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FRENCH INFLUENCE ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM
OF IRAN

By

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A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in the Education
Department of the American University of Beirut
Beirut, Lebanon

June 1964

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Professor Matta Akrawi, chairman of my thesis committee, whose kind encouragement, constant guidance and whose invaluable counsel and suggestions made this study possible.

Thanks are also due to Professor Nystrom and Professor Malik Badri, members of my thesis committee for their guidance and encouragement. I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Louis P. Cajoleas, chairman of the Education Department for his helpful advice and assistance.

Special thanks are due to Professor Issa Sadiq, the notable Iranian educator, whose kind directions and valuable ideas were of great help to me. Last but not least, I wish to thank the Iranian and French gentlemen working in the Ministry of Education and other governmental departments who helped me with materials and ideas. I am deeply grateful to them and shall always remember their help.

ABSTRACT

A sound system of education compatible with the social structure and with the needs and demands of Iranian society is of paramount importance. The present system of education with its highly centralized system of administration, with its prescribed curriculum, its highly academic and theoretical methodology and with its great emphasis on memorization and theorization has proved unable to cope with the emerging needs of modern Iran and with the increasing and complex demands of an expanding economy and progressive society. These needs originate from recent industrial, agricultural, commercial and technological developments of the country.

On the other hand it is not uncommon to hear from the Iranian educators and teachers that the present system of education is a complete imitation of that of France and that this rigid and inflexible system of education has turned out to be a great impediment to development and progress.

The purpose of this study is twofold; first, to investigate French influences on the present system of Iranian education from the time when they were gradually introduced into the country either by the Iranians or by the French educational missionaries up to the present time and, second, to formulate some suggestions in regard to the betterment of the present system.

Efforts have been made to divide this study into five stages or five chapters. The first chapter deals with a general description of the country; its physical, historical and educational features prior to the introduction of French education in the early 19th century. The second chapter depicts the political, economic, social and educational conditions of the country and the factors which facilitated French influence in this period. The third chapter has been devoted to the French educational impact prior to the proclamation of constitutional government in Iran in 1906 and the fourth chapter is concerned with these influences up to the present time. In the light of modern principles of education and the needs of modern Iranian society, suggestions for a more useful system of education have been proposed in the fifth chapter.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and its Importance

The main objective of this study is to examine the development of modern education in Iran and some of the foreign influences, especially those of France, which brought about this development with a view to formulating certain suggestions for the betterment of the present system. Western educational ideas and practices began to make themselves felt on the old educational system of Iran more than a hundred years ago. Early Iranian educators and those interested in modernizing the country partly imitated and partly modified Western educational methods and practices and introduced them into the Country. Changes in the old system were brought about either by the educated Iranians through establishing schools on the European model, sending students abroad and introducing the printing press and some such measures, or by the Christian and secular missions who were interested in promulgating and spreading European education in the country. These modernizing influences while helping to acquaint the Country with the modern world and to familiarize the Iranians with European Civilization, were not entirely in harmony with the cultural background of the country and the needs of her people.

The French system of education is said to have influenced the educational system of Iran more than that of any other European country.

This can be attributed to some factors the most important of which are the similarities existing between the old Iranian education and the French educational practices in that both systems emphasized the accumulation of a prescribed body of knowledge, the impartation of the Cultural heritage and both advocated a centralized system of administration and a unified system of methods and examination.

French educators have long recognized the defects existing in their own educational system and have attempted to make plans to adapt the existing French educational structure to the social structure and to modify the present rigid and inflexible system to the needs and demands of French Society.

The movement for the reorganization of the educational system of France began in the First World War. It was during the war that Les Compagnons de L'Universite Nouvelle (the Advocates of the New Educational System) put forward the proposal for the ecole unique, the common school system. The proposal would abolish special educational privileges based on class stratification, would provide the same primary school for all boys and girls, and would extend opportunities for postprimary education so that every French child would receive the education best suited to his abilities.¹

Such a movement for the reorganization of the educational system of Iran has not yet taken place. Although the country has developed in economy and industry and is in need of experts and technicians to exploit her natural resources and elevate the standard of living of her people, nevertheless few changes have been brought about in her educational system which was imitated in part

¹Kandel, I.L., The New Era in Education (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1955), p. 68.

from that of France. For over one hundred years it has remained static as far as the method and content are concerned and has proved to be unable to keep pace with the increasing needs of the country and of her young generation.

There is a common agreement among the Iranian intellectuals that the present inefficient system of education should be modified and be adapted to the interests and abilities of the Iranian students so that our young generation can lead a useful life in the service of the community and can carry out the tasks for which their natural talents best fit them. They believe that the country is, at present, in need of an educational system which can help in developing the entire resources of the country for the purpose of developing the national economy and raising the standard of living of the Iranians.

This study is, therefore, based on investigating French educational impacts from the time of their first introduction into the country up to the present time and on formulating some suggestions in the hope that they might prove helpful in the process of educational reform in Iran.

2: Method of Study

In order to investigate foreign influences on the present system of education, one will have to take a glance back at the history of these influences and study them chronologically. The problem has, therefore, been dealt within a narrative, historical and critical way. Iranian life has been depicted and such factors as social, economic, religious, educational and political which have ac-

celerated or hindered these foreign influences have been studied.

3. Sources of Study

In completing this study the following sources have been consulted.

1. Sources in English by American and English writers, orientalists, travellers, educational consultants and literary men who have visited Iran and have compiled books on her economic, educational, political, social and literary life.

2. Sources in French by the Iranians themselves or by educational French missionaries who established educational institutions in the country and have contributed to the promulgation of French education and civilization in Iran.

3. Sources in Persian in the form of books, periodicals, newspapers, magazines and yearbooks by the Iranian educators and writers who are interested in this field.

4. Statistical data issued by the Ministry of Education and other data concerning foreign educational activities to be found in the archives of the Ministry of Education and French missionary schools in Tehran.

5. Interviews with present Iranian educators and other personalities who have carried out studies on this problem.

6. Interviews with the principals, superintendents, directors of courses of French missionary schools in Tehran.

4. Limitation of Study

Although the present study is mainly concerned with the French

impact on the education of Iran, nevertheless, at times, some other aspects of French influences especially those on the Persian language, Persian press and the like have been also dealt with. Such an additional study might help in bringing to light the fact that not only did France influence the educational system of Iran but also impressed, to a great extent other aspects of Iranian life. In order to show the decline of French influences after the Second World War, some aspects of the American impact on the education of Iran have also been touched upon.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PERSIA

Name of the Country

Two names, Persia and Iran, have been frequently used to designate the same country, but they are not identical. The word, "Iran" bears a close affinity with the word, "Aryan". Aryan peoples in the late 16th or early part of the 15th Century B.C. migrated from their original land south of the Aral sea and settled down around the vicinity of the Caspian Sea. They called the new region, "Iran" meaning, "Homeland of the Aryans".

The word Persia is derived from, "Parsa" the royal site of the Achaemenids in the south of the country. "Parsa" was taken into the Greek language and was converted into Persepolis. So, all the Achaemenid Empire was called Iran but the regional royal site took over the name of the province in which it was situated and came to be known as, "Parsa" or "Fars" and hence peoples of other lands came to call the country, "Persia". In 1936, the Iranian government asked all foreign countries to use the official name of, "Iran" and the country gradually came to be known abroad by this name.

Iranian Land

Iran is bounded on the north by the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and Turkistan, on the south by the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, on the east by Afghanistan and Pakistan and on the west by Turkey and

Iraq. The total area of the country is 628,000 square miles or 1,645,000 square kilometers. It is as large as England, France and Germany put together. Approximately 1/6 of the total area of Iran is barren desert. There are two large desert areas known as the Dasht-i-Lut and the Dasht-i-Kavir which stretch across the plateau from the north-west to the south-east and beyond the frontier for a distance of 800 miles.

Topography

Iran can be described in general terms as a high plateau some 4000 feet above sea level encircled by mountains the most important of which are the Zagros and the Alborz ranges. The former runs south-east and roughly parallels the frontier of Iraq and the shore of the Persian Gulf. The latter, runs across the north of the country and is divided into ramifications which extend into Afghanistan and Turkistan. The peak of the Alborz range, Demavend, the highest peak in Iran, rises to 18,600 feet.

Seas, Lakes and Rivers

The Caspian Sea on the north is the largest landlocked sea in the world. It lies about 85 feet below the sea level and abounds with all kinds of fish. The Lake Rezaieh, formerly called Lake Urmid, is another landlocked body of water on the north-west of the country. It is about 80 miles long and 35 miles wide. Its water is so salt that no fish can live in it. The Rivers of Iran can be divided into three groups. The first group are those which empty into the Caspian Sea the most important of which are the Aras (Araxes), and the Sefid Rud.

The second group are those which empty into the interior of the country. Of this group the perennial river, the Zayandeh Rud can be cited as an example which flows past Isfahan. The third group are those which flow into the Persian Gulf, the most important of which is the Karun, the largest and the only navigable river in Iran.

Cities, Towns and Villages

According to law, the country is divided into eleven provinces (Ostans), each under a Governor-General. Each province is subdivided into counties (Shahrestans), each under a governor and each Shahrestan is divided into districts (Bakhshes) each under a Deputy-Governor. Every district is finally divided into Villages (Dehs) under the Headman of the village (Kadkhoda).

Tehran, the Capital-City of Iran, has a population of approximately two million. It has been the seat of the government since 1788, the time of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar. Other important towns of Iran are Meshed, Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Resht and Kermanshah with a population which varies between 100,000 and 200,000.

Climate

As for her climate, Iran can be divided into three distinct regions:

a) The Caspian region on the north: The annual rainfall in this region is from forty to sixty inches. It mostly rains in spring and autumn. It is the most fertile part of the country and is covered with forests. It has usually warm summers and mild winters.

b) The Persian Gulf region in the south: The climate is dry and hot. The heat is sometimes unbearable in Summer. The annual average

rainfall in this region is about twelve inches.¹

c) The Central region: Due to the existence of highlands and lowlands and the two desolate salt deserts in the midst of the country, the climate of this region is variable throughout the year.

In general, "the Iranian plateau is an area of dry clear atmosphere, great range of temperature, light rainfall, and well-defined seasons."²

Population

Compared with her extensive area, Persia is a very thinly-populated country. Due to the lack of public sanitation, frequent ravages of dangerous diseases such as typhoid, typhus, cholera, malaria and plague and also due to the bloody wars between the Iranians and other such nationalities as the Greeks, Arabs, Mongols, Tartars and the Afghans, the country has considerably been reduced in population.

In 1934 an official census placed Iran's population at 15 millions. Due to some slight improvements in the public sanitation, the figure has risen to more than twenty millions. The northern and western provinces are more populated than the central, southern and eastern provinces.

The density of population differs from one region to another. It is about 44 to the square kilometer in the Tehran area, 20 to 30 along the Caspian shores, 26 in Azarbaijan, 2 in Sistan and Baluchistan and virtually zero in the central saline desert.³

¹Hejazi, Mohammad, Mihan-i-Ma (Our Country), (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1957), p. 177.

²Vreeland, Herbert H., Iran (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1957), p. 31

³Iran To-day: Published by the Government of Iran, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 7.

Religion

The official religion of Iran is the Shia'h sect of Islam. Although the great majority of the population are Shia'hs, there is also quite a considerable number of the Kurds of the north-western areas who follow the Sunni Sect.

Out of the total population, about 850,000, mainly the Kurds of the north-western areas, belong to the Sunni sect; 100,000 Bahais; 50,000 Armenians; 20,000 Nestorians and about 10,000 Zoroastrians.¹

The number of Jews inhabiting the country is half the number of Armenians. They speak Persian and write in Hebrew characters.

Languages

The Persian Language of to-day, which is called, "Farsi" by the inhabitants of the country, is said to be an offspring of the Pahlavi language spoken during the time of the Achamenids. Persian is a member of the Indo-European family of languages which includes such languages as English, German and the like. There are words in Persian which bear a very close resemblance to their equivalents in English. Words such as bradar (brother), pedar (father), madar (mother), dokhtar (daughter), bad (bad), jungal (jungle), mah (moon), setareh (star), can be cited as examples.

Iran is a country with a diversity of ethnic group. Each group has its own dialect of Persian which is, in most cases, unintelligible to the speakers of the standard Persian.

¹Rajput, A.B., Iran To-day (Lahore, Pakistan: Lion Press, 1953), p. 27.

More than half of the people of Iran speak some dialect of Persian. There are dialects (Mazandarani, for example) which are not understood readily by the speakers of the standard Persian of Tehran, but most speakers of such dialects also understand and can make themselves understood in the standard Persian.¹

Persian is the official, national language of the country and since the coming of the late King, Reza Shah in 1926, it has been taught in all the schools throughout the country for the sake of establishing unity and solidarity among different ethnic groups. It is the language of literature and almost all newspapers and radio broadcasting. In addition to Persian, Turkish dialects are also spoken by about four million people in Iran. They are used by the people of Azarbaijan, in the north-west, by various tribes in the south and by the Turkmen in the north-east. Dialects of Arabic are also spoken by two million people inhabiting Khuzistan in the south of the country.

The Armenians, too, have their own language. The Armenian language, like Persian, belongs to the Indo-European stock, but closely related to Persian. The Armenian inhabitants of Iran write in a Greek derived alphabet of their own. The Christian Assyrians, numbering about 20,000, speak dialects of Aramaic which belong to the Semitic group of languages.

Historical Sketch of Iran

The Achaemenids: It was previously noted that the word, "Iran" is derived from the word, "Aryan". Aryan tribes, inhabiting the great

¹Vreeland, op. cit., p. 37.

plateau of Central Asia began to migrate to the Iranian territory in 16th or 15th Century B.C. The most famous of the Aryan tribes settling in Iran, were the two main groups known as the Medes and the Persians. The latter were farmers and herdsmen and were leading a pastoral life. The Persians are regarded as the true ancestors of the Iranian race since it was through them that the first Persian Empire was established in the country. Cyrus the Great (550-530 B.C.) was the founder of the Achaemenid dynasty which lasted from 550 to 331 B.C. during which time Persia reached the summit of her power and glory.

Alexander in Persia: In 331 B.C. Persia was conquered and was annexed to the Macedonian Empire by Alexander the Great.

A new social element was introduced into Iran after its conquest by Alexander in 330 B.C. It was the Greeks whose cultural contributions gave a new color to the great Iranian Civilization which henceforth evolved the famous Perso-Greek schools of art and thought. This embracement of the two ancient cultures greatly helped in giving a new life and wider field of activity to the Iranian philosophers, thinkers, artists, painters and architects.¹

The Seleucids, the Parthians: After the death of Alexander, his empire fell into the hands of his army commanders and soon was divided into several major monarchies. One of his army commanders, Seleucus, managed to overcome his rivals and to ascend the Persian throne. His successors known as the Seleucids ruled over Persia for nearly eighty years. From 250 B.C. till 226 A.D. Persia was under the Parthians. They were tribesmen of Aryan origin inhabiting a vast area between the Turkistan desert, the Caspian Sea and Sistan. Arces I,

¹Rajput, A.B., op. cit., p. 16.

the Chief of the tribe, revolted against the Seleucids and established a new dynasty known as the Parthians which lasted till 226 A.D. The Parthians were of a scanty cultural background and were highly impressed by Greek civilization. They used Pahlavi, the Achaemenid language, and adopted Zoroastrianism as their religion.

The Sassanians: The lost glory of Persia was once more regained by the advent of a pure Persian dynasty known as the Sassanians. They ruled over the country from 226 A.D. till 651 when the Arab invasion put an end to their empire. Under the Sassanians, Persia succeeded in attaining her previous prominence and importance and became a great rival to the Roman Empire.

The Sassanian period witnessed the rebirth of a nationalistic Iran, strong and prosperous in her own right and unreceptive to foreign contacts and influences. The remarkable internal stability of the empire was largely the result of the efficient and highly centralized administration of its group of Ministers and large Secretarial Staff.¹

The books of Greek historians, especially those of Herodotus, are good sources of information about the history of Iran in Achaemenid times. Details of political organization, the army, and the life of the people can be derived from these books. The vast Achaemenid empire was divided into twenty provinces or satrapies, each under the rule of a governor or a satrap who was elected from noble Persian families. People were divided into four distinct groups; the clergy, the warriors, the secretaries and the commoners. The last group included the merchants and artisans who had no concern for the government and

¹Wilbur Donald, Iran, Past and Present (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 32.

were led by the three other groups. The clergy, warriors and secretaries made up the nobility of Persian society.

Zoroastrianism became the official religion of the empire. The founder of the religion was Zoroaster or Zarathustra who was born in Media and lived probably between 660-583 B.C. The Avesta, the holy book of the Zoroastrians, contains Zoroaster's teachings. This new religion recognized Ahuramazda, the source of good, truth and light and Ahriman, the spirit of evil, falsehood and darkness. These two contradictory forces are always engaged in an eternal struggle against each other. They have separate origins and have been separate phenomena from the beginning of time. Although they are continuously engaged in struggle, they do not both survive in eternity. Ahuramazda, the wise lord and the fountainhead of goodness and light, will eventually overcome Ahriman and consequently light and happiness will prevail everywhere. Man to Zoroaster, is a free agent and is born with a free will. If his thoughts, deeds and words are good, Ahuramazda will triumph over Ahriman and, if bad, they will enhance the victory of Ahriman.

