true. Throughout vast areas, men and women are mostly unable to read the instructions which they may receive or to sign their name to an agreement. Today, it is not difficult to see what disastrous results may ensue from this situation. It may be said that it is the moral duty of those who have enjoyed the benefits of education to see that those benefits are further extended to people who have had no formal education at all.

The world today is divided into a large number of small groups, each expecting hostility from the other and each therefore suspicious and on the defensive. Illiteracy has an enormous bearing on this world-wide situation and on the establishment of peace and security. "Since wars begin in the minds of men,

it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed."¹ Throughout the history of mankind, ignorance of the ways of other peoples has been a common cause of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world. The wide diffusion of culture and the education of humanity for justice, liberty, and peace, are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual help and co-operation. Peace, if it is not to fail, must be founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.

If only a small part of our world remains on a fairly high economic level, while the majority of the human race are in poverty and degradation, the areas containing these underprivileged peoples cannot but be centers of resentment, unrest and revolt. Rapid communication and travel have stirred up the thoughts and emotions of men in underdeveloped areas. The airplanes, the radio and the cinema have ushered us into a new era where illiterates can see for themselves the enormous economic superiority of literate countries. Even those with little or no education are now realizing that it is possible to enjoy a

1 Department of State, The UNESCO Constitution and Basic Law, International Organization and Conference Series IV, UNESCO 17, Washington, D.C., 1952.

fuller and better life. This vision may bring peace, or it may cause widespread disturbance, or war. If those who seek for the better life can be given the education they need to realize their goals through the orderly means of social improvement rather than through violence, an era of peace and a richer and fuller life for all is in view. But if their energies are dammed up in frustration and dismay, or misled by ignorance, the result will surely be aggression and destruction.

Turning to the problem of illiteracy in India, it is an established fact that India is one of the least literate countries of the world. Very few people realize the magnitude of India's educational problems. According to the 1951 census India has a population of 356 million. Excluding children below the age of five, the literates form only 18 per cent of the country's population. Besides the great number of illiterate adults, India has 90,000,000 children between the ages of six and fourteen for whom educational provisions have to be made. The vast numbers with which one has to deal in India the poverty of her people, the lack of trained teachers, the inadequacy of present school systems, poor communications, the fact that the majority of people living in villages of less than 500 population all these factors complicate the problem of making the people literate. In addition, such things as the many different

scripts, languages, and dialects some of which are as yet unwritten - complicate both publication and teaching problems.

The problem under consideration is of immense importance, not only on account of the vast number of people involved, but because humanity stands in debt to India for priceless treasures of philosophy, religion, art, literature and exact mathematics. If India is adequately educated she is sure to make an even greater contribution to world civilization and culture. However, unless the masses of India are truly educated, her life will be corrupt and chaotic, for no government rises higher than its source. The whole country is undergoing startling changes. The land is thrilling with a new national spirit. Millions of men and women are on fire with an impetuous love for India and bitter impatience at whatever stands in the way of their country's development. Even the ignorant and illiterate masses are losing their ancient torpor and are struggling for self-expression and for their rights. India's rebirth is generating potential driving forces that can be used in vitalizing her schools. In directing the new forces of the day into wise and constructive channels education must have its share.

In the past the education of the vast majority of men, women and children in our country was simply neglected by the

government. However, since its independence the National Government has squarely faced the challenge of illiteracy and ignorance. The new government fully realizes that in a democracy no citizen should be allowed to go without education. Every citizen must be mentally equipped to play his part in the affairs of his village, town and state. The government of India has, accordingly, turned to the task of basic and social education as well as scientific research, technological and professional training and reform of university education. In recent years earnest attempts have been made to bridge the large gulf between India's needs and her level of achievement. So far as the central government is concerned, it can at present accept only a limited obligation in the field of education. The important objective of the national planning is to strengthen the economic base so that, in later years, an increasing proportion of resources can be applied to the development of social services. In the meantime, the immediate responsibility of all those who are concerned with education is to bring to bear on the existing organization and methods of education all the new knowledge and experience that have been gained at home and abroad. This is necessary if the most effective use is to be made of that part of the nation's resources which are made available for education at present.

Indeed, it is probable that no government has ever before had an educational problem of such magnitude and difficulty. The problem of the education of the Filipinos or of the Japanese, or even the Africans is not to be compared with the task of providing India with an education which will develop her people and help them to contribute to her national uplift. Only China furnishes a parallel, and even China is not hampered so greatly as India, by racial, social, and religious cleavages.²

² W.J. McKee, New Schools for Young India, The University of North Carolina Press, 1930, p. XII.

CHAPTER II

WORLD ILLITERACY

(A brief statement
of recent available facts)

A. Extent of Illiteracy

A thorough and complete critical analysis of international illiteracy statistics has not been made so far. The estimates produced by countries which actually have a system of compulsory primary education are the only reliable statistics.¹ However, the number of countries which can supply satisfactory information on this subject has steadily increased in the recent decades, as there is a growing tendency to consider illiteracy censuses as a regular feature of population censuses.

The Encyclopedia Americana defines illiteracy as inability to read or write, or both.² The basis of estimating illiteracy is a general census of the population, usually over a certain age, varying from 5 to 19, or the percentage of those unable to sign their marriage certificates; or the records of army recruits.³ Because of insufficient data and the varying

1 UNESCO, The Right to Education, Paris, 1952, p.7.
2 The Encyclopedia Americana, XIV, Chicago, 1953, 695.
3 Ibid.

bases used in computing, it is difficult to make comparisons of illiteracy percentages. Besides, the available statistics do not all belong to the same period of time. The following table gives the estimated percentage of illiteracy in a number of countries including the entire population over ten years of age.⁴

Table I⁵

Percentage of World Illiteracy

Continent	Country	Year	Percentage of Illiteracy
Africa	Egypt	1937	85.2
	Angola	1940	8.7
	Mauritius	1944	72.3
	Mozambique	1940	13.5
North America	Canada	1931	3.8
	New Foundland	1945	12.0
	Cuba	1943	22.1
	Salvador	1930	72.8
	Gautemala	1940	65.4
	Honduras	1945	66.3
	Mexico	1940	51.6
	Panama	1940	35.3
	United States	1930	4.3
	Jamaica	1943	23.9
	Leeward Isles	1946	14.5
	Windward Isles	1946	28.9
	Alaska	1929	20.1
	Puerto Rico	1940	31.5
Virgin Islands	1940	13.4	

⁴ United Nations Statistical Yearbook, New York, 1949-50, Table 163, pp. 486-94.

⁵ Ibid.

Table I (Continued)

9

Continent	Country	Year	Percentage of Illiteracy
South America	Brazil	1940	56.7
	Chile	1940	28.2
	Colombia	1938	44.2
	Peru	1940	56.6
	Venezuela	1941	56.6.
Asia	Ceylon	1946	42.2
	India	1931	90.9
	Korea	1930	68.6
	Turkey	1935	79.1
	Palestine	1931	67.4
Europe	Belgium	1930	5.6
	Bulgaria	1934	31.4
	Czechoslovakia	1930	4.1
	Finland	1930	0.9
	France	1936	3.8
	Greece	1928	40.8
	Hungary	1941	6.0
	Italy	1931	21.6
	Poland	1931	23.1
	Portugal	1940	48.7
	Rumania	1948	23.1
	Spain	1940	23.2
	Sweden	1930	0.1
Yugoslavia	1931	45.2	
Oceania	Oceania	1940	6.3
	Guam	1940	15.6
	Hawaii	1930	15.1
Australia	Australia	1924	4.7

Figures for a few countries in Northern Europe like Austria, Germany, Great Britain, Denmark, Norway and Poland where illiteracy is negligible, are not given. The above given statistics therefore, indicate that illiteracy approaches the vanishing point in the countries of northern Europe while those

in southern Europe have a higher rate of illiteracy. In 1947 the percentage of illiteracy in the United States was 2.7.⁶ Thus the United States and Canada come next in having a low rate of illiteracy.

Excepting Europe and English speaking North America, the small islands in the South Pacific have the highest literacy rates. This is supposed to be wholly due to the teaching of missionaries.⁷

Asia as a whole is only 10 to 20 per cent literate. Japan, however, is an exception. In 1926 it was estimated that only .8 per cent of the population of Japan was illiterate. However, because of the difficulty of the language a much larger percentage is semi-literate.⁸ In most of the Asiatic countries the rate of literacy has been rising rapidly during the recent years. In 1949, the rate of literacy in India was estimated to be only 18 per cent.⁹ Siam was only 31 per cent literate in 1935. But in the 1941 census, 60 to 65 per cent were listed as literate.¹⁰ A great campaign was going on in China and it is claimed that literacy there has been raised to 75 per cent.¹¹

6 Ibid.

7 F.C.Laubach, Teaching the World to Read, New York, 1947, p.8.

8 Encyclopedia Americana, p. 695.

9 The Statesman's Yearbook, New York, 1953, p. 144.

10 Laubach, Teaching the World to Read, p.9

11 UNESCO, The Right to Education, p. 7.

Africa has the lowest rate of literacy. However, literacy campaigns are getting under way in many parts of Africa and within a few decades great changes may take place.

Out of a world population of 2,378 million inhabitants, there are at least 1,200 million illiterates.¹²

This is an enormous figure, and it is all the more disturbing when we reflect that, according to data collected by the United Nations, the world's population is increasing at the rate of one percent per annum; with every hour that passes, 2,700 future school children are born and will soon be joining the ranks of those already crying out for teachers, books and equipment.¹³

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

B. DANGERS OF ILLITERACY

The civilized world gives great importance to education.

Education is preparation for life, for work, and for citizenship....The ability of an individual to manage his life, to play a productive part in the economy, and to participate in the community, in peace and war, are all influenced considerably by the extent to which he has been exposed to and has absorbed the advantages of education.¹⁴

Ignorance hinders the development of human personality. The right to intellectual and moral education implies more than a right to acquire knowledge. It means that all men have a right to forge for themselves certain mental and moral weapons of incomparable value; and they can do this only if social conditions are propitious and allow for a certain degree of freedom. Thus education is not only a process of training, but also an indispensable condition for natural development.

Democracy more than any other form of government calls for literate people.

Democracy requires an awakening of the co-operative spirit, a sense of national responsibility, and a disciplined people. These are the gifts which education distributes in the name of God.¹⁵

¹⁴ E. Ginzberg, and W. Bray, The Uneducated, p. 28.

¹⁵ Bureau of Education, Proceedings of the IX and X Meetings of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India, p. 2.

Ignorance prevents the democratic ideal from becoming a reality.

It prevents men from realizing their interdependence, the evils that beset or that threaten them, the remedies needed and the understanding which they must acquire if they are to know how to apply those remedies.¹⁶

If we are to build a workable democratic order, in which the will of the majority is to prevail, it is necessary to ensure that that will is intelligent, enlightened and inspired by benevolent, rather than malevolent, motives and purposes.

An uneducated democracy, swayed by random gusts of fanaticism and prejudice and invitingly responsive to the machinations of self-seeking demagogues, can be even a greater menace to peace, security, and happiness than any other form of government.¹⁷

The extent to which the individual is the cornerstone of democracy to that extent it is necessary that there be a high rate of literacy among all groups of its population.

In the modern world illiteracy is tantamount to slavery. It breeds want and stands in the way of scientific and technical progress. It prevents the use of modern means to improve the

16 UNESCO, The Right to Education, p.3

17 K.G. Saiyidain, Problems of Educational Reconstruction, Bombay, 1950, p. 233.

general state of health, to preserve natural resources, to increase agricultural production and to develop industrial undertakings. The eradication of illiteracy alone may not suffice to raise the people's standard of living, because the problem as a whole is not strictly educational, but social. However, various experiments made all over the world, prove that the problem of low living standards is invariably found in those areas where ignorance still prevails.

It is unjust to allow half humanity to remain deprived of the benefits of culture.

It is also a grave mistake, for it means that mankind as a whole is deprived of the co-operation of people, who if their abilities were cultivated instead of lying fallow, could make a contribution towards human progress.¹⁰

Such inequalities, that exist today in many countries, incite antagonism and jealousy among the men and women who are still sunk in ignorance and poverty toward the other half of the world's population living in relatively prosperous conditions. Thus illiteracy has also an important bearing on world peace and security.

An imperfect understanding of the aspirations and needs of their fellowmen may lead people to embark

upon dangerous enterprises, following which they sooner or later become victims of the catastrophes they themselves have caused; but they cannot be expected to see this unless they have already been taught the interdependence both of social, economic and political problems and of communities, and unless they have been convinced that it is in their interest, whenever an act of aggression is committed in any part of the world, to present a common front, in accordance with the principle of collective security. 19

The silent illiterate millions are not deaf. Today, they hear two voices. One tells them, "You are poor because the rich have kept you poor. Revolt!" The other says, "Knowledge is power. Educated people know how to take wealth from the ground, the minerals and water. Learn their secret." The people of the world are willing to try either way. They are determined to lift themselves up as civilized human beings. If the educators of the world do not lend them a helping hand the ignorant and underprivileged would be natural victims for any form of communism or Fascism that promises them a better way of life.

