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CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES & ENGLISH EDUCATION IN J & K STATE: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

English Language evolved successfully after standing strong against the tough trials and tests of time. The major cause behind its unparalleled success and wide spread across the world is its association with and patronage of the British Empire which itself emerged as the strongest colonial power and this undoubtedly gave English language an edge over the rest languages of the world. It crossed the British channel way back and is no more a colonial jargon of 'authority', 'self' or the 'other' for it has now become a global *lingua franca* and the status symbol of the upper classes of the society. In fact, it has now earned an indispensable position in all walks of life and hence our lives revolve primarily around this language for it symbolizes better education, brighter future, better culture and higher intellect.

Like other parts of India, it is said that the arrival of Christian missionaries has heavily contributed in exposing the people the J & K state to English language. The present paper raises a good number of such queries as how this language got birth here i.e., how it was introduced to the people of the Jammu and Kashmir state. Have English missionaries played any significant role or not? Did they suffer while making Kashmiries to master this Master's language or it was an easy task for them?

Key Words: Christian missionaries, missionary institutes, English language, drastic changes & great contribution

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Main Argument

History witnesses that Christian missionaries carried out their missionary works across the world for spreading the true message of Jesus Christ and India too constituted a very significant part of their missionary project. They initially started their activities by extending help to the destitute through health sector and later through English Education. This resulted in developing and producing such a lot of people who would be apparently Indians but in taste

and tolerance English. Like other parts of India, these missions did find an easy passage to enter into the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir as well. We must not forget the fact that when Christian Missionaries were first attracted to Kashmir, it was passing through a chaotic era and needed immediate rehabilitation. In this regard, Tyndale Biscoe rightly observes:

Kashmir has been conquered and reconquered by the invaders who had murdered, oppressed, and enslaved their

ancestors and so ground the life and heart out of them that their better selves have been crushed. (Biscoe 2005:79 – 80)

It was the aforesaid pathetic plight of the people and the evils of maladministration that prompted finally Lieutenant Robert Throp not only to write to the Indian Government about the sufferings of people in Kashmir but also to the papers in England, but to his bad-luck, it only earned him the hatred of the local government. He was forced immediately to leave Kashmir. He sacrificed his life for Kashmiris in the year 1867. When Christian missionaries arrived in Kashmir, they knew the condition of people was highly pathetic and pitiable at the same time. They knew their proselytizing operations would not easily thwart in this troubled region of the country. The missionaries were now fully determined to establish a Christian Missionary Centre in Kashmir. They knew the local people were illiterate and ignorant and could be easily exploited. In his book *Biscoe in Kashmir*, Shafi Ahmad Qadri writes:

Missionaries believed the people of Kashmir would be converted easily as they had first converted from Hinduism to Buddhism and vice versa and finally to Islam in 14th century. These missionaries knew the deplorable condition of the people of Kashmir, their mass illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, disease, and how they were oppressed and tortured. (Qadri 1998:21)

Though the primary aim of setting up a Christian Missionary Centre was to proselytize the people of Kashmir yet the missionaries did not start with proselytizing immediately after their arrival. They knew Kashmir was the best place to launch their cherished mission. Qadri quotes Robert Clark, a leading agent of Christian Missionary Society, in his book, *Biscoe in Kashmir*:

The valley is remarkably fit by its geographical position, by its pleasant climate and by its beauty and fertility to become a useful Christian missionary Centre for the vast countries of Tibet, China, Yaqand, Afghanistan, and Turkistan. (Qadri 1998:22)

Initially, the mission of the CMS started with the medical work. The CMS selected Dr. Elmslie as the first medical missionary to visit Kashmir. Dr. Elmslie arrived in Srinagar in the spring of 1864. Dr. Elmslie had to face many difficulties as he had no hospital or any other place to help his patients. Tyndale Biscoe pens down in his book *Kashmir in sunlight and Shade* that Dr. Elmslie performed his operations under the trees. Besides this move of the mission was not appreciated or supported by the Maharajah. He deployed soldiers at many places to keep people away from consulting Dr. Elmslie. Those who disobeyed the orders were severely punished and imprisoned. Walter R Lawrance was all encomiastic of Elmslie's courage. In this regard, he remarks:

Opposed, despised, and prosecuted, these good men (missionaries) stuck bravely to their work, and the small and almost hopeless beginning made in 1865 by Dr. Elmslie, without a habitation and without friends, has grown into a well equipped force which plays a civilizing part in the lives of the people. (Lawrence 2012: 200)