Zoroastrianism was still the state religion throughout the Sassanian period. The clergy known as the Magi were the most powerful, the most respected and the most educated body in the empire. They owned much of the best lands, were granted special privileges and constituted a powerful hierarchy. They had far deviated from the abstract moral teachings of Zoroaster and had misinterpreted Zoroastrian principles.

The creed as confined in the Avesta was far removed from the abstract moral teachings of Zoroaster. Rituals predominated and there was a growing tendency to rank the deities of the sun and fire with Ahuramazda in a new trinity.¹

Education in Pre-Islamic Persia

In pre-Islamic Persia, education was not available for all. There were schools attached to the royal courts for the princes and the sons of the nobles and aristocrats. Children of the royal families were left to tutors at the age of seven. "The child was brought upon his mother's knee up to the age of seven. He was, then, left to the teacher and was taught up to the age of fifteen."²

Teachers were elected from among the princes and governors. Because of their affinity to the royal court, teachers were highly respected and obeyed without question. The curriculum of study consisted of; 1) religious teaching, 2) physical training and 3) reading, writing and arithmetic.

1. Religious teaching

Such an education was based on Zoroastrianism. The child was instructed to tell the truth, to abstain from telling lies and to be good in his thoughts, words and deeds.

2. Physical training

Every child had to look after his health lest he might fall ill. He had to strengthen his body against evil spirits. According to Zoroastrianism, diseases enter the body through Ahriman which is the

¹Wilber Donald, Ibid., p. 33.

²Sadiq, Issa, History of Education in Iran (Persia). (Tehran: The Teachers' College Press, 1963), p. 60.

source of all evil spirits. Old Persians believed that sound spirit dwells in sound body and that one must strengthen his body through such sports as horse riding, archery, hunting, polo and swimming.

3. Reading, Writing and Arithmetic

They were taught to a selected elite group as the children of the royal family, the nobles and the priests. These children were taught to hold offices in different departments of the government. Children of the masses had no access to a formal education and were not allowed to hold governmental offices. They had to pursue their fathers' careers because it was believed that every child had inherited the ability to pursue no calling but that of his father. The child used to learn his father's job by apprenticeship under his father or a master. No formal education was provided for girls except that those from noble families were taught horse riding, polo and archery.

In general, education in pre-Islamic Persia had two conspicuous characteristics. First, it was monopolized by the elite group and the masses had no access to a formal schooling. The second characteristic lies in the method of instruction which was absolutely authoritarian. The learner had to submit to the teacher without questioning and to obey him blindly. Such a system of education led to a highly centralized system of government in which individuals had no part and their destiny was in the hands of the king and his agents.

The destiny of the people lay in the hands of the rulers and administrators of the government. People had no voice in the government. So, whenever a competent and worthy king was on the throne, people would live in comfort, the country was in good condition and would reach the zenith of splendor and magni-

ficance. Such was the Persian Empire under Cyrus, whose greatness and splendor was unrivalled. But any time Persia was under a weak and unworthy king, the country would be exposed to chaos, commotions, confusions, civil wars and foreign invasions.¹

The Arab Conquest

In 633, Persia was invaded by the Arabs. In 651 the last Sassanian king was assassinated and all the provinces of the country were nearly occupied by the Arabs and amalgamated with the Islamic Empire.² The period between the Arab conquest and the Mongol invasion is marked by the succession of local dynasties the most important of which are the Samanids, the Ghaznavids and the Seljuqs.

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, the founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty, was a staunch patron of poets and scholars, although he himself had no gift of poetry and no taste for literature. In the reign of this king, Firdowsi, the great Iranian national poet, wrote his great epic, the Shahnama, or, "The Book of Kings". The epic contains the stories of the heroic deeds of four ancient Persian dynasties two of which are purely legendary and are based on the mythology of the Zoroastrian holy book, the Avesta. The other two are the Parthians and the Sassanians about whom Firdowsi's account is tinged with legends rather than history. The Shahnama is written in a direct and simple Persian with relatively few Arabic words. Although the book is more than one thousand years old, it is still easily understood and cited by common Persians. The Shahnama has been rendered into English, French, German and other languages.

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 89

²Encyclopedia Britanica, Vol. 17, p.568.

Omar Khayyam who died in 1123 lived in this period. He was a philosopher, a mathematician, a physician, an astronomer as well as a poet. Owing to the genius of Fitzgerald who made a famous English version of Khayyam's Rubayyats, the poet is quite well-known to-day in Europe and America.

Education in this Period¹

The period prior to the Mongol invasion is marked by the appearance of great philosophers as Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazzali, Toussi and the like who, in addition to their philosophical careers, have also expressed their views on education. In order to have a notion of post-Islamic education in Iran, the views of these three philosophers on education will be presented briefly.

Ibn Sina and Education

According to Ibn-Sina the purposes of education are: religion, good morals, health, ability to read and write and preparation for a vocation. Parents should choose good names for their children and find a good person to look after them. Moral teachings should begin at the end of the second year. Parents must protect their children against bad habits and prevent them from associating with bad companions. They should not disappoint their children and not impose on them what they are unable to do. The age of schooling begins at six and ends at fourteen. Teachers must be religious, pious, wise, honest and respectable.

¹This part is mainly based on Dr. Sadiq's History of Education in Iran from page 123 to 159.

The curriculum of study should contain the teaching of the Qur'an, religious instruction, language, moral poems, physical education, arts and crafts. The method of instruction must be sometimes lenient and sometimes harsh. Corporal punishment must be used if necessary. Interests and aptitudes of the learner should be taken into consideration. Education, whether liberal or vocational, must be provided for all children regardless of their sex, social status and so on.

Ghazzali and Education

Ghazzali proposes the importance of knowledge for every Muslim. The child, to Ghazzali, has a malleable character and is apt to take any form in his early childhood. He emphasizes the importance of moral instruction in this period. Children are good imitators and always follow their teachers' words and deeds. Teachers must be very careful in their behavior towards children. They must not talk to children too much and must not joke with them.

Ghazzali's program of study consists of reading, writing, the Qur'an, biographies and stories of great personalities, poems which do not arouse sexual desires in children, moral teaching and an hour of play every day. Children should be kept away from bad companions. Parents should habituate children to simplicity in eating, dressing and sleeping. Reward, to Ghazzali, is more effective than punishment.

Toussi and Education

Toussi places a great emphasis on environment and its influences on the personality of the child. Like Ghazzali, he believes that the

child receives any kind of education presented to him by the elders. The aim of education, to him, is attaining prosperity. By prosperity he means having a healthy body, living in a healthy environment and associating with learned companions.

Toussi's curriculum of study consists of manners and duties of religion, history of good and instructive events, manners of eating, drinking and sleeping, memorization of selected and useful poems, ethics, physical education and vocation.

As for his method, Toussi believes that people differ in interests and capacities. It is the duty of the teacher to discover the interests of the children and set a program which can suit their interests best.

The Mongols

In the period between 1162 and 1227 A.D. Persia fell in the clutches of the Mongols and the Tartars and was severely attacked by them. Towns and cities were sacked, thousands were slain, palaces, mosques and houses were devastated and burnt down to the earth.

Although Persia suffered much from the Mongol invasion, considerable work in the field of the sciences and literature was done. Great poets were living during this period, the two foremost of whom were Jalalu'd-Din Mowlawi and Sa'di of Shiraz. Mowlawi who died in 1273, was a mystic whose work consists of six books all of which deal with mysticism and sufism. Sa'di, the celebrated Persian poet, was born in Shiraz in 1184. His best renowned works are the Gulistan and the Bustan. The Gulistan, in prose, later became a classical model for nearly all later Persian poets. It is a series of anecdotes concerning

the characteristics of the kings, qualities of the mystics, youth and love, effects of education and so on. The Bustan is entirely in verse and deals with such subjects as justice, equality, education, prayer and the like.

Education under the Mongols

The Mongol invasion had a disastrous effect on education.

All the improvements and progresses which had previously taken place in all fields of knowledge came immediately to a standstill. Adversity, calamity and catastrophe started. As long as massacres and destructions were going on, nobody could think of education. When the Mongol dynasty was established in the country and Amir Timur died and his son, Shahrukh, succeeded him, those who had escaped with their lives, heaved a sigh of relief and turned to the education of their children.¹

People began to lose hope in everything and to believe in fate and predestination. The aim of education came to be the protection of the self against corruption. "In order to achieve such an aim, people began to submit to the conqueror, resort to deception and trickery and carry the conqueror's flattery to extremes."²

Educational institutions such as mosques and schools were laid in destruction but as the Mongols and the Timurids came gradually in contact with the Persians, they were converted into Islam and began to build schools and mosques. Guhar Shad, daughter-in-law to Timur, built a magnificent mosque called by her name in Meshed which, "Perhaps constitutes the crowning architectural achievement of the Mongols."³

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 232.

²Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., pp. 232-233.

³Sykes, Sir Percy, History of Persia (London: Macmillan and Co., 1930), p. 154, Vol. 2.

The method of instruction became absolutely harsh and authoritative. Learners had to accept their lessons without any objection. There was no room for criticism and inventiveness. Teachers, too, were no longer allowed to express their personal views on the textbooks they were assigned to teach. Philosophical and scientific discussions gradually passed into oblivion and were replaced by religious disputes.

The Safavids

Two centuries later, Persia, under the Safavid kings, came to experience her next great revival and unity. The Safavid period is regarded as the beginning of the modern era in Persia. It was during the time of Shah Abbas that Persia, for the first time, established diplomatic relations with European countries. Robert Sherley and Sir Anthony Sherley are among the well-known English travellers who visited Shah Abbas's Court. The former was appointed to modernize the Persian army and the latter was made ambassador for Persia to Europe.

Many treatises on philosophy and logic were written during this period. These books, compared with those written during the pre-Mongol period, had little originality in them and were, in reality, a detailed reworking of Ibn Sina's works. The Persian language lost its simplicity and fluency and became absolutely subordinated to forms of expression rather than meaning. "The chief delight lay in the use of ornate and elaborate language, and figures of speech were highly developed."¹

¹Wilbur, Donald, op. cit., p.

Architectural activity was a characteristic of the Safavid period. A great number of structures built under the Safavids still stands in good condition. These masterpieces of Persian architectures are mostly found at Isfahan, the Safavid capital city. Carpet weaving reached almost incredible perfection under the Safavids. Magnificent carpets were woven for the royal palaces and holy shrines which are still famous for their good quality, variety of designs and color. Miniature painting developed during the Safavids. The Mongol invasion, with all its damage and instruction, gave birth to true Persian art. The art of miniature painting. In the miniatures, which came to be models all over Persia, the perspective, figures, clothes and faces were Chinese. The themes of these miniatures usually dealt with well-known events, meetings between kings, hunting scenes and the like.

Education under the Safavids will be studied in the next chapter.

From 1731 to 1779 two dynasties known as the Afshars and the Zands ruled in Persia. The founder of the Afshar dynasty was Nadir Shah and that of the Zand dynasty was Karim Khan. The latter was a ruler of fine personal character and was very much loved by his people.

In 1889 a new dynasty known as the Qajars came into power. Their great leader, Agha Mohammad Khan, managed to ascend the Persian throne by way of violence and slaughter. He succeeded to unite all the branches of the Qajar tribe, to take Tehran and to become the first

ruler of the Qajar dynasty. He was assassinated in 1797 after he had gained full control over Persia, including the province of Georgia in Russia.

His nephew, Fath Ali Shah, succeeded him in 1797 and reigned over the country until 1834. It was during his time that the Persians came into direct contact with European powers and European education. A group of French military instructors were employed to modernize the army. Students were sent abroad to study medicine, science, artillery and technology. Printing presses and newspapers like those of the European countries were introduced into the country.

The early part of the nineteenth century is an era during which foreign influences, especially French influences began to make themselves felt in Persian culture and education. These foreign impacts together with their consequences will be investigated throughout the following chapters.

CHAPTER III

IRANIAN SOCIETY IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

1. Political Conditions of the Country

The modern History of Iran begins from the 18th century onwards during which period the country came into direct contact with the big European powers, namely, Russia, France and Great Britain. From this time down to the twentieth century the country has always been a battle-field for the conflicting interests of these powers, especially Russia and Great Britain, and has frequently suffered great damage at the hands of these two rivals.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century, Great Britain extended her influence throughout India and succeeded in gaining full control over the economic and political affairs of that country. On the other hand, Russia planned to expand her influence in Asia and had visions of reaching a warm-water port on the Persian Gulf. Great Britain on her part wanted to protect the Persian Gulf regions and all areas adjacent to India from the probable encroachments of Russia.

Napoleon's policy in Iran

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) in order to take possession of India, undertook a hazardous scheme to destroy England's influence in that territory. To do so, he first entered into negotiations with Tsar Paul of Russia in 1801 and concluded an agreement with him to

invade India jointly. Their scheme was not put into operation due to the inadequacy of preparations and the death of the Tsar. But Napoleon was always seeking an opportunity to give realization to his plan by gaining access to India and contesting British supremacy in that land.

Iran was one of the gateways which could help Napoleon put his plan into practice. So, he tried to establish a military alliance with the Shah of Iran.

Fath Ali Shah was engaged in a war against Russia which lasted ten years, from 1803 to 1813. At the outset of the war the Shah and his crown prince, Abbas Mirza, came to be convinced that they would not be able to stand successive invasions of Russia with their old-fashioned weapons and with a group of unruly and disorderly soldiers.

On the other hand, the Shah and his crown prince, had heard stories about Napoleon's victories in Europe and were willing to enter into negotiations with him in the hope that the mediation or the power of that conqueror would enable them to resist Russia and restore the province of Georgia which had been annexed to Russia in 1801.¹

In 1804, the Shah dispatched a pompous and flowery Persian letter to Napoleon asking him to join the Persian troops so that they could jointly attack Russia and defeat her. The letter reached Napoleon through Marechal Brune, Napoleon's representative in Constantinople. Having received such a letter the ambitious Emperor was, once more, reminded of his previous plans of reaching India via Persia. Napoleon,

¹Nafisi, Said, The Political and Social History of Iran under the Qajars (Tehran: Shark Publication Institute, 1956), p. 91.

to acquire the Shah's acquiescence, dispatched M. Amedee Jaubert and later on Adjutant-General Romieu, as envoys extraordinary, to the Persian Court. Jaubert, on his way to Iran was captured and imprisoned in Turkey, but Romieu managed to reach Iran and to present Napoleon's letter to the Shah.¹

The Shah, in order to show his full agreement to Napoleon's mission, sent Mirza Mohammad Reza Khan, the governor of Ghazvin, to France at the head of an expedition. This mission visited Napoleon at Finkenstein, in eastern Prussia, and submitted the Shah's letter to him together with some precious presents. The two sides concluded a treaty known as the Finkenstein Treaty. The Franco-Iranian Treaty of Finkenstein is of high importance to Iran and is regarded to be the beginning of direct French influences on Iranian culture.

According to the third and fourth articles of this treaty, Napoleon confirmed that Georgia was an integral part of Iran and that he would do his best to persuade the Russians to evacuate Georgia and other Iranian territory.

According to the sixth and seventh articles Napoleon guaranteed to send adequate military instructors and modern arms to Iran and to modernize the infantry, artillery and cavalry forces of the country.

According to the eighth, ninth and twelfth articles Iran, in return, promised to break off all her political and commercial relations with Great Britain and undertook to enter into war against Russia and Great Britain if these two countries happened to declare war against

¹Ibid., p. 94.

France. Iran also agreed to let the French army pass through the country whenever France decided to attack India by land.¹

French Mission in Iran

The only result from such a treaty was the expedition of a French military mission headed by General Gardane with seventy commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Upon their arrival in 1807, they immediately set to work and within less than two years they succeeded in training a small army along European lines.

Fath Ali Shah was very pleased with his relations with France and hoped that he could restore Georgia to Iran. But, this friendly relation did not last long. All the Shah's hopes were soon ended in disappointment when Napoleon, in 1807, entered into negotiations with Russia and concluded a peace treaty known as the Treaty of Tilsit with Tsar Alexander. Fath Ali Shah felt very much offended and ordered the French mission to leave the country.

Yet, in 1807, Napoleon destroyed the edifice of friendship he had built by concluding the treaty of Tilsit with Russia. The Shah felt offended and betrayed. In 1809, he expelled Gardane and was ready to receive a British mission which offered him an alliance.²

Great Britain and Iran

England was very much alarmed by the increase of Napoleon's power in Iran. To attract the favor of the Shah, the British government immediately appointed Sir Harford Jones as the envoy extraordinary

¹Ibid., pp. 95, 96, 97, 98.

²Lenczowski, George, Russia and the West in Iran, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1949), p. 2.

and despatched him to Iran in 1807. Sir Harford Jones was vested with full powers to negotiate a treaty between the king of England and Shah of Iran. He proposed to the Shah a British alliance, together with an annual subsidy of one hundred and twenty thousand English pounds. He also proposed the services of the British officers for training the Persian army. England, like France, did not remain faithful to her promises and did not really intend to strengthen Iran against her powerful enemy, Russia.