19 Ibid. p. 5.

C. CAMPAIGN FOR LITERACY

One of the interesting phenomena of the past few decades has been the emergence, all over the world, of attempts to introduce literacy campaigns. There is a definite determination on the part of many countries to eliminate illiteracy. This added emphasis on world literacy is largely due to the spreading of the idea that education is not for the privileged classes alone but for all.

Russia is supposed to have made the most tremendous advance in history both numerically and in percentages.²⁰

In 1918 Krupskaja said: "Out-of-school education is the most acute, the most alive question of the present moment." The government at that time set about to "liquidate illiteracy". These are the results: In 1897 Russia was 69 per cent illiterate; by 1926 she was 48.7 per cent; by 1931, 25 per cent; and recently the government has issued an estimate that only ten percent of the people are now illiterate.²¹

Laubach wrote this fifteen years ago. More rapid changes may have taken place in the last few years.

Japan is another country that has made remarkable progress in literacy education. In 1872 a code was issued requiring popular education. At that time only 31 per cent of the

20 Laubach, Toward a Literate World, New York, 1933, p. 1

21 Ibid.

children were in school. In 1922, 99 per cent were in school²² and in 1926 it was estimated that only .8 per cent of the population of Japan was illiterate.²³

The famous Mass Education Movement of China is another good example of a successful literacy campaign.²⁴ It was begun by one Dr. James Y.C. Yen. In 1923 the Chinese National Association of the Mass Education Movement was organized. This organization spread into all provinces and special districts. Two campaigns were conducted simultaneously in China, one governmental, the other private. The government attempted the nationwide campaign, while Dr. Yen concentrated upon the Ting Hsien County with a population of 400,000 people as an experimental laboratory. Very soon he expanded the scope of his program. Today China claims to have raised her literacy rate to 75 per cent.²⁵

In South America, the efforts which had been made after World War II toward raising the level of literacy are beginning to show results.

Typical of the frequent reports of progress in this

²² Ibid.

²³ Encyclopedia Americana, p. 695.

²⁴ Laubach, Toward a Literate World, p.7.

²⁵ Laubach, Teaching the World to Read, p. 9.

direction was one from Venezuela which stated that in that country 107,000 men and women had been taught to read and write in the past seven years.²⁶

In various places throughout United States and Canada opportunity for literacy education is made available to adults. The United States Department of the Army, through its special training units, continues its practice of compelling functionally illiterate recruits to learn to read and write up to an acceptable standard.²⁷

India's battle against its tremendous problem of illiteracy was being attacked on a national scale in connection with its first five year plan. This was augmented by technical assistance through the Point Four Program. Dr. Frank Laubach was sent there to demonstrate that grown people can learn to read and write in a reasonably short time. The Indian army continues teaching illiterate soldiers to read and write.²⁸

Special measures has also been taken in Western Europe to wipe out illiteracy. In Portugal, where 60 per cent of the population was reported illiterate, the ministry of education began to enforce existing laws governing primary school attendance. Wherever necessary, the government also furnished

26 Encyclopedia Britanica, Book of the Year, Chicago,
27 Ibid. 1953, p. 348.
28 Ibid.

pupils with clothing and warm midday meals. Later, efforts are also to be made to provide transportation for school children. However, it was soon recognized that the percentage of illiteracy could not be reduced by these steps alone, since a good number of the illiterates fell within the adult segment of the population. Thus attempts were devised to teach older persons at least how to read and write. The army began literacy training of young recruits. Commercial and agricultural corporations as well as cultural and sports leaders were asked to co-operate in the literacy program. To prevent a relapse into illiteracy, the ministry of education of the Portuguese government also planned to create more libraries in rural districts.²⁹

These isolated attempts received a great impetus with the formation of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Since its inception, this organization has continued to prove its usefulness in marshalling available resources to combat the problem of illiteracy throughout the world.

29 Ibid.

D. UNESCO AND ITS
TWO-PRONGED DRIVE

As one of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations, UNESCO's task is to help Member States to ensure that their educational systems are adequate in every way to meet the needs of society and of the individual.

UNESCO's two-fold aim in the field of education is to give an increasingly wide significance to the right to education proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to ensure that this positive right is extended to all mankind and recognized as a birthright. 30

These aims are to be realized through a two-pronged drive which tries to establish universal, compulsory, free education for all children (at least of elementary school age); and to attack illiteracy among adults on as wide a scale as possible.

A distinction has to be drawn between UNESCO's contribution to a general movement to ensure free and compulsory education throughout the world and the direct assistance given by the Organization to countries encountering serious difficulties in this respect. As regards the first point, UNESCO studied the problems involved in making free compulsory primary education

ion more nearly universal and of longer duration throughout the world. The results of these various investigations were submitted to the Fourteenth International Conference on Public Education which was held at Geneva in 1951. The recommendations of this conference amount to a universal program for the full application of compulsory education.³¹ Direct assistance from UNESCO sometimes takes the form of the despatch of missions or experts to countries requesting them.

However, UNESCO's most outstanding efforts in the field of education have been made through its regional fundamental education centres.³² These centers are designed to train teachers and leaders in the best methods of combating illiteracy and its related problems. A center at Patzcuaro, Mexico, serves the Latin American countries. Another at Cairo, Egypt, is to serve the Near East area. Other centers are to be established in the Far East and in South East Asia.

Since its foundation, UNESCO has concerned itself with the enormous problem of fundamental education.

Fundamental education is defined as "that kind of minimum and general education which aims to help children and adults, who do not have the advantages

³¹ Ibid., p. 33.

³² Encyclopedia Britannica, Book of the Year 1953, p. 343.

of formal education to understand the problems of their rights and duties as citizens and individuals, and to participate more effectively in the economic and social progress of their community.³³

UNESCO has also tried to determine the extent of illiteracy and has studied all attempts so far made to combat it. It has attempted to draw up a general policy applicable throughout the world, and to decide the nature and extent of its own share in the campaign against the widespread evil of ignorance. For this purpose several committees of experts have been convened at UNESCO House in Paris; their findings have been published and have given rise to many interesting and useful discussions.

In carrying out the Technical Assistance Program, it has been possible to increase the number of fundamental education experts sent to a number of countries. UNESCO has also succeeded in setting up a number of pilot projects, associated projects and fundamental education centers in different parts of the world.

A "pilot project" is an intensive fundamental education campaign in a limited area, it may be compared to an experimental laboratory, where educational techniques and methods adapted to the needs of one or several communities are tried out.³⁴

33 UNESCO, The Right to Education, p.34.

34 Ibid., p. 36.

"Associated projects" are those schemes among the many activities in the field of fundamental education that are of value to other countries as well as their country of origin, and are worth continuous study.³⁵ UNESCO gives all possible assistance to these associated projects also.

The task of educating the adults is in many ways the most difficult part of decreasing illiteracy. However, effective steps have been taken under the auspices of UNESCO. In the fundamental education centers, mentioned earlier, provisions have been made for teachers from many lands to learn how to teach adults, and to prepare special materials for this purpose. In Patzcuaro, Mexico, for example, men and women teachers from many Latin American countries are working and living together for a year or more, while they co-operatively develop programs of fundamental education for adults in their own countries.

A local approach to local problems may be said to be the motto of the Patzcuaro school. For example, the students in this school are working with the people of the neighborhood in improving sanitation by helping them build sewage facilities; or if they find that the village needs a new school house, they proceed to enlist the villagers co-operatively in building it.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 37.

Along with this practical work to improve the life of the community, instruction is given in reading and writing. The immediate goal of this instruction is to give each person the basic skills of communication so that he can become a better worker, a better parent and a better citizen. But the ultimate goal of the project is to provide that broad basis of understanding without which millions of men and women today have to walk through life in intellectual darkness.

CHAPTER III

ILLITERACY IN INDIA

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From time immemorial India has been a land of schools, of literature and of philosophy, inseparably associated with the religions which dominated its people. In the long and chequered history of the country one may notice the growth and decay of many institutions or ideals, but what strikes one most is the majestic continuity of the growth of the Indian culture and educational thought.

Education is no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poets of the Vedic age to the Bengali philosopher of the present day there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars.¹

In ancient India religion was the mainspring of one's activities. To the ancient Indian religion was of all absorbing interest and embraced not only prayer and worship but everything -- philosophy, morality, law, and government. The study of Vedic literature was indispensable to every Hindu and he had

1 F.W. Thomas, British Education in India, London, 1891 p.1.

to be careful about his moral, spiritual, and intellectual growth. In short, the entire life of an Indian sprang from religion. Education was no exception to this general rule. Religion saturated educational ideals too. The objective of the educational system was the building up of character, the development of personality, and the preservation of the ancient culture of the land.

Education was more or less compulsory for every boy of the traivarnikas (the three highest castes -- the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas). The stages of instruction were rather well defined, viz., up to the age of seven at home, from 8 to 16 at schools, and then in a university. During the whole course of his school life, the student had to observe strict brahmacharya, viz., simple dress, plain food, a hard bed, and a celibate life. He had to learn how to pray, to offer sacrifices, and to perform his social and religious duties. There were no exceptions; the rich and the poor were treated alike.

In course of time, the Vedic ritual and learning became more and more complex. The teaching profession came to be virtually controlled by the Brahmans (the highest caste) and education aimed at preparing individuals for their future vocations. Religion was reduced to a complicated ritual to be performed by Brahman priests in a language hardly intelligible to the common

people. The formalism and exclusiveness of the Brahmanic system led to the birth of two new religions, Buddhism and Jainism. Neither of these religions recognized the authority of the Vedas and both challenged the exclusive claims of the Brahmans to the priesthood. Their founders, Buddha and Mahavira, taught through the common languages and advocated education for all, irrespective of caste, creed or sex. Besides, Buddhism also introduced the monastic system of education. Monasteries attached to Buddhist temples served the double purpose of imparting education and of training persons for the priesthood. Some of these Buddhist monasteries acquired international fame and numerous foreign scholars and pilgrims came to India to drink deep at the fount of her culture. However, before long Hinduism absorbed the best elements of Buddhism, which disappeared from India with the advent of the Mohammedans.

The Muslim kings had to choose between neglecting the education of their Hindu subjects and giving them separate schools : the majority of them chose the first alternative while a few like Akbar chose the second. But none of them denied that every child should be educated in his own religion if he is educated at all. The Muslim rulers did not interfere with the education of the Hindus, and the Muslim education was confined mostly to the followers of Islam. Till the end of the 15th century

A.D., the Mohammedans were like an 'armed garrison'² in a foreign country and the education of the Hindus did not receive proper attention.

The Mohammedan rulers set up two types of educational institutions, viz., the maktab (primary schools) and the madrasahs (schools for higher learning). Almost every mosque had a maktab attached to it. Primary education was thus brought within the reach of the people because the whole country was dotted with mosques. The madrasahs were established in all important towns. Both these primary and higher educational institutions were attended by the Hindus, because they had to learn Persian, the court language. With the death of Aurangzeb, the last great Moghul, the Muslim empire collapsed and the whole country was overrun by war-lords. Consequently education received a setback. Nevertheless a popular system of education survived a century of decay, and numerous indigenous schools were found to be in existence towards the beginning of the last century.

Thus it should be remembered that in the pre-British period, education was not unknown to India. In fact India was then far more advanced in education than many European countries.

2 F.E. Kay, Indian Education, Bombay, 1938, p. 110.

A state administrative machinery of the modern type did not exist, and education was more or less self-controlled. But both the Hindu and Muslim rulers considered it a religious obligation to help the spread of education. Liberal grants and donations were given for the promotion of education, and scholarships were awarded to worthy students. Royal patrons built universities and other educational institutions. The royal courts were sanctuaries of poets, musicians, painters, and learned men.

Almost every village had its school for the diffusion of not only three but 4R's -- the last R being religion.³

During the later period certain defects crept into the system and education became formal and stereotyped. However, it should be remembered that similar defects were also prevalent in the European systems during the mediaeval period, and it was the revival of learning during the sixteenth century A.D. that infused a new spirit into European thinking.

From the viewpoint of universal education the quantitative aspects of the work of the indigenous village schools were not satisfactory. Their number was not inconsiderable, but the attendance of children was very meagre and large groups of po-

³ B.D. Basu, History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company, Second Edition, Calcutta, N.D.

pulation received little or no education. Women were almost wholly illiterate although some official reports testify that a few girls attended indigenous public schools in Madras, that some girls from higher class families of Bombay were given domestic instruction in reading and writing, and that there were women teachers in the Punjab. Another large group which was almost completely neglected was that of the aboriginal and hill tribes and of the untouchable classes among the Hindus. Even from the other Hindu castes, only a small number of boys attended the village schools. According to Thomas:

On the whole we shall probably be not wrong if we accept one in ten as the real proportion which the number of Indian boys attending school usually bore to the number who should have been attending. If we add the number of female children under tuition it will not appreciably affect this estimate.⁴

Even allowing for the inaccuracies and underestimates involved in the early statistics, they cannot be said to represent any happy state of affairs. The percentage of literacy was about 6.1 in Bengal and it may be presumed to be more or less the same for India as a whole. The concept of compulsory or universal education was unknown. In a social background which had no printing press, no penny post, no newspapers, and

⁴ Thomas, British Education in India, p. 13.

no democratic concepts of government, formal instruction in an elementary school was mostly looked upon either as a superfluity or as a luxury intended mainly for the higher social classes. Sad as this picture is, it should be remembered that similar conditions existed, at this time, in most countries and that even these unsatisfactory statistics gave India then a fairly high educational rank among nations.

