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## OBJECTIVES OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY EDUCATION IN THE COLONIAL PUNJAB - A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

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Advent of the Protestant missionaries in India, during eighteenth century, introduced a major tactical change in the existing strategy of the missionaries of this region. Instead of direct preaching they decided to act through their social service activities. They involved themselves in the fields of health and education and rendered valuable services for the benefit of the native community. They were involved in the field of education so much so that, it became a compulsory part of their activities. Their extensive involvement in education aroused apprehensions in the minds of the native community as well as in those of the missionary administration. Some very strong voices from missionary circles were raised against their educational activities as it was considered as diversion from their original aim of preaching the word of God to the heathens. This study focuses on exploring the aims and objectives of missionary education for which they faced a lot of criticism from within themselves and also from the host nation.

The Christian missionaries carried on their activities throughout the world, including the Indian sub-continent, to fulfil their bounden religious obligation of preaching the gospel to the heathens with the ultimate aim of getting converts from the native population. Although, the origin of Christian missionary activities in the Indian sub-continent can be traced from 1<sup>st</sup> century AD yet the arrival of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutschau, in 18<sup>th</sup> Century AD, initiated the modern phase of missionary activities in the subcontinent. The arrival of both the missionaries is important because it marked the introduction of Protestant missionaries in the field.<sup>1</sup>The introduction of Protestant missions made a significant methodological difference with that of their earlier Catholic counterparts. The latter believed in the method of direct preaching whereas pioneer Protestant missions preferred that of indirect preaching based on the principle of 'Teaching Preaching and Healing'.<sup>2</sup>Consequently, they attached great importance to social service activities in the fields of education and health. Although they rendered very valuable services in both the fields but the pioneer Protestant missionaries and their followers

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preferred education so much as it became a compulsory component of missionary operations during the 19<sup>th</sup> century AD. They believed that ‘Church and school are to go together’<sup>3</sup> therefore each and every mission in the Indian subcontinent was supposed to maintain a school attached to it. Christian missionaries’ intensive involvement in the tiresome educational enterprise, apparently launched for the welfare of the native population, is considered to be one of the most striking things of the Indian mission field which goes on to raise the basic questions like:

- What was the real aim of missionaries, education or something else?
- Why the missionaries, instead of direct preaching, involved themselves in the field of education which was absorbing much of their human as well as material resources?
- What were the real objectives behind the tiresome activity of missionary education?
- Whether their involvement in the educational activities was a distraction from their original task of ‘preaching the gospel to the heathens’?

We can get the answers for these questions by exploring and analysing the existing situation of the Indian mission field during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Analysis of the objectives behind missionary education would be an essential part of this study. Moreover the contents of the curriculum taught in the missionary schools would also be helpful in answering these questions.

### **1- Main Aim of Missions**

In fact, missionary zeal and zest had its origin in the “great commission” from Mathew the Biblical Commandment 28:19, which prompted the adherents of Christian faith to toil the missionary hardships. It commands the Christian nation to spread in the world to make disciples of all nations.<sup>4</sup> So the Christian missionaries, taking it as their religious obligation, responded positively and went to different parts of the globe to convey the message of Jesus Christ. The great Charter of missions summed up the ultimate aim of the missionary work in the following words:

Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.<sup>5</sup>

M. Rose Greenfield, the author of “Five Years in Ludhiana”, also identified the same aims and objectives of

founding the missions and missionary societies. In an address to the Conference of Lady Missionaries held at Amritsar in 1888, she declared evangelization as the one and only objective of missions and missionary societies. Her statement ran as follows:

The one supreme aim of every missionary society, and the one all-absorbing business of every individual missionary, is the evangelization of the heathen—the proclamation of the Gospel to every creature. For this object societies are formed, prayer is offered, money is collected, and lives are devoted. By whatever means we may seek to reach the people, our aim is nothing less than this—to bring them to know Him “whom to know is life eternal.”<sup>6</sup>

So, it is quite obvious that conversion of the native population was the ultimate goal of all the missionary societies.

### **Origin of Missionary Education in India**

Missionary education in the modern form is considered mainly the phenomenon of early Protestant missionaries in the subcontinent. Though, the Catholics took lead in responding to the Jesus command of preaching the gospel to the heathen yet the teaching aspect of the Jesus command remained almost out of their preference. Prompted by their desire of getting more and more converts, they mostly adopted the method of direct preaching. They were interested in getting converts but paid little attention to their (converts’) spiritual growth.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the early Catholic missionaries were, although, reported to be involved in some educational activities yet they were found to abandon them by the end of eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup> The Protestants, on the other hand, were not interested even in the preaching of gospel in their early days. The theologians of Protestant school of thought were of the opinion that “Jesus’ command to preach the Gospel to the nations of the world was addressed to his immediate disciples, and their successors were not competent enough to continue the work”.<sup>9</sup> They thought it better to focus on the purification of their own selves than to preach the Gospel to the others. But the situation did not prevail for long and some bolder spirits like Ziegenbalg and William Carey emerged with an opposite viewpoint.<sup>10</sup>

Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plutschau were the first Protestant missionaries to enter the Indian subcontinent on July 9, 1706.<sup>11</sup>

