

**EDUCATION AND
STATESMANSHIP IN
INDIA, 1797 TO 1910**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649500888

Education and Statesmanship in India, 1797 to 1910 by H. R. James

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BY
H. R. JAMES

M.A., CH. CH., OXFORD, INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE



SECOND EDITION

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS

1917

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Six years have passed since these papers were printed in book form, three years of eventful peace, three of a war which has involved the British Empire in every quarter of the globe, and tested the bands, spiritual and material, which hold that vast commonwealth together. In December, 1911, came the King's visit to India; in February, 1913, a fresh declaration of educational policy; in 1914 the great war. The war has been a test, and it may reasonably be claimed a complete vindication, of the main thesis of this book. A system which has shown its results in such splendid loyalty and munificence and valour at a time of supreme crisis—results not to be paralleled in the world's history—*cannot* have been mistaken. The educational system is, indeed, only a part of the whole, but it is a considerable part.

This has been one result of the war as it affects education in India. Another has been to check and postpone for the time being the extensive plans which in July, 1914, were being worked out on lines sketched anew in the Government Resolution of 1913. The resolution, which is informed throughout by intimate familiarity with educational principles, modifies and expands in points of detail, but in the main re-affirms, the great declarations of policy of 1854 and 1904.

In January, 1912, the King had said: "It is my wish that there may be spread over the land a network of schools and colleges, from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and agriculture and all the vocations in life. And it is my wish, too, that the homes of my Indian subjects may

be brightened and their labour sweetened by the spread of knowledge with all that follows in its train, a higher level of thought, of comfort, and of health. It is through education that my wish will be fulfilled, and the cause of education in India will ever be close to my heart."

These royal words are recited in the first lines of the Government resolution, and are its keynote. There is to be a notable expansion of Primary education, a well-considered reconstruction and improvement of High School education, a new movement for the foundation of universities designed on the teaching and resident model, as contrasted with the existing affiliating universities. Schemes for such universities at Dacca and Patna were rapidly nearing completion by July, 1914, as well as the much-discussed universities at Benares and Aligarh; and further schemes for universities at Nagpore and Rangoon were taking shape. A great impulse was to be given to co-ordination in Technical education. Medical education, legal education, agricultural education, commercial education, as well as forestry, veterinary institutions and schools of art, were receiving careful attention. Oriental studies were to be specially encouraged with a view to the preservation of the ancient learning. In the forefront the resolution had set "the formation of character," in its rightful place as the guiding aim of the educational system; and in relation to this there were liberal grants for more hostels, and there was to be increased effort in the training of teachers. Much of this great work has of necessity been suspended since August, 1914; but it will go forward with the return of peace.

On the other hand, when peace is restored and the beneficent works of peace go forward again, the need of right understanding of educational problems in India will be greater than ever. The demand of the hour is clearly for more and more education. *Too much* cannot

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be given in response to this demand. But more than ever is it vital to pay careful regard to the kind and quality of the education given. A great readjustment has to be made, of which we only imperfectly comprehend the conditions. It is only by means of the moderation, good sense and loyalty which right education can give that the difficult era of transition, on the brink of which we stand, can be entered upon with safety.

H. R. JAMES.

August 24th, 1917.

PREFACE

THE slightness of these papers, compared with the magnitude of the subject of which they treat, would have decided me against their separate publication, were it not possible, as I conceive, that even in their present shape, they may serve a useful purpose in helping to a better understanding, so necessary for sound judgment, of educational work in British India. I have at the same time some hope that what I have written may tend to hearten educational workers there, both those in the service of Government and those who are outside Government service, for the difficult and often disappointing task on which they are engaged.

The papers appeared in the *Calcutta Statesman* in January, February, and March of this year, and are published with the concurrence of the proprietors. They are reprinted very nearly as they first appeared. A few corrections have been made, which were necessary, or seemed expedient.

H. R. JAMES.

June 27th, 1911.

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I

THE NEED FOR A REVIEW

THE recent formation of a separate branch of the Home Department of the Government of India to deal specially with education, has given new life to the contention that an entirely new departure is required in our system of education, and in Government policy in regard to it. The contention is not new, it is as old as the endeavour to educate at all in British India; for there were always two parties. It has been gaining strength and insistence for some years past; and the last four years with their painful record of murderous conspiracy and desperate outrage have added to the argument the coercive force of things done and suffered, so that it is not surprising, if any who knew educational work in India only by these supposed results, look askance at education itself. The expectation that Government intends on the inauguration of the new department not only to undertake large schemes for the co-ordination and extension of education but to initiate a fundamental change in educational policy, shows that we are, or may be, once more at a dividing of the ways. It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the gravity of such a crisis.

To comprehend the full significance of such a new departure as this expectation indicates, it is necessary to pause and look back; to turn away from the present results of three-quarters of a century of strenuous effort over the building up of an educational system, and go

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back to the beginning with a mind as open as possible to impartial judgment; to see what was the existing state of things when the obligation to educate was first spoken of; to see why in India it was spoken of at all as a concern for Government; why this was attempted and not that, and how step by step we have come to what we all see and many deplore, at the present time. We shall then be in a position to say with some assurance (for we must inevitably carry into our retrospect the knowledge and foresight which the present gives) whether mistakes have been made, and where, and when, and so come with greater sureness to a consideration of how at this date to rectify what has been done wrongly. Without such preliminary discipline we are only too likely to blunder out of one error into another and add to folly, if folly there has been, too precipitate a repentance. It will be for some of us a dismal result, if we have to confess that we have been wrong from the beginning; that we never should have attempted to introduce into India knowledge, as knowledge has been understood in Europe since the time of Descartes and Bacon; that we never should have founded universities; never have encouraged the study of English literature and European science; that we should have held fast to traditional learning and pre-Copernican science, and have based any more popular education which there was scope for strictly on the vernaculars; that it was bad policy, and folly little short of a crime, to introduce the races and peoples of Hindustan to the heights and depths of Western speculation, and to the principles that underlie discovery in natural science. It will be a dismal result; but if it is true, the conclusion must be faced practically, and all well-wishers of education must join the Government of India (if the decision of the Government of India is to lead the way in such reform) in retracing the steps that