



The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies
and
The Open University

Christian Missionary Education in India

PhD, Jonathan C. Ingleby

1998

The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies

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Education as a Missionary Tool

A Study in Christian Missionary Education by English Protestant Missionaries in India with Special Reference to Cultural Change

PhD Thesis, Jonathan C. Ingleby, 1998

Abstract

In the long nineteenth century all the English Protestant missionary societies in India used education as a missionary tool. This study examines their reasons for doing so and their attempts to implement various educational strategies. It also examines the theological and educational ideas that they brought with them from England, and the continuing pressures exerted on them by their English supporters. The way in which the missionaries adjusted to their new context and their relationship with the government and with the local culture are also studied.

The thesis argues that missionary education had considerable impact on the culture in which it took place, but that it was not always the impact that the missionaries had intended. Similarly the culture affected the choices which the missionaries made. Missionary strategies changed as they experienced failure and success in achieving their aims.

Attention is paid to the political, as well as the cultural, context of the missionaries. While the missionaries' educational aims were to some extent formulated in dialogue with government, the study suggests that the missionaries and the government had significantly different educational strategies.

A clear cut distinction is drawn between the education aimed at the nation's elite through English medium higher education and the attempt to educate at a village level in the vernacular languages. The thesis argues that the latter was more successful in terms of the missionaries' long term aims.

Finally, the thesis also argues that 'raising up a native agency' was the missionaries' initial purpose in founding schools and colleges. For a number of reasons they were often diverted from this aim in the intervening years. It became their strategy again, however, at the end of the period.