

MACAULAY'S MINUTE (1835)

Lord Macaulay landed in India on June 10, 1834 and was immediately appointed as president of General Committee of Public Instruction. Macaulay arrived in Madras on June 10, 1834, and proceeded to Ootacamund, Nilgiris, where the Governor General of India.

William Bentinck, was camping for the summer. Macaulay wrote of his initial experience as follows, "To be on land after three months at sea is of itself a great change. But to be in such a land! The dark faces, with white turbans, and flowing robes: the trees not our trees: the very smell of atmosphere that of a hothouse, and the architecture as strange as the vegetation". There was a salute of fifteen guns, when he set his foot on the beach! Lord Macaulay wrote a minute on 2nd February 1835, where he made the decision regarding the controversy. According to him, English was the best medium of instruction. He held the view that this would enable the emergence of a class of people in the Indian society, who would be well versed in English language, Western ideology, taste and opinion. By introducing the English language for education of the Indian people, Macaulay's opinion was that the public mind of India might expand under the English system and through the English language. It may educate the people into a capacity for better governance

In his minute, Macaulay criticized the oriental learning as, "a single shelf of good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arab." Macaulay believed that English should be introduced because it is a language of the ruling class and higher classes of Indians have gained the familiarity. In the minute. Macaulay further wrote, "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellects." Thus, Macaulay anglicized the education in India. Macaulay always devoted his best to the job on hand. In his youth, Macaulay exhibited. vehemence, over-confidence, the inability to recognize that there are two sides to a question or two people in a dialogue," just as other young men displayed. While thin traits were tempered in his later years, Macaulay was always a man of his own ideas and he was greatly influenced in his ideals, ideas, and ideologies by the great achievements Western civilization, sciences, philosophy, and theology. His nephew biographer writes.

"His speeches and essays teem with expressions of a far deeper than official interest in India and her people; and his minutes remain on record, to prove that he did not affect he sentiment for a literary or oratorical purpose."

Objectives of Macaulay's Minute

Dislike

in India during British rule.

1. To give knowledge to the students about the changing system of education
2. To make the students understand Macaulay's Minute of Indian education System
3. To make the students aware about the reports of Adam, regarding the Indian Education System.

7

Introduction of Macaulay's Minute

Thomas Babington Macaulay, who is generally regarded as the architect of the system of education in India during the British rule, was a great essayist, historian, linguistic orator,

politician, statesman and thinker. He was regarded as one of the first rate literary figure of his times. As a parliamentarian, he made his mark in British parliament. He came to India in 1838 and joined as the law member of the executive council of the governor-General. He was also appointed as the president of the general committee on Public instruction, by governor general Lord William Bentinck.

Macaulay wrote his famous minute on Feb. 2, 1835, in which he vehemently criticized almost everything Indian: astronomy, culture, history, philosophy, religion etc., and praised everything western. On this basis, he advocated the national system of education for India which could best serve the interest of the British Empire. His minutes was accepted and Lord William Bentinck issued his proclamation in March 1835, which set at rest all the controversies and led to the formulation of a policy, which became the corner stone of all educational programmes during the British period in India.

Revival of the Charter

The beginning of the state system of education in India under the British rule may be traced back to the year 1813 when the East India company was compelled by the force of circumstances to accept responsibility for the education of Indians. Clause 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 which stated, "It shall be lawful for the Governor General in council to direct that out of any surplus which may remain of rents, revenues, and profits arising from the said territorial acquisitions, after defraying the expenses of the military, civil and commercial establishment and paying the interest of the debt, in manner hereinafter provided, a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India."

The Charter Act of 1813 did not specify the methods to secure the objects of revival and improvement of nature. the encouragement of learned natives of India and the introduction and promotion of knowledge of sciences among the inhabitants of British territories in India. The vagueness of Clause 43 of the Charter Act 1813 intensified the Oriental Occidental's educational controversy in India. Since the dawn of 19th century. there had emerged two groups among the officials of the company. One group was of the orientlists or classists who wanted the promotion of Indian education through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, whereas the other group was of anglicists or occidentalists who were in favour of developing western education in India through the medium of English.

Points of Controversy

Points of controversy on the interpretation of Charter Act of 1813 and the National System of education and Macaulay's role : At that time a major oriental and occidental controversy was going on in respect of the following issues :

Aim of education of the British policy: Whether it should be to educate the classes in higher branches of learning or the masses in elementary education. (ii) Type of knowledge: Whether to preserve and promote oriental learning or to introduce western knowledge, culture and science.

(iii) Medium of instruction: Whether English or Persian and Sanskrit in Bengal, English or Indian languages in Bombay and Madras should become the medium of instruction.

(v) Agency of education : Whether the government should assume direct responsibility of educating the Indians or the indigenous system of the country to continue.(v)

Missionaries: Whether the shores of India to be thrown open to missionaries of all parts of the world to promote education or to a few missionaries or not at all.

There were important English officers of the East India Company supporting the oriental point of view like H.T. Prinsep. who was the education secretary in Bengal and the leader of the orientalist group. On the contrary, some prominent Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy supported the anglicists who were in favour of English and western learning.

MAIN AIM OF INTRODUCING ENGLISH SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN INDIA

Macaulay rejected the claims of Arabic and Sanskrit as against English, because he considered that English was better than either of them. His arguments in favour of English were:

1. It is the key to modern knowledge and is therefore more useful than Arabic or Sanskrit.
2. It stand preeminent even among the language of the west in India, English is the language sponsored by the ruling class. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the east.
3. It would bring about renaissance in India. just as the Greeks or Latins did in England or just as the languages of western Europe in civilized Russia.
4. The natives are desirous of being taught English and are not eager to learn Sanskrit or Arabic.
5. It is possible to make the natives of the country good English scholars, and to that end, our efforts ought to be directed.
6. It was impossible to educate the body of people but it was possible through English education to bring about a class of persons Indian in blood and colour and English in taste, opinions in morals and in intellect", and that education was to filter down from them to the masses.

Acceptance of minute by Lord William Bentinck: Lord William Bentinck endorsed the minute by writing one line beneath it "I give my entire concurrence to the sentiments expressed in the minutes." He passed the resolution of March. 1835 which determined the age, content and medium of instruction in India.

Merits of Macaulay's Minute

1. A clear cut picture of the national system of education in India emerged
2. The system proved very helpful in promoting the objectives for which it was planned.
3. English schools began to be established.
4. English became the medium of instruction.
5. Western arts and sciences became popular.
6. Filtration theory of education emerged.

Demerits of Macaulay's Minute

1. Indian culture and philosophy receded to the background.
2. Vernacular languages began to be neglected.
3. Mass education was neglected.
4. Western culture made rapid strides.

5. Arabic and Sanskrit languages found very few takers.

6. Arabic, makhtabs and Sanskrit pathshalas saw gradual disappearance.

In 1835, the arguments of Orientalists were put before Lord Macaulay, who rejected them through a very forceful minute, wherein, he supported the education of the classes and made a vigorous plea for spreading Western learning through the medium of English.

On March 7, 1835, Lord William Bentinck also accepted Macaulay's recommendations and sanctioned it officially. In 1837, English was made the court language and a Government Resolution of 1844 threw higher posts open to Indians. These measures resulted in a rapid growth of English education. The missionaries also established a large number of English schools and colleges. Some people of the higher classes in India and the Company⁶² appreciated the contribution of Macaulay and considered him as the torchbearer in the path of progress. Some Indians blamed Macaulay for his severe condemnation of oriental literature and religion.