Iran was left alone

Napoleon entered into a war against Russia in 1812. England, in order to weaken the power of Napoleon, established friendly relations with Russia. The three great European powers were now at war with one another. Napoleon was at war with Russia and had no intention of attacking India. England, seeing that no danger was threatening her colony, stopped helping Persia. Iran was thus left alone and in 1812 was attacked by Russia.

Wars between Iran and Russia

The wars between Iran and Russia fall into two distinct periods. The first period of the wars lasted ten years during which time the Iranian army won some successes, but, at last, ended with a defeat in 1812. In 1813 a treaty known as the Gulistan Treaty was concluded between the two countries.

According to this treaty Iran confirmed possession of Georgia by Russia. In addition to that, the treaty reserved the exclusive right of navigation on the Caspian Sea for Russia. Iran also agreed to let

no country but Russia keep warships on the Caspian Sea.

The war, thus begun, lasted ten years. As long as their interests were at stake, French and English officers participated in this war. As soon as the policy of France and Great Britain changed in Europe, Iran was invited by these two countries to make peace with Russia. Iran, in reality, was like a chessman on the chessboard of Europe and was being moved or stopped according to the whims and wishes of France and England.¹

The second period of wars between Iran and Russia dates from 1826. Having defeated Napoleon, the Russians, once more, attacked Iran in 1826. They succeeded in penetrating into Azarbaijan and capturing Tabriz. At last, by the intervention of the British ambassador, peace was made in 1828 and a second treaty known as the treaty of Turkman Chay was concluded.

According to this treaty Erivan and Nakhichevan, two Persian districts, were left to Russia, a heavy indemnity was imposed on Iran, an exclusive right of navigation was given to the Russian ships and special economic and commercial concessions were granted to the Russian commercial agents in Iran.

Hostilities with Turkey

Between 1821 and 1823 a series of hostilities took place between Iran and Turkey. The Turks were defeated in all the battles although the Iranians were inferior in numbers. In 1823, peace was made between the two countries and a treaty known as the Treaty of Erzerum was concluded.

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 294.

The political situation of Iran during this period can be best summed up by citing a quotation from Browne's Literary History of Persia.

Politically the chief features of his reign (Fath Ali Shah) were the Anglo-French rivalry typified by the missions of Malcolm and Harford Jones Brydges on the one hand, Jaubert and General Gardane on the other (A.D. 1800-1808), the growing menace of Russia, resulting in the successive disastrous treaties of Gulistan (A.D. 1813) and Turkman Chay (A.D. 1828) and the war with Turkey in A.D. 1821, concluded in 1823 by the Treaty of Erzerum.¹

Fath Ali Shah's death

In 1833, the Shah's favorite son, Abbas Mirza, the crown prince, died. The Shah survived him only about one year and died at the age of sixty-eight in October 1834, "Leaving fifty-seven sons and forty-six daughters to mourn his death!"²

Mohammad Shah and the Babi movement.

Fath Ali Shah was succeeded by his grandson Mohammad Shah who was on the throne till January 1848. The outstanding events of his time are the fruitless siege of Herat by the Persians, the continual Anglo-Russian rivalry in Persia and above all the appearance of the Babi religion in 1844. Sayyed Ali Mohammad, the Bab, of Shiraz, just one thousand years after the disappearance of the twelfth Imam of the Shiahs, the Mahdi, called himself an intermediary or channel of Grace between the concealed Imam and his faithful followers and so he called himself the Bab, meaning "the door" in

¹Browne, E.G., A Literary History of Persia (Cambridge University Press, 1928), Vol. 4., p. 146.

²Ibid., p. 146.

Arabic. The Babi movement led to the formation of a religion known as the Babai religion to-day.

Nasiru'd-Din Shah and Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir

Mohammad Shah was succeeded by his sixteen-year old son, Nasiru'd-Din Shah in 1848. Immediately after his accession to the throne he appointed Mirza Taqi Khan as his Prime Minister.

Mirza Taqi Khan's father was a cook to Kaim Makam, the first vizier to Mohammad Shah. Noticing that Mirza Taqi Khan was an intelligent and promising boy, Kaim Makam paid much attention to his education. In a very short time, Taqi Khan came to be a well-educated youth ready to hold an office in the government.

Unfortunately, the youth period of the late Amir is unknown to us, because he was an unimportant person and nobody cared to write the events of Amir's life at that time.¹

He soon entered into the service of Mohammad Khan, Amir Nezam, the commander-in-chief to Nasiru'd-Din Mirza, and accompanied him in a journey to St. Petersburg (Now Leningrad) on the occasion of an embassy to Russia. He then headed a commission which was to settle a frontier dispute between Iran and Turkey at Erzerum.

After the death of Mohammad Khan, Amir Nezam, Taqi Khan was elected in his place and was titled Amir-Nezam. He, then, was promoted to the rank of chief officer of the Crown Prince, Nasiru'd-Din Mirza who was living at Tabriz at that time. Shortly after his ascension to the throne, Nasiru'd-Din Shah elected him as his Prime Minister.

¹Eqbal, Abbas, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir (Tehran: University of Tehran, 1962), p. 5.

Mirza Taqi Khan managed to put an end to all the riots and disorders which had been brought about during the succession of the king. The Shah, in return to Amir's services, bestowed the title of Amir-Kabir (the Great Prince) on him. Amir Kabir is duly called the father of modern education in Iran, because it was through him that, for the first time, European teachers were employed and the first modern technological school known as, "Darul-Funoon" was established in Persia.

Mirza Taqi Khan, better known as the Amir-i-Nizam, who, notwithstanding his lowly origin (his father was cook to the Q'aim-Maqam) was one of the greatest men and most honest, capable and intelligent ministers produced by Persia in modern times.¹

During the short period in which he had the office of Prime Minister, he did his best to alleviate the miseries and ignorance of his fellow countrymen and to found a new education for them. Dr. Issa Sadiq, the notable Iranian educator, in his "History of Education in Persia," enumerates the services rendered by Amir Kabir.² The following is a list of Amir's services to Iran.

1. In collaboration with the European teachers, Amir Kabir turned to the training of the Persian army. The army was provided with sufficient provisions and amunitions and the salaries of the army officers were regularly paid.

¹ Brown, E.G., op.cit., p. 152.

² Sadiq, Issa, op.cit., pp. 228-229.

2. By the formation of a modern military force, roads became safe, commerce became active and a regular postal system was organized throughout the country.

3. A balance was brought about in the finance of the country by arranging definite scales of salaries for the public servants. It was carried out by putting an end to bribery, by modifying taxation in the interest of the public and by cutting life-pensions which were given to idlers and mullahs (Shiah priests).

4. He sent a group of students to Europe to study science and technology, employed foreign teachers and established the first technological school in Tehran.

5. He prevented British and Russian officials from interfering in the affairs of the country and creating agitation and confusion among the people.

6. He bestowed a special care on the public health of the people, set up an examination system for those who wanted to become physicians, had people vaccinated against diseases, established a state hospital in Tehran, had quarantines built on the frontiers to prevent the introduction of cholera, assigned a physician for each army regiment, had drinking waters protected against contamination and so on.

7. He restricted the influences of the mullahs and prevented them from interfering in the governmental and educational affairs.

Amir's death

Iran was now on her way to progress, but the foreigners and

those whose interests were at stake began to frustrate Amir's promising plans. They began to disturb the relations between Amir and the Shah. They told the Shah that Amir was plotting against him to overthrow his kingship. The young and inexperienced Shah was very much intimidated by such news. Amir-Kabir was deposed and was tragically put to death in his own estate in Kahashan in 1852.

The execution of Amir-i-Nizam was, indeed, a calamity for Persia; for it arrested the progress which had been so painfully achieved and, as the near future was to prove, it had an equally disastrous effect on her external relations.¹

2. The Economic Conditions of the Country in this Period

Due to the successive wars between Iran and Russia and to the heavy indemnities, resulting from them, the country had become economically weak and poor. On the other hand, the extravagances of the Shah's court, the heavy expenses for the maintenance of the Shah's harem, the indulgences and wastefulnesses of the princes, life pensions given to mullahs and many other unnecessary expenses caused the country to become absolutely poor and impoverished.

Fath Ali Shah had appointed his numerous sons as governors to different provinces of Iran. These princes who were vested with full powers would oppress the poor provincial people and would impose heavy taxes on them.

¹Sykes, Sir Percy, op. cit., p. 346.

The Persian grandees, who are the governing class, are not only merciless in their exactions but care little for the welfare of the country.¹

Taxes thus collected were not used for the welfare of the people but were squandered by the pleasure-loving princes.

The taxes were collected, concessions were granted, and presents were offered, all for the benefit of the Shah and his courtiers whose extravagances kept Persia poor.²

Fath Ali Shah had left behind him a fabulous treasure of gold and jewels. Shortly after his death this huge treasure, instead of being used for the well-being of the country, was robbed by one of his sons and was distributed among courtiers, princes and army officers.³

On the other hand, due to the unsafeness of the roads and to the lack of other means of communication, commerce became slackened. Foreign merchants, due to the lack of stability in the political affairs of the country, were not willing to invest their capitals in Iran.

The economy of Iran became slightly improved during the time of Amir Kabir, but later, due to the extravagances of Nasiru'd-Din Shah and his retinue, the country became miserably poor.

During the last years of his reign, Persia was exploited by the Shah, by Amin-u-Sultan (his Prime Minister) and by his rival Naib-u-Sultan, the Shah's favorite son; and Persian saw with indignation the national resources pledged to foreigners for money which the Shah spent on his own pleasures.⁴

¹Sir Percy Sykes, op. cit., p. 384.

²Ibid., p. 382.

³Eqbal, Abass, op. cit., pp. 178-179.

⁴Sykes, Sir Percy, op. cit., p. 395.

Persia could not get rid of her economic difficulties even when Reza Shah, the late king came into power. The First World War did not leave Persia untouched. The country was greatly damaged so much so that when in 1922 Dr. Millispaugh, the American economic expert, was employed by the Iranian government to improve the economy of the country, one of the newspapers of Tehran welcomed the American Financial Mission by the following sentences;

You are the last doctor called to the death-bed of a sick person. If you fail, the patient will die. If you succeed, the patient will live. I do not applaud your arrival. I shall applaud, if you succeed.¹

3. Social and Religious Conditions in this Period

Social Structure

Iranian society could be divided into the following segments. •

The Elite Group

Although small in number, they were the most powerful class of the society. They owned land and held governmental offices. At the head of this group stood the Shah. He was an absolute ruler to whom the threefold functions of government, legislative, executive and judicial were granted through divine right. His duties were very heavy because no council or assembly would assist or control him.

¹ Millispaugh, A.C., The American Task in Persia (New York and London: The Century Co., 1925), p. 3.

He was the pivot upon which turned the entire machinery of public life.¹

His subjects had to obey him and to submit to his orders without questioning. Any deviation from his orders meant death or exile.

In case of rebellion or of conspiracy against the throne, the monarch could put to death hundreds of his subjects and confiscate their property.²

After the Shah, the grand vizier had the second rank. He had the duty of controlling all the departments of the government and to direct the entire policy of the state under the supervision of the Shah.

The Mullahs or the Religious Doctors

The religious power was vested in the Mujtahids "whose position may be roughly described as analogous to that of a cardinal in the church of Rome."³ They lived either in Iran or outside in Karbala or Najaf. The Mullahs were not to be trifled with because on numerous occasions they had risen against the Shah and had shown their influence and authority to him and to their faithful followers.

Businessmen and other City dwellers

They formed the majority of the urban Iranian society. They were usually businessmen, craftsmen, shopkeepers and other skilled.

¹ Sykes, Sir Percy, op. cit., p. 381.

² Ibid., p. 382.

³ Browne, E.G., op. cit., Vol. 4, p. 353.

and unskilled workers, who were leading a simple life and were satisfied with what they earned. They were not provided with any kind of education or public sanitation by the state. These people were under the influence of the Mullahs and were, in reality, a good means for the realization of the Mullah's whims and wishes.

Peasants

At the bottom of the Iranian society lay and still lies a great majority of the population who live in rural areas. Persian peasants deserve careful study because of the role they play in the economic life of the country. Though, through hard work and drudgery, they produced much, unfortunately they gained very little. A great portion of the land yieldings was taken by the landlord and what was left was not sufficient to support the peasants and their families. Due to the lack of sanitary organizations, Persian peasants were always threatened by dangerous diseases. No education was provided for them and no modern agricultural implements were introduced in their farms.

The lot of the landless peasant in Persia is a miserable one, and a life of privation is his only prospect. Many are on the point of starvation for the greater part of the year, while others have to content themselves with barley bread only.¹

The Tribes

To get a full picture of different social elements in Persia, one has to study the Iranian Tribes such as the Kurds, Lurs, Bakhtiari

¹Fateh, Mustafa Khan, Economic Position of Persia (London: P.S. King and Son, 1926), p. 15.

and the like, to be found all over the country. Iranian tribes who represent ten per cent of the total population are nomadic herders of sheep, goats, camels and the like. The Tribes have always been famous for their bravery, their skilled marksmanship and horsemanship. Several ruling dynasties such as the Afshars, the Zands and the Qajars have sprung from tribal warriors.

Although the tribesmen are of different origin and use, in many cases, different languages, their customs are the same.¹

According to season they move from their winter quarters to summer quarters, looking for pastures to graze their flocks. They graze them on the mountainous lands in spring and on the plains in autumn. Each tribe has a chief whom everybody obeys and to whom everybody shows strong loyalty. Their dwelling places are black tents, usually made of goat's hair cloth, which are simply furnished by rugs woven by the women of the tribes.

The rate of illiteracy is very high among the tribesmen. Very few people can read or write although their chiefs are men of excellent education and some of them have been educated in foreign countries.

Little change has been brought about for the betterment of life among the tribesmen. They still raise their flocks, cultivate their farms and make their dairy products in an old and primitive fashion. Education and sanitation are not widely spread among them. In 1953 a council called the Higher Tribal Council, was established under the Ministry of the Court.

¹Sykes, Sir Percy, op. cit., p. 392.

This organization was to improve tribal health and education, develop tribal agriculture and improve the general economic situation, introduce administrative reforms in dealing with the tribes, cultivate intra-tribal unity, and inspire devotion to Shah and nation.¹

Women

Although women are not a social class by themselves, as they follow the class of their fathers or husbands, yet the fact that they were almost completely segregated from the men, makes it necessary to describe their condition during the Qajar period separately. At that time they had little or no social status. They had to be veiled and were not allowed to appear in public or to associate with men. No education was provided for them. Their social responsibilities were to breed and bring up children, to manage the house and be obedient to their husbands.

Woman in Persia is popularly supposed to be veiled, bejeweled, being the slave and toy of a jealous lord; her natural end, the sack, the bowstring, or a despised old age. All this is a mistake.²

Education in this Period

It can be concluded from the above that the Qajar period was a period of confusion and commotion. In order to establish unity, solidarity and homogeneity among the different ethnic groups of Persia and also to isolate Persia from other Islamic countries and

¹Donald, N. Wilber, op. cit., p. 169.

²Wills, C.J., Persia As It Is, (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1887), p. 63.

to revive the lost Persian glory, the Safavid kings made the Shi'ah Sect of Islam the official religion of the country. They did their best to spread the newly-established religion all over the country and to begin a series of hostilities against the Ottoman Empire by repudiating the Sunni Sect of Islam, and by rejecting and refuting the first three of the, "four Orthodox Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman."¹

The first repercussion of such a policy was the hostilities and enmities of the Ottoman Empire in the west and those of the Uzbeks in the east against Iran which resulted in bloody wars throughout the Safavid period.

The Ottoman Empire consisted of a large portion of Asia Minor, of the coasts of the Black Sea, of the Eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea and of the Balkan Peninsula. Such a vast Empire was like an obstruction between Iran and Europe. Due to religious hostilities between the two countries, Iran came to be confined within her own four walls and to be deprived of having direct contacts with European countries. The Safavid period coincided with the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, namely, with the Renaissance and awakening of European countries. Having been isolated from Europe by the Ottoman Empire, Iran was not exposed to modern sciences and industries and gradually fell behind the Caravan of progress and civilization. During this time, Russia became a neighbor to Iran. That limited and confined Iran even more. The result was that Iran did not have any access to the important centers of science and knowledge.²

The same situation continued during the time of the Qajars.

The Mullahs had a great influence on every phase of Iranian life during the time of the Safavids. They had acquired full control over the judicial affairs of the country and were considered the true

¹Brown, E.G., op. cit., p. 17.

²Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 250.

executors of justice. All matters concerning land, marriage, divorce and the like were referred to them. They had also in their hands the education of the people. A good system of education, to the Mullahs, was that which was based on Shia'h doctrine. They held that the Shia'h religion was the only religion which could guarantee man's happiness in this world and his salvation in the world hereafter.

