

Spread of Western Education

Prepared by

Raju Moshahary

Asst. Prof., Dept. of History

Bengtol College, Bengtol

Western education involves a system of scientific enquiry into a subject where reasoning and observation are its essence. The method of education was prevalent in the western Countries. But the East India Company did not initiative to introduce this in India up to 1813. Although the English introduced the English language and western education to get a regular Supply of English educated men to fill the lower rungs of the administrative system, proved to be a boon as it acted as a force among the people of India. The writings of liberal thinkers like - Edmund Burke, Lord Macaulay and John Stuart Mill introduced the liberal ideas of the west, namely - freedom, democracy and Nationalism, western Education also introduced the revolutionary ideas of Garibaldi, Mazzini, Rousseau and others of the 19thc, which infused social awareness and national consciousness among the educated Indians. English became the lingua - Franca of the Country, a link language through which people living in widely separated regions began to communicate, official and business correspondence began to be conducted in English.

The main phases of the spread of western Education are-

- (i) In 1813 the East India Company earmarked the sum of rupees one lakhs to be spent annually over the educations of Indians.
- (ii) In 1835 the British government accepted the Anglicists view to spend the whole amount over teaching of western Science and literature through the medium of English.
- (iii) In 1854, the government accepted the recommendation of woods Dispatch. Local languages were made the medium of instruction at the school level and English at the college level, universities, were also established at Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai.
- (iv) On the advice of Hunter's Commission the government agreed to transfer the primary education to the local bodies.

The agencies which helped in the spread of western education were- foreign Christian missionaries, the government and the progressive Indians. The Christian missionaries who did

extensive work in due sphere of the spread of western education in India were inspired mainly by a proselytizing spirit to spread Christianity among the Indian people. They sincerely believed that their campaign to convert the Indian was a civilizing mission. They attack polytheism and the caste inequalities among the Hindus for Christianity fundamentally stood for one God and Social equality. These missionaries were among the pioneers of western Education in India, while imparting modern secular education, the educational institutions started by them also gave religious instruction in Christianity. These principally Secular schools served as centers to bring together the Indians and then preach Christianity to them. It happened however that while the overwhelming majority of the students who attended these institutions imbibed western Education. Thus, the missionary organization played an important role in spreading Western Education among the Indians. The British government was however the principal Agent in disseminating western Education in India It established a network of schools and Colleges in India, which turned out innumerable educated Indians vessel in Indian Knowledge. In spite of the limitations and distortions of the education imported - which were the abject of criticism of Indian nationalism. The fact remains that Britain by spreading western Education in India- liberal and technical even due to its own needs objectively played a progressive role.

The introduction of western Education in India was primarily motivated in the political administrative and Economic needs of Britain in India. it was not a mere accident that by the middle of the 19th Century, Specially under Lord Dalhousie important beginning of the inauguration of western education in India were made. The political administrative and Economic necessity mainly urged the British government to establish Schools and Colleges in India where Western Education which alone could meet the needs of modern nation was imparted. There were other motives which encouraged some of the British statesmen and leaders of English thought to endorse the introduction of western education in India. These enlightened Britishers were convinced that the British Culture was the best and the most liberal in the world. The British were inspired by an almost missionary zeal for spreading British Education and Culture. Thus, the political and Economic necessity of British capitalism in India together with an almost fanatical belief in the role of Britain as the messiah to civilize and unify the world by a world-Scale dissemination of British Culture prompted due introduction of western Education in India. The third powerful agency in spreading western Education in India was the Indian themselves. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the pioneer of progressive western Education in

India. He hailed the English Education as the key to the treasures of scientific and democratic thought of the modern west. He declared that perpetuation of the old system of Education in India would only perpetuate superstition and authority. Subsequently, numerous organizations such as The Brahma Samaj, the Arya Samaj, Ram Krishna mission, the Aligarh movement and individuals like-Deshmukh, Chiplunkar, Agarkar, Maganbhai, Karamchand, Karve, Tilak, Gokhle, Maulaviya and others worked towards the establishment of educational institutions both for men and women imparting western education throughout the country. Western Education emphasized on individual liberty, its rejection of faith and stress in modern natural Sciences. Even Schools and colleges started by the Arya Samaj, taught western Education adding its religious instructions such as the teaching of the doctrine of infallibility of the Vedas