These missionaries laid the foundation of first Protestant Church at Tranquebar, a small Danish settlement in South India.<sup>12</sup> William Carey, after his forced departure from Calcutta, took asylum of Danish governor of Serampore. He played a key role in strengthening the base of the Protestants in Indian subcontinent and, due to his wide ranging missionary activities, he is considered to be the father of modern missions.<sup>13</sup> Alexander Duff was another missionary, from Protestant circle, who earned universal respect in the missionary ranks for his contribution to the Christian cause in this region. These early missionaries of Protestant circle started thinking of educational activities as an integral part of their missionary enterprise. Ziegenbalg and Plutschau viewed education as the first and foremost pillar of their missionary strategy.<sup>14</sup> William Carey was much influenced by these pioneers and initiated educational activities through the operations of 'Serampore Trio'.<sup>15</sup> Alexander Duff, believing on "Downward Filtration Theory"<sup>16</sup> targeted the high-cast Brahmins through English medium education. Julius Richter saw his contribution vital for the furtherance of Christian cause as well as for the development of the Indian education system.<sup>17</sup> So the Christian Missionary education was mainly the prerogative of early Protestant missionaries and they are, therefore, considered as the originators of Missionary education system in India.

. The territory of the Punjab although got the attention of Christian missionaries in the early 1830s yet the real missionary activities started in this region after its annexation to the British dominion. It was the time when the idea that "education would be a powerful and even predominant aspect of the missions to win over souls was taking firm roots in the Indian mission field."<sup>18</sup> So education of the native population was taken as one of the necessary components of Christian missionaries' campaigns. Most of the missionary societies, who entered and founded their stations in the Punjab, were already working on these lines in the different parts of India. These societies, following the footsteps of their founding fathers—Ziegenbalg, Carey and Duff— were closely involved in defusing education to the native population.<sup>19</sup> That is why most of the missionary societies in the Punjab started their missionary activities by establishing a school for the education of the native Christian and non-Christian population of the province.

## 2- Need of Missionary Education

Missionary education originated out of the missionaries' thinking that the Indian mission field was different from those in the other parts of the world. The early Protestant missionaries in the Indian subcontinent found this region a hard and relatively unfruitful field than others in the globe. It was a territory with a diverse population having different religious and social beliefs. The missionaries realized the fact: "Indians, thus, in fact, are a congregation of nations, a crowd of civilizations, customs, languages and types of humanity, thrown together with no tendency to homogeneity, until an external civilization and foreign faith shall and common interest possible by educating and Christianizing them."<sup>20</sup> The Hindu and the Muslim communities were numerically dominating the others in this heterogeneous society. The former turned out to be difficult to convert because of its unconditional attachment to the existing illogical religious and social customs. Most of the missionaries were having complaints about the insuperable barriers of institution of caste and that of the natives' stubborn attachment to their superstitions which made their work extremely difficult. An LMS missionary E. P. Rice identified the obstacles in the way of the conversion of Hindu community of the nineteenth century in these words: 'the institution of caste'; 'the absence of all religious and social liberty'; 'the utterly perverted standard of conduct'; the 'oppressive supremacy of the Brahman class'; 'polytheistic idolatry'; 'the fear of malignant demons'; 'the belief in religious merit'; 'pantheistic teaching'; 'the degradation of women'; 'the degradation of low caste'; and 'a whole jungle of superstitious beliefs and corrupt practices'.<sup>21</sup> That is why very few conversions were possible by the early decades of the nineteenth century. The missionaries were unable even to touch the "heartlands of Hinduism" and the modest community of converted Christians was mainly from the lower rung of the society—low castes, outcasts and tribal groups.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand the Muslim community was nearly impossible to convert. The Muslims, in missionaries' views, showed 'bigoted resistance to all the new faith' and attributed finality to the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), which were the major obstacles in their (missionaries) way to success.<sup>23</sup>

Under the abovementioned circumstances, the missionaries' existing method of direct preaching was unable to produce the desired results. Although the conventional way of street preaching was successful in drawing the audience yet it was not producing sufficient number of conversions. Moreover, the policy of direct preaching was unsuccessful in having any influence on the upper echelon of the Hindu society. The review of the past missionary endeavours against the net results produced, in terms of conversions, suggested modifications in the missionary strategies. The Christian Church, after a meticulous analysis of the existing circumstances, came to the conclusion that instead of 'spasmodic attacks', 'a careful, many-sided propaganda' should be maintained, patiently and steadily, for a prolonged period' to get some good results.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, the missionaries, instead of attempting the direct preaching for conversion, decided to adopt a comparatively circuitous and more time-consuming path to achieve their ultimate goal. They decided to make progressive movement to get to their desired end —evangelization. Preparation of the native mind, for the acceptance of Christian faith, was identified as the most important part of this new missionary strategy and the missionary schools and colleges were selected to do the all important task of creating conducive atmosphere for the extension of Christian faith. It is quite obvious by the Julius Richter's statement about Alexander Duff which goes in the following words:

Duff firmly made up his mind within a few weeks of his arrival in India that the new line of missionary work which he was destined to strike out was to bring the youth of India under Christian influences by means of schools.<sup>25</sup>

In this way missionary education became a powerful auxiliary to accelerate the work of conversion and emerged as a necessary component of missionary operations in the Indian mission field. Moreover the success of missionaries' new policy was closely linked to the performance of their educational institutions.