When India passed under the British rule, the Government found a more or less widespread system of education in the country. With the destruction of the village communities and the impoverishment of the people which were the natural results of British mode of administration in India, educational institutions which used to flourish in every village became things of the past.

The baneful effect of the administration of the British merchants constituting the East India Company was observable not only in the destruction of Indian trades and industries, but also in that of the indigenous system of education.⁵

The meagre percentage of the literates you find in India today hardly does any credit to the British Administration. The British government remained indifferent to the education of the masses. It neither opened enough schools of its own, nor

⁵ Basu, History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company, p.18.

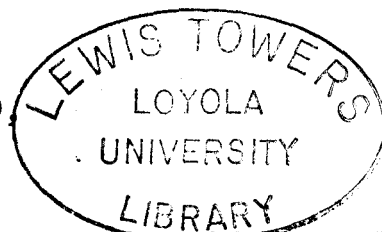
gave sufficient grants for the education of the masses. Thus today India is one of the least literate countries in the world.

B. EXTENT OF ILLITERACY

Though considerable efforts have been made to reduce illiteracy in India, the end result is not impressive. In 1931, 91 per cent of those who were ten years of age and over could not read and write; and in 1941, 85 per cent could not do so. This puts the Indian sub-continent in the position of being one of the world's most illiterate regions, although it is by no means the worst in this regard. Most of the African continent is worse off, and also certain sections of Asia. But in the whole of Latin America only one or two countries come somewhat close to India, and none in Europe.

In the six decades from 1881 to 1941 the percentage literate of the population aged 10 and over nearly tripled itself. (Table 1) Such progress over more than half a century, though gratifying, is not remarkable.....⁶

Table II⁷
Percent literate, Age 10
1891-1941



Date	Both sexes combined	Men	Women
1891	6.1	11.4	0.5
1901	6.2	11.5	0.7

⁶ Kingsley Davis, *The Population of India and Pakistan*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1951., p.150.

⁷ Ibid., Table 70, p.151..

Date	Both sexes combined	Men	Women
1911	7.0	12.6	1.1
1921	8.3	14.2	1.9
1931	9.2	15.4	2.4
1941	15.1	27.4	6.9

It is clear from this table that literacy in India rose in the forty years between 1891 and 1931, from 6.1 to 9.2, not even a rise of one per cent per decade.

Chile had 23 per cent of its total population literate in 1875, and raised this to 56 per cent in 1930. Russia had 24 per cent of its total population age 9 and over literate in 1897, and raised this to 81.2 per cent by 1939 -- a rate of increase considerably faster than that experienced in India.⁸

According to some, one important reason of the low percentage of literacy recorded in India is that the literacy standard adopted by the census authorities is very high. It is true that the Indian census long used a very strict definition of literacy.

The definition of literacy in India is ability to write a short letter to a friend and read the answer. That is a very inexact definition. It is too easy or too hard according to the interpretation of the examiner.⁹

⁸ Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.151.

⁹ Laubach, Toward a Literate World, p.1.

Thus the Indian definition differed from a good many countries which merely require that the person be able to read. In India there was traditionally much learning of religious literature by note memory. The pupils, however, were not taught to write and the census definition excluded such readers.

In 1881 and 1891, however, a confusion arose over a tripartite division that was attempted. Each person was to be recorded as falling in one of three categories: those who were literate, those who were learning, or those who were illiterate.¹⁰

The category 'learning' was not mutually exclusive with the other two, and there was no sure way of assigning persons so classified to the other categories.

According to Parulekar:

...if it is estimated on the basis adopted on many countries of the world, it would at least be twice as much.¹¹

Even so the position would appear to be most unsatisfactory.

According to the 1951 statistics literacy has increased to 18 per cent.

The vast illiteracy and profound ignorance of her people

¹⁰ Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, London 1939, p.151.

¹¹ R.V.Parulekar, Literacy in India, p. 153.

is a dead-weight to India's economic, industrial, political, social, and cultural progress. India is slowly but steadily realizing what it costs a country, even with a glorious past, to remain unlettered. It is a grave hindrance to her progress in every walk of life. India today is faced with the challenge of making education available to all her citizens; the state can no longer divest itself of this responsibility. Universal compulsory primary education for the whole of India and social education for adults have been accepted as a goal for the next few years. During the last few years every state in India has focused its attention on education, but it must be remembered that the very nature of the problem is such that progress cannot be spectacular. The growth of education is essentially slow, and the speed with which it can take place is not necessarily the sole test of success.

C. CAUSES OF ILLITERACY

1. Social

(a) Caste System

From the very beginning India was peopled by various racial groups, the dark aboriginal tribes, the sturdy Dravidians and the energetic Aryans. Later the Persians, the Greeks, the Scythians and the Moghuls came to enjoy the fabulous wealth of India. When peoples with different cultures and customs, habits and manners, faiths and beliefs came together, there is bound to be some difficulty in social adjustment. Naturally, therefore, few countries in the world have had such problems in race relations as India.

India felt the need for allowing each race group develop the best in it without impeding the progress of others. From the beginning of her history, India has attempted to tolerate differences and that spirit has manifested itself all through the course of her upward progress. In the words of Tagore, the great philosopher

Her caste system is the outcome of this spirit of toleration. For India has all along been trying experiments in evolving a social unity within which all the different peoples could be held together, yet fully enjoying the freedom of maintaining their own differences.¹²

¹² R. Tagore, Nationalism, New York, 1917, p. 137.

Caste system thus came into existence as a social unity in which the different peoples could live together in mutual harmony and enjoy at the same time the freedom to maintain their differences.

India had felt that diversity of races there must be and should be, whatever may be its drawback, and you can never coerce nature into your narrow limits of convenience without paying one day very dearly for it. In this India was right: but what she failed to realize was that in human beings differences are not like the physical barriers of mountains, fixed forever -- they are with life's flow, they are changing their courses and their shapes and volume.¹³

Thus in her caste regulations India recognized differences, but not the mutability which is the law of life. In her anxiety to avoid collisions she set up boundaries of immovable walls, thus giving to her many races the negative benefit of peace and order but not the positive opportunity of expansion and movement. The same thing happened when she tried to ward off the collisions of trade interests. She attached different trades and professions to different castes. This had the effect of reducing the jealousy and hatred of competition. In this also India laid all her emphasis upon the law of heredity, ignoring the law of mutation, and consequently arts were reduced into crafts and genius into skill. Many people fail to see that in her caste system India in all seriousness accepted her responsi-

13 Tagore, Nationalism, p. 137-138.

bility to solve the race problem in such a manner as to avoid friction, and yet to afford each race freedom within its boundaries.

Today caste is a good illustration of an institution which was once a useful tool in governing and helping people, but which has become a social handicap instead of a benefit. In course of time castes became rigid and unchangeable and many abuses crept into the system. Some writers attribute this rigidity to the Hindu doctrine of Karma.

Men were born in a caste because of their deeds in a past birth. They must, therefore, work out their Karma in the caste in which they are born. To do otherwise, to change one's caste, is to fly in the face of the laws of nature and of God.¹⁴

The four well known castes in existence today are the Brahmans or sacerdotal class; the Kshatriyas or military class; the Vaisyas or mercantile class; and the Sudras or servile class. These four classes are further subdivided into numerous subcastes and then there are the outcastes or the untouchables.

The vice of the system, however, was that it was based upon birth and the worth of past lives and not upon the person-

¹⁴ M. Ruthnaswamy, India From the Dawn, Milwaukee, 1911

ality of the individual or the worth of his present life.

Caste postulated that learning was hereditary and that no other class but the priestly, should ever engage itself in literary pursuits.¹⁵

Learning thus became monopolized by the intellectual elite. The caste system determined the character and the area of the education. The Brahmans (the highest caste) became the priests, teachers, and lawgivers of the people. They also became the custodians of the Vedic hymns and the authors of the Hindu literature, and for all this they claimed divine sanction. They determined the limits of knowledge for the castes below themselves. On account of the difficulties of Sanskrit, the language of the Vedic literature, the Brahmans held a practical monopoly of learning. The sacred obligation to teach laid upon every one of the highest caste, was accomplished in general by oral instruction. This oral instruction imparted to the privileged the religious ideas and caste obligations that made up the chief concern of life.

Moreover, the caste system denied education to the sixty million untouchables or outcastes. In the past the Hindu majority has ever been strongly, actively, and effectively oppos-

¹⁵ S.P. Chinnappa, The British System of Education in India, Bangalore, 1915, p. 114.

ed to the education of these people.

...caste exclusiveness, and the loathing of the caste for the outcaste people, still often render it impossible to have a single school that includes all the children of a village.¹⁶

Two mainstays of the caste order are, the content of its learning -- mystical, religious, and traditional -- and the distribution of this learning limited mainly to the priestly class.

The mysticism helps to rationalize and strengthen the superstitions of the masses, thus holding them ideologically under control, while the monopoly of the Brahmans restrains competition for spiritual leadership.¹⁷

These two features of the system place an effective brake on technical and scientific progress. Western education, on the other hand is directed along technical lines and is meant for all the people. It serves as an avenue of individual advancement on the theory that productive achievement is to be rewarded with enhancement of status.

The evil effects of caste rigidity and practices are more evident when we look at the available statistics. Among

16 M. Olcott, Village Schools and Teachers in India, Calcutta, 1926, p. 62.

17 Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.171.

the Hindus, and to some extent among the Muslim and Christian communities, the proportion of literacy varies sharply with caste position. For instance, in 1891 it was found from the census reports that eleven groups of castes comprised just under 14 per cent of the population and just over half the literate population. Again, as Davis quotes from the census of India for 1931

...out of a selected group of twentyfour castes in 1931, the one at the top had a literacy of approximately 63.4 per cent, while the one at the bottom had a literacy of only 0.55 per cent.¹⁸

The other castes were found scattered up and down the scale between these two extremes.

Very often the officers of the Education Department (Indian representatives) with whom the decision practically rests as to the localities where new schools are to be opened, belonged exclusively to the small privileged group of high castes. They naturally favored their own castes and denied others even the few opportunities that were available. As a result there is a correlation between social position and degree of literacy. At the top are usually the scribe caste, next the traders, and at the bottom the exterior castes and the tribal groups.

¹⁸ Davis, the Population of India and Pakistan, p. 156.

It is very unfortunate that much of the important work to be done by education, in fostering habits of good citizenship and modern social living, are counteracted by caste. It would not be out of place to mention a few Hindu beliefs which also have adversely affected educational and social progress in India. The two main Hindu doctrines, viz., the doctrine of Karma and the doctrine of Maya have had a great influence on the life of the people. The first of these, Karma, the doctrine of rebirths

sterilized custom into immovability and made it a bar to social and legal progress.¹⁹

The second doctrine, Maya

...came to give the common people a conviction that this world was an illusion, unreal, a vanity, or a vision to be turned away from for concentration on the one true vision, the vision of God.²⁰

In recent years the practice of caste has been made unlawful and punishable by law. Education has been extended to all castes and creeds. Several states have attempted to provide the outcastes with free tuition, books and clothing to encourage their education. But we cannot hope to eradicate overnight the customs and prejudices that existed in the country hundreds and thousands of years before Christ.

19 Ruthnaswamy, India From the Dawn, p. 52.

20 Ibid., p. 51.

The whole attitude toward life caused by the underlying religious principle of Karma and caste, that each individual is in the place where his past life and deeds have justly placed him results often in complete lack of effort and initiative. Where such a belief holds full sway, there is a serious question as to whether progress is really possible. Education must take full account of this situation and seek to develop in pupils a more dynamic and democratic conception of life.

(b) Position of Women

There is a great controversy today on the question of the position of Indian women.

It is possible to paint a general picture of Indian womanhood. There does not exist an Indian attitude towards woman. There is a Hindu attitude and a Moslem attitude, but even in the sphere of religion the main trend of thought is deflected by numerous counter currents.²¹

Looking at the history of India we find that three conflicting ideals of womanhood dominated Indian society at different epochs. These are the Vedic or Brahmanic, the Moslem, and the Christian or Western.

The loftier concept of woman prevailed during the early period of Hinduism, which extended from about 1500 to 600 B.C.²²

In the early Vedic times women enjoyed an equal status with men. There was no child marriage, no seclusion in the Zenana, no sati and no prohibition of the remarriage of widows.

Ladies of culture composed hymns and performed sacrifices as men did.²³

There is considerable evidence that the women of the upper class-

21 G.E.Noronha, Backgrounds in the Education of Indian Women, Washington, D.C., 1939, p. 20.

22 Ibid., p. 58.

23 H.G.Cowan, The Education of the Women of India.

es could often read and write. For instance, in the Ajanta caves which cover a period from the second to the seventh century A.D., women are depicted as engaged in study with books of palm leaves.