The religious policy of the Safavid kings made people turn completely to religion. They regarded religious teachings as the true knowledge. The title, "Alim" or scholar was used for only religious doctors. School curricula were nearly confined to the study of the principles of religion. The study of sciences and technology was frowned upon. The works of great scientists had little value to the religious doctors. Such an attitude toward secular knowledge was still prevalent in the time of the Qajars.¹

Education in the Safavid and Qajar periods

In order to bring to light the educational practices and the aims on which they were based in the time of the Qajars, we will have to take a glance back to the Safavid period and examine briefly, the aims of education, methods of instruction, curriculums of study and educational institutions and compare them with those of the Qajar period as the latter was, in reality, the continuation of the Safavid period.

The Aim of Education

Before the Safavid kings came into power, the aim of education was to educate children according to the Islamic principles. Now,

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 301.

due to the religious policy of the Safavid rulers, the aim was to educate children according to the Shia'h principles. The child was instructed to reject the first three Orthodox Caliphs, to denounce and curse them, to regard Orthodox Muslims as the infidels and to consider the Shia'h religion the most perfect religion in the world.

The aim was nearly the same in the Qajar period with the exception that children were not encouraged to curse and anathematize the first three Caliphs.

Educational Institutions

To spread their religious policy and infuse it into the learner, the Safavids began to build many educational institutions which came to be termed as Madaris (Schools). Mosques were also used for this purpose. Schools and Mosques such as the Shah Mosque, the Sheikh Lutfullah Mosque and the Chahar Bagh School were constructed in Isfahan. These buildings are said to be among the most beautiful Islamic buildings of the world.

Few changes were brought about during the time of the Qajars except that some more mosques and schools were added to the previous ones.

Curriculum

The curriculum of study used to be carried out in two stages; Maktabs or old-fashioned one-room schools and Madaris or advanced schools of Shia'h theology. In the Maktab, the child was taught to develop a love for Ali and his sons, the true successors of the

Prophet. Then he had to go through the Qura'n, the study of the Persian language and elementary Arabic.

Books chosen for these purposes were too difficult for the learner to understand. Whether the child liked them or not, he had to learn them, to memorize them and to recite them before his teacher. Upon the completion of the Maktab stage, brilliant students usually went on with their higher studies at Madaris and the less able ones would seek a job to earn a living.

At the Madaris, the learner had to go through a more difficult and painstaking course of studies. He was permitted to read no books save those written on the authenticity of the Shia'h religion. In order to become versed in and develop a mastery of the Shia'h principles, the learner had to go through a series of Arabic books full of complicated words and phraseologies. If ever, he wanted to read any other books, he would be permitted to do so, on condition that the books were concerned with the rejection and refutation of other religions especially the Sunni sect of Islam.

Another class of Shia' theological writings consists of polemical works directed against the Sunnis, the Sufis, the Shaykhis, the Babis, and the Christians.¹

Besides the Arabic textbooks, many other books concerning Shia'h jurisprudence, and sayings and deeds of the Prophet and the Imams, were written in a very simple and easy Persian. These books soon became popular among the people and provided a good code of behavior for the masses.

¹Browne, E.G., op. cit., p. 420.

The great achievement of the Shi'ah doctors of the later Safavid period, such as the Majlisis, was their popularization in the vernacular. They realized that to reach the people they must employ the language of the people, and that in a simple form, and they reaped their reward in the intense and widespread enthusiasm for the Shi'a cause which they succeeded in creating.¹

When the student finished one or more books successfully and was qualified to teach or to narrate Shia'h principles, he was usually granted a permission which enabled him to teach those books. This permission which was in place of the university diplomas of to-day, was written by the teacher on the covering of the book which the student was to teach.

During the Qajar period, no change was brought about in the curriculum items with the exception that philosophy and metaphysics were also included in the program of study. Besides, people stopped cursing the three Orthodox Caliphs in public and in social gatherings. As a result of direct contacts between Iran and European countries, Iranian army officers, members of the royal family and the sons of the aristocratic classes began to study the French and English languages.

Method

During the Safavid, the method of instruction was unbearably difficult. The learner had to abstain from all wordly pleasures in the hope that, some day, he would become a well-informed mullah and would be respected by all. Children were not allowed to play or engage in recreational activities.

¹Ibid., p. 417.

From their early childhood, children were assigned difficult Arabic books to read and to bear in mind complicated and abstract subjects. They had to go away from their homes in search of knowledge, to put up with poverty and indigence, to lose their eyesight in poring over illegible textbooks and complicated commentaries in the light of a candle or under the moonlight, to lose health and energy in the bloom of youth due to lack of food or to bad food, to pursue discussions willy nilly and in the end, if they succeeded and attained a certain stage of study, they would be drowned in an ocean of hypocrisy and prejudice.¹

In the Qajar time no basic change was introduced in the method of instruction. The old and harsh method was still being practiced except that in the case of foreign languages modern methods were applied. English and French were taught through conversation rather than mere reading and writing.²

From the above brief comparison, one can deduce this striking conclusion that for three-hundred and fifty years, namely, from the coronation of Shah Ismail, the first ruler of the Safavid dynasty, in 1502 till the establishment of the first modern school in 1851, education in Iran had remained unchanged and had been kept in a state of stagnation. Safavid kings managed to overthrow all the local governments, to establish a unity among the people and to maintain the independence of the country under a pure Iranian dynasty. Shia'h religion came to be the official religion of the country. Any deviation from it meant loss of life, excommunication or exile.

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 277.

²Ibid., p. 302.

While the Safavid kings were pursuing such a religious policy in Iran, people in Europe, due to the Renaissance and the revival of learning, had begun to be awakened and to adapt Christianity to the needs and demands of the time. People, in Germany, under the leadership of Martin Luther (1483-1546), the German social reformer, were preparing to break the chains of religious superstitions and to liberate Germany and Europe from the influences of the Pope and his corrupt church.

European countries were on their way to progress while Iran was lagging behind under the rule of unworthy kings and dishonest governors. Politically and economically Iran became weak and vacillating. In such a chaotic situation education was obviously neglected. It was not until Russia attacked Iran during the reign of Fath Ali Shah and defeated the country and annexed Caucasia and Georgia that Iranian rulers awakened from their long winter sleep and began to think of new means by which they could protect Iran against the invasions of the powerful enemy. They began to borrow from European civilization; they employed foreign teachers, sent students abroad, translated books from European languages and above all, opened modern schools after the European style.

Contacts of the Iranian with western civilization will be studied throughout the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

IRAN AND THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF EDUCATION FROM 1851 TO 1906

Factors Underlying French Influence on the Educational System of Iran

The main purpose of this chapter is to bring to light some aspects of the European impact especially that of France on the Iranian culture and education during the 19th century. Among European countries France is said to have impressed Iranian education more than any other country. This influence is evident in every phase of the Iranian life. The French language began to be studied by the secondary school students and became a basis on which further improvements and developments were founded.

The French language was introduced into Iran earlier than any other European language. The Iranians have benefited, to a very great extent, from this language. Nearly all scientific terminology concerning modern European sciences has been borrowed from French. Medical and pharmaceutical terminology and those of chemistry, physics, mathematics and law, common among the Iranians, have been taken from the French language.¹

The reason why French education was so welcomed and imitated by the Iranian educators and was introduced into the country can be attributed to the following factors.

1. France, unlike England, because of her geographical situation is one of those European countries which has frequently been exposed to outside invasions. In order to preserve the national unity and solidarity

¹Nafisi, Said, "The Unbreakable Relationship" (Sapid and Siah or White and Black) Magazine, No. 528, Tehran: October 1963.

of people and to develop in them a sense of loyalty and patriotism, France has always had to administer a centralized system of education which could bind the nation together against any threats. This goal has been achieved through an intelligent impartation of the cultural heritage termed as the general culture into the students.

The primary purpose of centralization has been to develop a sense of national unity and solidarity in the face of threats to the country's stability from within and from without.¹

The same is, to some extent, true of Iran. From the brief description of the Persian history presented in chapter one, one can deduce that the stability and unity of Persia has always been threatened by external invasions and internal riots and confusions. On the other hand, Iran is a composite of ethnic groups with different languages, religions, customs, rites and rituals. To unite all these **groups** and to bind them together in the face of any danger, a need for a centralized system of education was felt and the French system of education with its highly centralized system of administration, prescribed curriculum of study and unified methods of instruction could serve these purposes.

2. France came to know Persia and to get acquainted with her culture and literature before any other European country. This acquaintance dates from the Safavid period and even earlier when such French tourists as Adam Olearius who compiled a book on Persia in 1639

¹Kandel, op. cit., p. 153.

and Chevalier de Chardin who visited Persia in 1665 and stayed in Isfahan for six years and published his book in 1686 called, "Chevalier de Chardin; Journey in Persia and in East India."¹ The works of the Persian poets were also translated by the French writers. Amongst the Persian poets, Sa'di was the first poet whose Gulistan was translated into French in 1634, by Andre du Ryer and was called, "Gulistan or the Empire of Roses, by Sa'di, the Prince of the Turkish and Persian Poets."² Later in 1878 the Shah-Namah, the great Persian epic by Firdowsi was translated by Jules Mohl and was called, "the Book of kings, by Abul Kasim Firdowsi, Published and Translated and commented by Jules Mohl, 7 Volumes."³ It was through these tourists and writers that Persia came to be known by the French and a foundation was laid for the political, military and educational relationships of the two countries during the Qajars.

3. Students were sent abroad to study science and technology. Most of these students were dispatched to France, Belgium and Austria. These educated people played a great role in introducing French education in Iran and have contributed, to a great extent, to the acquaintance of the Iranians with French culture and civilization.

¹"Chevalier de Chardin: Voyage en Perse et aux Indes Orientales."

²"Gulistan, ou L'Empire des Roses, Compose par Sa'di, Prince des Poetes Turcs et Persans."

³"Le Livre des Rois, par Abul Kasim Firdowsi, Publie, Traduit et Commente par Jules Mohl, 7 Volumes."

4. Besides the above factors, there are also some points of similarity between the old Persian education and the French system of education which made it easier for the latter to be introduced into Persia. Both methods, emphasize the importance of accumulation of knowledge and loading the mind of the learner with various kinds of information. Such an education, according to the advocates of faculty psychology, will sharpen the mind and will enable the learner to cope with difficulties later on in his life. The emphasis, in both methods, is on the subject-matter rather than the child. A certain body of knowledge has to be mastered by the learner regardless of his ability to learn it or his interest in it.

The secondary school curriculum has in the same way been dominated by the emphasis on culture general not only as a body of knowledge to be mastered by the educated person and particularly by the elite of the nation but as a method of intellectual training, culture d'esprit.¹

French education began to be introduced either by the Persians themselves through establishing schools after the European fashion, by the expedition of students abroad or by the French religious missions who set up missionary schools throughout the country. Daru'l-Funun is said to have been the beginning of direct influence of European education on the educational system of Iran.

Daru'l-Funun

Daru'l-Funun or the "House of Arts" was founded by Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir in 1851. The factors underlying the establishment of

¹ Kandel, op. cit., p. 154.

this educational organization were, first of all, the security of the country and the stability in the political affairs during the reign of Nasiru'd-Din Shah. Secondly, Amir, while living in Tabriz, paid a visit to Russia where he visited Russian military and technological schools. Besides his journey to Russia, he visited Turkey and was informed that a technological school had been established in Istanbul. These two journeys impressed him and made him think of a similar school for the Iranian students.¹

Bitter experiences from the wars with Russia and successive defeats due to the old-fashioned weapons and disorderly troops made Amir think of a school where Iranian troops would be trained under European instructors.

Despite all the difficulties brought about by those who were against Amir's decision, and who would try to disturb the good relations between Amir and the Shah, Amir resisted bravely and did his utmost to introduce modern sciences in the country. The following short letter from Amir to the Shah is a good example of Amir's progressive plans at that time.

May I be devoted to the dust of your feet. This humble servant (Amir) asks permission to be allowed to spend all the income of the country, to the last penny, on the upkeep of the army and the improvement of Daru'l-Funun. He requests to be excused to give any money in the form of life pensions or salaries to the idlers and hangers-on who are a disgrace to the country. I ask your permission that no money will be given to such people. Such a permission depends on His Majesty's eminent decision. Your devoted servant, Taqi.²

¹Abbas, Eqbal, op. cit., p. 157.

²Sayyed Taqi Taqawi, A Page from the one hundred and ten year History of Daru'l-Funun. (Amuzash va Parvaresh, Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1957), p. 39.

In 1851 Daru'l-Funun was inaugurated by the Shah, while, Amir, the real founder of the school, had been assassinated thirteen days earlier. The school began to work with seven teachers who had been employed from Austria and with a hundred students who had been selected from the noble families of Tehran. These seven teachers together with a number of European teachers who were previously working in Iran and with a number of Iranian interpreters who had been to Europe, constituted the teaching staff of Daru'l-Funun. By 1860 all the Austrian teachers had left Iran and had been replaced by such French teachers as Capitaine Alexandre de Genie who taught military science at the college, M. Albert Lemaire who was sent to Persia by the French government to teach military music, M. Felix Vauvillier who came to Persia on behalf of a French syndicate for a railway but was afterwards employed as a teacher of minerology at the college and M.J.B. Nicolas who was employed to teach artillery at Daru'l-Funun.¹

The school had seven branches of study. They were taught in seven departments as follows:

1) Infantry department, 2) Cavalry and Artillery department, 3) Engineering department, 4) Department of medicine, 5) Department of surgery, 6) Department of pharmacology and 7) Mining engineering department.

In all departments natural sciences, geography and history, mathematics and the French language were taught. Sometime later painting and music departments were added to the above fields of study. All

¹Browne, E.G., The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia (Cambridge: University Press, 1914), pp. 154-155.

the expenditures were borne by the government. Besides the tuition fees, students were also given uniforms and the mid-day meal at school.

It was the first time, throughout the long history of the country, that the state had directly established a school and assumed all its expenditures. It was the first time the state took on the responsibility to educate the people. For this reason the year 1851, must be considered an era of educational revolution in Iran.¹

Daru'l-Funun was in working order for forty years. During this period sixteen Iranian teachers and twenty-six European teachers taught in this school and over one thousand and a hundred students were graduated from it. On the average, about two-hundred and seventy students were attending the school each year.²

The graduates of Daru'l-Funun who were mostly from the noble families did their best to familiarize the people of their country with modern science and with the new discoveries. Some of them held high office and could realize their progressive plans.

A very valuable service done by the teachers, interpreters and the graduates of Daru'l-Funun was the translation or compilation of scientific or literary textbooks which were printed in the printing house of the school and were distributed to the students.³ Professor

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 351.

²Nasrullah Falsafi, A Short History of Education in Iran. Amuzeh va Parvaresh, Magazine No. 7, 8 (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), p. 460.

³Year Book and Statistics (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1943-1948), p. 7.

Edward Browne in his Press and Poetry of Modern Persia has given a list of a hundred and sixty-two printed books compiled or translated by the older and more recent teachers of the Daru'l-Funun College such as Surgery by Dr. Polak, Physiology by Dr. Albu, The Science of Music by M. Lemaire, French-Persian Dictionary by Mirza Ali Akbar Khan, French-Persian Dialogue and French Verbs by the same.¹

Establishment of the Ministry of Education

Ali Gholi Mirza was a great educator who, after Amir Kabir, rendered great services to the education of the country. In 1851 he was appointed president of Daru'l Funun. In 1855 the Ministry of education was established in Tehran and Ali Gholi Mirza was made Minister of Education. He remained in this office for twenty-two years during which time he did his best to found modern Iranian education on the French basis.

↓
The first Ministry of Education was founded in 1855, but the essential form of the present educational system dates from the organization of an education council in 1897, when the decision was taken to use the French system of education as a model. This system, with its emphasis on the accumulation of a great mass of fact, is still in force²
↑

Expedition of Students to Europe

Another step towards the introduction of European sciences and technology was taken during the Qajars by sending Iranian students to

¹Browne, E.G., op. cit., pp. 157-165.

²Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 203.

European countries especially to France. In the previous chapter, it was mentioned that Iran, in order to protect herself against the aggressions of Russia and Britain, asked Napoleon's alliance and that according to a treaty concluded between the two sides, a military mission headed by General Gardane entered the country. General Gardane promised Abbas Mirza, the Crown Prince, to send a groups of Persian students to Paris every year.¹ Gardane's promise was not fulfilled because of Napoleon's peace with Russia and the departure of the French Military Mission in 1809.

During this time, Sir Harford Jones, the British envoy extraordinary, undertook to take with him two Iranian youths to London. These two students; Mohammad Kazim and Mirza Baba Afshar were selected from the noble families of Azarbaijan. They arrived in London in October 1811. One of them died in London but the other, Mirza baba stayed in London and studied medicine. On his return to Iran, he was appointed private doctor of the Crown Prince. In 1815, five more students were sent to London by Abbas Mirza. These people, too, were from Azarbaijan and were dispatched to London in the company of Colonel D'arcy who, at that time, was serving in Abbas Mirza's army.

Mirza Saleh, one of the five students came back to Iran with a good knowledge in English, French and Latin. He was appointed interpreter and special advisor to the Crown Prince.²

¹Mujtaba Minuwi, The First Caravan of Knowledge (Yakma Magazine No. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Tehran 1953), p. 182.

²Ibid., p. 188.