### **3- Objectives behind Missionary Education**

The initiation of missionary education was an important innovation for the native population of this region. In addition to its important role in the intellectual development of the native

population, it also helped the people in improving their financial condition and social status in the society. As it was an important means to get the lucrative jobs in public and private sector organizations. But the missionary education, in addition to its massive contribution for the welfare of the society, was initiated to serve the following objectives.

#### **4.1- Conversion**

As stated previously, the chief aim of missionaries' arrival in the subcontinent was the evangelization of the native population. This longstanding desire was working behind the establishment of missionary educational institutions. In fact, this was the most important factor to prompt the missionaries to commence their educational activities and without it, they were not likely to involve in any kind of such enterprise.<sup>26</sup> The originators of missionary education, including A. Duff, saw education as an evangelistic agency and held 'conversion of individual pupils and students' as one of their chief aims.<sup>27</sup> William Carey considered schools as 'one of the most effectual means of spreading the light of the gospel through to the world'.<sup>28</sup> C.W. Forman, a prominent missionary who earned great fame for his educational activities in the Punjab, also had the same views. He presented an essay in the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore in 1862-63 and suggested that:

We must keep more steadily in view the conversion of our pupils, and the fitting of them for extending still further the work of conversion, as the great end at which we are to aim.<sup>29</sup>

Teaching of Bible was made compulsory at missionary educational institutions to serve the purpose. Most of the missionary schools conducted a special Bible class for all students.<sup>30</sup> The atmosphere of a class-room provided the missionaries a unique opportunity to preach the principles of Christianity in an efficient way to impress the attentive audience. Rev. Goluknath, an American Presbyterian missionary at Jullundur, pronounced this fact at the forum of PMC, held at Lahore in 1862-63, in the following words:

We can communicate the principles of our religion more satisfactorily to a class of boys in our schools, than we possibly can do to a crowd of men in the bazaar.<sup>31</sup>

The secular education, side by side with the Bible studies, was taught at missionary schools but it was modified to serve the

ultimate aim of conversion. The secular studies, especially those of history and philosophy, were suggested to imbue with a Christian spirit.<sup>32</sup> So it is quite obvious that the foremost object of missionary schools was to get converts from the native community and almost all of their efforts for the improvement of their schools were to make them efficient and productive in terms of conversions.

#### **4.2- Preparation**

.Preparation of the native mind, for the acceptance of Christian faith, was another important aim of missionary education in India. It emerged out of the missionaries' new policy of progressive development towards the ultimate goal of conversion. The preparatory stage was the most important stage in the missionaries' new policy. The originators of missionary education in India—Ziegenbalg, Carey, and Duff, considered their schools and colleges best to serve the purpose of preparing the native mind for the acceptance of the gospel. So the missionary educational institutions, in the new setting, became an integral part of missionary operations. Rev. Ziegenbalg's schools, besides their immediate influence, were considered to help the missionaries to reach the parents through the medium of their children.<sup>33</sup> William Carrey, within one year of his arrival in India, set up a school because it was considered to be the most effectual means to serve the Christian cause.<sup>34</sup> In the same way, the education programme of Alexander Duff was aiming at bringing the native youth under the Christian influence. Julius Richter explained Duff's aims in the following words:

Duff's plan was to create schools for the children of heathen parents, that the schools themselves might be the instruments of pioneer missionary work.<sup>35</sup>

Realizing the importance of education, most of the missionary societies, by 1830s, adopted it as an integral part of their missionary enterprise with the hope that it might prepare the minds of the native population for the later receptiveness of Christianity. This preparatory purpose of education dominated the missionary ranks through the ages and missionaries, time and again, declared it as the major objective of their education. The same purpose of missionary education was echoed in the missionary ranks at the floor of the World Missionary Conference,



held at Edinburgh in 1910. As the report of commission III of the Conference observed:

Mission schools and colleges are to be maintained, not only for the purpose of conversions, but even more as a preparation of the ground.<sup>36</sup>

So, during the nineteenth century, the notion 'schools for the preparation of ground', dominated the missionary ranks and educational institutions emerged as a necessary component of missionary enterprise. The success of the missionaries' new policy was mainly dependant on the performance of the missionary schools and colleges, as the preparatory work, done by the missionary educational institutions, was the real key to success. That is why the missionaries were closely attached to such a laborious and tiresome task of educating the native population.

The preparatory work, in addition to its work against the native institutions of caste, idolatry, *Purdah*, the natives' stubborn attachment to the illogical superstitious beliefs and corrupt practices, etc., was supposed to extend the missionaries' influence in the society through the promotion of their image as the self-sacrificing men. The preparation process included 'extension of the Christian influence in the society', 'intellectual development of the native population', and 'diffusion of western culture in the oriental society'.