One poem, the Bhagwan Manu, prescribes positive punishment for parents who keep away from school their boys after five and their girls after ten years of their respective ages.²⁴

It thus appears that girls had some share in whatever education that was available.

In the second epoch, with the Moslem conquest of India, came the Parda system with its withering influence. According to Moslem historians, it was devised by Mohammed himself for the protection of women in wild and lawless times. Even though many Indian women today look upon the parda as a sign of prestige the thoughtful observer must reckon it, in its ultimate social influence, as a symbol of distrust. In later times a few isolated Indian women, both Hindu and Moslem have been prominent, but they by no means represent the common life.

In the thirteenth century it is said of Razia Begum, the only woman ruler of her own right of Moslem India, that the severest scrutiny of her actions could reveal no fault save that she was a woman.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid., p. 30.

²⁵ Cowan, The Education of the Women of India, p. 33.

In 1818 the Calcutta school of society ascertained that no provision of any kind existed for the education of women, and an attempted estimate of their general literacy places the figure at one in a hundred thousand. The old Hindu ideal had so completely disappeared, that it needed the touch of Western civilization to revive even the conception of its former existence. The modern epoch, consequently, is in part a renaissance, and in part the introduction of the ideal of another faith.

Today it is a well-known fact that the peculiar position of Indian women is greatly responsible for their low rate of literacy.

The gross deficiency of female education in India is closely related to the social structure of that oriental country.²⁶

The Indian woman suffers from many handicaps. She is often married at a very early age. Early marriage is enjoined by the Hindu law and this takes away the opportunity for education.

Religious and social conditions are such that it is considered a disgrace for a girl to reach the age of puberty without being betrothed, and parents will go to almost any expense and trouble to prevent such a calamity.²⁷

26 Zellner, A.A., Education in India, New York, 1921, p. 218.

27 Hecce, New Schools for Young India, p. 239.

Social reformers have tried for many years to raise the "age of consent" and to educate the public regarding the dangers of early marriage. However, infant and child marriages are still prevalent in India.

Another important handicap is the already mentioned custom of parda -- keeping women secluded from the public gaze. No men except husbands or close relatives are supposed to look upon their faces. Where this seclusion is strictly carried out, it tends to undermine health, to make education difficult, expensive and almost impossible. A third and perhaps the saddest of women's handicaps is that of enforced widowhood. This is sanctioned and approved by Hindu custom and is prevalent among the highest castes.

Due to these various social evils the difference between male and female with respect to education is more extreme in India than in any other part of the world. The following table would further illustrate the point:

Table III

Per cent literate, Age 10-plus, by sex, 1891-1921

Date	Men	Women
1891	11.4	0.5
1901	11.5	0.7
1911	12.6	1.1
1921	14.2	1.9

Date	Men	Women
1931	15.4	2.4
1941	27.4	6.9

In the nineties of the last century in the secondary and primary schools for boys when the percentage of pupils to the male population of school-going age was estimated at fifteen the corresponding proportion of girls in public institutions to the total female population of school going age was 2.10 per cent.²⁸ For every literate woman in the population (the sex ratio being held constant) in 1931, there were more than six males literate, and in 1941 approximately four. If we look further back we see that in 1891 there were 21 literate males for every literate female.²⁹

Thus there is some evidence of progress in female literacy, which may be the result of the improvements of her social position. The number of girls attending school has steadily increased. Reformers are working heroically and persistently to raise the age of marriage and to bring about the re-marriage of widows. Today, in India there is a great emphasis on women's education.

²⁸ J.S.Cotton, Progress of Education in India, 1892-93 to 1896-1897, London, 1898, p. 177.

²⁹ Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p. 52.

In one generation Indian women had walked a long way toward a more equal status. In Free India a woman is Minister of Health in the National Cabinet, another was, until her death, governor of the fifty-five million people of the United Province; another has been ambassador successively to Moscow and Washington, the two most important diplomatic assignments; and fifty-three women are members of India's legislatures. It is probably true that India has a larger percentage of women in its high public positions than almost any other country.³⁰

Parda is almost dying. An increasing number of girls are desiring and demanding education and freedom. The modern Indian women hope and strive for a better future. It is no exaggeration to say that the keynote to India's progress lies in the education of her women. The complete ignorance of many Indian women in regard to hygiene, maternity, and care of infants (all attributable to their illiteracy) is an important factor which is not only responsible for the high infant mortality, but also for the loss of health of both adults and children.

30 C. and H. Wofford, India Afire, New York, 1941, p. 30.

2. Political

When the English East India Company attained political supremacy in India, they did not bestow any thought on the education of the natives. Gold was their watchword.

Every one of their servants who came out to India tried to enrich himself as quickly as possible at the expense of the children of the soil. It was on this account that Burke described them as 'birds of prey and passage in India.'³¹

It took the British adventurers almost a century to come to the decision that it was for their benefit to impart education to their Indian subjects. The Battle of Plassey, which laid the foundations of British Empire in India, was fought in 1757; and Wood's Despatch, commonly called the educational Charter of India, is dated 1854. This shows that the system of education established by the British was not introduced in hot haste but after the mature deliberations of nearly a century. The number of Englishmen who consider that it was a mistake to have introduced Western education in India is not very small. But they should be reminded of the fact that the mistake was committed after nearly a century's deliberation.

The present system of education in India originated with the Charter Act of 1813 under which the British Parliament

³¹ Basu, History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company, p.1.

directed the East India Company to accept the responsibility for the education of the Indian people. The company was given orders to set aside a sum of not less than Rs. 100,000³² a year for the purpose. If the British administrators had taken proper steps to fulfil this responsibility, it would have been possible to make India an educationally progressive nation by the end of the nineteenth century. Educational despatches failed to become facts and the recommendations of committees and commissions have mere historical importance.

The whole policy of the British was chiefly aimed at administrative requirements and not at national needs; and much that was educationally useful was left out on the grounds of financial stringency.³³

The progress of primary education under the British has been really discouraging.

The total number of primary schools in old British India was less than two lakhs³⁴ with an enrolment of about twelve millions.³⁵

The official policies of this period were greatly defective and the position of mass education in India in 1901-02 was even worse than that of indigenous education prior to British

³² \$1 equals Rs. 4.74 according to the present exchange rate.

³³ S.N.Mukerji, Education in India in the Twentieth Century, Baroda, 1945, p. 141.

³⁴ One Lakh is 100,000

³⁵ Mukerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, p. 41.

rule. The percentage of literacy in India as a whole in 1901-1902 was even lower than that of the Bengal area surveyed by Adam in 1833-38.³⁶ In short the conduct of the education is a very unhappy feature of the British rule in India.

This disappointing result was due to several mistaken policies, the first of them being the downward filtration theory.

The adoption of this view was based partly on the belief that once the classes of India were educated they would strive to educate the Indian masses.....; partly on the political objective of winning the loyalties of those classes of Indian society which were adversely affected by the British conquest, and partly on the desire to secure intelligent, loyal and low-paid servants for the administration in as short a time as possible.³⁷

The British ruler, having in view the question of competent men to run administration, concentrated its attention on higher education rather than elementary education. The following table illustrates that, while the number of colleges and high schools increased by about 50 per cent in each decade (during the period 1922-42) there was a very slight increase in the total number of primary schools.

36 Saiyidain, K.G., Naik, J.P., and Husain, S.A., Compulsory Education in India, UNESCO, Paris, 1952, p.13.

37 Ibid., p.14.

Table IV³⁸Educational Institutions - British India
1922-42

Institutions	1922	1932	1942
Colleges	231	317	452
High Schools	2,248	3,125	4,035
Primary Schools	166,072	201,470	181,968

More than a century has elapsed since the present system was introduced by the British. It has, no doubt, succeeded in producing an army of clerks, petty officials and public men, but it has failed to meet our country's needs. The downward filtration theory failed. In any case it was unsound in principle because the state cannot divest itself of so fundamental a responsibility as the education of all its subjects.

From 1931 onwards the government adopted a new policy in regard to primary education -- a policy of concentration and consolidation. Efficient schools were encouraged and weaker ones were eliminated. Consequently the total number of institutions gradually fell and the enrolment in schools remained more or less stationary. The progress of primary education

38 Mankerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, Table VII, p. 43.

was thus checked to a certain extent. The following table contains the relevant information:

Table v³⁹

Number of Primary Schools and Enrolment (Br.India)

	1931-32	1936-37	1941-42	1945
Primary Schools	201,470	197,227	181,968	167,700
Enrolment	9,454,360	10,521,790	12,018,725	13,000,000

The unpalatable truth underlying the whole problem was that the British realized the fact that their autocratic rule could exist only so long as the mass of population were rolling in ignorance and poverty.

Another important cause for the check of educational progress was the financial policy of the British Government. The East India Company was more interested in dividends than in development. Its educational grant increased from Rs. 51,290 in 1813 to Rs. 1,002,134 only in 1853. Educational expenditure increased greatly under the Crown, nevertheless in 1901-02, it formed only 0.88 per cent of the total revenues.⁴⁰

³⁹ Mukerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, Table VIII, p.43.

⁴⁰ Saiyidain, Naik and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 17.

The Despatch of 1854 even looked forward to a time when all government initiative in education might be altogether abandoned as private enterprise grew.¹¹

A system of grants in aid was developed by which an institution, reaching a certain standard of efficiency was to be given partial aid if it asked for it. Private and missionary efforts were on an increasing scale during the British rule and all expense, over and above the grant given by the government, was met by fees and private funds. It is quite obvious that under such financial starvation mass education could not possibly be expected to make much progress.

The following table shows the comparative expenditure on education from public and private sources:

Table VI¹²

Growth of Expenditure on Primary Education
Analysed Under Two Main Sources
Public and Private
(In round number of rupees)

Year	Public	private	Total
1882	3,700,000	3,900,000	7,600,000
1887	3,900,000	4,200,000	8,100,000

¹¹ V.V.Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, p.70
¹² Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, p.70.

Year	Public	private	Total
1892	4,700,000	4,900,000	9,600,000
1897	5,400,000	5,700,000	11,100,000
1902	5,800,000	6,100,000	11,900,000
1907	5,400,000	10,100,000	15,600,000
1912	8,100,000	12,600,000	20,700,000
1917	8,400,000	20,900,000	29,300,000
1920	9,400,000	31,200,000	40,600,000
1922	10,100,000	40,800,000	50,900,000

Another major error of the British administrators was the undue emphasis they laid on higher education through English. This was mainly the result of the political decision to use English as the language of the government. In order to make this decision practicable, it was essential to found secondary schools and colleges to train a sufficient number of Indians using the English language so that they could act as interpreters between the rulers and the ruled. In 1844 the British Government announced that preference for public employment in India would be given to those who knew English.

Lord Macaulay's minute on education in 1835 and the announcement of Lord William Bentick, the Governor-General of India, that all funds appropriated for this purpose would be best employed on English education alone settled the question of the type of edu-

cation that was to be imparted to the natives.⁴³

The emphasis on English as the medium of instruction caused a general decline in the study of Indian languages and arts and resulted in the impoverishment of the indigenous schools which taught them. There is no doubt that the English language opened for India the door to Western science and humanities, and set in motion social and political movements; but the price was heavy in terms of India's own culture.

However, the greatest harm that British educational policy has done to India is the destruction of her indigenous system of education. As mentioned earlier, prior to the British conquest, practically every village in India had its own elementary school. A new and more scientific system of education could have been built on the basis of this indigenous system. But owing to the disrapture of the

...village economic life during the British rule, the country side was impoverished, the patrons of village schools disappeared and a large number of indigenous schools were starved and ultimately closed down.⁴⁴

Very early in the history of modern education, adminis-

⁴³ Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, p. 28.

⁴⁴ Mukerji, Education in India Today & Tomorrow p. 11.

trators and educationists like Munro, Elphinstone and Adam had suggested that the indigenous system of education had great potentialities and that it could be expanded and improved to become a great instrument of mass education. The Government paid no attention to them. In 1855, when the education departments were opened, the government attitude became even more hostile because the officials of the departments placed mistaken stress on 'efficiency' in mere academic attainments. As a result the indigenous schools slowly disappeared between 1854 and 1900.

Some died as a result of competition with the departmental schools...; not a few were suffocated by mistaken attempts at improvement; and the large majority disappeared through sheer neglect.⁴⁵

The education departments tried to compensate for this loss by creating a new type of primary schools. But these new schools were much more expensive and the rate of their expansion was not so fast as that of the disappearance of indigenous schools.

The failure to establish a system of universal compulsory education was another error of the British policy. One of the important arguments brought forward by the British against the introduction of compulsion was that the people of India are

⁴⁵ Saiyidain, Nair, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 16.

against any compulsory measure in the matter of education, because of their crude religious beliefs. That this argument was absurd has been demonstrated years ago by some native states having Indian rulers where mass education was made compulsory. For instance, Baroda, a progressive native state in India, enacted compulsory legislation in Primary education as early as 1893 in certain advanced parts of the state. Gradually the zone of legislation was widened over the entire state until the year 1918 showed an enrolment of 93 per cent of the school-going population including girls.⁴⁶ Some other native states like Mysore and Travancore-Cochin also show a better educational record than British India. In the state of Travancore-Cochin, for instance, in 1948-49 the percentage of children in the primary and secondary stage among the children of the school-going age was more than 60 while the percentage on an all-India basis was only 23.⁴⁷ As Oak said:

We believe that the mass of population in any country of the world is not alive to the great good education does to it, unless it is compelled by persuasion, legislation, democratisation and enlightenment to avail itself of its benefits.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, pp. 33-34.

