

## CHAPTER II

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### GENERAL AWAKENING AMONG JAIN COMMUNITY



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## CHAPTER TWO / GENERAL AWAKENING AMONG JAIN COMMUNITY.

British rule in India brought in its course a uniform administration, western education and modern means of communication. All the three factors contributed to the general awakening among the Indians to an extent unparalleled in the history of India. This intellectual awakening may be traced in all the castes and sections of the society with a varying degree. The Jain community was no exception. Slowly there emerged an awareness among Jains of their backwardness, the need of education in general and of female education in particular. Many of them were bold enough to express their thoughts openly and publicly. As awakening precedes any reforms, an attempt is made here to trace it in the Jain community by giving the gists of thoughts of the prominent persons of this community.

Shri. Annasaheb Latthe (1878-1950) : Shri. Annasaheb Babaji Latthe was born to Babaji and Anubai on 9th December, 1878, at Kurundwad.<sup>1</sup> Gifted with scholarly bent of mind, he cultivated reading and writing habits in his early childhood. He studied at various places such as Kolhapur, Poona and Bombay, and subsequently, came under the spell of Mahatma Phule and Chhatrapati Shahu of Kolhapur.<sup>2</sup> He held various posts and began his career and served in various capacities. To begin with, he joined as a Lecturer in Rajaram College in Kolhapur in 1907<sup>3</sup> and then was appointed as a Head of Education Department (1911-13).<sup>4</sup> He was the first superintendent of the Jain Boarding, Kolhapur (1905-14).<sup>5</sup> His

more important assignments were first in the capacity of Diwan of Kolhapur State from (1925-1931), Minister of Finance (1937-39), as an advisor to Chhatrapati Shahaji (1947-49). He also associated himself with Satyashodhak Samaj (1911-19)<sup>6</sup> and non-Brahmin party movement upto 1923. He also worked as an advisor to Chhatrapati Rajaram and more importantly, as a Diwan after the death of Chhatrapati Shahu. He had a flair for writing and was a good writer and editor. He was honoured by the British Government with the title of Rao Bahadur.<sup>7</sup>

Because of his writing skill and the comparative study of the Indian society in general and that of the Jain community in particular, he could put forth his views quite emphatically. He assumed rightly the rampant ignorance to be the main cause of the backwardness and slavery of masses and education to be the only way to remove the ignorance and bring about the liberation of the masses.

Even on finding Mr. Paranjape, the Education Minister of Bombay Presidency in early 'twenties, rather reluctant in introducing primary education, Mr. Latthe accused him of harbouring the educational interests of only classes and not masses.<sup>8</sup> Naturally he stood for compulsory primary education and its early implementation. Otherwise, he feared, rising illiteracy would create serious problems. More importantly, the schemes for female education should be implemented in right earnest.

He believed that education would not only bring

about social and religious reforms but would also equip the masses with a will and encourage them to fight for political rights.<sup>9</sup> His convictions were so strong on that score that he discouraged the students from boycotting schools and colleges during non-cooperation movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi. He justified his stand in these words:

The masses are ignorant for years together and, therefore, I do not feel it advisable to ask the students to boycott the colleges. This will particularly go against the non-Brahmin students who have now started educating themselves slowly.<sup>10</sup>

In one of his interviews, he opined:

I am uncompromisingly for compulsory primary education, but as there are certain monetary difficulties, it was to be implemented gradually. Five years would be an adequate time limit for the same. Fortunately, evil social practice and harmful religious beliefs are changing. Once the students of touchables and untouchable communities start sitting in one class-room, though separately, gradually they will start even sitting together. Postponement of introducing compulsory education would increase the number of illiterate and ignorant people and this would create serious problems.<sup>11</sup>

Further he said:

Girls education scheme should not be postponed even if the number of girls coming to schools is small. I am prepared to allow its postponement for three years only for the financial reasons.

