

## CHAPTER - VI.

### Elections.

#### Introduction:

6.1 It is an indisputable truth that in the last analysis sovereignty rests with the people who have the ultimate authority to determine the form and functions of the government. But in modern conditions direct democracy is not feasible; therefore, people as a whole are directly and effectively associated with the government through the representative system. Every democratic State holds elections periodically to choose its rulers. An election is a grand occasion for people to assert their sovereignty; even it has become a plebiscite to decide whether one party or another shall be empowered to govern the country.

6.2 This chapter discusses whether students were voters and/or canvassers at the last General Elections. Students are asked whether they contested any elections, have liking to contest them, and their liking for elections is also tapped. Their views on the bases of elections are examined, and various elements in elections noticed by them are observed. All this would spotlight their involvement in elections, and their political alignments and aspirations would be clearly discernible. Lastly, their views on elections would be discovered. All this will eventually reveal their political maturity.



### Voting

6.3 Political rights are possessed by persons whom the state permits to share in the legal expression and administration of its sovereign power. They are exercised by voting or by serving as an official of the state. Not every one living in a state is given the right to vote but the trend is towards universal suffrage.

6.4 Table No.73 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 10.64% and of the 150 females, 2.00% have reported that they were voters at the last General Elections (1962). It is not surprising that the percentages of the male and female voters are quite meagre; the low percentages of the voters are explainable with reference to the age-groups of students. The lower percentage of the female voters indicates that they are comparatively younger in age than males.

6.5 A detailed break-up of the table gives the distribution of votes party-wise. To understand rightly the distribution of votes party-wise, it would be worthwhile to recall that the political situation in Maharashtra rapidly changed after the formation of the Maharashtra State on May 1, 1960. The formidable all-party alliance (the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti) turned out to be a mere apple-cart of the Communist Party, the Peasants and Workers Party, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Lal Nishan Gat, and the Republican party (Bhandare faction). The parties which entered in the



election arena in 1962 were the Congress Party, the Samiti, the P.S.P., the Jan Sangh, the Socialist Party, the Nag Vidharbha Andolan Samiti, the Republican party (Kamble faction), and the Swatantra party. In addition to these parties, there were a number of Independents and rebel Congressmen. It may be mentioned here that I have not treated the two factions in the Republican party separately, and the Nag Vidharbha Andolan Samiti is not embodied in the questionnaire.

Out of the 81 male voters, the highest percentage of the males (46.93%) has voted for the Congress party. This at once and beyond a shadow of doubt discloses the top-most popularity of the Congress party among students (males). This was because the ushering in of the Maharashtra State proved to be a turning point in the politics in Maharashtra. The 1962 General Elections were generally looked upon as a popular ratification of the decision to set up a unilingual Maharashtra State. It was felt that the Congress party was instrumental in securing the unilingual State. The Congress party was on the offensive compared to its defensive posture in 1957. The Opposition was in a demoralised State. The Samiti was, no doubt, still functioning but with a greatly reduced strength and a fast declining prestige. It had lost much of its emotional appeal to the common man. Despite this, next to the Congress party, the Samiti succeeded in winning over 35.80% of the male voters. Thus, the performance of the Samiti was not as bad as that of the other opposition parties: the P.S.P. could attract 4.94% of the male voters, the Jan Sangh got votes of 2.47% of the male voters and the



Swatantra party polled 1.23% of the male voters. It is seen that the Independents were obliged by 3.70% of the male voters.

In respect of females, it is noticeable that the Congress party, the P.S.P., and the Independents got 33.33% (one female voter) of the female votes each. In the end, it is observable that it is only the Congress party that is most popular among both males and females. Obviously, females have not voted for the Samiti, the Jan Sangh, and the Swatantra party. It is instructive to note that the Socialist party is not at all in the good books of males and females as it failed to get their single vote.