⁴⁷ Central Bureau of Education, Govt. of India, Education in India, a graphic presentation, New Delhi, 1951, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, p. 33.

Acts of compulsory primary education have been passed in various provincial governments during the second decade of this century chiefly due to the efforts of some Indian leaders. However, the results of these acts are very disappointing. Thus

In 1945-46, i.e., more than 25 years after the passing of the first primary Education Acts, not more than 190 towns or cities and 16,308 villages had introduced compulsion for boys and only 21 urban areas and 650 rural areas resorted to compulsion for boys and girls.⁴⁹

This has been achieved in a country with 700,000 villages. Even where compulsion has been introduced, the enforcement of compulsion is not very satisfactory, the average daily attendance in primary schools being less than 75 per cent.⁵⁰

Besides these there were a few other bad effects of British rule which affected the progress of literacy in India. The first of these was the centralized and urban character of the British rule.⁵¹ The few attempts to improve conditions of life were made in the imperial capitals, provincial cities, district headquarters and a few smaller towns. No thought was given to the improvement of villages. Educational development followed the same general rule. While fairly good educational provis-

⁴⁹ Mukerji, Education in India Today & Tomorrow, p. 11

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

⁵¹ Baiyidain, Naik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 17.

ions were made for towns and cities, the bulk of the villages were given the poorest types of schools or none at all. The neglect of rural education implied the neglect of mass education, because in India about 87 per cent of the people live in villages.⁵²

Secondly, the British wiped out the existing self-sufficient Indian villages, suppressed Indian industries, and trade, and thus destroyed the whole economic structure of the country. Under their administration very little was done to exploit the industrial resources of the people and to raise the standard of life of the people. Agriculture continued to be practised by the same primitive methods while a rapidly growing population increased the pressure on land. These and several other economic factors increased the poverty of the people, and thereby created greater difficulties in spreading mass education.

Thus education in India under the British was neither free, nor compulsory, nor universal.

Contrasted with the American policy in the Philippines to cheapen and democratise education, the British policy in India has been uncharitable in the extreme and unsuited to the moral code of any civilized government.⁵³

⁵² Ibid., p. 17.

⁵³ Oak, England's Educational Policy in India, p. 95.

The staggering illiteracy of the people of India is an eloquent commentary on the educational policy of Great Britain. The net result of the British policy was that India lost the slight advantage that she had held at the beginning of the nineteenth century. India's failure to progress under the British and the rapid educational developments made in several other countries made her one of the educationally backward nations at the opening of the twentieth century.

3. Economic

A An ever present reason for India's illiteracy and slow educational progress is her poverty. However, India is not a country doomed to poverty by lack of natural resources. It is a commonplace remark that while nature has showered her bounties on India with a liberal hand, man has failed to profit adequately by them.

The contrast between the bounty of nature and the poverty of man is here very striking. Hence the usual statement, which has almost become a proverb, that India is a rich country inhabited by the poor.⁵⁴

Centuries ago India was world-famed for its mineral riches, and at an early date Indian artisans produced brassware, swords, and other metallic objects. India is richer in metals and minerals than Japan, Italy, France, which have long been industrial nations.⁵⁵ She is the world's leading producer of hides and skins, and peanuts and ranks only second in tea, cane sugar, cotton and rice.⁵⁶ The agricultural products in India include a rich variety of different crops. India's natural resources are considered to be the third richest in the world, though hitherto they have remained largely untouched.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Jather and Beri, Indian Economics, p. 32.

⁵⁵ L.K. Rosinger, Restless India, New York, 1946, p.27.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

India has potential resources, if well developed, could make her people economically strong, and give her sons and daughters the education they need.⁵⁸

During the British rule the economic pattern of the country was shattered. Before the coming of the British, India's villages were self-sufficient, her cottage industries were well-developed, and she carried on trade with other countries. But the whole economic pattern underwent a radical change with the British conquest.

England's policy towards her, while always mixed with other motives and interests, was the policy of an industrial nation towards an agricultural colony. She tended to use the area as a source of raw materials for her industry and as a market for the products of that industry. Such industries as were allowed to develop in India was often for the profit of citizens of the paramount power.⁵⁹

Besides the British exploitation the most important causes of poverty are as follows: debt with high interest, laziness, ignorance and lack of skill, drink, extravagance (on social occasions like marriage, etc.) and conditions resulting from famines, epidemics and sickness. Amongst these, probably indebtedness stands first, having as further causes ancestral debt, precarious climate, irregularity of income, an unproductive

58 Olcott, Village Schools in India, p. 33

59 Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p. 211

soil, unwarranted use of expanded credit and an increase of the population without a corresponding increase of production, The numerous economic problems of the country are so complicated and aggravated by the social and religious factors that one cannot possibly explain fully them in a few pages.

In the countries that have made the greatest economic advance a shift in the occupational structure has taken place. Greater and greater proportion of the population have found their living in manufacturing, transportation, merchandising, and professional occupations. In these countries despite the growth of population, there has been little increase in the ratio of farm population to the supply of land.⁶⁰ In India, on the contrary, such a shift in the occupational structure has not taken place and, consequently, with the growth of population more and more people have sought to find a living in farming. Thus today about 85 per cent of India's teeming millions live huddled together in her 700,000 villages, depending on the soil for their very existence.

The average per capita income in British India during the year 1931-32 was given, as 65 rupees, or roughly \$23.40, per year.⁶¹ This means that the average person in the United States

⁶⁰ Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.207.

⁶¹ According to the exchange rate then prevalent.

has 22 times the wage of the average Indian; the average Englishman, 15 times; and the average Japanese, $4\frac{1}{2}$ times.⁶² Below are comparative figures illustrating the fact.⁶³

Table VII

Per capita annual Income of various countries

Countries	Rupees
U.S.A.	1,406
Canada	1,038
Australia	980
France	621
Germany	603
Japan	281
British India	65

Recently the average income of an Indian has been computed at Rs. 255 (about \$54) per year.⁶⁴ However, even this extremely low figure gives no idea of the appalling poverty of those at the lowest rung of the economic ladder. Peasants with

62 Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.205.

63 Ibid., p. 206.

64 Saifidain, Waik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 104.

ridiculously small holdings and labourers in towns who have no permanent employment seldom earns as much as the average for the total population indicates. Besides, there are the large sections of the population e.g., landless labourers in the villages numbering 45 million according to the 1951 census, people depending on land, 'wholly or mainly' unowned, numbering $31\frac{1}{2}$ millions; aborigines living in jungles and outlying hilly districts, nomadic tribes wandering throughout the country whose income per head is far below the statistical average.⁶⁵ Added to these there are quite a few millions that are unemployed.

How can anyone expect these people, struggling for bare existence, to send their half-starved and ill-clad children to school for a certain number of years and to bear the expenses of their education? Even if they did not have to pay any fees, the price of books and other educational materials would be beyond their means.

The average Indian is unable to keep his family alive without the help of the children's labor. As soon as they are seven or eight children become economic assets to their parents. They graze cattle, help their mothers in milking cows, and carry the milk to the customers.

65 Ibid., p. 104.

There are a number of minor jobs at home, in the field, in the workshop, and in the market which are assigned to them almost as soon as they are able to walk and to use their hands.⁶⁶

School is considered as a convenient place to keep the children when they are young. As soon as they become old enough to be useful the average Indian withdraws him from school.⁶⁷

That the parent has considerable reason for withdrawing his children from school (before they have acquired even the rudiments of literacy) must be frankly admitted. When most of them have to make a choice between two courses -- keeping their children more than half-starved by allowing them the luxury of education, and making them earn at least one full meal and perhaps a little more by sending them to work -- can we blame them if they choose the latter?

Now the question may arise, if the people are too poor to bear the financial burden of educating their children, cannot the state shoulder it? The economic problems that face the new government of India should be borne in mind before one tries to answer this question. In view of conditions prevailing in India the expenditure on a free universal education will have to be divided into three categories:

- (a) the direct expenditure on compulsory education,

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 105.

⁶⁷ This leads to the problem of lapse into illiteracy which will be discussed in another section of this chapter.

- (b) the cost of supplying books and other educational material and at least one free meal to the children of destitute parents.
- (c) Compensation to such parents for the loss of children's earnings.

According to the estimates made (somewhat arbitrarily) on the basis of the general economic conditions of the country, the total cost of universal compulsory education in India including subsidy to the children and compensation to the parents works out to be 6,260 million rupees (which is equivalent to about \$1,320 million)⁶⁸ The total revenue of the Union government and all the state governments in India amounts to about only 18,600 million rupees.⁶⁹ From this one can see that it is absolutely impossible for the state to launch a scheme of universal compulsory education within a very short time.

So, the poor economic condition of the people makes it impossible for them to get their children through even the full elementary course of education. As Mr. Laubach put it

The illiterates for the most part are caught in a vicious circle -- they are ignorant because they are poor, and they are poor because they are ignorant.⁷⁰

Where to attack the problem is a major question. It would be a

⁶⁸ Saiyidain, Naik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 110.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 111.

⁷⁰ Laubach, Toward a Literate World, p. 92.

great mistake to improve the economic condition and leave the people ignorant. A literacy program should accompany any reconstruction program, acting as the handmaid of progress. Actually this is what the government of India is trying to do today.

The highest development of India's manpower and the fullest utilization of her great natural stores of wealth need to go hand in hand.⁷¹

⁷¹ Olcott, Village Schools in India, p. 33.

4. Linguistic

India is a land of many languages. The new constitution of India recognizes 14 major languages. Besides these there are more than 200 dialects. As Mukerji writes:

...India can be described as the 'microcosm of the whole world'. Within her vast boundary, several races speaking a number of languages and professing all the religions of the world reside.⁷³

The progress of education has been greatly hindered by the linguistic situation. If all the Indian languages had the same number of speakers, the effect of such diversity would have been overwhelming. Fortunately, the great majority of the languages are spoken by relatively small groups, leaving large sets of people each of which enjoys the benefits of a common widespread language. According to Davis, in 1931, over 300 million people, nearly 90 per cent of the entire population, spoke one or the other of these major languages as a mother tongue.⁷⁴ The following table gives the names of these languages, together with the number of speakers and the per cent that each constitutes of the total population with declared mother tongue

73 Mukerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, p.8.

74 Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.157.

Table VIII⁷⁵

Distribution of Languages in India

Language	No. of speakers (millions)	Percentage of total reporting
Western Hindi	71.4	21.2
Bengali	53.1	15.8
Bihari	27.9	8.3
Telugu	26.2	7.8
Marathi	20.9	6.2
Tamil	20.2	6.0
Punjabi	15.8	4.7
Rajasthani	13.9	4.1
Kanarese	11.2	3.3
Oriya	11.1	3.3
Gujarati	10.8	3.2
Malayalam	9.1	2.7
Eastern Hindi	7.9	2.3
Total of 13 Languages	299.6	89.2
Total reporting	335.9	100.0

Each of these major languages tends to have several dialects, some of them mutually intelligible only with practice.

The trouble in India is not only diversity of language or dialect but also diversity of script.

It is said that the number of scripts used for the languages of India is equal to that of all other scripts in use throughout the world; and while some of them are akin, others are absolutely diverse, even when the languages belong to the same family. A Tamil man may understand the gist of what is said

in Malayalam but when he tries to read the latter he is baffled by the difference in the script.⁷⁶

Many of these scripts have between 200 and 500 characters and this furnishes a major reason for the enormous stagnation in the lower grades of the schools and for the slow rate at which pupils in school learn to read.

Another cause which adds to the difficulty of making education popular is the fact that these scripts are much harder to learn than, for instance, the Roman Script. Although the script has a sculptural beauty, the shapes of the letters are complicated. The shortcomings of these scripts have been recognized by many Indian linguists. Some of them have suggested the radical measure of replacing all these scripts by the Roman script. This would be ideal from the point of view of eradicating illiteracy with the greatest possible speed. But, the national sentiment of India, which had to smart under the British domination, for a long time, has become hyper-sensitive to anything it associates with that domination. Perhaps a time may come when a proposal like this can be considered on its merits, but at present it arouses passions which are not amenable to reason.

Another difficulty is the divergence between the spoken

and the literary language.

In each language area of India there are two languages, under the same name, one written and the other spoken. In Tamil, for example, newspapers and books print one vocabulary while the illiterate people speak another. In order to read the illiterate man must practically learn a new language -- the language of print.⁷⁷

Besides the Indian languages are burdened with difficult rules of rhetoric. In Tamil, for example,

...There are a dozen synonyms for "heaven". It is bad rhetoric to use one of these synonyms twice until the other synonyms have all been used...To a greater or less degree every one of the major Indian languages follows the same custom of overburdening the written vocabulary.⁷⁸

One other linguistic hindrance to progress of literacy is that the languages are taught generally by teachers who are poorly paid and poorly equipped for the difficult task of initiating pupils into the mystery of letters. Their methods are old and worn out. There are no attempts made to evolve methods of teaching or to prepare textbooks and other teaching materials on modern lines.