The expedition of students to France begins from 1844 when by the order of Mohammad Shah five Iranian students were sent to Paris.¹

Seven years after the establishment of Daru'l-Funun, the government of Iran dispatched a group of forty-two students, selected from the graduates of Daru'l-Funun, to Paris. Such an expedition was of great importance to Iran and affected her education to a very great extent. It was through these people that the foundation of modern Iranian education was laid on the French basis.

Dr. Sadiq in his "History of Education in Iran" points out that these forty-two students greatly influenced education and that they brought about an intellectual revolution among their fellow countrymen.² He also hints that later improvements in education were mostly due to services rendered and innovations made by these students. Some of these people held high offices in different governmental departments. One of them, Nizamu'd-Din Ghaffari, was appointed Minister of Education twice.

French Missionary Schools in Iran

The history of the educational and religious activities of Christian and non-Christian missions in Iran dates from the time of the Safavids. Iran established diplomatic and commercial relations with England, Spain, Portugal, Holland and Russia during the reign of Shah

¹Private Notes in the possession of Mr. Kazim Birashk, the budgetary assistant of the Plan Organization of Iran.

²Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 353.

Abbas.¹ Shah Abbas, although a staunch believer in Islam, had no prejudices against the followers of other religions. He was specially very liberal-minded towards Christians and permitted them to set up their own churches wherever they wished.

Having heard about Shah Abbas, Louis XIII, king of France, decided to enter into commercial negotiations with him and to become a rival to Spanish, Venetian, English and Dutch merchants. In 1622, Louis XIII, dispatched one of his courtiers, Louis des Hayes de Courmesin to the Persian court. This man was apparently sent to Iran for religious purposes but in reality he was vested with full powers to begin commercial negotiations with Shah Abbas. The following is the version of part of an order issued by Louis XIII which is still to be found among the documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris.

The main purposes of the expedition of M. Des Hayes to Persia are to promulgate and establish Catholic religion and also to establish French power and superiority in that country and to facilitate commerce there.²

Des Hayes set out for Iran via Turkey but due to the hostilities between Iran and the Ottoman Empire, was not allowed to pass the Iranian frontier. He stayed in Turkey for a while and went back to France without any consequences. Soon after this expedition, a clergyman named Pere Pacifique de Provins was dispatched to Iran by Louis XIII. He managed to enter the country and win the Shah's consent for establishing churches in Isfahan and in other cities of

¹Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 68.

²Biani, Khan Baba, Diplomatic Relations of France and Iran Under the Safavids. Amuzesh va Parvaresh, Nos. 8 to 11, Tehran, 1942, p. 21.

Iran. Shah Abbas received him warmly, accepted his proposals and sent him back to France with a letter addressed to the king.

Pere Pacifique de Provins, thus, succeeded in establishing the first religious and political relations between the two countries.¹

After the death of Shah Abbas, due to the lack of stability in the political affairs of the country and also due to the strict religious policy of his successors, the activities of the Christian missions came to a standstill.

The Catholic Lazarist Mission in Iran²

It was under the Qajars that the religious and educational activities of the Christian missions were once more revived in Persia. Eugene Bore, a Catholic priest was appointed by the French government to travel to Turkey, Syria and Iran and set up educational and religious organizations in those countries. In 1837, he arrived in Tabriz and was welcomed by Kamran Mirza, the Regent to Mohammad Shah. In 1839 an order was issued by Mohammad Shah empowering Eugene Bore and the members of his mission to establish missionary schools and charitable organizations. In a short time, the mission succeeded in opening three elementary schools with fifty students in villages near Tabriz.

¹Ibid., p. 26.

²This part is mainly based on the following sources.

1. Private notes by Mr. Ahmadian existing in the archives of St. Louis School in Tehran.
2. Interview with Mr. Ahmadian, the principal of St. Louis School in Tehran.
3. Interview with M. Emile Toulemonde, the present head of the Catholic Lazarist Mission in Iran.
4. Interview with Dr. Issa Sadiq, the Iranian educator.
5. "A **Short** History of Education in Iran", Amuzesh va Parvaresh, No. 7, 8, (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), p. 464.

In 1840, Augene Bore, assisted by Comte de Sercey, the French ambassador to Iran, opened a school with thirty-one students in Isfahan. The activities of the mission were extended to other towns and cities and increased year after year. The mission was supported by the Iranian government, because in 1851, Daru'l-Funun was established and the Iranian leaders were seeking any opportunity to modernize the education of the country. The mission was encouraged to establish a modern school in Tehran. In 1864, due to the efforts of Comte de Gobineau, French ambassador to Iran, a modern European School Called the St. Louis School began to work with twenty students of whom fourteen were Christians and six were Moslims. The latter were all from the royal family. By 1897, this number had risen to four hundred because the mission was strongly supported by the Iranian government and by the aristocratic families who wanted their children to be educated the French way.

In 1935, the Lazarist Society in Paris appointed M. Poiron the head of the Catholic mission in Iran. He was elected the principal of St. Louis School and was asked to teach French at the faculty of sciences. During his time, the number of students attending St. Louis School increased to six hundred.

The Catholic Lazarist mission is still active in Iran and is carrying on its educational, social and religious activities.

The Alliance Israelite Mission in Iran¹

In 1873 the Central Committee of Israelite Alliance in Paris,² decided to provide some kind of education for sixty thousand Jewish people living in Persia. When Nasiru'd-Din Shah was visiting France, the committee tried to win the Shah's consent to its plan but was not successful.

During the reign of Muzaffaru'd-Din Shah the Alliance Committee could win the Shah's agreement concerning the establishment of schools for the Iranian Jewish people. The first school set up by the committee was in a dirty ghetto in the south of Tehran under the supervision of a certain Joseph Cazes who had been dispatched to Iran in 1898 by the Central Committee in Paris.

Since 1898, the Alliance Israelite Mission has succeeded in improving and promoting the education of the Iranian Jews, in providing equipped and well-organized schools for boys and girls in Tehran and in extending its branches to other towns and cities of Iran. According to the statistics issued by the Ministry of Education in 1924, the number of students attending the Alliance Schools were 888 with thirty-nine teachers.³ In 1931, there were seven Alliance schools with 4150 students.⁴

¹This part is mainly based on the following sources.

1. Interview with M. Ohayan, director of courses at the Alliance School of Tehran.
2. Interview with Dr. Sadiq, the Iranian educator.
3. The book, "L'Alliance Israelite Universelle depuis Cent Ans", p. 58 onward, kindly given to the writer by M. Ohayan.

²Comite Central de L'Alliance Israelite.

³Amuzesh va Parvaresh, (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1924), No. 8 and 9, p. 38.

⁴Siassi, Ali Akbar, La Perse au Contact de L'Occident (Paris: Librairie Erneste Leroux, 1931), p. 185.

There are, at present, thirty-one Alliance Schools with 6220 boys and girls. The Alliance Israelite Mission has extended its branches to such towns and cities as Hamadan, Kermanshah, Isfahan, Senendaj, Nehavand, Yezd, Broujerd, Tousserkan, Bijar and Kashan. These schools are not confined only to Jewish students, followers of other religions can attend them too.

The curriculum of these schools is the same as the state schools run by the Ministry of Education with the exception that in Alliance Schools French is taught from the first year of the elementary school. Besides, Jewish religious instruction¹ and the Hebrew language are also taught.

The French Laïque Mission in Iran²

The Laïque Mission began its educational activities from the time of Nasiru'd-Din Shah, but its real contributions to education dates from 1928 during which time the first Laïque school called L'ecole Franco-Persane was set up in Tehran. In 1935 the name was officially changed into the Razi School.

¹Etude de La Loi.

²This part is based on the following sources.

1. Interview with M. Louis Andrieu, the principal of Razi (Franco-Persan) School.
2. Siassi, Ali Akbar, op. cit., p. 185.
3. Papers existing in the archives of the Razi School.
4. Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 356.

In 1931 about two-hundred students were attending the school. Since that time, there has been a fluctuation in the number of students. During the **Second World War** it was between a hundred and sixty-four and a hundred and sixty-eight. At present 449 students attend the School. For the last ten years, the average number of students has been between 400 and 430.

The curriculum of the school is the same as the Alliance school except that here no religious instruction, whether Muslim or Christian, is given.

Other Schools

Along with missionary schools, other schools were established by the Ministry of Education. In 1874, through the collaboration of the Iranian and European teachers, a modern school opened in Tabriz. This school is said to have been the second modern school after Daru'l-Funun.¹ In 1881 a military school was established in Isfahan. Two years later another military school came into existence in Tehran. French, Austrian and Belgian teachers along with the graduates of Daru'l-Funun were appointed to teach in these schools. The first school for girls was set up in 1826 in a village near Kerman.²

The Anjuman-i-Maarif

In 1897, Ja'far Gholi Khan was appointed Minister of Education by Mirza Ali Khan Aminu'd-Dowleh who, at that time, was holding

¹ Nasrullah Falsafi, The History of Education in Iran, Amuzesh va Parvaresh, No. 7 & 8, Tehran: 1934, p. 462.

² Iran Almanac, published by the Echo of Iran. Tehran: 1962, p. 822.

the office of Prime Minister. These two men gathered Persian writers and scholars and managed to organize a society known as, "Anjuman-i-Maarif" or "The Education Council." The main purpose of establishing such a council was to open modern schools and to introduce new scientific findings in the country.

..... The development of the modern educational system more properly dates from 1897 when a society for the establishment of national schools (afterwards known as the Anjuman-i-Maarif, or, Education Council) was founded. Its efforts resulted in the opening of numerous elementary and secondary schools which with some foreign schools formed the basis upon which subsequent progress was made.¹

The council established twelve modern schools some of which were free of charge and some charged a small fee. Some of these schools are still in working order. A regular paper called, "Maarif", a public library known as, "The Central Public library of Iran," and a translation bureau for translating foreign books, were established by the Council.²

Newspapers in Iran

Due to the introduction of printing presses in 1817, books and newspapers began to be printed in the country. Amongst the first books printed in this period were the Qura'n, books concerning the Shiite principles and a book dealing with the history of the reign of Fath Ali Shah.³

¹Encyclopaedia Britanica, Vol. 17, pp. 584, 585.

²Amuzesh va Parvaresh, No. 7 and 8 (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), p. 464.

³Browne, E.G., op. cit., p. 7.

The appearance of the first newspaper of the present form and arrangement took place during the reign of Nasiru'd-Din Shah at the direction of Amir Kabir. It was a weekly publication and was called Ruznama-i-Waqaiyi-i-Ittifaqiyya, or, Paper of Casual Events. The first number of this newspaper appeared in March 20, 1851.

In an article published in the Amuzesh va Parvaresh Magazine, the organ of the Ministry of Education, thirty Persian papers are listed. These papers were either published in Iran or in the Capitals of other countries such as Bombay, Calcutta, Istanbul, Karachi, London and Egypt prior to the proclamation of the Constitution in Persia. Among these papers, there were three papers published in French in Tehran. The first one was a monthly paper named Ruznama-i-Elmyya-i-Dowlat-i-Iran, or, "The Scientific Paper of the Sublime State of Iran". It appeared in 1863 and was in three languages; Persian, Arabic and French. The second one, "Echo de Perse" or "Voice of Persia" published in 1885. The owner of these two papers was Ali Gholi Mirza, the first Minister of Education from 1855 to 1877. The third French paper, "La Patrie" or "The Homeland" appeared in 1877.¹

The Maktab and the Modern Elementary Schools

In order to see to what extent the Foreign influences impressed the educational system of Iran prior to the proclamation of the Constitution, a brief comparison between the Maktab, the old-fashioned

¹Amuzesh & Parvaresh Magazine, No. 7 and 8 (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), pp. 459-464.

elementary school, and a modern elementary school will be presented below.

The Maktab was, as a rule, a one-room primary school which could be set up anywhere. It could be established in a mosque, in a shop or at the residential place of the "Maktabdar" or the owner of the Maktab. The child would usually enter the Maktab at the age of five or six and would stay there not more than the age of fifteen. Those from the well-to-do families might stay longer but children of poor families had to leave the study and go for a job.

Besides the monthly fees which were paid by the parents, the Maktabdar would also be presented gifts when children were able to read or write or to finish a book or a part of the Qur'an. The curriculum of study was not according to the ability or interests of the learner. The child was first taught Persian alphabet and then was assigned to memorize some parts of the Qura'n. Then he had to go through Persian textbooks most of which were in verse.

The choice of textbooks was not according to a regular plan. The ability of the child and the ease or difficulty of the book were not taken into consideration. If the parents came across a book by chance, they would give it to the child to read at the Maktab.¹

There were no chairs or tables available for the children. They had to sit on the ground or on a piece of cloth or a small rug which they brought to the Maktab from home. The method of instruction

¹Sadiq, op. cit., p. 379.

was absolutely harsh and authoritarian. The teacher would sit at the entrance of the Maktab with a long stick in his hand. Grown-up children went to him one at a time and recited what they had been taught in the previous session. The teacher, then, gave them a new lesson and ordered them to teach it to the younger children. After having been taught, the child had to recite the lesson loudly and repeatedly so that there was always a continuous and monotonous humming going round the Maktab. To the Maktabdar, reading aloud and incessantly would help the child learn the correct pronunciation of words, learn how to talk and to concentrate on the lesson. If children failed to memorize the lesson, they were punished and sometimes were severely beaten.

The modern elementary schools were no longer set up in the mosques or shops. They were either established by the state or publicly maintained in a private building. Contrary to the maktab in which all the children were taught in one room, modern schools were divided into rooms or classes to which children were classified according to their age. Each class was assigned to one or more teachers. The salaries of the teachers were either paid by the state or by the principal of the school who would collect fees from the parents.

Although the curriculum of study was divided according to different stages and considered, to some extent, the ability of the learner, nevertheless it was very much overloaded with subjects which were too difficult for the boys of ten or twelve to understand. For example, the

Kamalyeh school which was founded in 1899 had different classes. In the first class Persian alphabet, Muslim religious instruction and the Qur'an were taught. In the second and third class Arabic grammar and reading were taught from difficult Arabic textbooks printed in Beirut. French was also taught from such textbooks as "Lecture d'elocution", "Lecture Courante" and, "Claude Auge" printed in Paris. In fourth and fifth classes children would be presented Arabic lessons on logic and Muslim theology through the old Arabic texts. Arithmetic, geometry, algebra, history and geography were also taught.¹

Students were examined at the end of the year. Examinations were carried out in the presence of the Mullahs, dignitaries of the city and the parents. Every child was individually examined orally so that the parents would be informed of the progress of their children and would be sure that adequate religious instruction was given to them.

¹Ibid., p. 356.

CHAPTER V

IRAN AND THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF EDUCATION FROM 1906 UP TO THE PRESENT TIME (1963)

Granting of the Constitution

Due to the gradual contacts of the people especially of the educated class of Persian society with the liberal thought of the West and also as a result of the introduction of such modernizing influences as the construction of telegraph lines by the British in 1864, the establishment of Daru'l-Funun, the publication of newspapers and the like, a general awakening began to set in.

Although Nasiru'd-Din Shah made frequent trips to Europe and was very much influenced by the progress and developments brought about in that continent, he did not really want Persia to make progress. He did his best and used all his influence to maintain the status quo and keep the country in an unprogressive state. He was very much afraid of the day when his obedient subjects would rise against him and would deprive him of his vast and unlimited privileges and so he liked to be surrounded by courtiers who were not clever enough to know whether, "Brussels" was a city or a cabbage.¹

During the last years of his reign the country was exploited by the Shah and his retinues and the national resources were pledged to foreigners for the money which the Shah spent on his own pleasures.

¹Sykes, op. cit., p. 395.

He was succeeded by his timid and sick son, Muzaffaru'~~d-Din~~ Shah who reigned till 1907. Being ill and afflicted, he had no concern for the affairs of the state. He made trips to Europe which cost the Persians tremendous sums, and left the treasury almost without funds.¹

The time was ripe for a sudden change and a new system of government.. At last, due to the persistent pressure against the Shah and his courtiers on the part of the masses who were led by a group of devoted and liberal-minded leaders, merchants and some devout clergymen, the dying Shah was made to sign the Charter of the Constitution in August 1906 and died one year later. He was succeeded by his son Mohammad Ali Shah.

The Constitutional government was established in the country and the legislative power was vested in the representatives of the people. But the grant of such a right did not last long, for, Mohammad Ali Shah, encouraged by the Russian assurances of support, rose against the constitutionalists hoping to restore his absolute royal power by taking advantage of dissention within the ranks of the liberal leaders. By the help of the Russian cossacks, he bombarded the House of Parliament and proclaimed the dissolution of the Constitution. But the people's reaction was swift and decisive. The Shah was made to resign. He resigned and fled to Russia in 1909. His eleven-year old son, Ahmad Shah was named by Parliament, ruler of Persia.

¹Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 79.

Education in this Period

Little change was brought about for the betterment of education in the early period of the constitutional government, because the constitutionalists who were the real advocates of modern education were engaged in fighting against the despotisms of Mohammad Ali Shah and did not have any leisure time to think of education. The actual development in education dates from 1911 when a law was passed by the Parliament according to which all the educational institutions, private or public, came under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education. A movement began for providing education for all and a law was ratified by Parliament according to which education was made compulsory for all the Iranian children up to the age of thirteen. Unfortunately, this law was not put to practice due to the economic difficulties brought about by the extravagances of the Qajar kings. Besides, people were not enlightened enough to recognise the advantages of a new system of education. They preferred their children to be educated at the Maktabs under the Mullahs. They were afraid their children might lose their faith in religion in modern schools.