6.6 A faculty-wise consideration of the sample shows that the highest percentage of the male voters is from the Law faculty (63.15%); and 50.00% of the male voters report that they are from the Post-graduate classes. Evidently, it may be generalised that the average age of males from the Law faculty is higher than that of males from the Post-graduate classes. There are 11.87% of the male voters who hail from the Arts faculty; 7.69% of the male voters belong to the Commerce faculty; and 5.88% of the male voters are claimed by the Agriculture faculty. The lowest percentage of the male voters is from the Science faculty (1.58%). On the whole, it may be placed on record that a large number of the male voters are from the Law faculty and the Post-graduate classes. This is very much in consonance with their age. The percentage of the male voters from the Arts



faculty is higher than that of the male voters from the Commerce, Agriculture, and the Science faculties. It is safe to say that the average age of males of the Arts faculty is higher than that of males of the Commerce, Agriculture, and Science faculties. Plainly, the percentage of the male voters from the Commerce faculty is higher than that of the male voters from the Agriculture faculty. All the same, it would be preposterous to compare the percentages of the voters from these faculties because at the time of the present survey there was only one class (F.Y) in Agriculture faculty. It is superfluous to point out that those joining the Science faculty are very much young in years as is obvious from the percentage of the male voters from this faculty.

As regards females, it is seen that one female voter belongs to the Arts faculty, other is from the Commerce faculty, and the last one is claimed by the Post-graduate classes.

6.7 Table No.74 gives the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 12.75% and of the 472 urban students, 5.93% were voters at the General Elections. The high percentage of the rural voters may be explained with reference to the age-groups of rural and urban students. Besides, this may also be attributed to the family back-ground of students.

6.8 A further examination of the table shows that out of



the 56 rural voters and of the 28 urban voters the highest percentages of the rural (44.65%) and urban (46.42%) voters are claimed by the Congress party. This unequivocally means that this party is most popular among rural and urban areas. However, it may be pointed out that it is slightly more popular among urban places than among rural areas. It is interesting to note that the Samiti has polled more votes in rural areas (41.62%) than in urban places, (28.76%). The P.S.P. has attracted more ~~than~~ urban voters (10.71%) than rural voters (3.57%). It may be generalised that this party is more popular among urban places than among rural areas. It is apparent that the Jan Sangh has succeeded in securing more votes of the urban voters (3.27%) than that of the rural voters (1.78%). The Swatantra party gets only one rural voter (1.78%). Independents are obliged more by the urban voters (7.14%) than by the rural voters (1.78%). The Socialist party seems to be discredited by rural as well as urban students as it has failed to attract even a single voter. In the over-all context, it is safe to observe that in the general elections of 1962 the Congress party and the Samiti were the important contenders for power.

6.9 . A castewise treatment of the table shows that there are voters from almost all castes from rural and urban places. Though there is not much that could be commented upon in respect of the castewise treatment of the sample, it may broadly be observed that the percentages of Maratha, Backward and Scheduled castes, Neo-Buddhist, Muslim, and



Christian voters are considerably higher than that of Brahmins and others. The disparity between the percentages is attributable to the family background of students; and therefore to their age-groups. The Congress party and the Samiti draw voters from a large number of castes but the Jan Sangh lives only on the votes of Brahmins and others. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that the Jan Sangh is identified with Brahmins and others only.

#### Reasons for Voting.

6.10 After knowing the exact number of the male and female voters, it would be advisable and desirable to examine the motive force behind its voting. This would at any rate flood-light its political maturity. In all, I have offered ten reasons to students: fascinating personality of the candidate, caste and/or religion of the candidate, party programme of the candidate, celebrated leaders in the party of the candidate, relation with the candidate, suggested by others, forced by others, election propaganda, out of self conviction, and other.

6.11 Table No.75 gives the distribution of the reasons for voting according to sex (males). Since the number of the female voters is negligible, the distribution of the reasons for its being voting is not shown in the table. I have treated below the percentages of males in the descending order. Out of the 81 male voters, 48.16% - the highest