In modern India the question of language, script, and education is still a bone of contention. Under the British, the English language became the intellectual lingua franca of the

⁷⁷ Laubach, Toward a Literate World, p. 90.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

country. After the attainment of independence Hindi was adopted as the national language of the country. However, the Indian constitution has rightly and justly guaranteed that all children shall receive primary education in their own mother tongue.

Thus any scheme of universal primary or adult education has to be so planned as to provide schools in every region with the regional language as the medium of instruction. Besides, schools should also be established for linguistic minorities teaching the children of each minority through its own mother tongue.

Scripts will have to be devised and books prepared for them as Mr. Pike's mission has done in Mexico or the government of U.S.S.R. has done for its erst-while backward republics.⁷⁹

Lastly, all the schools in the non-Hindi speaking areas will have to make special arrangements for teaching Hindi as the national language. When we take into consideration all the administrative and financial implications of this fact we can easily realize that the problem of literacy education in India is perhaps more difficult and more complex than in almost any other region in the world.

However, some recent experiments have proved that some methods found useful in the Philippine Islands can be applied

⁷⁹ Saiyidain, Naik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 101.

to the languages of India, even though the results are slower, because the alphabets are very much longer. Sets of charts have been built in Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu, and are now being used experimentally and improved as experience dictates.⁸⁰ After such charts are prepared a period of few months or years is needed to bring them to the state of perfection reached by some of the charts in the Philippines.⁸¹

The adoption of Hindi as the national language of India has much to be said in its favor. The Nagri characters used by Hindi and Marathi are simpler than many other scripts.

Nagri could quite easily be transformed into one of the easiest alphabets to learn in the world. Its letters are now arranged so scientifically that one does not wonder at the common belief that it was handed down out of heaven. At a meeting held in 1935 to consider the adoption of simplifications one of the plans under consideration required the learning of only nine essential forms for consonants, and such a simple form for vowels that the entire alphabet could be learnt by reasonably "bright" persons in a day.⁸²

However, one of the tragedies that linguists and spelling reformers have to confront is the conservatism of the educated about the methods which they learned.

The method of teaching illiterates used in the Philip-

⁸¹ H.B.Champness and Richardson, Indian Adult Education Handbook, Lahore, n.d., p. 53.

⁸² Ibid, p. 53-54.

83
pines has the following important advantages for India.

1. The lessons are very inexpensive
2. The students are trained at once to be teachers and are encouraged to teach their neighbours, thus carrying on the campaign by the aid of voluntary service and teaching by the endless chain method.
3. Great emphasis is placed upon patient, loving and mutual aid which is characteristic of the Indian people.
4. The little fortnightly paper which is published to follow those who learn is so inexpensive that the poor people of India could afford to subscribe.
5. "Sweeping" villages clean -- teaching men, women and children -- is made possible by the organization of Indian villages.

5. Educational

The following are some of the important educational factors which have impeded the progress of literacy in India:

(a) Wastage.

'Wastage' is used to denote the case where a child leaves school without even acquiring a fairly stable literacy. ⁸⁴

It may now be taken as definitely established that a child who has passed the third class of a primary school and spent about a year in the fourth class (or, preferably has passed the fourth class) generally acquires a stable literacy. ⁸⁵

Every child who leaves school before completing this course is considered to be a case of 'wastage' because he is not likely to receive any lasting benefit from such short schooling. The following table would reveal the successive diminution in enrolment from class to class in the primary stage:

Table IX⁸⁶

Enrolment in Indian Schools

Class	Year	Number of pupils	Percentage of no. in class
I	1932-33	5,258,081	100
II	1933-34	2,156,248	41
III	1934-35	1,674,081	32

⁸⁴ Saiyidain, Naik and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 52.
⁸⁵ Ibid.
⁸⁶ Mukerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, p. 12

Class	Year	Number of pupils	Percentage of no. in class
IV	1935-36	1,240,863	23
V	1936-37	789,655	15
VI	1937-38	487,820	9
VII	1938-39	391,047	7
VIII	1939-40	339,826	6

The diminution is the highest after Class I, where more than half the children fail to get promoted. Besides 77 per cent of those who enter primary schools fail to reach Class IV. This is a very large percentage and it justifies educationists in regarding wastage as a major evil of the present system of primary education.

Several investigations made to determine the causes of wastage show that more than 60 per cent of wastage is due to economic causes; that is to say that children are withdrawn from schools before they reach Class IV because they are needed to work in or for their families.⁸⁷ The other causes are repeated failures which make the parent think that the child is no good at books; marriage or betrothal in the case of girls; truancy which the parents does not or cannot control; migration to a place where facilities for primary education do not exist; the

⁸⁷ Saiyidain, Naik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, p. 56.

existence of a large number of incomplete primary schools which have no third or fourth classes.⁸⁸

The less important causes can be eliminated by raising the standard of instruction and reforming the system of examinations so that fewer pupils may fail; by strict enforcement of the Child Marriage Prevention Act so that girls may not be taken away too early from the schools; by making the schools attractive to children so that truancy may be reduced; and by providing instruction up to and inclusive of Class IV in every primary school.⁸⁹ However, the economic causes are not too easy to deal with. The

standard of living of the people cannot be increased overnight and the majority of poor children will have to work for their livelihood for quite a while. Therefore, a more practical reform would be to adopt a system of part-time instruction which would give them enough time to help themselves and their parents in their struggle for existence.

(b) Stagnation.

The problem of wastage is very intimately connected with what is called stagnation.

A pupil who is required to spend more than a year in any one class is regarded as a case of stagnation.⁹⁰

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid., pp. 56-57.

90 Ibid., p. 58.

In India, the percentage of passes is never high even in the primary schools. Consequently the extent of stagnation is very large in every class, but especially in the first class. The following table illustrates this fact:

Table X⁹¹

Average percentage of passing
pupils in different classes

Class	1927-28 to 1935-36	1936-37 to 1944-45
First	48.02	51.83
Second	69.09	68.91
Third	65.45	68.87
Fourth	67.30	70.17
Fifth	59.47	65.70

Stagnation dampens the enthusiasm of both pupil and parents and leads to wastage. The general causes of stagnation include inefficient instruction; irregular attendance on the part of the pupil; defective curricula; faulty methods of examination; wrong conceptions of standards; and failure to isolate backward or retarded children and to provide them with special guidance. These causes indicate that the existing system of education

91 Ibid.

should be subjected to further study and necessary changes based on adequate research.

(c) Lapse into Illiteracy.

Another reason for India's slow educational progress is that so many children lapse into illiteracy again after they have left school.

They return to almost wholly illiterate villages and having nothing to read or write, forget almost all they knew. In many villages it would be impossible to find a post office, and difficult to find a book or newspaper. Unless a student continues to make use of the knowledge he has gained in four or five years of schooling, he will forget it all...⁹²

However, in the past 'lapse' into illiteracy was exaggerated too much. Literacy has to be attained before it can lapse. As stated earlier, only those pupils who have reached at least the fourth class can be considered as literate. Studies made in Baroda show that only 3.5 per cent of those who had been in Class IV at school were subsequently enumerated in the census as illiterate.⁹³ Parulekar believes that the whole problem of 'relapse into illiteracy' has been overestimated, and he makes a good case on statistical grounds.⁹⁴ Compulsory education, up to a certain age could enable more pupils to reach

92 Laubch, Toward a Literate World, p.91.

93 Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.160.

94 Parulekar, Literacy in India, Ch.V.

the fourth class and thereby solve the problem of lapse into illiteracy to a considerable extent.

(d) Inadequate supply and training of teachers.

The supply of teachers is very inadequate. In 1948-49, there were only about 474,000 teachers in as many as 192,000 primary schools, that is, roughly two teachers per school.⁹⁵

Out of these a good number are single-teacher schools. One can imagine the efficiency of these schools where one teacher has to teach several classes simultaneously. Often the teacher is untrained. It is no wonder, therefore, that wastage and stagnation are great in these schools. Besides the majority of single teacher schools are incomplete schools with two or three classes. Instruction in most of the primary schools is unsatisfactory on account of lack of proper equipment and accomodation.

Another problem is the inadequate supply of qualified teachers. The graduate teachers are a microscopic minority among the primary school teachers.

Less than five per cent of the teachers have passed the matriculation or the secondary school certificate examination: a large majority have completed only the primary course, so that their general education is no higher than that of the pupils they are ex-

⁹⁵ Central Bureau of Education, Govt. of India, Education in India - A graphic presentation, pp.30-31, 20-21.

⁹⁶ Mukerji, Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, p.

pected to teach. A fairly large number of teachers have not even completed the primary course. Some have received professional training for one year and some for two. But a large percentage of them are either completely untrained or are only 'certified'⁹⁷.....⁹⁸

Consequently instruction in the primary schools is dry, inefficient and uninteresting. It has been said that a zealous and competent teacher is the most successful attendance officer. However, one cannot expect more from these teachers since they are neither adequately paid or supplied with necessary materials.

(e) Defective Curricula.

The present curricula of primary schools are unsuitable to meet the needs of national life and the cultural and economic problems of the masses. Nor do they take into account the exigencies of a rural environment in which about 87 per cent of the people live, or the fundamental task of securing an all-round development of the child's personality.⁹⁹

The divorce between the curricula and the real needs of life, and the predominantly academic character of the primary curriculum are mainly due to the continuance of nineteenth century ideas in curriculum making. The English officials of the Education Department, who had absolute authority in this respect, were generally inspired by English precedents and tried to apply

⁹⁷ Certified teachers are those who have obtained any kind of teacher's certificate other than the one granted on the basis of public examination of a teacher's training institution.

⁹⁸ Saiyidain, Naik and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, P. 39.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 62.

the curricula of elementary schools in England (which is essentially an industrialized country) to a rural and agricultural country like India. Even when the English schools shifted their emphasis from 'knowledge' to 'activity' in the early years of this century, the Indian schools stuck to the obsolete ideas and continued to aim at imparting information.

Thus Indian education has been described as a foreign plant, not suited to the Indian soil.¹⁰⁰ According to Gandhiji, the present system of primary education is a snare and a delusion. It is not only wasteful but positively harmful. The pupils pick up evil habits, affect urban ways, and get a smattering of something which may be anything but education.¹⁰¹

The critical public of our country looks upon the the present system of Indian education as 'English education'.¹⁰²

The parents are dissatisfied with the present system because it generally makes a child unfit for his traditional profession and makes him a burden on the family when he fails to obtain a service, public or private. The failure of the Indian school as a means of adjusting the student to the social, economic and cultural environment in which he will live is implicit in its historical origin.

100 S. Nurullah and J.P. Naik, A History of Education in India, Bombay, 1951, p. 856.

101 C.J.V., The Vardha Scheme of Education, p. 13.

102 Mukerji, Education in India in the 20th Century.

How can the school harmonize the child with his surroundings and give him an insight into his social and cultural heritage when, in its methods, curriculum, and organization, it is inspired by principles and ideas not native to the Indian soil but mainly transplanted without due thought and adaptation from a foreign medium.¹⁰³

At present a radical reorientation of the curriculum, therefore, is generally regarded as a top priority problem in primary education.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Saiyidain, K.G., The School of the Future, Allahabad, 1935, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰⁴ The remarks given apply only to the traditional primary schools and not to basic schools that have been started since 1938.

(d) Evaluation

In the foregoing sections of this chapter, an attempt has been made to analyse the factors bearing on the problem of illiteracy in India. This analysis gives us an idea of the magnitude of the problem India is facing today. The religious sentiment of all communities in India strongly favors religious education and may be used to work up an agitation for secular education as well, but it is a very dangerous step which must be avoided. The linguistic and social factors and the administrative set up of the present system of education itself present many difficulties. Above all, the financial difficulties are so great that there seems to be no hope of surmounting them in the near future.

It is true that the social, linguistic and educational factors are very serious and difficult to overcome. But with the attainment of independence and the spread of Western ideas a great change has taken place in the Indian mind. The educated Indian realizes the gravity of the social evils, like child marriage, caste, and the seclusion of women. Several reforms have already been made to eradicate these social evils. Mahatma Gandhi, who was in some ways the most conservative among Indian leaders, took an incredibly radical attitude in several matters of social reform. Without repudiating the time-honored institu-

tion of caste, he fought against restrictions upon inter-caste marriage and against the seclusion of women. It was because of his untiring efforts that the untouchables - whom he called by the respectful epithet of Harijans, "persons dear to God" - were given by law not only political but also social rights equal to those enjoyed by the members of the higher castes and were provided with special safeguards in the constitution of India for protecting these rights. The passage of the Sarda Act, forbidding child marriage was also mainly inspired by the Mahatma.

The passage of the Hindu Code Bill, proposing reforms in the religious laws of marriage, inheritance and other aspects of social life, is sure to bring about a revolution in Hindu society unparalleled in the history of India since the time of Buddha. It is sure to shake the very foundations of the caste system and by withdrawing legal recognition from social inequalities, make it possible to reorganize community life on democratic lines. The process of social regeneration is further likely to be accelerated by the more numerous opportunities of coming into contact with the outside world offered by her independent status.