#### **4.2.1 Extension of missionary influence**

Caste system was thought to be an 'insuperable barrier' in the way of conversion of Hindu society as well as a stumbling block in the extension of the missionaries' influence in the society. The upper rung of the Hindu community remained totally out of the influence of Christian missionaries, till the early decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>37</sup> The importance of getting converts from these classes was paramount because of their religious, social and political influence in their respective communities. The missionaries, by the start of the nineteenth century, realized that winning the people from the upper rung of the society was mandatory to show some concrete output of their proselytizing activities. Access of these classes was one of the great difficulties of the field, which was considered to affect the performance of the missionaries very badly. The mission schools were considered to be the powerful agencies to break into the strong hold of caste hierarchy and extend the missionary influence to the higher ranks

of Hindu society. Alexander Duff was strongly motivated by this aspect of missionary education and therefore adopted it as a means to access the higher echelon of the society. Julius Richter described Duff's aims and objectives behind his educational enterprise in the following words:

Education, and particularly higher education, is in the civilized lands of the East a prerogative of the highest classes. If Duff could succeed in making his schools popular, he would thereby gain entrance to the first circles of society in the country—and that seemed to him desirable, not only because all the methods hitherto adopted by the different missions had failed to gain such access, but also those very classes were in India the privileged leaders of society, the sole possessors of higher culture and of an already developed intellectual life.<sup>38</sup>

Almost the same views about the purpose of missionary education were echoed in the letter of Dr. Miller of Madras which he wrote to the delegates of WMC held at Edinburgh in 1910. He insisted that:

India could never be won for Christ, if it is the lower castes or outcastes who are relied upon. The higher casts must be reached, and the only way of reaching these classes is by diffusing Christian influence amongst them by means of education.<sup>39</sup>

Secular part of missionary education, especially that of English language and literature, was supposed to serve the purpose best in extending the missionaries' influence to the upper classes of the society. English education at mission schools was supposed to exert a pull on students from the upper rung of the society. As the upper classes of the society were in demand of English education, due to the Social prestige and economic benefits, attached to the language of the ruling class.<sup>40</sup> The demand was further increased after 1835, when the British government took the decision to patronize English over vernacular education and attached the government employments with the educational attainment of the candidates. Christian missionaries, being aware of the extent of a teacher's influence on the life of a student and his family in the oriental settings,<sup>41</sup> fancied their access to the upper echelon of the society through the means of the youth of these classes. So they

presented English education as an inducement to draw the youth of the upper classes of the society in the mission schools.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the English instruction, the scheme of studies and the atmosphere of the missionary educational institutions were supposed to break the cast hierarchy in the society. Missionary schools and colleges were aiming at creating a feeling of dislike against the cast system, in the minds of native students. The blend of Christian and liberal education was fashioned in the missionary institutions hoping that 'it could not recognize or tolerate caste observances within its walls'.<sup>43</sup> The atmosphere of these schools also accentuated the breaking of the cast system where the students were admitted regardless of their social status. The missionaries were prepared to admit the students from low caste or from outcastes, despite its negative consequences on the enrolments of their schools. So the missionary schools were working in their highest capacity to extend missionaries influence in the higher ranks of the society by breaking the system of caste hierarchy and making the upper classes accessible for the missionaries.

#### **4.2.2 Intellectual Development**

The superstitious behaviour of the native population was considered to be a stumbling block in the way of conversion. The missionaries felt that the native people were not in a state of mind to analyze things on the basis of reason and science rather they were in a habit of accepting them blindly. Especially the beliefs and religious rituals of Hindu community—their 'belief in the religion's merits to be obtained by acts of idol-ritual, pilgrimages to supposed sacred spots, bathing in supposed sacred waters, their seductive pantheistic teaching which wipes out the distinction between right and wrong and denies the authority of conscience, and a whole jungle of superstitions beliefs and corrupt practices'<sup>44</sup>—were the typical examples of their illogical behaviour. In these circumstances, the native community, according to the Christian missionaries, was unable to evaluate the truth of the Christian doctrines presented to them. So the native mind was considered to be in a dire need of an intellectual revolution. Consequently, the missionaries aimed at the development of native mind on scientific lines to enable the people understand the value of missionaries' arguments, by exercising their power of reason.<sup>45</sup> The missionary schools and colleges came forward to serve the purpose and initiated their efforts in this

direction. Rev. Dr. D. O. Allen termed it one of the important factors behind the establishment of the missionary schools and observed:

In commencing their operations, missionaries have generally seen the propriety and importance of establishing schools. One reason for them is to educate the minds of the people, so that they may be more capable of understanding and appreciating the facts and evidences, the doctrines and duties of the Scriptures.<sup>46</sup>

Education of science was seen to sow the seed of reason and logic in the native society. It was aiming at the intellectual development of the native mind on the lines to analyze things on the basis of logic and reason rather than believing on them blindly. The ultimate result of this development was seen as the denouncement of the native religious beliefs by these educated classes of the native society, which was considered an important and compulsory stage towards the absolute aim of conversion. So the knowledge of science was thought beneficial to remove the superstitious behaviour of the native population and making them able to evaluate the truth of the Christian beliefs and notions presented to them. This preparatory work was expected to pave the way for the extension of the world of Christianity.