percentage - have exercised their franchise "out of self-conviction". It goes without saying that there is no external pressure that coerces them into voting. They have voted willingly and voluntarily. It is their sheer personal conviction that has motivated them to vote. There are 37.05% of the male voters who report that the reason for their voting is "party programme". Plainly, these males are influenced by party programmes. It would not be wrong to infer that a large number of males do read party programmes, and make up their mind. It clearly means that a large number of students (males) are in the know of party positions. Presence of "the celebrated leaders in the party of the candidate" has won over 30.86% of the male voters. In party politics leaders are as much significant as party programme. They are the architects and helmsmen of party system; hence a party without leader would be like a vessel without rudder. In view of this, the sheer presence of the illustrious leaders in the party not only elevates its reputation but also allures considerable number of electors. Thus, it may rightly be commented that a large number of students (males) are conversant with both party programme, and leaders. "The fascinating personality of the candidate" has successfully influenced 23.46% of the male voters to vote. It is crystal clear that besides party programme and reputed leaders, the candidate himself should possess a personality that could command votes of the people; the name of the party alone will not help the candidate. It is interesting to note that kinship which was one of the factors that



brought about the state plays a role, though insignificant, in the present politics as is obvious from the fact that 8.64% of the male voters have voted because of their "relation with the candidate". It is verily deplorable that the consideration of kinship alone should constrain these students (males) to vote. This is the proof of how bloodties in case of some students are stronger than the ideologies. There are 6.15% of the male voters who state that they have voted because of the consideration of "the caste and/or religion of the candidate". There are two things here that deserve treatment: first, the caste and/or religion appeal to some credulous people; and secondly, caste and/or religion patriotism of some bigotted people is prostituted by the parties to translate their grand designs into practice. This is the evidence of how parties know not scruples when they stoop to conquer. It is worthwhile to note that "suggestions by others" influence the political behaviour of students ~~in~~ as is evident from the statement of 2.47% of the male voters that they have exercised their right to vote because of suggestions by others. This is clearly an indication of their sheep-mentality; they simply yield to suggestions of others. 2.47% of the male voters disclose that they were "forced to vote". It is despicable that of all the means of winning over voters parties resort to force to swell the number of voters. It may, I think, be generalised that elections are not that fair in our country. Propaganda is an effort to sell the party programme in order to win over the



maximum number of voters. It is indeed surprising that only 1.23% of the male voters cast their votes on account of "the election propaganda". It is a matter of gratification that students do not fall prey to the winning and vigorous propaganda of parties; they are not influenced by it. It means they are in the know of party affairs hence they do not require any "political education" at the time of elections; they are themselves the judges of political happenings and affairs.

#### Canvassing At The Elections.

As regards the female voters it can be seen that out of three voters, two have voted because of "the fascinating personality of the candidate"; and "the presence of the celebrated leaders in the party of the candidate" has attracted two female voters. One female reports that she has voted because "the candidate happens to be her relation". It may be summed up in the end that a large number of students exercise their franchise because "the self-conviction", "the presence of the celebrated leaders in the party of the candidate", "party programme", and "the fascinating personality of the candidate".

#### Canvassing.

6.12 Elections could be considered as a huge experiment in mobilising public opinion. It is at the time of elections that the interest of the majority of the people in politics is aroused dynamically. The contesting parties employ



every means at their disposal to project their images and distort the images of the opponents. In their bid to capture the minds of the people many techniques are used freely and unscrupulously. A variety of traditional and modern techniques used by them for reaching the voter and impressing him are not treated here separately; only an attempt is made to learn the involvement of students in electioneering.

#### Canvassing At The Elections.

6.13 Table No.76 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 52.83% and of the 150 females, 14.67% report that they have canvassed at various elections. It is as clear as sunlight that more than half of males and comparatively less number of females are involved in elections. Elections seem to be the great attraction that drags more students-especially males- than the other party activities as is obvious from the table Nos.57 and 58 (Ref.5.26). This is once more the proof of how parties in their madness to seize power allure students into electioneering and use them as tool. The involvement of students in elections is indeed deplorable. The health of democracy will deteriorate eventually if this phenomenon is not stamped out. A comparatively lower percentage of the female canvassers may be considered as suggestive of their moderate interest in elections or it may be attributed to social taboos that inhibit them from actively associating with elections.



6.14 A detailed composition of the table displays the number of the canvassers canvassing at the various elections. On learning the number of the male and female canvassers it is, further, envisaged to pinpoint their involvement in the various elections. This will also indicate the popularity of the various elections among students. In all, the names of six elections are presented to students; General Elections, Municipal Elections, Zilla Parishad Elections, Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections, Gram Panchayat Elections, and other. I have considered below the percentages of males and females in the descending order.