The political factors, which led to the destruction of the indigenous system of education, impoverished and exploited the Indian people, and consequently resulted in the present unhappy conditions have, at last, disappeared with the attainment of independence. The new government of India, though poor, is

anxious to do its best to improve the situation.

As far as the linguistic problem is concerned, Hindi has been accepted as the national language. The constitution has laid down that all children shall receive primary education in their own mother tongue. Further remedies for the problems connected with the linguistic factor have yet to be developed.

The educational factors are being dealt with. Several commissions and committees have studied the problem and made many valuable suggestions. Basic education has been accepted as better suited for Indian conditions than the one introduced by the English.¹⁰⁵

But when we look at the financial factors involved in the problem, the story is different. Almost all the authorities on Indian education agree that the financial obstacles in the way of literacy education is the most difficult to overcome. Millions of dollars would be necessary to educate India's millions of illiterates. Where is she to find this enormous sum when most of her people are still struggling for bare existence?

The whole problem appears to be a vicious circle. To live a better life and earn a better living the people need en-

¹⁰⁵ See Chapter IV for basic education.

lightenment through education. But to provide them with the necessary education, money is essential. One might wonder where the problem should be attacked first. It needs to be attacked on all sides. Thus India is making earnest attempts to improve the economic conditions, and at the same time to give as many people as possible, some type of education which would help them to lead a better life.

The next chapter gives a brief survey of what is being done at present and what India plans to do in the future to make her people literate.

CHAPTER IV

The New Plans and Objectives of India's Present Government

In the Republic of India, education is an important part of the total program of social and economic reform the Constitution envisages. India's first Five Year Development Plan summarizes the philosophy of education in the following terms:

As an immediate objective, within the limits set by prevailing conditions and resources, the system of education has to be adapted to the requirements of national planning. Education, has, however, an even more vital function in relation to the development of the individual. It has to train the senses, develop the intellect, humanize the emotions and equip the individual for efficient living so as to insure an integrated growth of his personality. There is also the larger question of reorientating the system of education, so that the people are able to participate effectively in building up and efficiently serving the social order which it is the object of national planning to evolve.¹

The constitution aims at developing a pattern of democracy which would insure equality of opportunity and the essentials of civilized life to every individual. It also provides for a high degree of social solidarity and for the ultimate leveling down of the psychological barriers which tend to divide the people within the country. As the plan points out, it is

1 Government of India Information Services, India News, "India Educates for Democracy", IN/13/52, p.2.

primarily through the right kind of education that such a transformation can be brought about.²

Another objective of education which the Plan stresses is the further development of Indian culture. It is pointed out that education

should stimulate the growth of the creative faculty, increase the capacity for enjoyment, and develop a spirit of critical appreciation of art, literature, and other creative activities.³

(a) Basic Education

It was Mahatma Gandhi who first postulated and advocated the new idea of "basic education" in India. According to his scheme of basic education

Firstly, mass education should be made free, universal, and compulsory. Secondly, the mass education should not be perfunctory, cut short at the end of four or five years. The minimum duration of this, basic National Education - as it came to be known later - should be seven years. Thirdly, this education should be given through the mother tongue. Fourthly, and this is the crucial educational basis of the scheme - this mass education should be given through productive crafts like spinning and weaving and not primarily through books, that children should actually produce articles that are marketable and these should be sold to make education self-supporting so far as possible.⁴

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Saiyidain, Problems of Educational Reconstruction,

The idea underlying Gandhiji's 'New Education' was that work done with integrity and intelligence is ultimately the only proper medium through which human beings can be rightly educated and that schools must become active centres of doing and learning by doing, both organized in integral relationship with each other. He condemned the system of education which aims at stuffing children's minds with all kinds of information alone. He has said

I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through the proper exercise and training of the bodily organs.⁶

And again,

I would begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. I hold that the highest development of the mind and the soul is possible under such a system of education.⁷

No one in India, before Gandhi, has stressed this new principle so emphatically and unambiguously or sought to make it basic to the entire education process. The academic tradition in education has persisted in India for centuries with the result that culture has become divorced from work, and manual

5 Ibid., p. 161.

6 M.K.Gandhi, "Gandhi on Education", Education Digest XIV, September, 1948, pp.25.

7 Ibid., p.26.

labor is still regarded as positively dishonorable.

Gandhiji struck at the citadel of this prejudice and stipulated that every child, whether rich or poor, high-born or low-born, should whole-heartedly participate in actual, manual work.⁸

The justification for this new idea, is as much social as psychological, for the education of the worker is in a very real sense 'the door to the education of the man'.⁹

India's Five Year Development plan stresses the need for basic education. In a country as poor as India is at present, the primary aim of education should be to prepare each individual not only to make a living for himself but also to contribute as effectively as possible, to the productivity and well being of the whole nation. Thus the concept of education advocated by Gandhiji has attracted widespread attention and is the key to the basic education now being popularized by the government of India.

Dr. Zakir Hussain, Vice Chancellor of Aligarh University in India, in a broadcast on the future of education in India said:

The idea of educationally productive work as the

8 Saiyidain, Problems of Education Reconstruction, pl.

9 Ibid.

principal means of education would run through our future educational system from basic school to university. All our educational institutions will be communities of work. At these educational institutions which shall no longer be places of passive receptivity but of active experience; pupils will have facilities to experiment, to discover, to work, to live.¹⁰

(b) Compulsory Education

India has set itself the tremendous goal of bringing free and compulsory education to sixty million children. This goal had been set by the Indian constitution itself which says:

The state shall endeavor to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.¹¹

Accordingly, the most important item of the program set forth in the Five Year Plan is the provision of universal, compulsory, and free education for all children between the ages of six and fourteen.

The problem of compulsory education in India is a part of the general problem of her development from a backward subject nation to an advanced sovereign state. Today, India finds herself in the unhappy position of being politically free but

¹⁰ Embassy of India, Washington D.C., Indiagram, Oct. 19, 1953, "Perspective of India's New Education", p. 3.

¹¹ Govt. of India, Information Service, India News, PR/50/52, 'India Works to Educate 60 million children'. p. 1.

economically dependent on those, among others, from whom she wrested her independence after a long struggle. Her primitive agricultural economy in the midst of an industrial world, and her predominantly feudal social order in the modern democratic age are a source of perpetual danger to her hard-won independence. If India had unlimited resources in money, material, and technical skill, she could tackle all these problems simultaneously. The extremely limited nature of the resources which are actually available at present, makes it imperative that some of these tasks should be given priority over others. There is no doubt that educational expansion in the sense of launching schemes of universal free primary education on a compulsory basis is the most essential task -- essential for the preservation of freedom, and for the efficient working of democracy, in fact, for all real and permanent progress. But it has to wait of necessity till the obstacles in its way are removed by a certain degree of economic and social development.

As soon as universal education becomes financially possible, the greatest hurdle in its way will have been cleared. But the schemes can never achieve complete success until the social obstacles -- the caste prejudice, early marriage, and the seclusion of women -- have been removed. However, the process of social regeneration which has been going on in India, slowly but steadily, is likely to be accelerated in the next few years.

The most daring venture of the advocates of social reform in India is the Hindu Code Bill, which was debated several times in the Central Legislature during the last few years. There are fairly strong hopes of the reforms proposed in the bill receiving legislative sanction very soon, as the leader of the Congress Party, Pandit Nehru, made it one of the issues on which he fought the recent general elections and won them by an overwhelming majority.

With regard to the financial question, the successful implementation of the five year plan is expected to increase the revenues of the state. The increase in industrial and agricultural production is sure to result in a general rise in the prosperity of the people. Besides the huge investments made in river valley projects, in the extension of railway lines, in breaking up fallow land for cultivation and in new state owned factories will begin to pay dividends. Thus the state will be able to spend much more on education than it can think of doing today.

In short, if the five year national plan results in any appreciable improvement in the economic situation, and if the community development project succeeds in creating a general atmosphere of service and sacrifice, material support from the public may reach such proportions as to form a new and decisive factor in removing the financial obstacle in the way of providing

all children in India with free primary education. In the words of some eminent Indian educators:

In view of the expected improvements in the financial situation as well as in social conditions, it would not be unreasonable to hope that, by 1956, the introduction of compulsory primary education in India will have become a more practicable proposition.¹²

(c) Adult Education

The most formidable impediment against the promotion of literacy in India, is the enormous illiteracy of large masses of adult population.¹³

Our efforts to check retardation, elimination and wastage in the primary classes will bear fruit only if measures are undertaken to impart a minimum amount of literacy to the adult population, male as well as female, as much as would enable them to read vernacular newspapers and magazines and take lively interest in the affairs of the nation. When parents themselves possess the advantage of education, it is highly probable, nay even certain, that they would themselves without any external stimuli send their children to school in no inconsiderable numbers.¹⁴

In a country, which has chosen democracy as its goal, an intelligent interest in its affairs by the adult population is essential. A child who becomes literate about the age of ten, has to wait for another ten or eleven years to be able to

¹² Saiyidain, Naik, and Husain, Compulsory Education in India, pp. 123-24.

¹³ Parulekar, Literacy in India, p. 156.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 156-157.

take active part in the affairs of the state. But a literate adult immediately steps in to contribute his share to the government of the country and the life of the community in which he lives. The government of India has realized the importance of adult education. Consequently, a social education program geared to the needs of the adults in the villages and on the farm is being put into effect.

India's social education plan is akin to UNESCO's concept of fundamental education. It seeks to do far more than merely teach adults how to read and write. It aims at raising the whole quality of adult life and hence may be called a plan to teach people how to live.

The curriculum includes courses in the concept of citizenship, the laws of the land, instruction in personal and public health, and practical training to enable the people to better their economic status. At the same time creative courses like art, literature, music, dancing, and the principles of brotherhood and ethics have been included.¹⁵

The activities thus cover all aspects of life, and endeavor to draw the adults into active co-operation, enlisting their interests and dealing with their needs and problems. The locale is

¹⁵ Govt. of India Information Services, India News, "India Educates for Democracy", p. 4

not the classroom, but a community center.¹⁶

In the organization of this movement every effort is being made to associate private, non-official agencies with government agencies and to co-ordinate their work. The general aim is to assist agencies, as far as possible, and to obtain the advice and co-operation of influential and experienced social workers in the formulation of programs and policies. In many provinces there are Advisory Boards or committees on social education. In some provinces the Government provides the whole or part of the expenses of the staff, while the actual supervision, and conduct of centers is left to the Boards.¹⁷ The centers may be scattered throughout a region, or concentrated in compact areas. They may even take the form of camps, attended by large numbers of adults, where intensive work is done by voluntary or paid workers for a few weeks.¹⁸ A considerable measure of elasticity and local variation is permitted which is necessary in view of the nature of the work and the fact that it is still in the experimental stage.¹⁹

A novel scheme called the Education Caravan was recently introduced in India. It consists of four vans, one of which

Education 16 UNESCO/Ed/69, International Directory of Adult
 17 Ibid., p. 157.
 18 Ibid.
 19 Ibid.

serves as a mobile stage, another as a cinema theatre, and the remaining two as exhibition halls.

As the caravan comes to a village, it sets up its equipment, produces plays, gives concerts, shows educational and cultural films, and in general seeks to motivate the people of the village towards gaining at least rudimentary education.²⁰

It also provides the villagers with simple literature and instruction so that the work can be carried on by the people themselves. The caravans have been well received and the reports indicate that they are having a large degree of success.

India, with her vast area, scattered villages, difficult and slight transport and travel facilities offers immense possibilities for broadcasting to educate her people. Great advances have been made since India won her independence, on August 15, 1947. The number of radio sets has nearly tripled, rising from 238,274 sets in 1947 to well over 600,000 at the present time.

Today, there are over 5,000 community sets in rural and industrial areas, and each one of these has many hundreds of listeners. Broadcasts arranged with the co-operation of the

²⁰ Government of India Information Services, India News "India Educates for Democracy", p. 4.

various state governments and local authorities carry programs describing the current grow-more-food campaign, bringing information about health, sanitation, dietetics, co-operative markets and the news of the day.²¹

The community sets draw a large number of people who are anxious for news of the outside world and for information that will help them to achieve a better way of life. Today it is a common sight to see villagers squatting around village loudspeaker hung from a tree. It is said that a villager would rather miss a meal than the evening broadcast. In Madras State alone it is estimated, that there are more than 15,000,000 listeners in rural areas -- nearly a third of the population of the state.²² At present, India has the largest broadcasting network in Asia and is carrying out by radio the largest adult education program in the world.²³

Besides, the Education Ministry is organizing audio-visual units to take films and film strips all over India. The production of educational films is being subsidized and they are being made in increasing quantities.

21 Govt. of India Information Services, India News, "India Expands Broadcasting to Educate her people", pp.1-2.

22 Ibid., p.2.

23 Ibid., p.1.

An adult education movement of this magnitude inspired by broad and ambitious aims, but dealing with a wide age group and battling against apathy and prejudice is naturally beset with many difficulties and problems. They are mainly problems of finance, lack of adequate and well-trained personnel, difficulty of effective supervision, and absence of literature and visual aids suited to the special needs and interests of adults.