Dr. Elmslie stayed for eight years and died in 1872 when he was on his way back to Delhi. After his demise, the CMS sent Dr. Theodore Maxwell to continue the medical mission in Kashmir but he left Kashmir due to his ill health in 1876. It was in the same year that the famous surgeon Dr. Edmund Downes arrived in Kashmir. During his stay, a terrible famine attacked Kashmir resulting in countless deaths. Dr. Downes worked tooth and nail and saved hundreds of lives. He also wrote to the Indian Government for help. Rev. T. R. Wade also worked with him. They set up an orphanage for the orphans and an asylum for the destitute women and in various ways did their best to alleviate the sufferings of the stricken. After Downes, the medical work was continued by Dr. Arthur Neve who came to Kashmir in the year 1880 and was joined by his brother Dr. Ernest Neve four years later. Mr. Rias Akhtar, the emeritus scientist, in his essay "Arthur Neve (1859-1919) and a Mission Hospital, Kashmir", *Journal of Medical Biography*, Vol. 19, states that the Neve brothers were thronged by patients

from even distant Himalayas. He wrote that the presence of the life-threatening diseases and the deplorable economic conditions presented a dreary view. He writes in his essay:

Poor economic conditions and insanitary and unhygienic living conditions present an environment conducive to disease. Various infectious diseases and Kangri-burn cancer (specific to the region) were widely prevalent in Kashmir.

The Neve brothers worked hard to fulfill their vision of a fine up-to-date hospital with every necessary scientific appliance. Apart from treating their patients, the doctors held the lessons on teachings of the Bible in wards of the hospital. As time passed, the number of patients visiting the Mission Hospital increased by leaps and bounds. Walter R Lawrence writes in his *Valley of Kashmir*:

At the beginning of 1902 this (Mission Hospital) had 76 patients, and 69 others were admitted during the year. In the same year, the medical mission treated 14515 out-patients and 1151 in-patients, paid 36969 visits, and performed 3,147 operations. (Lawrence 2012: 200)

The works of medical mission continued after Neve Brothers despite the still opposition from the Maharajah and the people of Kashmir. The Missionaries 'ignored the excuses of the Maharajah [and] knew that the bogey of fanaticism on the part of the masses had no base'. (Hussnain 2009:118)

Regarding education of Kashmiries, we know that missionaries brought about a drastic change in the traditional educational system. When they arrived in Kashmir, Qadri remarks:

The upper and middle class people were educated in *Pathshalas* and *Maktabs* run by *Moulvis* and *Pandits*. The opening of CMS School was a red-letter day in the history of Kashmir. It brought a new era by imparting scientific education on modern lines. (Qadri1998: 25)

The history of missionary education begins with the arrival of Robert Clark in 1864. Unlike his wife, Mrs.

Elizabeth who accompanied him during his visit to Kashmir, Clark was not much interested in medical work. While Elizabeth started as a medical missionary, Robert Clark started as a teacher. Initially, they started with a dispensary at Srinagar where Elizabeth alone treated hundreds of patients. On the other hand, despite obstruction and strong antagonism, Robert Clark managed to open a school in Srinagar. As the crisis escalated, Qadri writes:

The Governor informed the Resident that the majority of the people in the valley were ignorant and fanatic Muslims, the presence of Christian Missionaries would create trouble, and the people would revolt. He wanted the Resident to dissuade the missionaries from entering Kashmir. (Qadri 1998: 22-23)

The Missionaries, on the other hand, knew that the masses of Kashmir were still living in dark ages and were firmly resolved to reform the education system of Kashmir and thereby improve them and their miserable plight. In those days, as Tyndale Biscoe rightly observes:

The indigenous schools of Kashmir had always been in connection with the mosques, where the boys [were] taught to read Arabic so that they [might] be able to read the Koran, but not necessarily to understand it. Likewise the Brahmins [had] their schools, where Sanskrit [was] taught so that the boys [might] be able to read the sacred Hindu books. (Biscoe 1987: 253)

Robert Clark's school was almost a failure. The parents hesitated and were wary to send their wards to this school for it could have only earned them the displeasure and bad blood of the whole community. Those who sent their children to his institute were even threatened by the authorities. In fact, there were wide spread protests against the school and the effigies of Mr. Clark were burnt by the local priests and this made him to leave Srinagar in 1868. However, his dream of establishing a missionary school did not end or perish. The missionaries who followed him afterwards were not allowed to rent a building or a house for school purposes. This compelled them to

launch a school in the CMS Hospital at Drugjan with just four or five students. Mr. Knowles, the first person responsible for disseminating education on the Western pattern in Kashmir, was the principal of this school in 1880. At Drugjan, Srinagar, Mr. Knowles taught in a small cluster of mud huts where students complained of inconvenience and discomfort. Realizing that the huts were not comfortable, a building was hired at Sheikh Bagh for the school. It was in 1890, when the Government allowed the school to hire a building which was a merchant's house, near Fateh Kadal, Srinagar. During all this activity the number of students increased from 200 to 300. Rev. J. H. Knowles worked hard to dig the foundations of this school. It was also during his time that a 'great body of Kashmiri teachers, who worked most loyally and cheerfully' (Qadri 1987:260) with their European fellow workers at this school, Mr. Knowles was also assisted by Miss Helen Burges, the first European lady to establish kindergarten.