Mass education was his self-chosen goal. He was

quite aware of the nature of work involved. The slow pace of it and genuine need to extend and expand the base of such programmes<sup>12</sup> was realised by him; he believed that and so did every educated individual. His concept of education covered every possible field available to the people. He was for vocational education. In his concluding speech in one of the functions at the vocational education camp arranged by Prof.R.J.Radhyaksha at Belgaum between 18th April 1942 and May 1942, he remarked:

The vocational education teaches man to work with his own hands and also stimulates his brain. This is also known as education by doing some exhibits in the exhibition which act in both ways, that is to say, they entertain a man and also please his mind, whereas some of the exhibits here are helpful to earn one's own bread. The organizers of the school and the parents must think over education seriously. As far as possible, the raw material required from the vicinity of the industry and it should be helpful to prepare final goods out of them. This would provide a good means of livelihood for the people in the rural areas.<sup>13</sup>

Latthe's concept of education was all comprising and it had room for physical education which had its own importance and one need not neglect it.<sup>14</sup>

However, the crux of his ideas and views on education was, "Indian Society needs to be reformed and Indian masses who have become slaves of traditions must receive education, if Indian nation is to make progress".<sup>15</sup>

Danvir Manikchand Javeri (18151-1914) : Sheth Manikchand, born at Surat in Gujarat in 1851, came to Bombay with his father Hirachand for commercial purpose in 1863. Once having settled in business, he turned to socio-educational work for Jain, his community, along with his friend Hirachand Nemchand Doshi of Solapur [he established Hirachand Gumanji Jain Boarding at Bombay for Jain students in 1900 and was active member of the Daxin Maharashtra Jain Sabha right from its inception (1899)].<sup>16</sup>

The popular saying 'Charity begins at home' fits Shri. Danvir Manickchand Javeri rather well. He was very vocal against the evils the Jain society suffered from. He advised young educated Jains to, "tour the country and convince Jains of the importance of religion, then the custom of sale of girls should be ruled out and child-marriage should be strongly opposed".<sup>17</sup>

He practised what he preached. He not only denounced child marriage but set an example before others by marrying off his own daughters Phulkumari and Maganmati at the age of 15 and 13, respectively.<sup>18</sup> And Maganmati became widow, unfortunately, at the tender age of 19.<sup>19</sup>

Considering the fact that usually the girls were married off in the stage of infancy, marrying a daughter at teenage was definitely a bold step. He did not want the widows to suffer the harsh and miserable life. Far from it, he encouraged his widowed daughter to come out in the open to work for improving the lot of widows. The personal tragedy of his daughter gave

him a fresh cause to work for women in general and the widows in particular. He advised his daughter to,

... treat your personal grief as a social one and try to wipe out the tears. More than this, try to wipe the tears of other women. Accept your widowhood as a bliss. Show a light to your sisters who are groping in darkness of ignorance. Take the flame of education in your hands. Light the flames of life of other women in India.<sup>20</sup>

He not only educated his daughters at home<sup>21</sup> but also appointed a lady teacher to teach his wife.<sup>22</sup> He wanted widows not to indulge in self-pity but regard widowhood as a bliss.<sup>23</sup>

Shri.Manikchand gave due importance to education in liberation of Jain women and did his best to contribute to it. However, of him, it must be said that given his times, he did contribute substantially on individual level and yet he was humble enough to know of his limitation which was quite obvious from his felicitation speech.

I have tried to do my best as per my limited capacity. The spread of education in Jain community is very less and so it is necessary that all the rich Jain people should devote themselves to the educational development of Jain society.<sup>24</sup>

Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi (1856-1937) : Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi born on 5th November, 1856, in a merchant family of Solapur, was another of outstanding personalities produced by the Jain community.<sup>25</sup>

At quite an early stage of his life, he gave hint of his rational and courageous bent of mind when he waved aside boldly the superstitious notions firmly associated with the study of English and studied it enough to speak it fluently.<sup>26</sup> Premature death of his father burdened him with family and business responsibilities<sup>27</sup>. When he was just in his mid-twenties, he traded in textiles and soon started a mill in the Marathwada State.<sup>28</sup> Then he shifted to Bombay and opened a jeweller's shop. It is in Bombay that he subsequently came in contact with Seth Manikchand Hirachand Javeri and with the great social reformers.<sup>29</sup> He, till his death until on 2nd February 1937 worked for the progress of the Jain community.<sup>30</sup> The pathetic condition of many of Jain community had moved him long back and he wanted to do something for it. His first step was to start a magazine. 'Jainbodhak' (1884) to spread liberal ideas and thoughts when he was hardly 28 years old.<sup>31</sup> He concentrated on the most neglected part of the Jain community, i.e. Jain women. He criticised the evil customs affecting the Jain community. For instance, on the issue of child marriage, at the 6th conference of the Daxin Maharashtra Jain Sabha (1904), he spoke thus:

In Kolhapur State, nearly one lakh Maratha and Kunbi people live. The number of child marriages here is thirtyfive while in Jain community consisting of 50 thousand people, the number of child marriages is 55. This makes clear that the child marriage custom is widely spread in Jain community. So, we have to struggle to end this pitiable situation.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly, he would impress on people the need



of the knowledge of English, so as to keep up with the changing times. The following passage makes his views clear on this aspect:

The present situation strongly needs the knowledge of English. Firstly, we have to take primary education. As English is a language of Court, it is mostly useful for practical knowledge. We stumble at every step if we don't know English. So, it is necessary to have atleast a preliminary knowledge of English. The fear that the learning of English is an act supposed out of religion, is illusionary. The men who have worked for the advancement of religion and society, like Prof.A.B.Latthe, Bapu Patil, Shri.Annappa Chougule, have learnt English. It should be reminded that these three people have brought a very bright future for Jain society, and it is very necessary to try and plan, so that many persons like them should work in society.<sup>33</sup>

He was aware of stark negligence of education on the part of Jain community and criticised<sup>34</sup> their educational backwardness. He would come up with relevant data to make himself well understood on this score. Daxin Maharashtra Jain people are one lakh thirty thousand. In Kolhapur, one thousand. In the State, there are fourteen thousand Jains among whom only thirtyseven know English. If such is the condition of men, what would be of women! So, only fiftyfive women and 24,725 men are able to read and write, English knowing women were nil. He gave top priority to female education. He made it a point to impress upon the community members the need to send their

daughters to school to read and keep the account and to learn about religion, so as to distinguish between good and evil.<sup>35</sup>

For him, education was the foundation of all pleasure and he considered British rule beneficial from that point of view as a number of schools were established by them. And as such, it was left upto them to see to it that their sons and daughters attend the school. "If they have no capacity to pay the fees, the wealthy persons should arrange for the fees and books. This solution will not cost much but will include a constructive work".<sup>36</sup>

Seth Hirachand Doshi did what he preached. He encouraged his widow daughter, Kankubai, to take education and help its spread among other Jain women.

Pandita Maganbai (1876-1930) : Pandita Maganbai walked confidently in the footsteps of her famous father and emerged as the first rank woman social worker. Born in 1876, she devoted to the spread of education among Jain women.<sup>37</sup> She confined herself initially to the women Digambar sect. She toured India extensively, delivering lectures on education.<sup>38</sup>

Through her lectures and articles, she criticized the deep-rooted superstitious fears of Jain women about education, such as the education was an evil force, which would bring widowhood on them.<sup>39</sup> In her presidential address of the 8th conference of Daxin Maharashtra Jain Mahila Parishad, she glorified the role of educated women in the progress of the society, the

fact that was rightly understood by their forefathers. Hence, a special significance was attached to female education in Jain religion. She also pointed out that education was the most important act among the fiftythree important enjoined in 'Shravak'.<sup>40</sup> Hence, they must come out of hell of ignorance so as to make good of you as well as of others.<sup>41</sup>

About the beneficial results of women, she said:

The behaviour of human beings gets improved because of education and knowledge. Even the evil traditions will not be ruled out without taking education. We have to take the help of education to improve the lot of Jain women. Even we have to find out the solution to cure these evils.<sup>42</sup>

After discussing the importance of women education and its benefits, she addressed to Jain men on whom the progress upgradation and development of Jain women depended, she said:

Brothers! if you want to progress and develop the women, then the first thing is to remove the ignorance, for that be effective to start a girls' hostel (Kanyashram). There you should teach them to read, write as well as morality. You should travel all through the world and advise others.<sup>43</sup>

While making aware Jain women of their duties, she addresses neglected Jain women to develop themselves:

Sisters! You should start girls schools in every town. If lady-teachers are not available, you should try to get lady-teachers. I would suggest that

our widow-sisters should take admission in Digambar Jain Shravikashram at Ahmedabad or Kolhapur Shravikashram if they want to be free from family troubles!<sup>44</sup>

Oh! sisters, as you insist on ornaments and ask your husbands to give those, in the same way, you should be insistent for taking education.<sup>45</sup>

Because of the valuable thoughts of Pandita Maganbai, Jain women could follow that the status of women is increased because of education more than ornaments. Even they realized that education is worshipped by the whole world. The thought which gave this consciousness is as follows:

Woman is the important part of the society. Her status is very high. The mothers of all past great persons were the women. So, firstly we should educate the girls and then only perform their marriage. Matrimonial expenses should be reduced and that money should be spent on their education. We must include Hindu language, physical education, professional education and ethics in education.<sup>46</sup>

In the latter part of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century, which was supposed to be a dark era of female education, when people were afraid of even speaking about women education, Pandita Maganbai advocated her modern thoughts. She convinced the people of the importance of education and successfully started institutions like Shravikashram girls school and schools for Digambar Jain women. Because of her inspiration only, Jain women took a progressive step.

Dharmachandrika Kankubai (1876-1939) : Dharmachandrika Kankubai, like Pandita Maganbai, was devoted to the cause of female education and worked enthusiastically all her life to create awareness and need of education among the young women of her community. Born at Kumbari in 1876, she drew inspiration and took primary education upto fourth standard at Solapur. She got married in 1887, but suffered widowhood in 1900 at the age of 25. Then, she came to Solapur to her father's house. She died at Bombay in 1939.<sup>47</sup> She drew inspiration and zeal for social work from her father, Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi. Latthe's friend Manikchand Hirachand Javeri and his widow daughter Pandita Maganbai also influenced her and shaped her ideas and work to a great extent.<sup>48</sup> The pitiable condition of young widows of poor family held her concern. She aimed at improving their lot by educating them. She appealed to the rich and wealthy Jains to donate substantially and liberally for the cause of female education.<sup>49</sup>

Impressing upon them that among the four kinds of donations - of food, of medicine, of fearlessness and of education - the last was most important one and as such, constituted the prime need of time.<sup>50</sup> And the donations received should be spent on female education, on orphans and widows.

She believed in concrete actions, not in empty talk, She wanted literate women to form the habit of reading newspapers available as talks mirror the Jain society. It was not considered appropriate by many for women to advocate such bold thoughts through articles and in meetings. However, she was ready to

face their sacrasms on that account and she expressed her views boldly and frankly through 'Jainmitra'.<sup>51</sup>

Mrs.S.A.Bhokare: Another such active worker, Mrs.Sulochana Annasaheb Bhokare was born to Shri.Adiraj Devendra Upadhye and Godubai Upadhye at Saundatti, Kolhapur, in 1914. As both of her parents were educated,<sup>52</sup> they took keen interest in educating her. She was first put in Mainabai Jain Shrivakashram, Poona, and then at Jain Shrivakashram, Sangli.<sup>53</sup>

She was associated with Pratapsinh Library, Terdal (Ichalkaranji, 21st February, 1944). She joined Pragati and Jinvijay in 1933 as co-editor. She not only wrote thought-provoking articles on the conditions of women but inspired other women to contribute to it.<sup>54</sup>

In her views, she differed somewhat in the sense that she put entire responsibility of progress of women on the shoulders of men. The society being male-dominated and family being patriarchal, it was the major responsibility of father in getting his daughter educated. Male members were to take the responsibility of protection and upbringing of women.<sup>55</sup> She welcomed remarriage as there was nothing evil in it. The men should take initiative in discouraging the undesirable and evil customs of society. They should understand the signs of time, should march with it giving opportunities to women in various fields, including politics and administration.<sup>56</sup>

According to her, only the self-supporting women could achieve their social status.<sup>57</sup> "Finally the women are the dependents (excluding serving women) and so even if they wish, they cannot spend the money without the permission of men".

She criticized the men who showed hypocrisy. The men who talked about liberation of women in public, back at home, they suppressed their womenfolk. Also those who treated the birth of a daughter as a curse quite forgetting that the same daughter could be like a shining jewel if properly taken care of.<sup>58</sup> And by setting personal example, she did prove that her assumption could be very much true.