Development in Education

The period beginning with 1918, the end of the First World War, was highly important to Iran, because Iranian educators had recognized that people had to be educated if the country was going to be improved and that all the Iranian children should be educated regardless of their

sex, religion or social status. That is why we notice a boom in the number of schools and students during this period.

In 1918 there were 295 elementary and secondary schools with 23,033 students whereas in 1911, five years after the establishment of the constitution, there were only 123 schools most of which were in Tehran with 10,531 students.¹ Besides these schools, two teachers' Colleges were established for training elementary-school teachers. It was the first time that teacher training was considered important and that the state took upon itself the responsibility of providing qualified teachers for schools.

During this period French influence is quite evident on every phase of Persian life especially on the judicial system of the country. A number of French professors of law were employed by the Ministry of Justice and with their help a school of law was founded in Tehran.

The French government considered this school with its French dean and French teachers a good means for the promulgation of French Culture and civilization in Iran.²

The graduates of this school played a great role in introducing the French judicial system in Iran. During this time, a number of French judicial advisors were employed to improve the organization of the Ministry of Justice. In general, the administration of the Ministry of Justice of Iran is an imitation of that of France.

¹ Amuzesh va Parvareh (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), No. 9.

² Sadiq, Issa, Memoirs, p. 293.

Iran's judicial system, modeled after that of France, is a hierarchy of courts from the district courts on the lowest level up to the supreme court, which is the court of final appeal but has not the power to determine the constitutionality of current legislation.¹

Reza Shah and Education

In 1926, Ahmad Shah was deposed by Parliament and Reza Khan was elected as Shah of Iran and as the first ruler of the new Pahlavi Dynasty. Being a man of power and decision and a serious and strict disciplinarian, Reza Shah did his utmost to bring about a sudden reform in all aspects of Persian life and to do away with many of the old and out-of-fashion conventions. Having recognized the contrast between Iran's glorious past and her present weak state, he was resolved to elevate the country and to foster her national unity and pride. He asserted his authority over every province of Persia, disarmed the riotous tribes and established order and security throughout the country. The right of Moslem clergy over many phases of public life began to be challenged by the new ruler who tried to break down their power and prestige. Their tight grip over education began to be loosened and religious education gave way to state schools.

All the educational system was brought under a highly centralized government with the Shah as the head. Educational facilities were greatly expanded and great educational improvements were achieved during this period.

¹Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 152.

The table below shows the number of schools and students at the accession of Reza Shah compared with six years later.¹

Year	Number of Schools	Number of students (Boys and Girls).
1925-26	3,285	132,694
1926-27	3,177	137,896
1927-28	3,502	150,811
1928-29	3,300	153,229
1929-30	3,644	163,346
1930-31	3,643	181,698
1931-32	4,181	200,926

The Establishment of the Higher Council of Education

In 1921, five years prior to the accession of Reza Shah, a law was passed laying down the organization of the Higher Council of Education. The organization of such a council was a direct imitation of the Higher Council of National Education of France.² According to this law all the administrative affairs and those concerning curriculum, examinations, employment of teachers, granting degrees and the like were brought under direct control and supervision of the council.

¹Amuzesh va Parvaresh (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1934), No. 9, p. 462.

²"Conseil Supérieur de L'education Nationale".

Educational affairs became centralized and all the offices of education in provinces became absolutely dependent upon the Ministry of Education. A uniformity was introduced in all schools by monopolizing the right of preparation of textbooks by the Ministry of Education. Textbooks and teaching materials below the university level were prepared by a group of Iranian scholars in Tehran and were sanctioned by the Higher Council of Education. These books were prescribed in all schools throughout the country.

Expedition of Students to France

Shortly after the constitutional government was established, schools began to be expanded and the number of students began to increase. In order to provide a good education for all the children, qualified and experienced teachers were needed. There were, of course, many Iranian teachers, but most of them were experts in teaching Persian literature and Arabic grammar whereas the country had an urgent need to teachers of sciences and mathematics.

In 1911, a law was passed empowering the Ministry of Education to send a group of thirty students to France and England. As French was the second dominant language at that time, twenty-seven students went to France and the rest went to England. Out of these students, fifteen were commissioned to train themselves as teachers and the rest had to complete their education in agriculture, road construction, industry and chemistry.

From 1922 onwards, the expedition of students to European countries was very much emphasized. The country was rapidly developing

in industry, education, and technology and was in urgent need of experienced technicians and trained teachers.

In order to improve and modernize the Iranian army, Reza Shah dispatched a group of army officers to France in 1922, to study at Saint Cyr Military College. But the real program for the expedition of students to Europe was laid down in 1927 when a law was passed by Parliament permitting the Ministry of Education to send one hundred students every year for a period of six years to well-known universities and higher educational institutions in Europe and America.

The reason for such an expedition can be best explained by translating a passage from Dr. Sadiq's Autobiography. Dr. Sadiq was the chairman of the Higher Education Department at that time and the bill for sending students abroad was presented to the Higher Council of Education by him.

I (Dr. Sadiq) was frequently consulted by I'timadu'd-Dowlah, the then Minister of Education, on all educational affairs. So, I would offer all the necessary suggestions, the most important of which was a proposal concerning the expedition of students to Europe. The main reason for offering such a suggestion was that after the renewal of the monarchy, the government was in an urgent need of experts for executing such progressive plans as constructing railroads in which Reza Shah was very much interested, improvement of the Ministry of Justice whose foundation was being laid by Dawar, the then Minister of Justice, establishment of the University of Tehran, creation of factories which were going to be set up and the like. Having been the head of the Higher Education Department and the assistant director of the Chief Office of Education, it was naturally within my responsibility to offer such a plan. Fortunately the Minister of Education and his assistant consented to my plan and after having negotiated with Teimur Tash, the then Minister of Court, the bill was presented to the Shah and then to Parliament. The bill, thus presented, was sanctioned by Parliament on the fourth of May 1927 and the first cornerstone of fundamental reforms was laid in the country.¹

¹Sadiq, Memoirs, p. 330.

As the country needed more teachers to complete her developing schools it was stipulated in the bill that thirty-five per cent of these students should be commissioned by the Ministry of Education to train themselves as teachers. Others were commissioned to study technology, sciences, mathematics and engineering.

Besides the Ministry of Education, other governmental departments including those of Police and of Post and Telegraphs followed the same course and dispatched a considerable number of students to Europe to be trained for running the said departments. As the second important language and in many cases the sole medium of instruction was the French language, it was decided that sixty per cent of the students should go to France.¹

From 1927 to 1930 over 336 students were busy completing their education at the expense of the government in such countries as France, England, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland.

The table below shows the distribution of students dispatched by the government in these countries from 1927 to 1930.²

Country	1927	1928	1929	1930
	No. of Students	No. of Students	No. of Students	No. of students
France	82	73	67	68
England	3	8	9	21
Belgium	1	3	4	4
Germany	4	5	6	3
Switzerland	-	-	1	4
Total	90	89	87	100

¹The Year Book of Education, 1949, University of London, Institute of Education, London, 1949, pp. 462-463.

²Year Book and Statistics (Ministry of Education, Tehran: 1929-30), p. 281.

The table below shows the number of students abroad who were doing their education at their own expense in 1931.¹

Country	Number of Students
France	537
Belgium	137
Beirut	163
Germany	114
America	70
England	33
Switzerland	31
Russia	25
Turkey	19
India	16
Austria	8
Other countries	12
Total	1,165

French Archaeologists in Iran

The history of the French archaeological activities in Iran dates from 1840 during which time Louis Philip, King of France, dispatched an archaeological mission consisting of Flandin and Coste,

¹Ibid., p. 282.

two French archaeologists, to Persia.

The year 1840 marks the beginning of the French archaeological exploration in Iran. It began about a century and a quarter ago and is still going on. It has brought to light many aspects of Persian history, religion and art.¹

In 1895, the exclusive right of exploring ancient sites in Persia was given to the French government for sixty-one years by Nasiru'd-Din Shah. Jaques de Morgan, former director of archaeological service in Egypt,² was dispatched to Iran at the head of a mission.³

The mission began to excavate and explore in the south of the country. The outcome of their constant efforts was the compilation of a book in thirty-one volumes on the archaeological sites of Persia. The foundation of the Iran-Bastan (the old Persia) Museum which is the first and the most beautiful, archaeological museum ever established in Persia, was laid by M. Andre Godard, the director general of the archaeological service in Persia in 1936.

Since the Second World War M. Chirshman, the notable French archaeologist, has been appointed head of the Excavation Mission in Iran.⁴ M. Chirshman believes that a French archaeological center must be set up in Tehran by the French government. This center must take upon itself the training of Iranian archaeologists. This is, to him,

¹Chirshman R, Revue de L'enseignement Superieur, No. 3, Paris, 1959, p. 1.

²"Ancien directeur du Service archeologique en Egypte."

³Encyclopaedia Britanica, (Copyright in the United States of America, 1911, by the Encyclopaedia Britanica Company), Vol. XXI, p. 243.

⁴"Directeur des missions archeologique en Iran."

an easy task to do, because most of the archaeological literature concerning Iran's past is in French. He holds that the establishment of such an institute will contribute to the acquaintance of Persian students with the French language, because, since the Second World War, the study of French has, to a very great extent, declined in Iran whereas less than two decades ago it ranked first among the foreign languages taught in Iran.¹

The University of Tehran and the French Professors

In 1934 a plan for the construction of a university in Tehran was presented to Parliament. The University of Tehran began to work with such faculties as medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law and political science, engineering, letters, science and Islamic theology and philosophy.

The regulations of all these faculties concerning administration, curriculum, examinations, method of instruction, courses to be studied, tenure of study, degrees and the like are very much similar to those of French universities.²

From 1932 onwards a number of laws was passed by parliament according to which French professors were employed to teach at the University of Tehran and other colleges and high schools.³ In 1959, the

¹Chirshman, op. cit., p. 12.

²Year Book of the University of Tehran (Tehran: University Press 1956-57), pp. 6-22.

³Year Books and Statistics, Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1932-33, pp. 3, 5, 6, 1935-36, pp. 5, 6, 1936-38, pp. 5, 6, 8.

university had about 9,300 students of whom 1000 were women.¹ In 1963 there were about 13,667 students of whom 2,460 were women.²

Iranian Academy and the French Words

During the time of Reza Shah for the sake of preserving the unity of the country and establishing the power of the monarchy throughout the Iranian territory, a sense of rather exaggerated nationalism began to be propagated all over the country. This was achieved by reference to the ancient heritage of Persia and by reviving and exalting the deeds and the feats of the old Persian kings and heroes especially those from the time of the Achaemenids and the Sassanians. Buildings were constructed after the style of the ancient Persian palaces, textbooks were filled with passages and poems on the praise of the old kings and generals and on the superiority of the Persian race, class-rooms and offices were decorated with pictures of the kings and of the old Persian buildings and mausoleums, and many school songs were composed which praised the Iranian land and devotion and submission to the Shah.

Another step taken towards the realization of this goal was the establishment of, "Farhangistan" or "The Academy" whose function was to purge and purify the Persian language from Arabic and French words.

¹Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 499.

²Issa, Sadiq, op. cit., p. 499.

A great effort was made to find purely Persian equivalents for the technical, scientific, geographical and administrative terms which were either of Arabic or European origin.

The Academy was, to some extent, successful in finding such words as, "Danishgah" for, "universite", "Danishkadeh" for, "faculte", "Barnameh" for, "programme", "Parvande" for, "dossier", "Takhteh-Siah" for, "Tableau" and such words as, "Amuzagar" for "Mua'llim", "Danish-Sara" for, "Daru'l-Mua'llimin", "Farhang" for "Maarif" and the like. But it could do little in finding pure Persian words for scientific and technological terms. To day, Iranian schools cannot do without Arabic and French words. Nearly all terms pertaining to sciences, law, technology, medicine and pharmacy are either from Arabic or French origin.

The Academy was in working order for only four months and succeeded in making nearly three hundred Persian words.

Secondary Education and the French Programme

Before 1938, secondary education was divided into two stages of three years each. The first three years were devoted to a comprehensive type of education which would acquaint the learner with the fundamentals of science, literature and mathematics. The second three years were the period of specialization and provided five branches of study, namely, literature, sciences, commerce, agriculture and industry. Upon completing the first cycle of study, the learner, according to his ability and interests would be guided to follow one of these courses of study.

In 1938, this system of education was changed and was replaced

by a defective imitation of the French secondary education. According to this new system secondary education was divided into three distinct periods each of which ended in a kind of certificate. The first period consisted of three years and ended in what was called, "Gavahinameh-i-Dowreh-i-Aval-i-Motevasseteh" or "Certificate of the First Cycle of Secondary School" and was very much similar to "Brevet d'etudes du premier Cycle du second degre" in the French system of education. The Second period took two years and led to the first part of the secondary school diploma and the third period was one year and ended in the second part of the diploma.

Curriculum of study became difficult by the addition of unnecessary courses. Without taking into consideration the interests, the ability and the moral and physical training of the learner, those in charge overloaded the curriculum with courses which were of little use in life and which were an unbearable load on the mind of the learner.¹

Besides the secondary level, changes were also brought about in the curriculum of higher education. Before 1938, courses presented at the Teachers' College were elective. In 1938 all courses became required and compulsory.

The Iran-America Relations and the Decline of the French Influence

The Iran-America relations have a relatively long history which dates from 1836 during which time a group of Educational missionaries attached to the Presbyterian Church opened schools and hospitals in rural areas and cities of Persia. Twenty years later in 1856 the first com-

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 370.

mercial treaty was signed between the two countries.¹

The economic relations of America and Persia begins from 1911 with the employment of an American, Morgan Chuster, as the Treasurer-General of Persia.

With several American assistants, Chuster arrived in Tehran in 1911 and in a very short time made considerable headway with a reorganization of the financial system, while his energy and obvious devotion to the best interests of the country won the people's hearts.²

Eleven years later the government of Iran employed an American financial advisor, Dr. Millispaugh, who through his constant efforts managed to overcome the financial difficulties and accomplish much progress with the support of the Shah.

With the co-operation of the Persians, much has been accomplished in the finances. Revenues have been increased, expenditures controlled, and economies effected, funds have been gradually diverted to the items which contribute to economic development and public welfare³

The educational activities of the Americans in Persia started from the reign of Mohammad Shah when two Americans; Justin Perkins and Ashel Grant were permitted to set up school in Iran. In 1836 the first American school was set up in Urmia. In 1913 an American college was established in Tehran under the direction of Dr. Jordan who stayed in

¹ Kianfar, Mahdi, The American Policy in Iran (Tehran: Khayyam Book-store, 1949), pp. 34-35.

² Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 82.

³ Millispaugh, A.S., op. cit., p. 318.

Persia for forty years and did valuable services to the Persians.

Thousands of Iranians have had their education at the American College and most of them have held high offices as ministers, ambassadors or members of Parliament.¹

The Establishment of the Iran-America Society

In 1925 a group of Iranian Scholars and Americans living in Iran established the Iran-America Society. This organization has proved to be highly effective in introducing the English language and American culture in Iran. The second article of the constitution of the society emphasizes the importance of acquaintance of the Persians with the social, scientific, literary industrial and educational life of the Americans.²

The Society was almost inactive for sixteen years. After the Second World War it resumed its activities. Classes for teaching English were established and clubs with diversified activities were organized.

To-day the scope of the activities of the Society is so extensive that only in its classes four thousand Iranian boys and girls are busy learning English and becoming acquainted with American Culture and civilization.³

¹Kianfar, Mahdi, op. cit., p. 211.

²Kianfar, Mahdi, op. cit., p. 221.

³Sadiq, Memoirs, p. 299.

Cultural Exchange

In 1949, according to Senator Fulbright's cultural plan an educational agreement was concluded between the two countries according to which Iranian students, teachers and professors were dispatched to the United States to study and do research in educational institutions, and American professors were invited to teach at the University of Tehran and other provincial universities. In 1962, there were fifteen American professors, lecturers and instructors at the Tehran University and the high schools who were sent to Iran **under** the Fulbright Cultural Exchange program.¹

After 1950 U.S. aid to Iran had a considerable influence in the development of education, especially in the rural districts. In co-operation with the Ministry of Education an increase of about 1,600 teachers and 6,400 pupils had been effected by 1954.²

Due to the afore-mentioned factors, French influence began to lose ground in Persia and the study of the French language began to decline to a very unexpected extent. According to the statistics issued by the Ministry of Education in 1962 about 93.5 per cent of all the Iranian students below the university level studied English as the second language in 1958. Of the remaining 6.5 per cent about 5.5 studied French and one per cent studied other European languages such as German, Italian and the like.³

¹Iran, Almanac, op. cit., p. 305.

²Encyclopaedia Britanica, Vol. 17, 1962, p. 584.