Rev. Knowles' contribution in education and development of English language is not only interesting but unarguably outstanding. His unflinching character and untiring zeal assured the possibilities of English Language learning among the people of Kashmir. He loved to teach English language to local people. In his book, Qadri mentions:

Knowles was man of indomitable courage and scientific planning. He introduced the teaching of English against stiff opposition. He took the personal interest in the children being taught in English: This continues to be a noteworthy feature of the Mission School. (Qadri 2003: 6)

Apart from his hard work, resilience and indefatigable perseverance, Rev. Knowles was a scholarly person. Eric Biscoe pens down:

Although the arrival of the Rev. J Hinton Knowles in 1880 really marks the foundation of the school, the Rev. J. S. Doxey had got together five boys to whom he imparted instructions. He taught them elementary Science in his own house, and also in a room set aside by Dr Edmund Downes in the

hospital. He used to take the boys for walks with him and explain to them the movements of the solar system and at night time teach them about the stars. While supervising building operation in the hospital compound, he was able to give them practical lessons in mathematics. About two years later he left Kashmir, and the Rev. J. H. Knowles, with this nucleus, started the school. (Biscoe 1930: 1)

Knowles thoroughly even read and learnt Kashmiri language, literature, and culture. His two seminal works – *A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings* and *Folktales of Kashmir* – are still read with great enthusiasm and continue to appeal folks from all walks of life in Kashmir. Rev. Knowles noble mission was continued by Rev. C. Tyndale Biscoe, who visited Kashmir in December 1891.

Rev. Biscoe's contribution in the development of 'all-round education' in Kashmir is marvelous in all respects. He worked hard to annihilate the social evils that were common in Kashmiri society in the latter half of the 19th century. With the help of police, Rev. Biscoe fought all these evils one by one. He brought some noteworthy changes in the local education system. Apart from giving lessons on moral values and the principle of selfless living, Rev. Biscoe also taught his students the importance of different games in life.

Dr. Shakeel Ur Rehman, a pass out from Tyndale Biscoe of the year 1989, presently a doctor and the owner of the New City Hospital, Srinagar talks about how the pedagogy of the School is different from other schools. He said:

During my school days, I was treated odd one out among cousins as I was in the missionary school and I was the only one who was able to talk to father's colleagues fluently at functions and I was also able to host seminars, debates, symposiums, etc., at school, district and national level.

During my medical studies outside the valley I was among the few who were able to participate in discussions and workshops held by the international communities in the medical health.

He generously praised that it was during his school days that he learnt the techniques to overcome shyness and laziness and thanked his teachers who taught him those days. (Dr. Shakeel Ur Rehman. Personal interview. 25 January, 2015)

Unlike any other C.M.S School teacher, Rev. Biscoe won the confidence of people and opened a number of C.M.S. branches without much resistance from people. He also helped the people of Kashmir during hard times of epidemics, flood, cholera, malaria and draughts.

The education of girls was very far behind than that of the boys in Kashmir. It was in 1894 that the first C.M.S. Girls' School was established in Srinagar. Tyndale Biscoe maintains that 'it was of course by no means popular, as it shocked the prejudices of all proper-thinking folk in Srinagar' (Qadri 1987:257).

The School continued for some time and then the locals were afraid that the missionaries had come to kidnap their girls and with the result, the school was closed. After some time the school was reopened, and this time it was attached to the Srinagar C.M.S High School. Meanwhile Miss Coverdale, a member of the Christian Missionary Society, started a girls' school at Islamabad, Kashmir. Tyndale Biscoe says that the number of girls at this school was one hundred and all of them were 'very devoted to her (Miss Coverdale), which no wonder considering the love and care that was shown 'by her' towards and for them'. The notable women missionaries who served at the C.M.S. Girls' School include Miss E. G. Hull, Miss Gomery, Miss Fitze and Miss Mallinson. It was their dedication and devotion towards the cause of girls' education that a new era of women's education dawned in the valley. Khan writes:

The CMS Girls' School underwent a radical transformation during the period that Miss Mallinson was the principal (1922 – 1961). It can hardly be over emphasized that it was Miss Mallinson who was instrumental in bringing about enough educational and cultural advancement among the women of Srinagar. (Khan1978:169)

The school run by Miss Mallinson is still working and is located currently at Sheikh Bagh. It has done a tremendous service by uplifting the womenfolk of the valley to newer heights and excellence in terms of proving their worth and mettle as great and efficient.