Shrimati Kalantre Akka : Jain people saw a very learned and scholar lady in Shrimati Kalantre Akka, who was the jewel of Maharashtra. She worked as per her capacity and intelligence and did the social work. But the place and worth of this great lady is really extra-ordinary and unparalleled. She took the work of upliftment of the women who spent their life in very troublesome customs and who were neglected and insulted. Still, she is doing that work.

Among the names of social workers from Jain community is that of Shrimati Kalantre Akka who stands out to her decided role in the upliftment of women. She was born at Aurwad, Kolhapur State, on 22nd November 1896.<sup>59</sup> Hers was the same story of early marriage and early widowhood. Undaunted by the adversities, she defied the orthodox elements in her community and chose

the path of liberation who shared the similar plight. Backing of her father and encouragement from Mr. Latthe<sup>60</sup> combined with her qualities of head and heart, saw her emerge within a short span as leading personality in the Jain community. Her career was crowned with the ministership in 1949 and 1952.<sup>61</sup>

Her primary concern was education which she regarded as the only source for all-round development. However, mere education on its own was not enough. Education and culture must go hand-in-hand.<sup>62</sup>

She put much stress on culture. Only proper culture would make a woman a good wife and an ideal mother and only cultured women can bring up social stability. Only a cultured woman can make her home a good school where the young children could learn their first lessons. As such, education of women is more important than that of men. Hence, father should not discriminate between his son and daughter and should be more particular about his daughter's education. They should not overlook the fact that bringing up children is major responsibility of women. Hence, she should not be left illiterate under any circumstances.<sup>63</sup> She was aware of the glaring gap between the existing ignorance on the one hand and the existence of so many schools and opportunities to achieve so many qualifications on the other hand. They could choose any profession they wish.<sup>64</sup>

Orthodox elements in the community did not share her ideas. Naturally, they opposed her. She saw in their resistance the inevitable clash between the old and new. That should not discourage a true social worker.<sup>65</sup>

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She herself took their opposition in her own stride propagating her liberal ideas and achieved a niche for herself.<sup>66</sup>

Thoughts Expressed from the Platform of Jain Women's Conferences:

Daxin Maharashtra Jain Sabha, established in 1899, at Shri Kshetra Stavanidhi (near Nipani, district Belgaum) in general and its women wing established in the same year by leading personalities such as Latthe, Mr.Chougule, Bugate, Malgave, Hanje, Raosaheb Patil and others in particular provided a popular platform to the young educated men and women in Jain community to air their liberated progressive thoughts, ideas and views. Many important issues relating to female education were discussed from time to time. Such issues may be broadly categorized as under :

Obstacles : While discussing the obstacles in women education, Mrs. Jyotsnabai Latthe at the 15th Mahila Conference at Shri Kshetra Stavanidhi in 1913 underlined some of the important obstacles which affected educational progress of Jain women. Child marriage and reluctance to educate the widow and in addition the sceptic attitude of society towards the school-going girls were the main hindrances according to her.<sup>67</sup>

Similarly, at the 35th conference held at Hubli in 1933, Sou.Tungabai Anandrao Mantaganikar dwelt upon the cause of lack of motivated social workers, to certain superstitions, beliefs of Jain women, etc. She also suggested a way out that

the widow should work for social upliftment.<sup>68</sup>

Prejudice : One of the major causes for the female illiteracy in the Jain community was certain deep-rooted prejudices.

Bhagirathi Pirale at the 15th Mahila Parishad (1913) spoke against such prejudices that there was no harm and justification to suspect the moral character of school-going girls. Education was not a cause for loss of character. If it were so, she questioned, why educated women lose their character? Hence, the parents should take their daughters not only to school but to co-education schools.<sup>69</sup>

Srinmati Sushilabai Mithare made the following comments in the 36th Conference (1934):

Some people in our society object to female education on the grounds that the educated women will not be able to run a family and they will fight for equal rights. The so-called objections and fears are baseless. Hence, these should be discarded.<sup>70</sup>

Male Opposition :

Male opposition to female education was a serious hurdle in the progress of women education. In the 24th Conference of Stavanidhi on 22nd January, the members gave vent to this issue in these words: "Mainly, men are responsible for the opposition to women education. They do not respond properly and positively to the women education".<sup>71</sup>