Out of the 402 male canvassers and of the 22 female canvassers, the highest percentage of the males (68.66%) and females (50.00%) canvassers during the "General Elections". It goes without saying that the General Elections involve the largest number of males and females; further, it is pertinent to state that they are most popular among students. Evidently, females are not involved in the General Elections to the extent to which males. "Municipal Elections" engage considerably high percentage of the male (34.08%) and female (50.00%) canvassers. It is plain that next to the General Elections the Municipal Elections involve the large number of the male and female canvassers. It is understandable that males are not as much involved in the Municipal elections as females. This may be explained with reference to the place of origin of males and females. A majority of females come from urban places; hence their percentage is higher than that of



males. 33.08% of the male and 4.54% of the female canvassers state that they have canvassed during the "Gram Panchayat Elections". It is markedly noticeable that the Gram Panchayat Elections engage more student canvassers - especially males - than the Zilla Parishad Elections, and the Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections. It obviously means that the Zilla Parishad and Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections are not much popular among students. A lower percentage of the female canvassers is not contrary to the experience because almost all females are urban dwellers. There are 32.59% of the male and 9.09% of the female canvassers who report that they have canvassed in the "Zilla Parishad Elections". A meagre percentage of the female canvassers is attributable to the fact that there are few females who hail from rural places. The "Taluka Panchayat Elections" got 11.19% of the male canvassers only. It is discernible that the Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections could involve but the least number of male canvassers. It obviously means that they do not have much of appeal and attraction to students; and in case of females they have failed totally.

6.15 A faculty-wise treatment of the sample shows that the highest percentage of the male canvassers (61.50%) hails from the Arts faculty. Evidently, the largest number of males of the Arts faculty are involved and interested in elections. It may be placed on record that the percentage of the male canvassers (58.82%) from the Agriculture faculty is next to that of the Arts faculty. This indicates the extent to which males of this faculty are involved in elections. It is indeed



a matter of enlightenment that those prosecuting higher studies engage themselves in election campaigns as is obvious from the statement of 57.90% of the male canvassers from the Post-graduate classes. It may be said that the charge that highly educated people do not take to active politics seems to be meaningless. There is not marked difference between the percentages of the male canvassers from the Law faculty (52.63%) and the Commerce faculty (51.92%). It can be seen that the lowest percentage of the male canvassers is from the Science faculty (42.69%). It goes without saying that the males of this faculty are not involved in elections to the extent to which the males of other faculties; or it may be said that they do not have as much interest in elections as males of other faculties. This may, I should believe, be attributed to their being primarily career-minded. In the end, it may be observed that more than half of males of every faculty except that of the Science faculty are canvassers; it may be ventured to say that faculty does not markedly influence the behaviour of students (Males).

I respect of females, it is apparent that the percentages of the male canvassers are far higher than those of the female canvassers from every faculty, except that of the Agriculture faculty. A female from the Agriculture faculty reports that she has canvassed at the various elections. It is a matter of gratification to note that those taking higher education do not shut themselves away from active politics as is evident; from the declaration of 25.00% of the female canvassers from the Post-graduate classes. 20.00% of females of



the Commerce faculty are canvassers, while the percentage of the female canvassers from the Science faculty is 16.13%; there are only 12.84% of females from the Arts faculty who have associated themselves with canvassing.

6.16 Table No.77 gives the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 58.54% and of the 472 urban students, 35.38% have canvassed at the various elections. It is noticeable that there is a wide gap between the two percentages. It may be ascribed to the fact that rural students are involved in elections on larger scale than urban students, or it may be said that rural students have more interest in elections than their counterparts from urban places. The waning interest of urban students should be placed on record taking into account their urban background, and the fact that urban places are generally the hub of political activities.