³The Educational Statistics in Iran (Tehran: Ministry of Education, 1962), p. 27, Table No. 17.

Students began to go to the United States either on state scholarship or at their own expense.

In 1957 there were about 4,000 students in foreign countries. Of the 2,000 students in the United States, nearly 700 were in California.¹

Statistics show that during the last ten years there has happened a very unprecedented boom in the number of Persian students in foreign countries. According to the statistics issued by the Ministry of Education, there were 16,472 Persian students in countries abroad.

The table below shows the distribution of Persian students in the United States, European countries and in other countries of the world in 1963.²

Year	1963
Country	Number of Students
U. S. A.	4,677
Western Germany	5,820
England	2,688
Austria	1,543
Switzerland	3,44
Italy	240
Belgium	46
India	17
Other countries	8
Total	16,062

¹Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 205.

²Archives of the Department of Statistics, Tehran: Ministry of Education. Kindly given to the writer by Mr. Sheikhistani, head of the Department.

Education during the Post-War Period in Iran

Due to the occupation of the country during the Second World War by the Allied forces and to the damages resulting from the War, there happened a considerable drawback in the number of students and schools. As a result of inconsistency in the political affairs of the country and of shortage of food materials, the country became weak and poor.

Food was short and goods of every type very scarce, inflation sent prices soaring, and large amounts of currency issued to meet Allied expenditures within the country, added to the inflationary trend.¹

In 1943 the law of compulsory education was enacted according to which elementary education up to the age of thirteen became compulsory for all Iranian children at the expense of the state. In 1947 the University of Tabriz was set up. A law was passed in 1949 which provided for the establishment of the provincial universities. In this year the universities of Shiraz and Meshed opened and in 1955 and 1956 universities of Isfahan and Ahwaz came into being. According to the statistics issued in 1962, students at these universities together with those studying at the University of Tehran and other technical and industrial colleges numbered 25,769. These students together with those studying at the foreign universities abroad made 41,831.

As for the education below university level, there has taken place a tremendous increase in the number of students, schools and

¹Wilber Donald, op. cit., p. 103.

teachers since the second World War.

The table below shows this increase Since the War.¹

Year	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Teachers
1941	4,920	361,000	12,345
1963	14,429	2,100,000	73,334

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 497.

CHAPTER VI

EVALUATION AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction

In the foregoing pages it was mentioned that the present educational system of Iran is an imitation of that of France and that it was introduced into the country by men who were interested in modernizing the old system and in acquainting the Iranians with the European sciences and technology. The borrowed system with its highly centralized administrative organizations, its emphasis on the acquisition of a prescribed body of knowledge and with its authoritative methodology came to be gradually accepted by the early educational reformers and be imposed on the old system. Efforts were made to make a reconciliation between the two systems, so that to-day one can perceive some vestiges of the old and some trends of the new in the present system of education.

Although the country has developed in economy and industry and is in need of experts and technicians to exploit her natural resources, nevertheless few changes have been brought about in the existing system of Education. It has remained static for over a hundred years as far as content and method are concerned and has proved not to be able to keep pace with the increasing needs of the country.

There is to-day a general agreement among the Iranian intellectuals and even among the lay men that the nation's educational system has not been able to meet the needs of modern Iran and that it is

not well-equipped to cope with the increasing and complex demands of an expanding economy and progressive society. The inefficiency of the system has been frequently criticized and the weaknesses of the educational machinery have been repeatedly brought to the public notice by Iranian educators, educational experts and foreign educational consultants. Dr. Sadiq, in his talk delivered at the Iranian Senate, said:

In the case of the inhabitants of the cities, I will have to say that about 20,000 students are being graduated from our secondary schools every year. These students do not have qualified and experienced teachers and are lacking in knowledge. Our children are wasting time and energy at the desks of the secondary schools and at the graduation they will be given a diploma which will be of little use to them. There are, at present, 326,000 secondary school students of whom perhaps 100,000 are apt for intellectual and academic education. Vocational schools must be extended and vocational education must be developed. Manual jobs must not be considered menial so that our students become interested in them.¹

The country is, at present, in need of an educational system which can help in developing the entire resources of the country including its man-power skills for the purpose of developing the national economy and elevating the standard of living of her people.

√ The inefficiency of the present system can be attributed to the educational philosophy underlying the present educational practices. In general, the aims are to produce a distinguished intellectual elite who could direct the affairs of the people by determining what should be

¹Sadiq, Issa, Ettela'at (Newspaper), Air Edition (Tehran: 23, October, 1963), No. 4185, p. 3.

taught in schools, how should the instructional materials be handled and when they should be taught; to subordinate the individuals to the will of those above them and to develop a sense of rather exaggerated nationalism through an impartation into the learner of the cultural heritage of Persia and of the magnanimity and superiority of the Persian rulers.

In order to see to what extent the existing system of education has succeeded in advancing and improving the Iranian life and in keeping abreast of the needs of the country, a brief description of the system will be presented and in the light of the present educational problems, suggestions will be included.

Characteristics of the Present System of Education

1. Administration

The Educational administration of Iran is a highly centralized and bureaucratic system under the direction of the National Ministry of Education. The Educational Administrative Law was sanctioned by Parliament in 1910 according to which all the educational affairs, administrative or instructional, came under the direct supervision of the Ministry and all the pertinent offices came to be dependent on the Ministry of Education. The organization is headed by a Minister who is also a member of the Council of Ministers. He is responsible to Parliament and is appointed by the Shah through the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

In Iran, ministers do not usually remain in their offices for a long time. Their tenure of office is entirely dependent on the stability of

the government and of the political affairs. To this rule, the Minister of Education is no exception.

Unfortunately, after the Second World War, due to the successive crises and to the inability of the government to cope with difficulties, the country became so unstable and shaky that in a period of eight years, namely, from 1940 to 1948, twenty-two ministers of education were called to office while during the sixteen-year reign of Reza Shah, the Minister of Education was changed only five times.¹

Immediately below the Minister of Education is the Under-Secretary who is appointed by the Minister of Education and who carries out the duties of the Minister in his absence. Under the Under-Secretary are some Directors-General whose number has fluctuated in recent years. The Ministry consists of different departments the most important of which are the Educational Department dealing with the Kindergartens, elementary and secondary schools and with their programs of study, the Administrative Department which is concerned with finances, construction, personnel, inspection and supplies, other departments which involve libraries, museums, archaeology and Department of Endowments dealing with the administration of funds from pious foundations.

Below the National Ministry of Education are the provincial offices of education whose organizations are on a smaller scale similar to those of the Ministry. The head of each office is appointed by the Minister and is usually sent from Tehran. There are, at present, 139 offices of education which have direct access to the Ministry of Education.

¹Sadiq, Issa, op. cit., p. 372.

The important characteristic of the existing educational administration is that the Ministry supervises and controls with complete authority every function of the whole system; finance, construction, supervision, preparation and appointment of teachers, examinations of the students, construction of curriculum, preparation of textbooks, adoption of methodology and the like. There is a unified elementary and secondary school curriculum for the entire nation. Whether the learner lives on the coasts of the Caspian Sea in the north, or on the shores of the Persian Gulf in the south, whether he has been brought up in a remote village among the Baluchi tribes of the east or among the Kurdish people of the mountainous west, whether his native language is Baluchi or Kurdish, he will be doomed to follow the prescriptive programs of the Ministry of Education designed by a group of intellectual elite from Tehran.

Such an inefficient system of administrative organization has deprived the majority of the Iranian children from a sound and effective schooling and has not been able to develop the individual abilities and to encourage initiative and leadership. It has deprived the provincial people, lay and professional, of the opportunity of participation in the education of their children.

The existing system of educational administration has to be modified and be adapted to the needs of the Iranian society not because of the technical failure of the system itself but because of a changed social philosophy. Iran has to adopt an educational philosophy which can keep with the needs and opportunities of the time.

If any new administrative system is going to be employed; it should be rather decentralized and democratic putting its faith in the inherent ability and strength of the great mass of the Iranian people. A rather decentralized system of education is justified for Iran on the ground that by such a system it would be possible to develop the real leadership of our students and to draw upon their individual experiences. Experience has revealed that wisdom and leadership are not characteristics limited only to a handful of intellectual elite with the greatest formal education but are qualities which can also be fostered in all people at any level of society. Moreover, decentralization is favored because it has proved to be an effective pattern of administration which permits adequate flexibility and variations to meet local and environmental needs.

Although the present centralized system has proved to be a major impediment to progress, likewise a sudden introduction of a decentralized system might bring about disorder and chaos. It cannot be suddenly introduced in a country where people have, for centuries, been accustomed to a highly centralized government and have not been trained to take on responsibility to direct their own political and educational **affairs**. The procedure must, therefore, be gradual. Its goal must be a gradual shift of administrative responsibility from the Ministry of Education to the local educational authorities.

It is suggested that the Ministry will be gradually reduced in size and increased in efficiency. To achieve such a goal, trained personnel will, of course, be needed. The present Ministry staff is not

skilled in the operation of a modern decentralized system. On the other hand, the present staff cannot be replaced by a skilled staff since these people support families and their discharge will create disorder. Moreover, it will cost the Ministry a great deal of money to train a new and skilled staff. A possible solution to this problem is to give a kind of on-the-job training to the present personnel, central or provincial, to prepare them for administering a decentralized system of education.

There are, at present, local educational councils in towns and cities but their powers are very limited. It is suggested that the existing local educational councils be extended and be given greater powers to administer their own educational affairs such as allocation of finance, appointment of teachers and the like. The shift must be first to Ostans (provinces) and then to Shahristsans (towns).

In the process of enforcing a gradual shift from centralization to decentralization, it would not be enough for one isolated office to put into practice a broad initiative while other departments are neglected. To attain a proper system of education, it will be necessary to give teachers, local educational officials, parent-teacher associations and the lay public the opportunity to recognise their own common problems and seek their own solutions.

One of the characteristics of the Iranians is lack of patience for getting results from a relatively long-term plan. In order to obtain proper results from a decentralized system a good deal of patience may be required. People must be advised to avoid rush judgement if, at the

outset, an educational plan meets with failure and not to try to re-establish the previous authoritarian methods if, for the first time, there was an obvious deficiency in the local control. Such failures will naturally happen. The cost of these trivial failures both in money and time is very small compared with the price Iran will have to pay for the impediments to progress which exist in the present system of education. In order to prevent disorder it is, therefore suggested that small teams of two or three educational experts be sent to the local educational councils to help focus their attention upon the basic existing problems.

It would be worth mentioning that Iran, at present, will not be able to embark upon any concrete reforms without the educational assistance of foreign specialists. The employment of foreign educational consultants is necessary to assist in evaluation of programs and in advising on all matters involving any shift in educational policy. These advisors must be limited in number and be adequately familiar with Iran, her history, her past and present educational system, people, religion and all the other cultural background of her people. If any advice is going to be given, it must be based upon these factors and upon the present needs of each locality.

2. Curriculum

√ The present curriculum is highly formal and places much emphasis on theoretical and academic knowledge. The theory behind it is that such a curriculum is designed to pour knowledge and information into the student. The student's mind, when stuffed with various kinds of

information, will be strengthened and will be able to cope with more difficult subject-matter and later on with difficult tasks which might arise during the learner's lifetime.

The source of information in the Schools of Iran is usually the textbook. There is so much dependence on the textbook that only the most verbally gifted students can live up to the standard and those successful students are not likely to have acquired a full mastery over the subject-matter. The result of this formal curriculum is an attitude towards academic learning whereby each student attempts to memorize the exact text of the textbook and the best student is he who can repeat perfectly the materials presented by the teacher.

Teachers have usually a great tendency towards theorization and academic instruction. One may find a physics teacher who can describe different, complicated parts of an instrument and yet can not recognize the very instrument if he is confronted with it. One may find students of biology who have perfectly memorized the names of different bones of the skeleton, the muscles of the body and of various categories of worms and insects, but have never been given the opportunity of dissecting a fish or a frog or even watching a film related to the materials learned.

From the third up to the sixth elementary class the child has to read and in some cases to memorize the Arabic text of the Qur'an. He has to reproduce after his teacher the difficult and unfamiliar Arabic words. In many cases neither the teacher nor the pupil will be able to read much less to understand the meaning of a single word.

The present curriculum offers little real opportunity for guidance. Teachers and pupils do not become well acquainted and the effective guidance which has as its pre-requisite a continuous and warm pupil-teacher relationship is usually lacking in and outside the classroom. The curriculum is handed down from the pinnacle of the educational system and is, in its nature, authoritarian. It tends to cast all the students regardless of their personalities, interests and individualities into a common mould and leaves little room for the teacher's originality and guidance.

Being dependent on the machinery of the Ministry and expecting the Ministry to define the scope of his activities, the Iranian teacher is usually lacking in the sense of responsibility and does not show much interest in the improvement of his profession. All he has to do is to teach one or some of the items of the prescribed curriculum and to see to it whether they have become fully imbedded in the minds of his students. The usual criterion of evaluation is the examinations which are to be carried out according to the laws and regulations of the Ministry. Those who are fit for intellectual learning and can memorize the exact text will pass and those unfortunate students who fail to attain the minimum requirements in any specific element of the prescribed body of knowledge will be dropped as unsatisfactory and unworthy. Instead of adopting a school curriculum which can discover the abilities and interests of the learner and which can guide and develop such abilities towards goals commensurate with the present demands of the Iranian society, the whole educational system has turned into a sifting device which is slightly related to any real manifestation

of interest and ability.

In order to improve the present inefficient curriculum, the adoption of a sound and effective policy is of great importance. It might be argued that local educational councils must be given full freedom and powers to study the local needs and to design curriculum in regard to those needs. The practicality of such a suggestion seems doubtful and may result in chaos or at least in a harmful breakdown, because, at present, there are not adequate trained and experienced teachers to be able to carry out effectively such a great responsibility in regard to making an effective curriculum.

It is, therefore, suggested that the Ministry of Education in co-operation with the educational experts set up a center of curriculum research in Tehran. This center should consist of educational specialists in psychology of teaching, in modern methodology and of those who are adequately aware of the present needs of the Iranian Society. The center can embark on a broad field of study the most important of which can be enumerated as follows.

1. The center can organize in-service study seminars on the curriculum, methodology, preparation of textbooks, etc for the purpose of acquainting the teachers with problems of curriculum making and inviting them to co-operate with those who work for a better curriculum at the center.

2. The central office of research can organize small teams of two or three of the curriculum advisors who travel regularly to different towns and cities giving curriculum counselling to the local educational councils and asking the views of the teachers and educational authorities in regard to the new curriculum.

3. The center can publish the result of its investigations done by the experts in the form of booklets and pamphlets and send them to localities to be studied and commented on.

4. Questionnaires can be sent round asking the teachers' views on the new curriculum and investigating the expectations of each educational council of the central office of research so that the latter can decide on a curriculum which can meet the needs of different regions.

5. Scholarships should be awarded to students interested in this field. They should be sent to such countries as the U.S.A. or England where a decentralized system of education is administered. These students should take intensive courses in curriculum making, the function of the local educational authorities and the modern methods of instruction for a period of at least two years. On their return to Iran, they should be invited to co-operate with the office of curriculum research and to employ their knowledge for a better and productive curriculum.

With such measures taken and such valuable data gathered, the central office of curriculum research will be able to construct curriculums based on the study of the vocational and academic abilities of the students, the future job opportunities and on the predicated social demands.

3. Methodology

The most usual method used in the elementary and secondary schools and even in the higher level of studies is a formal study and recitation technique. At the elementary level the lesson is presented

segmentally by the teacher and the pupils are supposed to memorize each segment for the following session. At the secondary level, although the materials to be studied have unexpectedly increased compared with the elementary level, the same tradition of memorization is reserved. The concept of discipline has been misinterpreted by the Iranian system of education. A class is considered disciplined when the students sit in immobile silence and appear to submit to the authority of the teacher. There is hardly any friendly relationship between the teacher and his students.

The lesson is usually presented in the form of a lecture from the elementary to the university levels. Every bit of the lesson is clarified and explained by the teacher and the best student is he who can exactly reproduce what he has been taught. Such a method which by its hair-splitting procedure leaves no stone unturned obviously leaves little room for the students' initiatives and is hardly able to stimulate the students to research and to outside reading. That's why library practices are not usually adequate. The elementary and secondary periods are a good time to develop reading habits in the students and encourage them to investigate and do research but the existing methodology with its emphasis on memorization and on the accumulation of mere information is hardly able to stimulate the students to such activities. Homework and assignments are not regularly given and, if given at all, they are not outside the textbook.

The same is true with the school laboratories. It is true that at present all the schools of Iran are not well-equipped with all kinds

of modern laboratory equipment but there are many schools with small laboratories which can serve the immediate purposes of the students. These laboratories are seldom used because the teachers are either not familiar with handling laboratory equipment and laboratory experiments or are usually indifferent to such activities. The educational system is not to be blamed for that. The present system, with all its deficiencies, has, to some extent, provided laboratory equipment in most schools. The fault also lies with many of the teachers who show little interest in their profession and tend to do their duties perfunctorily. There are many physics and chemistry teachers who have been to Europe and America and have worked in the best equipped laboratories there. These people can help their students and colleagues a great deal if they want to. But, on their return to Iran, they do not use their knowledge for the advancement of their profession and tend to follow their previous academic and theoretical method.