#### **4.2.3 Diffusion of Western Culture**

Missions all over the world have contributed immensely to the development of the society on Christian morals and so was the case in the colonial Indian society. Christian missionaries aimed at making profound changes in the traditional culture of oriental society. They were greatly disturbed by the significant aspects of the Indian culture and therefore considered cultural change as a compulsory component of preparatory stage. The reformation of the society on the basis of Christian models was thought to alleviate the influence of the native social institutions of caste, *Purdah*, child marriage, superstitious behaviour, etc. in the society. So they approached the Indian society with reformist intent and attempted to incorporate major changes in the social structure of the society. They aimed at presenting western ideals to adapt the decadent social values on western lines which were expected to ultimately culminate in the formation of a liberal society with dominant Christian morals. To them this social and cultural change was necessary for the preparation of native mind to achieve the

ultimate. So, the mission boards and missionaries, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, remained busy in establishing social institutions in the oriental society. They believed that these efforts would open the door for the conversion of the native population.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, the missionaries were of the opinion that evangelization and civilization go hand in hand in the south Asian society. Many of them interpret ‘evangelism in the wider sense of bringing the people under the influence of Christian social values and Christian attitudes towards life’.<sup>48</sup>

Due to its intrinsic relation to culture, education is considered to be one of the most powerful forces for social change. The missionaries also thought in the same vein and chose the instrument of education to reform the traditional Indian society. American missionaries are specially worth mentioning in this context. They were traditionally identified with the group of missionaries who offered allegedly better civilization through the commencement of their social service programmes—provision of educational, medical and other facilities.<sup>49</sup> Their Women missionaries left a potent impact on the social structure of the host society. They presented themselves as role models to the native female population and “examples of their own domestic arrangements, especially their conjugal marriages, their child-raising methods, their skills in cooking and sewing, and their attention to domestic hygiene, were considered to be powerful civilizing forces.”<sup>50</sup>

#### **4.3- Education for the Native Christian Community**

In addition to the conversion of the native population and doing the preparatory job, missionary education was also considered beneficial for the converts, in their post conversion phase. The missionaries were very conscious about the education and training of the Christian converts based on the Christian principles. So the education of the Christian converts was another important factor which prompted the missionaries to carry on with their educational venture. Education for the native Christians was aiming at ‘Development of Reading and Writing Skills’, ‘edification or building up of the native church’, ‘improvement in the financial condition of the native Christians’,

##### **4.3.1 Development of Reading and Writing Skills**

Reading of Bible is considered to be an important motivating factor for education since the inception of Christianity.

As, each and every Christian is supposed to be able to read the holy Scriptures. It was considered necessary due to its eternal character and positive effect on the heart and mind of the reader. The missionaries took great care of this and Protestant Christians are, especially, considered to be the people of the Book. Therefore, the Christian missionary educational institutions aimed at enabling the Christian converts to read the word of God, a necessary prerequisite of salvation. Rev. N. G. Clark pronounced it as, “some degree of education must be added to enable believers to read the Word of God for themselves in their native tongue.”<sup>51</sup> So, due to their contribution in making the students able to read the scriptures, the missionary schools became a necessary part of the evangelical enterprise of Christian missionaries.

The same purpose, providing the religious scriptures to the natives in their respective languages, paved the way for the translation of Bible in different vernacular languages. The missionaries took on this gigantic work and translated the sacred scriptures into native dialects and languages. Printing press was introduced to make these translations available in the published form for the native population. The work of the ‘Serampore trio’ is especially important who translated and printed the portions of Bible into about thirty one Indian languages and dialects. M.A. Sherring observes the contribution in these words:

In no country in the world, and in no period in the history of Christianity, was there ever displayed such an amount of energy in the translation of the sacred scriptures from their originals into other tongues, as was exhibited by a handful of earnest men in Calcutta and Serampore in the first ten years of the present century.<sup>52</sup>

So the development of reading and writing skills in the community of Christian converts was an important factor behind the educational enterprise of Christian missionaries. The missionary schools and colleges were aiming to enable the Christian converts to read the word of God.

#### **4.3.2 Edification**

The word ‘edification’ is used in the New Testament which suggests the divine purpose of edifying the individual as well as the building up of the edifice—the church, the Christian community.<sup>53</sup> The term ‘native Church’ is used to show a community of local Christians of some specific locality.<sup>54</sup>

Edification or the Building up of a native church rested at the heart of almost the whole Christian community. In fact the state of the native church in India was considered to be a crucial indicator to show the success or failure of the missionaries on the mission field. Richard Lovett termed the work of earlier missionaries as preparatory and related the survival of Christianity in India with the state of the native church. He described it in the following words:

Christianity in India must ultimately stand or fall by its success in building up, or by its failure to create a living, active, self-supporting *Hindu Native Church*.<sup>55</sup>

The governing bodies and the missionaries of all the great societies, still by the second half of the nineteenth century, considered edification—development of the native churches on self-supporting, self-governing, and self-extending systems—as one of the major objectives of their enterprise.<sup>56</sup> The training of the native population, for the said purpose, at missionary schools was a subject of paramount importance for the participants of WMC held at Edinburgh in 1910. The Bishop of Birmingham related the efficiency of the clergy class to their efficient training. He attached much importance to the missionary schools due to the training aspect of education. His argument ran as follows:

From the schools—with their range from kindergarten to university—come the leaders of both Church and State in all these mission lands; the ministers, the teachers, all the laymen who are going to lead. In these schools are educated the rank and file of the christen communities, no less important than those, as we have seen, in carrying the gospel to their own people. These are the men, then, who will interpret the Christian faith to their fellow-countrymen; and therefore the whole question of education in the mission field becomes at one of the most vital importance.<sup>57</sup>

Rev. W.L. Ferguson, an American Baptist missionary also pronounced in the same vein and wrote:

Educational missionary work should serve to produce an intelligent Christian community, able to read the Word of God in the vernacular, establish and maintain its own churches, discipline and order, extend its influence in and beyond its local habitat, and furnish a body from which

leaders for church and secular life may be drawn, this is the main purpose. Christianity cannot be said to be fully indigenous until this is accomplished.<sup>58</sup>

Thus the training of the native Christians for the development of the native church was one of the important objectives of missionary education. The missionary schools and colleges took great pains to produce trained leadership for their respective churches.