6.17 A detailed composition of the table shows the number of rural and urban canvassers involved in the various elections. The knowledge of involvement of rural and urban students in the various elections is considered as useful. The percentages of the rural and urban canvassers at the various elections are considered below in the descending order. Out of the 257 rural canvassers, 66.15% and of the 157 urban canvassers, 70.06% report that they have canvassed during the "General Elections of 1962". These are the highest percentages of the canvassers. It is apparent that it is the General Elections which alone involve the largest number of urban and rural students. All the same, it may be borne in mind that



urban students are involved in the General Elections more than their counterparts from rural areas. It would not be wrong to say that urban students have slightly more interest in the General Elections than rural students. The "Municipal Elections" allure 65.27% of the urban and 15.18% of the rural canvassers. It is quite in the fitness of things that the urban canvassers are involved in large number in the Municipal Elections. The glaring disparity between the two percentages is naturally attributable to the place of origin. Further, it is worth noting that some students from rural areas evince interest in the Municipal affairs. The "Gram Panchayat Elections" have engaged 50.58% of the rural and 2.39% of the urban canvassers. It is not at all surprising that the percentage of the rural canvassers is higher than that of the urban canvassers. Involvement of the urban canvassers in these elections is not at all absurd because some city-dwellers have still agricultural interest in villages. It may be recorded that college students interest themselves actively in these elections. This may be treated as symbolic of the fact that these elections are keenly and spiritually fought; they are simply all-absorbing. The "Zilla Parishad Elections" have attracted 46.3% of the rural and 8.33% of the urban canvassers. It is revealing that students - especially rural ones - do not have as much interest in the elections as in the Gram Panchayat Elections. It is certainly not contrary to expectations that the percentage of the urban canvassers is considerably lower than that of the <sup>rural</sup> ~~urban~~ canvassers. ~~in~~ The "Taluka Panchayat Samiti



Elections" are patronised by 16.73% of the rural and 1.19% of the urban canvassers. It is crystal clear that these elections are not as much attended to as other elections by the canvassers. Naturally, the percentage of the urban canvassers is far lower than that of the rural canvassers. In the end, it may broadly be observed that it is the General Elections that alone involve the largest number of both rural and urban canvassers. Involvement of the canvassers in the Municipal Elections, the Zilla Parishad Elections, the Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections, and the Gram Panchayat Elections is very much regional. It is striking that next to the General Elections rural students associate themselves with the Gram Panchayat Elections but are not involved in large number in the Zilla Parishad and the Taluka Panchayat Samiti Elections. Plainly, these elections are not as yet much popular among rural students.

6.18 A castewise composition of the table shows the number of canvassers from every caste being involved in the various elections. A glance at the table conveys that the percentages of the rural canvassers from every caste are almost consistently higher than those of the urban canvassers from every caste. It can be seen that there are canvassers more or less from every caste. All the same, it may be noted that a Neo-Buddhist does not canvass; he remains aloof from the electioneering; his is a typical case of non-response and political neutrality. Broadly, it may be generalised that caste does not decidedly govern the course of action of stu-



dents. It is worth recording that the percentages of the minority castes are considerably high. This is clearly indicative of the fact that the students of these castes participate in electioneering without any inhibitions. In this context, the percentages of Maratha, and Brahmins and others may be treated. The percentages of the Brahmins and others canvassers are substantially lower than the percentages of the Maratha canvassers from both rural and urban areas. Further, the percentages of the Brahmins and others from both urban and rural areas are the lowest. This means that they are not as much interested in active politics as the members of other-castes.

#### Canvassing For Party.

6.19 It is considered significant to examine the canvassing partywise as it would disclose the popularity of contesting parties; and political alignments and involvement of students. The canvassing for the Independent candidate is also treated here.

6.20 Table No.78 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. The distribution of the sample for females is not shown in the table. Out of the 402 male canvassers 89.55% and 10.45%; and of the 150 female canvassers 81.82% and 18.18% report that they have canvassed for the parties and independent candidates respectively. It is indubitably discernible that a thumping majority of the male and female canvassers, have stated to have canvassed for the Parties. This could be taken as an indication of the popula-



rity of party politics among students. It would not be incongruous to generalise that almost all the male and female canvassers have aligned staunchly with the parties as they rightly understand their role in a democratic state. In spite of this, it may deplorably be noted that the parties are undemocratically utilizing students for the furtherance of their political ends. Exploitation of students by the parties should be discontinued forthwith and for ever in the larger interest of our democracy; they should be ascetically kept aloof from the party affairs. It is no exaggeration to state that the value of the independent legislator has reached nadir on account of party politics. All the same, it goes without saying that the independent candidates have succeeded in gathering but a few student canvassers. It may be noted ~~that~~ with interest that the percentage of the female canvassers for the independent candidates is higher than that of the male canvassers.