Shrimati Shamabai Moruse, speaking in the conference of 31st, regarded male orthodoxy to be the main hurdle in the path of women's liberation. However, she was not prepared to make an issue out of it. Instead, she wanted women to act on their own and face the problems boldly. They should establish their own institutions in all villages and make others aware of the duties and status. Further, she maintained that mere passing of the resolutions would not lead to results, hence something more concrete would have to be done by implementing the resolutions passed in such meetings.<sup>72</sup>

Social Status:

Mahila conferences also registered protest against the custom of child marriages from that platform in 1905. Dr. Krishnabai Kelwalkar, wellknown social reformer, criticized child-marriages on grounds of physical and mental immaturity and suggested twentyone and eighteen to be the marriageable ages for men and women respectively.<sup>73</sup> The Mahila conferences of 1907, 1908 and 1909 registered strong protest against child marriages and passed resolution to encourage adult-marriages.<sup>74</sup>

Mrs. Malatibai Mule spoke against this problem in 1924. Mr. A. B. Latthe convened the first conference of the All India Non-Brahmin Congress conjointly with the All India Congress Conference in December 1924 at Manikbag, Belgaum. An attempt was also made at the same time to give an all India status to the Daxin Maharashtra Jain Sabha. In her presidential speech at the Mahila Parishad, Malatibai said,

The main root of the progressive nations, which are known in the world, is education. There may exist some differences of opinions regarding the nature of the girls and boys. Of course, it is necessary that the nature of education of girls should differ from that of the boys', but to pay no heed towards women education would lead to self-destruction.<sup>75</sup>

On the same issue, thus spoke Sou.Pushpavati Deshpande-Annegiri,

... that the limit for the marriage decided by the Sharda law is 18 years for boy and 14 for girl. This is insufficient and so the efforts should be made to increase it.<sup>76</sup>

#### Importance of Women Education:

In 1903, Mrs.Murudevi Gundopant Subhedar of Shahapur (sister of Shri.A.B.Latthe) was appointed as President of the Sabha. She was the first woman to preside over the Sabha and to advocate the problems of women on behalf of the women.<sup>77</sup>

In 1904, Mrs.Shakubai Hirachand Doshi was the President of Women's Conference and even though her husband, Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi of Solapur, was the president of the conference of D.M.J.Sabha, he advocated the importance of education for women in his speech, atleast to a level to understand religious and practical matters.<sup>78</sup>

Mahila Conference of 1906 turned out to be the next step in the development of the women education because Pandita Maganbai presided over the conference. She was inspired by

the only motive to advocate women education in Digambar Jains all over India. In this conference, they gave first preference to women education. Pandita Maganbai delivered a thought-provoking speech on the very subject. The Sabha must make efforts for getting lady teachers, a resolution to that effect was passed in the conference. By this resolution, Women Education Section was opened in the Department of Education and the responsibility of it was assigned to Mr.A.B.Latthe.<sup>79</sup>

The thoughts expressed in this conference resulted in the establishment of Jain Shrivikashram in Kolhapur on 31st January, 1908.<sup>80</sup>

Shri.A.B.Latthe was working as Education Inspector in Kolhapur in 1911. He had started the work of Jain women education with the help of his wife. At this time, an unexpected event took place in the life of A.B.Latthe. Because of Tar Incident, it became inevitable for Latthe to change his residence from Kolhapur to Belgaum. At the same time, the first World War broke out and the States concentrated their attention on the war. So, upto 1921, the work of arranging women's conferences and their work became stagnant.

As a result of the work of Pandita Maganbai, Shri.A.B. Latthe and Jyotsnabai Latthe, the workers like Shrimati Kalantre, Shamabai Moruse, Kokil and others, took lead and did the work of women education.