#### **4.3.3 Improvement in Social and Financial Condition**

Missionaries' educational institutions also aimed at improving the social and financial condition of the Christian converts. It is an obvious fact that the initial converts were from the upper echelon of the society but they were few in numbers. The bulk of the Christian converts, towards the end of the nineteenth century, was converted during the mass movement. These converts were mainly from the lower rung of the society, mostly coming from the classes of *chuhras* and *chamars*.<sup>59</sup> They were generally illiterate people with pitiable financial condition. Their financial condition became even worse after their embrace of Christianity because of the hostile behaviour of the native community towards them. In these circumstances the missionaries were supposed to do something for them and they came forward by taking the responsibility of improving their sources of income. Missionary education, especially its secular part, was considered the best means to do the trick. Missionary curriculum was modified to prepare the students for the professional careers. In addition to the provision of the professional courses at missionary schools the missionaries also created opportunities for their successful students within the missionary circles. The local Christian converts, educated from the missionary institutions, were supposed to serve in the fields of education, health, and the like in private as well as in the government sector. The missionaries also created jobs within their missionary circle where Christian candidates were given priority over those from the other religious communities.<sup>60</sup>

Hence the education of these native Christians was supposed to improve the financial as well as the social condition of the native Christians by providing them some job under government or some missionary organization.<sup>61</sup> The missionary educational institutions had special focus on the professional studies and devised special courses to serve the purpose.



## 5- Nature of Missionary Education

In the above said context missionary schools and colleges were established in different parts of the country. Due to their crucial role, each and every mission was supposed to operate schools in its periphery.<sup>62</sup> The curriculum of missionary schools and colleges was carefully devised to meet the challenges of the time. The blend of Christian religious education based on Bible studies and that of secular education based on western sciences and literature was considered to pave the way for the Christianization of the native society.<sup>63</sup>

Religious education was seen as a unique opportunity for the missionary teachers to interact with the native youth. Bible studies and daily worship were considered the best means to interfere in the religious beliefs and practices of the native students.<sup>64</sup> That is why Bible studies became the most important part of missionary education. Special Bible classes were conducted at missionary schools where missionaries themselves were involved in the teachings of Bible. Trained Christian teachers were given priority over those of non-Christians for the teaching of Bible. The stories of Adam and Eve, of Cain and Abel, of Joseph and his brethren, etc., were supposed to have a good impact on children. The teacher was expected to teach this kind of material with an animated way to get desired outcome.<sup>65</sup>

Although Christian study material was the only desirable teaching material at missionary schools<sup>66</sup> yet secular education was included in the missionary curriculum. It got importance in the missionary ranks due to its two fold impact on the native society. On the one hand, it was important to create a liberal image of Christian missionary educational institutions because it provided the missionaries an argument that they were not working for conversion. On the other hand, due to its aim of developing the logical as well as precision powers of the students, it was a proposed remedy for the ailments of caste system, superstitious nature and the other perceived wrong doings of native society. It was considered an associate to Christianity because of its crucial anticipated role in preparing the ground for ultimate conversion.<sup>67</sup> So the secular education was included in the curriculum of missionary education with a hope that the native educated people would ultimately denounce their religious beliefs on the basis of

logic and reason. The native religious and social beliefs and practices were considered to be in opposition with the scientific notions therefore the diffusion of scientific knowledge was likely to pave the way for the conversion of the native population. Professor Robertson pronounced it in the following words:

The sacred books of the Hindus are 'inextricably committed to a collision with the truths of astronomy, chemistry, medicine, geography, and all the facts of modern science.' Instruction in the elements of physical science and or geography not only upsets the old notions on these subjects, but so far forth uproots the Hindu<sup>68</sup> religious system.<sup>69</sup>

This notion was not only popular in the missionary ranks but was also admitted by the officials of the Punjab government.<sup>70</sup> So the blend of Christian and secular education was expected to do the trick for the missionaries. The secular part was aiming at preparing the students to denounce their faith and the Christian part of missionary education was expected to fill up the space, created by the secular instruction, by providing them the alternative to substitute their old religious beliefs.

#### CONCLUSION

The missionaries came to the Indian sub-continent, basically, for the fulfilment of their evangelical agenda and therefore were carrying conversion of the native population as main objective of their pursuit. The early missionaries were not interested in the social service activities rather they preferred to work on the smooth way of getting converts through direct preaching. But the challenges of the Indian mission field tempted them to change their course of action. The Protestants were the first to change their course of action and, instead of direct preaching, decided to focus on indirect preaching. Because of its multipurpose role in preparing the minds for conversion in the pre-conversion period and its numerous religious, social, and financial benefits for the converts in their post conversion scenario, education got the key position in their new strategy.

In the pre-conversion scenario, it was supposed to remove conservatism from the students' minds which was beneficial for the missionaries to convince the students on the basis of logic and reason. It was also supposed to provide an opportunity to the missionaries to have attentive listeners in the form of students and their families which was impossible to get otherwise. Furthermore,

it provides the missionaries and opportunity to disseminate their cultural values in the host society through their students. That is why it became a compulsory organ of missionary operations for the missionaries in India, including the province of the Punjab.