6.21. In respect of faculty, there is nothing remarkable to say. However, it ~~may~~ may be observed that the male canvassers of the Law faculty and the female canvassers of the Post-graduate classes dissociate themselves from canvassing for the independent candidates; and females of the Commerce faculty have not canvassed for the parties.

6.22 A detailed composition of the table shows the male and female canvassers canvassing for the parties. The names of the parties are not presented to students; they are asked to state the name of the party of the candidate if canvassed during the



elections. I have treated below the percentages of the male and female canvassers in the descending order. Out of the 360 male and of the 18 female party-canvassers, the highest percentage of the males (38.33%) and females (55.56%) has canvassed for the Congress party. Evidently it is the Congress party which alone has attracted the largest number of the male and female canvassers. This is the sign of the indisputable popularity of this party among students. But it is more popular among females than among males. It is a matter of instruction to notice that next to the Congress party, the Samiti could engage considerably high percentage of the canvassers, specially males (31.11%) the percentage of the female canvassers is 16.67%. It is a fact that both the Congress party and the Samiti have used student community for the realisation of their political dreams. It is clear that females have not as much warmly responded to the call of the Samiti as males. The P.S.P. is obliged by 4.47% of the male and 11.11% of the female canvassers. It is evident that this party is not as much popular among students as the Congress and the Samiti. However, it is more popular among females than among males. There are 4.17% of the male and 11.11% of the female canvassers who state that they have canvassed for the Jan Sangh. Like the P.S.P. the Jan Sangh too does not get much patronage from Student community but it receives more co-operation from the female canvassers than from the male canvassers. The Swatantra party has the lowest percentage of the canvassers: 0.83% of the male canvassers only. The Socialist party



is ostracised by both the male and female canvassers. On the whole, it may be observed that the percentages of the male and female canvassers for the parties other than the Congress and the Samiti are very much meagre. This is because the Congress and the Samiti were the real contenders for power.

6.23 Table Nos.79 and 80 give the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of the 257 rural canvassers, 90.27% and 9.73%; and of the 167 urban canvassers, 87.43% and 12.57% state that they have canvassed for the parties and independent candidates respectively. It is explicit that the percentage of the rural canvassers canvassing for the parties is higher than that of the urban canvassers. It evidently means that rural students are involved more in party politics than their counterparts from urban places. However, urban students evince more interest in the independent candidates than rural students.

6.24 A detailed break-up of the tables shows the rural and urban canvassers canvassing for the parties. Out of the 232 rural party-canvassers and of the 146 urban party-canvassers the highest percentage of the rural (40.09%) and urban canvassers (37.67%) has canvassed for the Congress party. Obviously, it is the Congress party which has alone engaged the largest number of the canvassers from both rural and urban areas. But it is worth noting that this party is not



as much popular among urban canvassers as among rural ones. The Samiti is patronised by 28.45% of the rural canvassers and 33.55% of the urban canvassers. It is superfluous to say that the stand of the Samiti was better appreciated by urban students than by rural students. The P.S.P. has succeeded in alluring 5.18% of the rural and 4.11% of the urban canvassers. It is apparent that this party lives more on the support of rural areas than on that of urban places. The Jan Sangh has collected 4.31% of rural and 4.79% of the urban canvassers. It is quite plain that this party gets almost the equal backing from both urban and rural areas. The Swatantra party has got but the lowest percentage of the canvassers from rural (0.43%) and urban (1.36%) places. In the end, it may broadly be generalised that the percentages of the rural and urban canvassers for the parties other than the Congress party and the Samiti are very much negligible owing to the fact that a real trial of strength was between the Congress party and the Samiti.