The Saint Joseph School was started in 1903 by Father Brauer, a Roman Catholic missionary, and J. P. Boland, a teacher at Baramullah. It even today serves the people particularly of North Kashmir. The successful launch of the St. Joseph's school at Baramulla strengthened the Missionaries (Mill Hill Missionaries i.e., Catholic Missionaries) to start another institute at Srinagar. For this purpose, Fr. Thijssen and Fr. S. Jong in 1942 rented a house at Lal Chowk, opposite Pratap Park, Srinagar. In this regard, the school souvenir 2006 on page 11 quotes:

Fr Thijssen and Fr. Jong came to Srinagar in 1942 and rented a home from Mr Mirza at hotel road (now Moulana Azad Road) Srinagar. The building which housed the first Burn Hall School is at present the Teachers' Training College.

The true history behind the origin of this institute is that it was the outcome of the shift of the Senior Cambridge classes, which were conducted otherwise at St Joseph's School, Baramulla, to Srinagar. Similarly, the history of the Presentation Convent Srinagar begins with Maharaja Hari Singh's imploring the then church Head of Kashmir to implore the Presentation Sisters of Rawalpindi to launch a school here in Srinagar. They acceded to the request and three sisters – Mother M. Peter Conway, Sr. M. Annunciata and Sr. Xavier – came here and rented a bungalow at Boulevard Srinagar adjacent to pleasant world famous Dal Lake and opened a school which they named as Presentation Convent. They made it operational on the 17th of March, 1936 but in the beginning, the students were foreigners only especially Britishers residing in Srinagar. According to Satish Munshi, a Kashmiri migrant, currently Coordinator at Alexander Memorial School, Idd Gah Road, Jammu:

This school was almaters of Maharaja Hari Singh's son as well and all teachers then were

Europeans only. It had in the beginning mostly children of European family, on its rolls, who were residing in Srinagar. Those who joined it were very lucky for they had true English ambience around them throughout. Hence, catching or picking the language was very easy. (Satish Munshi. Personal Interview. 6 February, 2015)

The number of the local students was initially very less but it grew with the passing of time and a patch of land was rented on the beautiful banks of River Jhelum where a fresh building was constructed and later was thrown open on the 9th of June, 1939 by Maharaja Hari Singh himself. It was in 1947 that the school was closed for some months due to the political disturbance and the partition seconded by the tribal invasions. However, it was soon restarted and by 1964, the number of students reached 800. Unfortunately, in 1965, a devastating fire razed down literary the whole new structure to ashes and as such the school was made functional in a three storeyed youth hostel by the Government. The Government came to its rescue and extended help in rebuilding a fresh structure on the devastated site. Since then the school has grown heavily and has emerged as the best centre of education for girls. Today, it is senior secondary institute and has dedicated itself fully towards the spread of English education across the state especially in the valley.

In a personal interview, the present principal of the presentation Convent, Srinagar, Sr. Phyllis said:

We emphasize on the motto i.e., "Dignity and Labor". I, prior joining Srinagar Convent, served the Presentation Convent, Jammu and followed the same motto. I know how it was set up before independence in 1936 by three sisters from Pakistan. It was a co-educational missionary school earlier and later was made a girls' institute. Here, the art of teaching is different from others which makes it a special school in the whole valley. Few things are to be kept in mind like vision, commitment and dedication. The PCHS lays emphasis on the deliverance of curriculum differently and

claims to be different from the rest of the missionary and the non-missionary schools. We engage specially trained teachers especially for English language teaching. Here, speaking in English is mandatory from the very beginning and students have to communicate with one another and even with the teachers in the same language and in fact the remedial teaching is provided to the slow learners and shy students.

Methodology or pedagogy used is different at different levels for learning English as language. The school uses play way method in lower classes and interactive and participative methodology at elementary and high school levels. I appreciate the teachers of my institute who use innovative techniques of learning English language viz., dramatization, skits and dialogue methods. Proper ICT (information computer technology) is also used for this purpose. I know about the pass outs and their achievements as they are serving the community today in various capacities such as doctors, teachers, banking officials or associates, engineers, lawyers, and administrative officers.