In the post conversion scenario, education was supposed to produce the future leadership for the Indian Church and edification of the native church was the desired religious goal to achieve through this system. Education was also supposed to support the new converts in improving their social and financial status in the society. The curriculum of the missionary schools was modified and different professional courses of practical nature were added to get the desired results towards this end. These new converts, educated from missionary institutions, were hoped to earn some government or private source of income on the basis of their professional skills.

So the missionaries' intensive involvement in the field of education was to support their main aim of getting converts from the host society. They were hoping to get converts and religious leadership due to its preparatory character. Native religious leadership was also expected come from this system. The consolidation of the converts was anticipated by improving their social and financial status through the missionary education system. In this way the missionaries' educational endeavours cannot be termed as a distraction from their main aim rather they should be considered as a powerful auxiliary to get converts from their educational clients.

### REFERENCES & NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia* (New York: Friendship Press, 1963), 39.

<sup>2</sup>P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954), 151. Also

Comfort Jacob, 'Aspects of the History of C.T.I', *Shua-e-Nau, Special Issue of C.T.I. Magazine* (Sialkot: Vincent David, PEB & Manzur Gill, January 2001): 35-36.

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), 195.

<sup>4</sup> John Newton, 'Preaching to the Heathen; How can it be Made More Efficacious than it has Generally been in this part of India?', *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore in December and January, 1862-63* (Lodiana: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1863), 3-4.

<sup>5</sup> Cited in *World Missionary Conference, 1910; Report of Commission III, Education in Relation to the Christianization of National Life* (Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), 16.

<sup>6</sup> Greenfield, M. Rose, *Education versus Evangelization, an Address to the Conference of Lady Missionaries held at Amritsar, Punjab, 1888*, 3, <http://www.archive.org/details/educationversuse00roseuoft> (accessed September 17, 2016)

<sup>7</sup> P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia* (New York: Friendship Press, 1963), 33.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', *Evangelical Quarterly* 69:3 (1997): 245.

<sup>9</sup> P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan*, 151.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia*, 39.

<sup>12</sup> P. Thomas, *Christians and Christianity in India and Pakistan*, 153-154.

<sup>13</sup> P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia*, 39

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 195.

<sup>15</sup> In 1799, Ward and Marshman arrived in Calcutta to join William Carrey. Due to the critical circumstances, for missionary work at Calcutta, they convinced Carrey to settle down at Serampore, a Dutch Settlement only 15 miles away from Calcutta. The combination of these three missionaries was excellent for missionary work—Carrey was a propagandist, Ward was a painter and Marshman was a school teacher—and is popularly known as 'Serampore Trio'. Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Students' History of Education in India, 1800-1947* (Bombay: Macmillan and Co., 1951), 35-36.

<sup>16</sup> The term 'Downward Filtration Theory' was introduced in 1820s by the East India Company. It had three interpretations. 1) Only those classes of the society which had lost the most by the change of the government should be educated. 2) The second interpretation suggested that the upper or the influential classes should be educated first, as their culture was supposed to be trickle down to the lower classes of the society. 3) The last interpretation of the term suggested good education for a few persons, may or may not from the upper classes, and the education of the masses was expected through these persons. Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Students' History of Education in India, 1800-1947*, 82-84.

<sup>17</sup> Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, translated by Sydney Moor (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908), 177-179.

<sup>18</sup> Sanjay Seth, 'Which Good Book? Missionary Education and Conversion in Colonial India', *Semeia*, 88 (2001), 116.

<sup>19</sup> The major missionary societies in the region were the Church Missionary Society of England, Anglicans from the Church of England, Presbyterians from the Church of Scotland, and two north-American Presbyterian denominations.

<sup>20</sup> William Butler, *The Land of the Veda* (New York: n.p., 1871), 371, cited in Iftikhar Haider Malik, 'The American Missionaries in South Asia, 1812-1870', *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, XIX: 3, (1982), 33.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Lovett, M. A, *the History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895* (London: Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1899), 4-6.

- <sup>22</sup> Sanjay Seth, 'Which Good Book? Missionary Education and Conversion in Colonial India', 116.
- <sup>23</sup> Richard Lovett, *the History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, 6.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, 174-175.
- <sup>26</sup> Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Students' History of Education in India, 1800-1947*, 32.
- <sup>27</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910; Report of Commission III, Education in Relation to the Christianization of National Life*, 17.
- <sup>28</sup> William Carey to Jabez Carey, Serampore 20 August 1815. Cited in Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', 246.
- <sup>29</sup> C.W. Forman, 'Schools; How can They be Made in the Highest Degree Auxiliary to the Work of Evangelizing the Country', 31.
- <sup>30</sup> Ikram-ul-Haq, 'The Punjab, 1849-83: Educational Activity', *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, XVIII-III (July, 1981): 4.
- <sup>31</sup> *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore in December and January, 1862-63*, 46.
- <sup>32</sup> C.W. Foreman, 'Schools; How can They be Made in the Highest Degree Auxiliary to the Work of Evangelizing the Country', 34.
- <sup>33</sup> Andrew Thomson, D.D., *Great Missionaries; A Series of Biographies* (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1870), 199.
- <sup>34</sup> Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', 246.
- <sup>35</sup> Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, 174-175.
- <sup>36</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910; Report of Commission III, Education in Relation to the Christianization of National Life*, 20.
- <sup>37</sup> Sanjay Seth, 'Secular Enlightenment and Christian Conversion: Missionaries and Education in Colonial India', *Education and Social Change in South Asia*, [http://www.ilng.in/pdf/educ\\_soc.pdf](http://www.ilng.in/pdf/educ_soc.pdf), 30.
- <sup>38</sup> Julius Richter, *A History of Missions in India*, 175.
- <sup>39</sup> W.H.T. Gairdner, "Edinburgh 1910" *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (Edinburgh; Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 122.
- <sup>40</sup> English language was considered to be an influential means to get a job and enter 'the emerging colonial public sphere of courts, local and provincial councils, and the like'. Sanjay Seth, 'Which Good Book? Missionary Education and Conversion in Colonial India', 119.
- <sup>41</sup> Robert Clark, an eminent missionary of Church Missionary Society, described it as, "the Gospel is carried by the pupils into families, where otherwise it would hardly gain access; and it is very much through the means of our heathen pupils in mission schools, that prejudice becomes disarmed, the native mind becomes accustomed to contact with Christianity, and many of the indirect blessings of holy religion are gradually conferred on the people." *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference held at Lahore in December and January, 1862-63*, 44.