6.25 A Castewise consideration of the sample reveals that the large number of students of every caste from urban and rural areas have canvassed for the parties. Thus, it may confidently be said that participation in electioneering is not the monopoly of any one or few castes; all are grazing without fear in the pasture of politics. All the same, there is only one exception to this: a Neo-Buddhist student from rural areas is not a canvasser; he



may be considered as a typical case of non-response. It is the Congress party and the Samiti that receive canvassers from almost all castes from rural and urban areas. It is seen that students of Gujars etc. and Neo-Buddhist castes from both rural and urban areas do not canvass for the Congress party. Further it is quite striking that only Brahmins and others have canvassed for the Jan Sangh; it means this party is communal and lives on the support of one community alone. This is indeed unfortunate that the Jan Sangh has come to be identified with Brahmins and others only.

#### Reasons For Canvassing

6.26 As involvement of the students in electioneering is established it is but opportune to examine reasons that have influenced them to canvass. This would, I should believe, elucidate the political ripeness of students. I have presented fourteen alternative reasons to students to enable them to indicate their choice: for fun, paid, promised service, party programme, personality of the candidate, celebrated leaders in the party, related to the candidate, caste and/or religion of the candidate, friends canvass, personal benefit, Out of Self-conviction, to become leader, Social service, and others.

6.27 Table No.81 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex. I have treated below the percentages of



male and female canvassers in the descending order. Out of the 402 male and of the 22 female canvassers, the highest percentage of the males (38.81%) and females (31.81%) has been motivated to canvass because of "party programme". This is the unequivocal evidence of how party programme is significant in attracting considerable number of the canvassers. It would not be, I should think, preposterous to draw the generalisation that the majority of students have the requisite knowledge of party programmes. Clearly, females do not as much value party programme as males. There are 32.09% of the male and 22.72% of the female canvassers who positively specify that they have canvassed "out of their conviction". It is unmistakably discernible that these students are not goaded into canvassing by any external coercions; they are impelled to solicit votes. This is largely true of males than of females. It is quite interesting that the presence of "the celebrated leaders in the party" claims 31.09% of the male and 13.63% of the female canvassers. It is not unconvincing to maintain that besides party programme, party leaders are also prominently influential; party is certainly known by the leaders it has. It is worth noting that females are not as much moved by the presence of the celebrated leaders in the party as males. It is explicit that "the personality of the candidate" captivates 23.38% of the male and 18.18% of the female canvassers. It clearly signifies that besides party programme and leaders, the personality of the candidate himself matters fairly; therefore, it is not presumptuous to say that a contestant should have a good per-



sonality. It is indeed striking that females have not fallen prey to the personality of the candidate to the extent to which males. It is distinct that 13.93% of the male and 9.08% of the female canvassers are inspired to solicit votes by the sense of "social service". Howsoever lofty their motive is, it is amusing that canvassing is treated as identical with social service. This is largely true of males than females. It may seriously be viewed that 12.19% of the male and 18.18% of the female canvassers have participated in canvassing just "for fun". A conclusion easily follows from this that apart from deciding the destinities of the contesting parties elections furnish revelry and merrymaking to some. The higher percentage of the ~~male~~ female canvassers may be attributed to their festive nature. It may be noted cautiously that the blood-ties are stronger than the political-bonds; for 10.45% of the male and 18.18% of the female canvassers have taken part in soliciting votes as they are "related to the candidate". These students brazen-facedly owe their loyalties to kinsmen. This is indeed regrettable that the political behaviour is prejudiced by the narrow considerations of kin patriotism. Evidently, females are influenced more by this sense than males. There are 8.46% of the male and 18.18% of the female canvassers who disclose the reason for their canvassing as the "Caste and/or religion of the candidate". It is extremely disappointing that the caste and/or religions considerations weigh triumphantly on the minds of these students and chart the course of their action. It is indeed unfortunate that caste and/or religion have place in our elec-