I feel proud of their achievement and confidence in and outside the state. Today, I believe that it is the language given by the school to its pass outs which has enhanced their confidence and growth chances. For the last twenty years, it has been seen that 30 to 40% doctors of the state are from the PCHS and 10 to 15% are also well placed in the main administration of the state. (Sr. Phyllis. Personal Interview. 11 December, 2014)

The history of Christian Missions in Jammu begins with the advent of the Protestant Scottish missionaries, who were associated with the Church of Scotland, in the mid 18th century. Before their arrival in Jammu, they had already established their mission stations in the border areas of Sialkot, which is now in Pakistan. Due to close geographical proximity between Jammu and Sialkot, the missionaries desired to establish a

mission station at Jammu. The first known member of the Church of Scotland, who travelled from Sialkot to Jammu in 1862, was Waris Mesih. He was a devout Christian. After his arrival in Jammu, he worked strenuously to preach the doctrine of Christianity. He addressed many gatherings and distributed the copies of the Bible among the local people. The people were mostly backward, ignorant, and illiterate, started to look at him with hate and suspicion for they could read his intentions. As the resentment was wide spread now, Waris Mesih was arrested by the police. It was only with the intervention of Rev. Robert Paterson, another member of the Church of Scotland, that Waris Mesih was exonerated from the prison. In her essay "Dawn of Christianity in Jammu and St. Garrison Church" published in daily *the Himalayan Mail*, Swati Sharma maintains:

Fifteen years after Waris preached in Jammu, the missionaries of the Church of Scotland were formally invited by the State Durbar of Jammu to open schools in Jammu.

In 1880's, Catholic of Punjab migrated to Jammu in large numbers for better off life conditions. Their continual presence in Jammu highly affected social, cultural and educational structure of Jammu Society. Swati Sharma writes in her essay:

.... In 1880's, when rapid evangelization was going on in Punjab, Lahore and Wazirabad, the vicariate of Punjab came into being. Jammu Catholics are the direct result of the rapid influence of the examples of love and sacrifices which were exhibited by the missionaries who came here with the mission of evangelization. Marginalized Catholics of Punjab started migrating to Jammu for better life options. Since the Jammu Catholics are essentially Punjabi migrants, the social and cultural outlook of the Catholics in Jammu is Punjabi in nature.

In the field of education, the missionaries in Jammu had no ground breaking achievement to their credit until the arrival of Msgr. George Shanks and Father Boerkamp in 1952. Msgr. George Shanks, the first apostolic prefect of Jammu and Kashmir, was anxious

to amplify his missionary prospects beyond Kashmir Valley. Swati Sharma mentions in her essay that he was 'prompted by the miniscule population of the Catholics of Jammu to be the first priest of Jammu Region'. During Msgr. George Shanks' stay at Baba Jivan Shah locality at Shahidi Chowk, he was deeply dejected by the deplorable condition of the children. He promptly made his mind to establish a school in this locality. He informed the sisters of the Presentation Convent at Srinagar about the condition of the benighted children and the urgency of the establishment of a school. Meanwhile Father Boerkamp and Lt. Col. Dean joined these missionary forces in 1952 and requested the then Hon'ble Chief Minister, Sheikh Abdullah, for a piece of land in order to build a Convent School. Father Boerkamp looked after the Catholics scattered in different parts of Jammu. He rented a house near Kashmiri Mohalla, Baba Jivan Shah and stayed there for 2 years. It was from the same house that St. Peters' School originated in 1952. Initially, it was an Urdu Medium School and only those Catholic Students were admitted who were denied admission elsewhere in Jammu City. In 1954, Father Boerkamp bought a banglow at B. C. Road Jammu and began an English Medium School there with the help of the Presentation Sisters. In 1964, the Presentation Sisters shifted the school, now popularly known as Presentation Convent Senior Secondary School, to the new venue in Gandhi Nagar, where as B.C. Road School continued to function as St. Peters's. The School changed its medium of instruction from Urdu to English in 1984 and in 1987; it was recognized as a High School by the State Government.

The Presentation Convent School has highly influenced and still continues to affect the system of education in Jammu. In April 1954, when the school started, the role of students was 170, and in 1957, the number swelled to 333. In the same year, the school was granted recognition for three years, which was subsequently extended by three more years. As the rolls continued to swell, the school was granted 5 acres of more land in 1962, and in 1964, when the school was shifted to Gandhi Nagar, 5 more acres of land were sanctioned in favour of the school by the then

honourable Chief Minister, Mr. G. M. Sadiq. The fame of this institution spread like forest fire throughout the city of Jammu. In the year 1971, the number of Students increased to 1175 and the staff swelled to 36. Presently, the school continues to be a success. Many students from this institution have dazzled in diverse fields of human endeavour. The School strictly adheres to the principle as laid down by the foundress of the congregation of Presentation Sisters, Nano Nagle, that education is a powerful means of transforming society. In the Spirit of Nano Nagle, the school, presently, enables its students to discover the treasure of 'Being' within themselves and inspires them to God-centered and sociable life. The school is funded by the local Government and several societies across the world. The School still continues brilliantly, with its invaluable contributions to the field of education.

