

Chapter 7- Civilising the Native , Educating the Nation

Handout (Module - 2/2)

James Mill and Thomas Macaulay considered European education essential in India for the following reasons:

- Macaulay felt that knowledge of English would allow Indians to read some of the finest literature the world had produced. It would make them aware of the developments in Western Science and philosophy. Teaching of English could civilize people, change their tastes, values and culture.
- James Mill felt that the aim of education should be to teach what was useful and practical. So Indians should be made familiar with the scientific and technical advances that the West had made, rather than with the poetry and sacred literature of the 'Orient'.
- Both of them thought that European education would enable Indians to recognize the advantages that flow from the expansion of trade and commerce and make them see the importance of developing the resources of the country.
- They also felt that introducing the Indians to European ways of life, would change their tastes and desires, and create a demand for British goods, for Indians would begin to appreciate and buy things that were produced in Europe.

- **William Adam (1796 – 1881) toured the 'pathshalas'** in Bengal, mostly those in the north of Calcutta. The conditions of the Pathshalas were:
 - The system of education in pathshalas was flexible. There was no proper system of fixed fee, printed books, benches, chairs, blackboards, and roll-registers.
 - They had no system of separate classes and school buildings.
 - There was no procedure for annual examinations and regular time-table.
 - In some places classes were held under a banyan tree, in other places in the corner of a village shop or temple, or at the guru's home.
 - Fee depended on the income of parents: the rich had to pay more than the poor.
 - The teaching process was oral with no fixed topic. The guru decided what to teach, in accordance with the needs of the students.

Vernacular: British considered English as the language of the imperial masters and said that knowledge of East was full of errors and unscientific thought. So for local languages they used the term vernacular.