These problems are being tackled gradually, but the financial situation limits the scope of efforts in every direction. The UNESCO Seminar on Adult Education, held at Mysore, South India, has studied all these problems, collected valuable data and made useful recommendations which will, it is hoped, receive the careful consideration of governments as well as non-official workers and give a new impetus to the movement in rural areas where the bulk of the illiterate population lives.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Until recently, the civilized world knew very little about India. In fact, India could not let herself be known to the world, because of the restrictions imposed on her by the British. Today, India stands before the world as a nation plunged in poverty, ignorance, superstition and misery. The causes that led her to this unhappy state have been analyzed in the previous chapters. It was also made clear how India stands today (in the matter of literacy) in comparison with the other parts of the world.

The fact has been made clear that India was educationally more advanced before the British conquest than she is today. Students of ancient history testify that when the Anglo-Saxons were living in caves, India had her days of prosperity. Megasthenes, an early Greek historian and contemporary of Alexander the Great, has fortunately left a very valuable testimony of the early Indian civilization.

But under the British rule India suffered from the worst kind of economic exploitation. The British plunder and legalized pillage of Indian industries, the destruction of Indian

self-sufficient village economy, and the enormous flow of wealth from the country to England have made India what she is today. In the face of this abject poverty and suppression the indigenous system of education could not survive. Education is considered to be the bread of the soul. If this is true, there is no reason to be surprised at the fact that social evils, ignorance and superstition thrived among a people who were denied even the rudiments of education for generations.

Today, India, having won independence, is faced with the problem of finding solutions for numerous difficulties at the same time and as quickly as possible. To add to her trouble there is the threat of Communism which is becoming serious day by day. The first two years of India's independence were complicated by the staggering refugee (from Pakistan) resettlement problem. Much of the attention and energy of the government had to be devoted to this urgent problem. However, since then the government has begun to tackle the other vital problems -- industrialization, food production, education, health, etc.

The country's needs and potentialities were studied; her objectives set; and on the basis of this an ambitious and complex Five Year Plan was drawn up and put in operation. But there was so much to be done, with everything needing to be done at once, that I had a feeling that only a beginning had been made;...Nevertheless, though India has far to go, she has made a determined and inspired beginning.¹

¹ E. Roosevelt, India and the Awakening East, pp. 110-11

Expenditure on education in India has almost doubled since independence, the present figure standing at 210 million dollars.²

The outlay on education from Government funds alone has risen from \$53,600,000 in 1947 to over \$136,500,000 in 1951-52. It must be remembered that this great increase in expenditure has taken place in years of great financial strain when millions of dollars had to be spent on such urgent projects as the relief and rehabilitation of displaced persons from Pakistan, land reclamation, etc.,...³

Attempts at social, educational and linguistic reforms, that have been made and are in the process of making have been mentioned earlier. It is true that much has not been done yet. But many people have admired even the little progress that India has made so far.

The surprising thing, in view of the overwhelming handicaps, is the amount of progress that has been made. It has apparently been made because education offers the people a way to attain some of the things they want, and once they see the possibility, they grasp at it eagerly. The unwieldy but persistent drive toward modernization in India is thus reflecting itself inevitably in the demand for widespread education.³

Within the next few years, history in Asia will reach a turning point. The pivot is India. Democratic India should

² Govt. of India Information Services, India News, "India educates for Democracy", p.5.

³ Davis, The Population of India and Pakistan, p.161

prove to her own and Asia's millions whether or not democracy can solve the staggering problem of the Asian people. The government of India has realized this fact and has accepted this grave responsibility. In India News, the government has stated that

Education in India does not mean simply the removal of illiteracy and the training of large numbers of experts in various fields who are needed to develop the country's resources, but more important, it involves the education of 361 million people in the ways of self-government so that India may continue to be the bulwark of democracy in Asia.⁴

⁴ Government of India Information Services, India News, "India Educates for Democracy", p.1.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Books

- Abbot, A and Wood, S.H., Report on Vocational Education in India, Delhi, 1948
- Ahmad, M., Present Day Problems of Indian Education, Bombay, 1935
- America and India Feature and News Service, Tolstoi and India, New York, n.d.
- Basu, A.N., Education in modern India, a brief review, 2nd ed., Calcutta, 1947.
- Basu, B.D., History of Education in India under the Rule of the East India Company, 2nd. ed., Calcutta, n.d.
- Bhandarkar, D.R., India, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1939.
- Boman-Behram, Educational Contraversies in India, Bombay, 1943.
- British Information Service, The British in India, New York, 1948
- Bulsara, J.F., Mass and Adult Education in India, Bombay, 1938.
- Bureau of Education, India, Proceedings of the 9th and 10th Meetings of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India, October 1943 and 1944 respectively. Govt. of India Press, Simla, 1944.
- C.J.V., The Wardha Scheme of Education, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 1940.
- Central Administrative Board of Education, Post-war educational development in India, 1944.
- Chamberlain, W.I., Education in India, New York, 1899.
- Central Bureau of Education of the Government of India, Education in India: A Graphic Presentation, New Delhi, 1951.

- Champhess, E. and Richardson, H.B., Indian Adult Education Hand-
book, Lahore, n.d.
- Chinnappa, S.P., The British System of Education in India, Ban-
galore, 1915.
- Commission of Inquiry, Village Education in India, Oxford Univer-
sity Press, 1920.
- Cornelius, J.J., Rabindranath Tagore, India's Schoolmaster, New
York, 1928.
- Cotton, J.S., The Progress of Education in India from 1892 to
1897, London, 1898.
- Cowan, M.G., The Education of the Women of India, New York, 1912.
- Datta, T.K., What English Education has made of us, Lahore, n.d.
- Davis, K., The Population of India and Pakistan, New Jersey, 1951
- Department of State, The UNESCO Constitution and Basic Law,
International Organization and Conference Series, IV,
UNESCO, 17, Washington, D.C., 1952.
- Embassy of India, About India, Washington D.C., 1953.
- Embassy of India, Perspective of India's New Education, Washing-
ton D.C., 1953.
- Encyclopedia Americana, XIV, Chicago, 1953.
- Encyclopedia Britannica, Book of the Year, Chicago, 1953.
- Encyclopedia of Modern Education, edited by Harry N. Revlin,
New York, 1943.
- Foster, J., An Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance, London,
1863.
- Ginzberg, E. and Bray, W., The Uneducated, New York, 1953.
- Government of India Information Service, India Educates for
Democracy, New York, 1952.

- Government of India Information Service, India Works to Educate 60 Million children, New York, 1952.
- Griffiths, P., The British Impact on India, London, 1952.
- Jathar, G.B., and Beri, S.G., Indian Economics, I, 9th edition, Oxford University Press, 1949.
- Keay, F.E., Indian Education in ancient and later times, Bombay, 1938.
- Lajpat, Rai, L., The Problem of National Education in India, London, 1920.
- Lal, P.C., Reconstruction and Education in Rural India, New York, 1932.
- Laubach, F.C., Silent Billion speak, New York, 1943.
- Laubach, F.C., Teaching the World to Read, New York, 1947.
- Laubach, F.C., Toward a Literate World, New York, 1938.
- Macaulay, T.B., Speeches by Lord Macaulay with his Minute on Indian Education, Oxford University Press, 1935.
- McKee, W.J., New Schools for Young India, The University of North Carolina Press, 1930.
- Menon, T.N.M., A Symposium on Post-War Education in India, Baroda, 1945.
- Ministry of Education and Broadcasting, Government of India, Education for Democracy, Delhi, 1952.
- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, India in Maps, 1950.
- Monk, F.F., Educational Policy in India, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, 1934.
- Monroe, P., A cyclopedia of Education, III and IV, 1914.
- Mukerji, S.N., Education in India in the 20th Century, Baroda, 1945.
- Mukerji, S.N., Education in India, Today & Tomorrow, Baroda, 1945.

Nayer, U., India, Washington, D.C., 1949.

Noronha, G.E., Backgrounds in the Education of Indian Girls, Washington, D.C., 1939.

Nurulla, S., and J.P. Naik, History of Education in India, Bombay, 1951.

Oak, V.V., England's Educational Policy in India, Madras, 1925.

Olcott, M., Village Schools in India, Calcutta, 1926.

Osgood, W.C., An Adult Education Program for Orissa, India, Oregon State College Press, 1950.

Parulekar, R.V., Literacy in India, London, 1939.

Proceedings of the Meetings of the Central Advisory Board of Education in India, 1942-44.

Ranga, N.G., Indian Adult Education Movement, Rajahmundry, 1936.

Roosevelt, E., India and the Awakening East, New York, 1953.

Rosinger, L.K., Restless India, New York, 1946.

Ruthnaswamy, M., Indian From the Dawn, Milwaukee, 1949.

Ryburn, W.M., Suggestions for the Organization of Schools in India, Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., 1939.

Saiyidain, K.G., Problems of Educational Reconstruction, Bombay, 1950.

Saiyidain, K.G., The School of the Future, Allahabad, 1935.

Saiyidain, K.G., Naik, J.P., and Husain S.A., Compulsory Education in India, UNESCO, Paris, 1952.

Scott, G.W., Manual for Teachers of Adult Illiterates, The National Advisory Committee on illiteracy, Bulletin No.2, October, 1930.

Siqueira, T.N., The Education of India: History and Problems, Oxford University Press, 1943.

- Sharma, G.C., Early Brahminic Education, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1923.
- Statesman's Yearbook, New York, 1953.
- Tagore, R., Nationalism, New York, 1917.
- Thomas, F.W., British Education in India, London, 1891.
- Thottugal, N.J., The Reconstruction of the Elementary Schools' Curriculum of India, Calcutta, 1932.
- U.N. Statistical Yearbook, New York, 1949-50.
- UNESCO, Access of Women to Education, Geneva, 1952.
- UNESCO, Fundamental Education, Washington D.C., 1948.
- UNESCO, International Directory of Adult Education, Paris, 1950.
- UNESCO, The Right to Education, Paris, 1952.
- UNESCO, World Handbook of Educational Organization and Statistics - Paris, 1951.
- Washburne, C., Remakers of Mankind, New York, 1932.
- Williams, W.E., and Heath, A.E., Learn and Live, London, 1936.
- Wofford, Jr., Clare and Harris, India Afire, New York, 1951.
- Woodroffe, J.G., The Seed of Race, an Essay on Indian Education, Madras, 1921.
- Zellner, A.A., Education in India, New York, 1951.
- Suhuruddin, A., Present Day Problems of Indian Education, Bombay, 1935.

B. Articles

- Agarwal, S.H., "Mahatma Gandhi's New Education", Education Digest, XV, April, 1950, 14-15.
- Caliver, A., "ILLITERACY and Manpower Mobilization", School Life, XXXIII, June, 1951, 131-331.

- "Education in India", Foreign Education Digest, XV, July, 1950 to June 1951, 25-32.
- Gandhi, M.K., "Gandhi on Education," Education Digest, XIV, September, 1948, 25-27.
- Gokhale, B.B., "Liquidation of Illiteracy in the State of Bombay", The Indian Journal of Educational Research, II, December, 1950, 61-68.
- Gray, W.S., "Efforts of UNESCO to Reduce Illiteracy", Elementary School Journal, LI, May 1951, 475-76.
- Heyman, C.L., "Half the World is Illiterate", United Nations World, V, October 1951, 25-27.
- Kemp, H.H., "Manpower Through Literacy Education; State School systems can create it.", School life, October, 1951, 1-2.
- Kilgore, H.M., "Literacy and the National Welfare," School Life, XXXIV, March, 1952, 90-91.
- Laubach, F.C., "Literacy as a Base for World Peace," October, 1951, Phi Delta Kappa, XXXIII, 84-86.
- McGrawth, E.J., "Schools for survival", School Life, XXXIV, April 1952.
- Menon, T.K.N., "Indian Union", Yearbook of Education, 1951, 549-64.
- Misra, J.P., "Adult Illiteracy in India," Minnesota Journal of Education, XXXII, April, 1952, 16-17.
- National Planning Commission, "Five Year Plan of Educational Development in India," The Indian Journal of Educational Research, III, December, 1951, 206-211.
- Parton, M and Britter, E., "Profile of Youth -- Young India", Ladies Home Journal, LXIX, September, 1952, 45-51.
- Shah, M.R., "Characteristics of Indian Educational Administration," The Indian Journal of Educational Research, III, December, 1951, 187-205.
- "Some Recent Developments in Education in India", Foreign Education Digest, XI, July, 1946 to June 1947, 16-18.

"Steps to Reorganize Basic Education," Indiagram, September 2, 1953, 2.

Stoddard, G.D., "There is a you in UNESCO", National Education Association Journal, XLI, January, 1952, 23-25,

Thacore, C.M., "Social and Individual Aims in Gurukula Vasa, Bharati, Jamia Millia and the Wardha systems of Education," The Indian Journal of Educational Research, III, June, 1951, 42-62.

Wood, W.R., "Community Responsibility for Literacy Education", School Life, XXXIV, November, 1951, 23.

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Teresa K. Kalathiveetil has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

January 27, 1954
Date

Ruth Byrnes

Signature of Adviser