One of the past alumni and presently a staff member of the Presentation Convent Senior Secondary School, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, Ms Poonam Kotwal, who has now been serving this esteemed institute for the last 32 years, turned nostalgic and stated:

She has evolved with the institute which has made her what she is today, a highly honoured respectable teacher whose students are spread across the world in all walks of life – doctors, engineers, police officers, bureaucrats, professors, businessmen, etcetera. She is proud of both her institute and the pass outs of her institute who have proved their mettle in and outside the state and the country. (Poonam Kotwal. Personal Interview. 8 February, 2015)

While asking about the development of English Language Skills among the students within the school premises, she said:

From primary classes, in addition to regular English text books, we expose our students to additional assignments and supplementary materials such as providing them with abridged literary texts such as *Great Expectations*, *David Copperfield*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, etc. Further, students are regularly made to

participate in class interactions, group discussions, class seminars, debates, writing competitions, and declamation contests in order to equip them with the linguistic competence and thereby develop a strong taste of English culture and language among the students of our institute.

She further stated:

When we teach a class, no matter what we teach, creation of meaning and the resourcefulness of the teacher play a major role. Prose or poems are authentic texts, unlike constructed sentences we use while teaching grammar. Poetry is particularly the natural spring versus distilled water. It is more enticing than a few monotonous constructed sentences. The teacher reduces the anxiety by starting with known signals. Visual images are provided to support the teaching of language items. The examples given in the text or books are related to real life of the students. Loud reading supports in understanding and conditioning their ears to their speech in English. Lessons are planned in such a way that the primary focus remains language. Modelled talk and role play are built within the classroom. Right from the 9th standard, students are given tasks to write prose pieces with the help of teachers as guides. Self-help exercises like referring to a dictionary, a grammar book are developed in the students right from 8th standard onwards. In addition to this all, right from the primary classes, students are encouraged to learn sharing with other members of groups constituted by their teachers in the class for discussion or interaction.

The Alexander Memorial School, located in the heart of Jammu city and is adjacent to the famous Eid Gah near Sher-i-Kashmir Bhawan on famous Residency Road, was founded by the Scottish Missionaries – Dr.Youngson and Rev.Paterson – in 1892 as an Anglo-Vernacular institute. It was later upgraded up to the 8th standard in 1914 and was commonly known as Scott

Mission School. It was under the dynamic leadership of Rt.Rev. Aziz William that the school became a High school in 1957 and is even currently a co-educational institute. It falls under the control of the church of North India and is governed through the Diocese of Amritsar. The bishop of the Diocese is the chairman of the Board of Management. The school remains very selective about employing teachers into the classes or school premises. It has currently highly veteran, qualified and devoted staff which has truly made it more progressive and modern in its mission and outlook. It is 123 years old and has been serving the people of Jammu over these years successfully. The Cowie Hall of the school is a historical church built in 1911 and serves the purpose of an auditorium also. It has also a well-roofed hall with an adjacent greenroom and a permanent stage cum podium to conduct morning assembly, to stage short skits and musical concerts, etc. The school prospectus reveals that:

We firmly believe that each student is definitely gifted with some innate talent. Our first and foremost job is to spot and identify that latent and then to nourish and groom it so that it reaches a recognizable stature. We teach our students to be self-confident ...to have perseverance, to withstand setbacks and to develop a healthy spirit of competition and even to take defeat in a sporting manner. We try to protect the individual uniqueness and personality of each child-of those who are gregarious and of those who are reticent and less expressive; of those who are born stars in some particular field or of those who are great at everything and are all rounders. (Alexander Memorial School Prospectus, 2015)

After visiting the school and interacting with the teachers and a few officials of the administration, it was found that it lives up to the expectations and especially its motto i.e., Arise, Shine, Serve. The students are inculcated with human values such as hard work, kindness, courtesy, sincerity, piety, and courage. It has a well – stocked library which has a huge number of books particularly on English

Language. Mr Satish Munshi, ex-teacher of Burn Hall and present Coordinator of Alexander Memorial School, said:

To me a teacher is a combination of three things chalk, walk, and talk. I also believe that teaching is not like the priest's preaching at the pulpit but it is the way a tailor sits. You know, I served Burn Hall, Srinagar where I got chance to work with great missionary teachers. After migration, I served initially St. Peter's School and Presentation Convent, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu. I have now been serving Alexander Memorial since 1996. I have huge experience on my back as a teacher and now as a coordinator of this institute. I remember an occasion when I was a teacher at Burn Hall Srinagar. Rev. Fr. Mackmohan, the then Principal of Burn Hall School, asked me to engage his class though he himself was free. On return, I, after mustering courage, asked him why he didn't go himself to class. He took me along, offered me a cup of tea and replied that yesternight one of my friends from the PG Department of English of the University had come to see him and stayed till late night discussing Shakespearean drama and thus he couldn't prepare for the 7th Class English period. This was the reason why he didn't go himself. It was an eye opener and made me understand that a teacher should be first a great learner. (Satish Munshi. Personal Interview. 7 February, 2015)

He further said:

I remember how English missionary teachers would stoop down to the level of students in order to make things clear, easy and understandable for their students. I also remember how we develop English language among our students by exposing them to regular debates, competitions, declamation, group discussions, etc. We have made it a must that students should speak in English during school hours.

T.N. Koul who served Biscoe School, Srinagar, for a long time prior migration and taught English to students, currently teaches at Alexander Memorial School, Jammu and is known as a walking encyclopedia. He worked with many great foreigners at Biscoe School, Srinagar and knows a lot about better methods of teaching English language. He said:

In missionary schools like ours, students are made to speak in English especially within the school premises. They are made to read such language material and drills which improve their pronunciation and speech. Situations are created for compelling them to create their own discourses in English language alone. We make them to stage Shakespearean dramas especially on annual days; this also helps finally in honing their language skills. Right from day one, they are filled with such strength which finally produces them as great speakers of English. (T.N.Koul. Personal Interview, 7 February, 2015)

Ladakh is one of the world's largest and the highest plateaus located at 3000 meters (9800 ft.) above the sea level. Unfortunately, its educational system has not been strong, satisfactory, or pleasing. The education system of Ladakh was primarily based on the traditional systems, delineated by the monasteries. The children of far flung areas in Ladakh remained ignorant and benighted for a long time. The general penury, ignorance of parents and the complete dearth of schools and teachers are some other major causes responsible for their backwardness. In the first half of the 19th century, education was still confined to the monasteries. The lessons given in these monasteries by the Monks were mainly centered on 'the word of Buddha'. The conservative village people of Ladakh were still reluctant to send their children for the formal education. However, with the arrival of European travelers and missionaries, and their pioneering efforts in the field of medicine and education, the education system of Ladakh slowly started to show some positive signs of change. The Europeans especially the missionaries not only laid the foundation of education

on the Western pattern but also brought with them the more important thing that is English Language.

It was only between 1819 and 1822 that two Britishers namely William Moorcroft and George Trebeck came to Ladakh. Both of them were the employees of the (British) East India Company. There is mention of Moorcroft's stay at Ladakh in Parvez Dewans' book, *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh*. Dewan states:

In 1819, William Moorcroft, a veterinary surgeon employed by the (British) East India Company, happened to be in Ladakh. He was on his way to Yarqand, from where he was to purchase horses for the EIC. After a three year wait in Ladakh, he was denied to go to Yarqand. He used this time not only to record the history of Ladakh but also to influence it. (Dewan 2004: 76 -77)

During their halt at Ladakh, Moorcroft and Trebeck wrote a valuable account of the Himalayan Provinces. Their important work, "Travels in the Himalayan Provinces of Hindustan and the Punjab, 1837", (reprinted in 1971) is the first travelogue ever written about this region. It was around the same period that a Hungarian, Alexander Csoma, visited Ladakh. He was sought to explore the origins of Magyar language, one of the few in the Western and the Central Europe that are not Indo-Aryan.

After the Treaty of Amritsar (1846), there was a steady flow of the British Administrators in Ladakh. In 1847, a team on work, headed by Alexander Cunningham, demarcated the borders between Ladakh on the one hand and Tibet and Spiti on the other. Alexander recorded all this in his book titled *Ladakh: Physical, Statistical, and Historical with Notices of the Surrounding Countries, 1854* (reprinted in 1970).