The existing methodology tends to neglect the development of the individuality of the learners and to turn them into passive objects who uncritically accept the dicta of those above them and who unquestionably absorb what is presented to them. With such a method of instruction, our students cannot be expected to live as intelligent and independent citizens and to be effective and productive people in the future while during their formative life, they have been accustomed to be obedient objects for accepting the authority and imposed disciplines of the teacher.

In the process of improving the existing methodology, the following suggestions might be helpful.

1. By a gradual shift of responsibility from the Ministry of Education to the local educational councils teachers will become free from the prescriptions of the Ministry and will allow themselves to go beyond the strict laws and regulations. This freedom can be achieved by guiding the teachers to organize meetings, to discuss their common problems and to adapt methods by which both the teacher and the student can participate in the class-room activities. It must be pointed out to the teachers that their duty is not to pass mere information to their students but to guide and help their pupils in the use of the information and in putting into practice what they have learnt.

2. The local educational councils can invite the teachers who have been abroad and have worked in physics, chemistry and agricultural laboratories to help their colleagues who have not had such experiences and to show them how to handle laboratory equipment and to carry out experiments.

3. By adopting the problem-solving method, students will not expect their teachers to explain every bit of the lesson and will have to work their mind to be able to find solutions to the proposed problem. To work on a project, students will have to consult books. They will gradually become interested in reading and in using the school library. Books chosen for the school library must be attractive and up to the students' comprehension.

4. Qualified teachers in foreign languages should be encouraged to translate books, pamphlets and periodicals on modern educational techniques and modern educational findings.

5. Besides their teaching profession, many Iranian teachers hold outside jobs which, in most cases, are much more profitable than, teaching. It is not uncommon for a teacher to be a building contractor, a merchant, a dealer in land, a private tutor and at the same time an elementary or a secondary teacher or a university professor. Teachers must be advised that their duties are not over when their classes are over and that they should work with their students outside the classroom. Under the guidance of teachers, students should be encouraged to work co-operatively together and to participate in organizing various extra-curricular activities such as different clubs and societies, newspapers, trips and so on.

6. Teachers should be encouraged to organize faculty groups. A non political national teachers' association should be set up. It should organize forums, publish a professional journal and organize summer classes for discussing common problems and giving advice to newly-employed teachers especially those teaching in rural areas.

4. Teacher Training

Iranian educators and even the lay people, when evaluating the efficiency of the teachers, usually tend to place the major blame for all the failures of Iranian education, on the teaching profession. Such a judgement might be, to some extent, true but we will have to have in mind that teachers are not the only factor underlying the inefficiency of the present system for, they are the products of their social environment, of their own imperfect training, of a complete lack

of provision for their in-service training and of a social status that is usually looked down upon by the majority of the people. This attitude towards teaching profession prevents superior individuals from entering into the profession.

It must be pointed out that little has been done for the training of qualified teachers for the schools of Iran. The Ministry of Education has, in recent years, attempted to open numerous secondary schools without having provided qualified teachers for them.

Since 1952 attempts have been made to develop education in Iran. Since then considerable amounts of money have been added to the budget of the Ministry of Education and a large portion of these sums has been wasted on opening secondary schools without teachers and without qualified students. A careful examination will reveal this fact that such secondary schools have unexpectedly increased. In 1951 there were about 411 secondary schools with 82,000 students. In 1961, this number rose to 1,184 with 300,000 students.¹

Before increasing the number of the secondary schools, the Ministry of Education should have designed accurate plans for training qualified teachers. A brief study on the present secondary schools will show that the increase in the number of students has not been in proportion with the increase in the number of teachers.

In order to see to what extent teacher training has been neglected, I shall have to point out this fact that in June 1949 there were 386,000 elementary-school pupils throughout the country with 30 normal schools for training elementary school teachers. In 1962, the number of pupils rose to 1,436,000 while we still had the same previous 30 normal schools

¹Sadiq, Issa, "The Real Organizers of the Nation", the Yakma Magazine, Tehran, 1962, p. 6.

with the exception that 12 agricultural schools for training rural teachers were added. So, in a period of 13 years the percentage of increase in the number of pupils was 370% while it was 40% in the case of the normal schools.¹

In 1961 an order was issued by the Ministry of Education according to which all the normal schools throughout the country were closed. Instead, it was decided to open teachers' training classes for the secondary school graduates. These graduates will take courses in pedagogy, the Persian language and experimental sciences for a period of one year and will be appointed to teach in the elementary schools. The dissolution of the normal schools was done hastily and was not according to a well-defined plan. It is suggested that these teachers training institutions be reopened. These schools had many advantages compared with the present teachers' training classes. Some of these advantages can be enumerated as follows.

1. The students who entered the normal schools had already finished the first cycle of their secondary studies and were about fifteen years of age. Their character was still pliable and flexible and could be modified by a proper education whereas those who attend the present teachers' classes have already passed the age of eighteen and are more resistant to change than the boys of fourteen or fifteen.

2. The normal schools were boarding schools in which the prospective teachers had to stay at least for two years. This provided

¹Ibid., p. 6.

good opportunities for the faculty to study every individual student, to guide or drop him if he proved to be inefficient or to encourage and promote him if he was promising, whereas the present teachers' classes do not provide such opportunities. Students attend these classes, four or five hours a day for a period of seven or eight months and then on the basis of their academic records will be assigned to teach in the elementary schools.

3. Most of the students of the normal schools used to be selected from rural areas and to be sent to those areas after graduation. They were accustomed to rural life and were aware of the needs of the rural areas whereas the students of the teachers' classes are usually chosen from the urban areas. These people are accustomed to the luxuries of urban life and are not likely to develop a healthy adjustment to the rural areas and to be adapted to village life.

4. During the two-year period of the normal school many such good habits as discipline, reading habit, punctuality, cleanliness, carefullness and co-operation could be formed in the prospective teachers whereas the existing teachers' classes are lacking in these advantages.

It is, therefore, suggested that the Ministry of Education re-open the dissolved normal schools. These schools were closed on the ground that the money spent on their maintenance was a waste and was an extra burden on the Ministry. Such a claim seems to have no ground, because before the dissolution all the expenditures of the normal schools together with those spent on the agricultural and tribal schools amounted

to 78 million Rials (one million dollars). Now the total budget of the Ministry of Education is 9,170 million Rials (117,564,102 dollars).

If the normal schools were re-opened, only eight per thousand of such a budget will suffice for their maintenance. If thirty per thousand of the educational budget were allocated for elementary-school teacher training, it would be possible to open 80 boarding normal schools with 16000 students and to graduate about 8000 school teachers for villages every year. If such a plan were put to action, it would be possible to enforce the law of compulsory education throughout the country by 1971.¹

5. Students

Our elementary-school pupils are not usually happy and lively while in school and their behavior is almost unnatural. They are often frightened and have to be obedient to the orders and demands of the teacher. The outcome of such a harsh method is that children will dislike school and schooling, play truancy and show little interest in group work and in mixing with their **peers** and classmates.

Students progressively move from the elementary stage to a higher level of secondary education. At this stage, the curriculum is heavily loaded with subject-matters which bear little relation to the student's future life. Upon graduation, he will be given a diploma which entitles him to continue his higher academic studies at the

¹Sadiq, Issa, Ibid., p. 17.

university. The result of recent entrance examinations has revealed this fact that our secondary-school graduates have drastically declined in knowledge and have not been able to learn satisfactorily the academic curriculum. The following quotation illustrates the point.

The entrance examinations of the University of Tehran have revealed this fact that the curve of our students, knowledge has drastically declined. If, for instance, we examine the statistical data issued by the Faculty of Science, we will notice that at the beginning of the school year in September 1958, a hundred students were going to be selected out of 600 who had registered for admission to the faculty. Out of these 600 students only 15 could score an average above 8 (8 out of 20) and the remaining 585 had scored below 8. The faculty, then, had to select 85 students out of those who had scored between 6 and 8.¹

Those who are not successful in the entrance examinations of the universities will have to go for the military service. If they were exempted, they may be able to find a minor job in a governmental office and will become content with a meagre salary. There are others who, being usually from well-to-do families have a far too exalted idea of their own abilities and consider themselves too well educated to stoop to a common manual labor or to a minor governmental position. On the other hand, they have read and heard fascinating stories about educational and professional opportunities available for foreign students in some European countries and in the United States of America. They pack up bag and baggage and set out for Europe and America.

¹Sadiq, Issa, "The Decline of Knowledge", the Yakma Magazine, Tehran, 1960, No. 2, p. 51.

It was previously pointed out that there has recently happened a very unexpected boom in the number of students abroad and that within a short period of seven years from 1957 to 1963, the number of the Iranian students has risen from 4,000 to nearly 17,000. In addition to this number there are other students who have gone abroad by ordinary passports. The number of this latter group can be estimated at approximately 4,000.

So we can say without exaggeration that the number of the Iranian students abroad approximates 20,000.¹

The percentage of increase in the number of the Iranian students attending foreign universities has been strikingly conspicuous so much so that in 1959, the increase in the number of students attending the University of Tehran was 1%, in provincial universities 6% and in foreign universities 66% compared with the previous year.²

Every year considerable amounts of man-power and of national wealth of Iran are exported to foreign countries while nearly 85% of the Iranians are deprived of even simple reading and writing. The students are dispatched abroad without any accurate plan, without taking into consideration the needs of the country and without having effective guidance programs abroad to prevent the students from getting disoriented with their previous environment.

¹Bazargan, Fereidun, "A Definite Appraisal of the Condition of the Iranian Students Abroad", Ettela'at, Air Edition, No. 4226, January 29, 1964, p. 1

²Ibid., p. 2.

If we assume that out of 20,000 Persian students living abroad, 14,000 live in Europe and each spends 500 Swiss Francs per month and each of the remaining 6,000 students living in the United States spends 800 Swiss Francs per month, we will notice that every month, a total of 11,800,000 Francs and that every year over 140,000,000 Francs (about 35,000,000 dollars) are being exported from an economically poor country which has always been in financial difficulties and which has many developmental plans ahead of her to improve and elevate the standard of living of seventeen million laboring peasants who are deprived of even the simple necessities of life.¹

On the other hand, these students remain in a foreign country for at least four or five years. They usually get married and tend to become dissatisfied with their previous homes. They manage to find a job and refuse to return to Iran.

Year after year the Iranian government has had difficulty in arranging to supply the foreign currency required by these students. It must be noted that many of these students become disoriented with respect to their own country and seek to remain abroad.²

What should be done in order to prevent such a great loss to Iran? Should we let our man-power and national wealth be exported to countries where there is little need for them while they are urgently needed at home? It is obvious that Iran, at present, is badly in need of experts in any field and that if any basic reform is going to be brought about in the country, it should undoubtedly be through the educated people.

¹Ibid., p. 2.

²Wilber, Donald, op. cit., p. 215.

The following suggestions might prove to be helpful in overcoming some of the difficulties in regard to the students abroad and in encouraging the students not to leave home or, if they did, to return to their country after graduation.

1. The government of Iran should organize good guidance programs abroad. In co-operation with the Ministry of Education and other Ministries such as of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, these guidance programs can study the needs of the country in every field and can investigate the definite number of employees needed by the technical, industrial, agricultural and educational institutions. According to their interests and abilities, the students will be advised to follow a course of study which will qualify them for employment on their return to Iran. In this way neither the man-power nor the national wealth will be wasted. Moreover, the students will be encouraged to work and to make the best use of their time and energy because they are sure that their efforts will be valued when they return home.

2. When a student lives in a foreign country for some years, he gradually begins to break ties with his own culture especially when he feels that the foreign one provides more freedom of action and expression. A good guidance system can, to some extent, prevent such a tendency through gathering the students together and making them organize clubs, societies and associations. They can arrange lectures, show films, publish books and newspapers and put on theatrical shows about Iran and Iranian culture and civilization. All these activities must be carried out by the students themselves and must be the product

of their own co-operation and team-work. The students will participate in all these activities, will come to know their fellow countrymen and will feel at home with their own culture and custom. It would not be so hard on them to leave the foreign country after graduation because they have not yet been completely assimilated in its culture.

3. With such a huge sum of money (about 35,000,000 dollars) which is being **spent** on the students abroad, Iran can extend and improve her own universities in Tehran and in the provinces, can invite those students who have completed their education and have already been employed by foreign institutions to teach at her universities and can embark upon many other developmental plans.

With half of this sum which is drawn out of the country every year, Iran will be able to extend the capacity of her own existing universities, establish many schools in rural areas, continue her campaign against illiteracy and, then, with one fifth of this money, the best qualified students can be carefully selected and be dispatched to foreign universities according to a definite and regular plan and in regard to the needs of the country.¹

4. Many of the students who return to Iran are not financially strong and are in need of help. That is why they always seek to be employed by the government and be provided with a white-collar job. On the one hand, students must be advised not to be dependent on the government and not to expect it to provide jobs for them. On the other hand, students must be financially aided by the government and encouraged to come together and set up industrial, commercial and agricultural enterprises. These governmental aids must be in the form of loans without

¹Ibid., p. 4.

interest.

6. Mass Education

In the process of reform and in an attempt for administering a gradual decentralized system of education, the community participation is of prime importance. At the present time Iran is faced with two problems. On the one hand it is popularly agreed that in order to be able to draw upon the potentialities and intelligence of the individuals, the adoption of a proper decentralized system of education is urgently needed. On the other hand the administration of such a system involves the full participation and co-operation of the people. A nation whose percentage of illiteracy is 85¹ is not likely to be able to take on responsibilities for the enforcement of such a system.

The high percentage of illiteracy cannot be an acceptable reason for postponing a decentralized system of education. It can be gradually introduced on condition that all the other governmental departments co-operate with the Ministry of Education for carrying out the educational plans for mass education. Through the extensive use of mass educational media, people can be encouraged to participate in the educational affairs of their localities. They must be enlightened about the local needs and must be encouraged to take on responsibilities to cope with the needs. It would be unrealistic to expect the laymen to recognize and analyse their own educational deficiencies unless given good guidance.

¹Iran Almanac, op. cit., p. 302.

The following suggestions may prove helpful in the process of executing mass education through employing mass educational media.

1. The press must take it upon themselves to enlighten the masses by publishing accurate and detailed articles on education and educational responsibilities both in rural and urban areas in a very simple language. There are, on the average, one or two literate people in every urban household to-day. These educated people must be asked by the broadcasting services to read these useful articles to other illiterate members of the family. In rural areas, the school teacher might be asked to gather the illiterate peasants in the village school and read the articles to them.

2. Educational programs can be broadcast informing the public of the educational progresses in other countries and how people participate in their educational affairs willingly. To assure the public that the newly-adopted system is to their benefit, it would be wise to broadcast the actual unrehearsed classroom situations with a running explanation by a skilled teacher.

3. Parent-Teacher Associations can play an effective role in acquainting the public with the problems of specific schools. At present, the duties of these associations are limited and are carefully defined by the Ministry of Education. They should be given more powers and freedom and should work independently of the dicta of the Ministry of Education. Problems concerning each individual school can be carefully investigated and discussed in detail in regard to the general local needs.

4. Parents should be invited to schools and be shown films concerning the inefficiencies of the present system and the educational progresses in other countries and the opportunities available for the public participation and co-operation. Illustrated pamphlets and magazines on educational developments can be distributed among them.

5. In order to create interests in those parents whose children are attending inferior schools and encourage them to take action for the improvement of their own localities, it is suggested that demonstrations of good educational methods be carried out in the best schools in the district. Parents should be invited to watch the educational services given to the children of those superior schools. In this way, the parents may be awakened to the deficiencies existing in the program which their own children receive and may determine to take active steps for the betterment of their own situations.

6. People should be encouraged not to lean on the government and on the Ministry of Education and not to expect them to direct and supervise all the educational affairs. The public must be enlightened to this point that the more the Ministry of Education gives assistance, the more it tends to supervise and establish control over the educational affairs.

7. While the educational system is thus engaged in the preparation of the masses for direct participation in their own education, the assistance of other governmental departments is equally needed. The Ministry of Health and its pertinent offices can do a lot in acquainting

the people with the hygienic rules. Through the use of such mass media as radio, television, travelling libraries, illustrated books and pamphlets, films and the like, people, urban or rural, must be guided in how to look after their health and how to bring up healthy children. The Ministry of Roads and Communication should lend a hand in developing and maintaining the road system of the country so that the educational and health missions can easily reach the rural people. The Ministry of Agriculture and its offices should co-operate with the Ministry of Education and the local educational councils to acquaint them with the needs of each rural area and the kind of agricultural schools which are to be established in those areas.

In short, people will have to perceive that they are responsible for the creation of a correct and satisfactory educational situation. This is the **core** of any reform. If people do not show any interest in their own affairs and do not make sacrifices for a better education for their own children, no amount of reform on the part of the Ministry of Education will have much effect on the existing problems of Iran. No reform will be fruitful unless the people have a direct part in it. The Iranians, must be encouraged to embark voluntarily upon their own reforms not by exerting force or dictatorship but by being honestly guided that such reforms are necessary and are to their benefit.

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