- <sup>42</sup> Sanjay Seth, 'Which Good Book? Missionary Education and Conversion in Colonial India', 119.
- <sup>43</sup> Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Policies on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India* (London: Curzon Press, 1980), 28.
- <sup>44</sup> Richard Lovett, M. A, *The History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, 6.
- <sup>45</sup> T.F. Middleton, cited in Sanjay Seth, 'Secular Enlightenment and Christian Conversion: Missionaries and Education in Colonial India', 30.
- <sup>46</sup> Rev. Dr. D. O. Allen, cited in Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Students' History of Education in India (1800-1947)*, 32.
- <sup>47</sup> Leslie A. Flemming, 'New Models, New Roles: U.S. Presbyterian Women Missionaries and Social Change in North India, 1870-1910', in *Woman's Work for Woman: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia*, ed. Leslie A. Flemming (1989), 3.
- <sup>48</sup> P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia*, 42.
- <sup>49</sup> Christensen and Hutchison, cited in Ruth Compton Brouwer, 'Opening Doors Through Social Service: Aspects of Women's Work in the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in Central India, 1877-1914', in Leslie A. Flemming *Woman's Work for Woman: Missionaries and Social Change in Asia*, 35-57.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.
- <sup>51</sup> Rev. N.G. Clark "High Christian Education as a missionary agency" in *Report of the Centenary Conference on Protestant Missions of the World held in Exeter Hall (June 9<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>) London 1888* ed. James Johnston, II (London: James Nisbet & Co, 1889), 185. Cited in Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', 255.
- <sup>52</sup> M.A. Sherring, *The History of Protestant Missions in India* (London: Trubner and Co. 1875), 75.
- <sup>53</sup> Eugene Stock, *The History of Church Missionary society, its Environment, its Men and its Work*, II, (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899), 393.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 402.
- <sup>55</sup> Richard Lovett, *the History of the London Missionary Society 1795-1895*, 257-258.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.
- <sup>57</sup> W.H.T. Gairdner, "Edinburgh 1910" *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference*, 114-115.
- <sup>58</sup> *World Missionary Conference, 1910; Report of Commission III, Education in Relation to the Christianization of National Life*, 18.
- <sup>59</sup> R.K. Ghai, 'Christian Conversion in the Punjab: A Critical Analysis (1849-1914 A.D.)', *Proceedings of Punjab History Conference*, 17<sup>th</sup> Session (October, 8-10, 1982), 181-183.
- <sup>60</sup> The native Christian were given priority over the other religious communities while filling the teaching vacancies at missionary schools, *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference, 1862-63*, 40-45.
- <sup>61</sup> Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *A Students' History of Education in India (1800-1947)*, 32-33.

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<sup>62</sup>Iftikhar Haider Malik, 'The American Missionaries in South Asia, 1812-1870', *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, XIX: 3, (1982), 29.

<sup>63</sup> Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', 264-265.

<sup>64</sup> P.D. Devanandan, *Christian Issues in Southern Asia*, 41.

<sup>65</sup> C.W. Foreman, 'Schools; How can They be Made in the Highest Degree Auxiliary to the Work of Evangelizing the Country', *Report of the Punjab Missionary Conference, 1862-63*, 35.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 34

<sup>67</sup> Sanjay Seth, 'Which Good Book? Missionary Education and Conversion in Colonial India', 120.

<sup>68</sup> In fact, India was regarded as Hindu in character and its religious beliefs and practices were considered to affect the evangelicals with a deep revulsion. Therefore, most of the missionaries' energies were spent on the plans to draw the Hindu population in the Christian fold. Avril A. Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1993), 81.

<sup>69</sup> Rev. Professor Robertson, 'the education of the young as a regular part of mission work' *Report II 1888*, 194, cited in Steve Bishop, 'Protestant Missionary Education in British India', 264.

<sup>70</sup> In his reply to bishop Tait, John Lawrence, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, said, "It is not possible to introduce Western learning and science into India without leading its people to throw their faith." Cited in Eugene Stock, *The History of Church Missionary Society, its Environment, its Men and its Work*, 231.