Jain women, Shrimati Kalantre, Indumati Patil,

Anantmati Upadhye took lead for Jain women education in the 23rd Women Conference at Stavanidhi, in 1921. Kalantre Akka, who took education in Mainabai Shrivikashram, Poona, illustrated that women should take their education either at Poona or in Ashram. Shrimati Indumati Patil, who in her all stages, as daughter, wife, mother and widow, stressed the need of women education. She also pointed out that the Daxin Maharashtra Jain Sabha which was started at 1908 and was closed on 1911, paid no heed towards the establishment of Shrivikashram in Sangli.<sup>81</sup>

The main root of the progressive nations which are known in the world is education. There may exist the differences of opinion regarding the nature of education provided to the girls and boys. Of course, it is necessary that the nature of the education of girls should differ from that of boys', but to pay no heed towards women education would lead to self-destruction.

The twentyfifth conference was organized at Sangli in November 1922. At the same time, Sangli Shrivikashram was established on 21st April 1922, thanks to the efforts of Shrimati Kalantre. Shrimati P.Maganbai, Lalitabai and Shrimati Kokilbai attended the conference. They offered their ornaments as a financial help for the progress of women education.<sup>82</sup>

Sou.Laxmibai Patil, speaking in the conference of 1926, gave a new direction propagating that the women of Jamindar and

Patil families should take lead in taking education and imparting it as society looks down upon working women.<sup>51</sup> Her suggestion was practical since the Patil and Jamindar families enjoyed considerable class, if their family members were to take initiative in educational matters, the others would follow suit.<sup>83</sup>

Shrimati Kesharbai Shah, while expressing her valuable thoughts in women's conference in 1938, said,

Education is essential for Jain women. But the care which is taken while imparting primary education, is not taken while giving higher education. We must establish separate universities for the girls. And the beginning of it is to make society favourable for women education. We should be keen before the examples of ideal women, e.g. Shrimati Shamabai Moruse, Shrimati Kalantre, Shrimati Kunkubai and Shrimati Kokilbai.<sup>84</sup>

#### Nature of Education and Syllabus:

In the 29th conference (1927), Pandita Maganbai expressed that education should include practical knowledge, professional education, physical education and moral education.<sup>85</sup>

In the 36th conference (1934), Shrimati Pushpavati Deshpande Annegiri stated that like boys, the primary education of girls should be made compulsory and free. It is also essential that training in home-science and of the development of children should be imparted with this.<sup>86</sup>

When freedom struggle became acute, its influence is also reflected on Jain Mahila Parishad. The social philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi was also reflected on Jain society. The result of this is seen in the speech of Shrimati Tanibai Arwade (Sangli). She said in her presidential speech:

The literacy is the first step of education. So, we should do more efforts to spread literacy. But our outlook towards education should be broader than including only literacy in education. It is not proper to interpret the education only in terms of the education provided through school and colleges. That education is the education which aims at the development of physique, mind and intelligence and thereby enables the women to know their duties towards their families, society and the nation. So, our women education should be directed to this end.<sup>87</sup>

The thoughts advocated in women's conference in 1938 shows an impact of political situation existing at that time. The president of this conference was a learned woman and famous social worker of Solapur, Shrimati Kesharbai Shah. While expressing her thoughts, she said,

We are still dependent, when the sun of freedom will rise, we don't know. But we are on that way. And we should work on that way. Because the women are the foundation of nation and girls are the budding flowers. So, if we need brave women, it is necessary to give physical education to women. Because as intellectual education leads to cultural development,



physical education leads to courage and thoughtfulness.<sup>88</sup>

Mode of Work:

There was another thought in these conferences, that every Jain woman should direct her attention towards getting education and even she should try that others will concentrate their attention to this. At this stage, organization is very necessary. Organization means unity. So, the success of our work depends upon the strength of our unity. So, we should establish clubs of women to organize the strength of women and to increase their strength. In such clubs, we have to convince them of the importance of small scale professions and artistic skills. We should realise the importance of newspapers. Very fortunately, we have the newspapers like 'Satyavadi' and 'Pragati and Jinvijay', which can devote a special section for women. Women should try to get benefit of this.<sup>89</sup>

Thus, there may be seen a kind of general awakening among the Jains. Prominent members of this community such as Mr.A.B.Latthe, Seth Manikchand Hirachand Javeri, Seth Hirachand Nemchand Doshi, Pandita Maganbai, Pandita Kunkubai, Mrs.Sulochana Bhokare, Shrimati Kalantre Akka were propagating the need to take education and give up outdated society evils such as child-marriages, etc.

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