The more important Maravian Mission that permanently affected the education system of Ladakh, and still continues, arrived in 1885. The mission established its Churches in Leh and Shey, and over the years many locals converted to Christianity. In his book, *Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh*, Parvez Dewan writes:

Almost all Christians in Ladakh belonged to the Moravian Church, even though the Jesuits had arrived almost three hundred years before. Perhaps Jesuits didn't try to proselytize, or may be they did not stay on long enough. (Dewan 2004: 84)

The members associated with this mission were not categorically denounced or bluntly disallowed to stay in Ladakh. Unlike the people of Kashmir of the same period, there were almost no communal feelings or religious contumacy among the Ladakhis. There were no wide spread agitations or any deep grounded public grudge against the missionaries. Janet Rizvi rightly observes:

Indeed, with a few exceptions communal feelings as experienced often so bitterly in other parts of India, has so far been conspicuous by its absence. This may in part be due to the fact that Buddhism seems to be a genuinely non-violent religion with no tradition of holy wars or religious persecution, so that where Buddhists are in majority they are content to live at peace with their non-Buddhist neighbours. (Rizvi 1983: 157)

It was the nonbelligerent and co-operative people of Ladakh that helped the Moravian Mission to flourish smoothly. In fact, the first two missionaries, associated with Moravian Mission, were Wilhelm Heyde and Eduard Pagell. Both of them arrived in Keylong (Lahoul Valley) in 1856. In Keylong, they are said to have cleaved the first pine trees to build a mission station, and it was from this station they had started their Tibetan or Himalayan Mission. Wilhelm Heyde frequently visited Ladakh in 1860s and 70s and made pioneering efforts to establish a mission station there. In August 1885, Rev. Redslob moved to Ladakh as the first resident missionary. In January 1887, Rev. Redslob started a small school originally in the bazaar and then moved to the mission compound where it was quiet and serene. In the same year, Dr. Karl Marx, not to be confused with the communist philosopher and the author of the *Communist Manifesto*, a fully equipped medical doctor, set up the Moravian dispensary in Leh. It was a pioneer milestone in the allopathic medicine in

Leh. During his visit to Ladakh, Walter R Lawrance was all praise for this mission. He said:

The Moravian Mission is an old and excellent institution, much appreciated by the people for its charity and devotion in times of sickness. The mission has a little hospital whither the Ladakhis, whose eyes suffer from the dustiness of the air and the confined life in the winter, flock in great numbers. (Lawrence 2012:162)

In its early years of establishment, the Moravian Mission School acquired the Government patronage. In 1889, the Kashmir Wazir (District Magistrate), Radha Kishan, issued an official edict that families with more than one child should send atleast one pupil to the mission school. The Wazir and the Government knew that the mission guaranteed altogether a new pattern of schooling and, therefore, encouraged the parents to send their wards to this school. Parvez Dewan writes in his book:

The Moravian Church and Hospital were setup in 1885, when Shive Saran was the Wazir. The number of Ladakhis who converted to Christianity and the physical size of the Church was small. It still is a very modest mission. However, its impact has been far reaching. It brought quality Western schooling to Ladakh. (It is no coincidence that the first two Ladakhi officers to join India's elite civil services, in the 1950's, were Christians from this Church and educated at its school. (Dewan 2004:84)

The missionaries mustered distinguished staff consisting of Theodor Schreve, Joseph Gregan, Dr. Karl Marx, and Samuel Joldan. They prepared a syllabus in which they included Tibetan, English, Urdu, Geography, Arithmetic, Nature Study and half an hour's voluntary study of the Bible. In 1900, there was total of 275 pupils on the rolls of Moravian Schools in Ladakh, Lahoul, Spiti, and Kinnaur. The Mission School not only influenced the poor but the elite class of Ladakh also appreciated their contribution, Janet Rizvi writes:

It (Moravian Mission) appealed here (Leh/Ladakh) not, as in many other parts of India, to the poor and downtrodden but to members of Leh's social elite, so that the Christian community is one of high standing in the town. (Rizvi1983:157)

Apart from proselytizing operations, medical missions, and dissemination of education on the Western pattern, the missionaries brought with them different vegetable seeds and the Western skills of baking and knitting, then unknown in Ladakh.

In 1909, the British Government sent a cultural mission under the supervision of Dr. A. H. Franke of the Moravian Mission Board to Ladakh. Franke was a polyglot. Apart from several Indian languages, he had a good command over Tibetan language. He is remembered today for his two famous works – *Antiquities of Indian Tibet* and the translation of the epic, *Kesar Saga*. Later in the century, on account of various internal and external reasons, the educational work of the Moravian Mission came to halt in Ladakh. China attacked Ladakh in latter half of the century; this checked the movement missionaries in Ladakh. Parvez Dewan rightly sums it up:

After the Chinese invasion of Ladakh in 1962, the movements of the foreigners in the region were severely restricted for the next twelve years. Later on Ladakh was thrown open to tourists. Along with the Western Tourists came writers and books of all sorts. (Dewan 2004:192)

It was only under the pioneering leadership of Nathaniel Batapa in the early 1980s that the Moravian School in Leh was re-opened. The school was recognized by the Government and upgraded at regular intervals. Presently, the school stands as the largest and one of the best schools among the rest academic institutions of Ladakh.

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