tioneeering; this will, I am sure, debilitate our infant democracy in the long run. Females suffer more from this "malignant disease" than males. Immaturity of 6.47% of the male and 9.08% of the female canvassers becomes apparent from their statement that they have canvassed because their "friends have canvassed". This is the best illustration of what an association can do. Females are more vulnerable to the influences of friendship than males. Political ambition of 3.23% of the male canvassers only is very much in evidence as they specify that they have canvassed with a view "to become leader". It appears that there is some misunderstanding among some students that participation in canvassing would make them leaders. 2.95% of the male canvassers only have ulterior motive behind canvassing; they have done it sheer "for personal benefit". It is shocking to record that the reason for canvassing of 0.74% of the male canvassers only is that they are "paid". On whatever scale this is practised or detected it must be despised; even discarded to make our democracy a success. The statement of 1.49% of the male canvassers only is revealing because they are prompted to canvass as they have been "promised service". This is plainly suggestive of how parties attract the needy citizens into party affairs. It is logical to generalise that parties in their efforts to build majority in the legislature would do anything conceivable. In the end, it may be observed that major reasons behind canvassing of the large number of the canvassers are; "party programme", "out of self-conviction", "the presence of the celebrated leaders in the party", and



"the personality of the candidate".

Desire to Contest Elections.

6.28 Political rights are the very foundation of a democratic party. They provide the people with channels of direct access to the sources of authority. The right to stand for election is a corollary to the right to vote. Every democratic state endows its citizens with the privilege of contesting election to the legislature. A question: do you desire to contest election? is thoughtfully put to the students in order to learn whether they have political aspirations.

6.29 Table No.82 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 48.48% and of the 150 females, 26.00% explicitly desire to contest elections. It is the indisputable proof that these students are politically ambitious: given an opportunity they would certainly contest elections. It is indeed ruinous that these students cherish the dream of contesting elections during their college life instead of devoting themselves fully to studies. It is, I should think, safe to say that political life appears so provokingly alluring that they irresistably long for it; hence they aspire to contest elections. The higher percentage of males indicates that they are politically more ambitious than females. However, it would be a sheer folly to underrate the comparatively lower percentage of females for the simple fact that they are gradually and increasingly occupying many a high political office. Non-response to this question is almost negligible



1.18% of males and 1.33% of females have not specified their desire.

6.30 A facultywise treatment of the sample shows that the highest percentage of the male aspirants is from the Law faculty (57.89%). This is very much in harmony with our broad observation that most of the leaders are lawyers by training; so it is no wonder at all that the large number of the prospective lawyers set their heart on political career. There are 50.73% of the male aspirants from the Arts faculty; while 50.00% of the male aspirants hail from the Post-graduate classes. It is observable that half of the Arts students (males)-viewing together in the percentages of the male aspirants from the Arts faculty and the Post-graduate classes - desire very much to be in corridors of power. It is interesting to note in particular that the large number of those prosecuting higher studies are ardently keen to embrace the public life. The percentage of the male aspirants (49.35%) from the Commerce faculty approximates the percentages of the male aspirants from the Arts faculty and the Post-graduate classes. It is surprising that almost half of males of the Commerce faculty wish to enter the public life instead of devoting themselves to Commercial enterprises. It is enlightening to notice that a sizable number of males (46.64%) from the Science faculty desire to contest elections. It may be generalised that not all the Science students (males) are necessarily career-minded. The Agriculture faculty has the lowest percentages of the male aspirants (35.29%); the majority of males of the



First Year class of this faculty do not seem to have taken any decision as yet to contest elections; their ideas do not appear to be crystallised so far.

In respect of females, it is seen that the percentages of the females aspirants from every faculty are lower than those of the male aspirants from every faculty; further, a female of the Agriculture faculty does not wish to fight elections. The highest percentage of the female aspirants is from the Commerce faculty (60.00%). Next to this faculty the Science faculty has 38.71% of the female aspirants. It is explicit that the percentage of the female aspirants from this faculty is higher than those of the female aspirants from the Arts faculty (21.10%) and the Post-graduate classes (25.00%). In the end, it may be observed that faculty does not markedly influence political ambitions of students.

6.31 Table No.83 gives the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 52.39% and of the 472 urban students, 38.38% desire to contest elections. The wide gap between the two percentages is worth noting; how evident it is that rural students are more politically ambitious than their counterparts from urban places. It is indeed mysterious as to why urban students evince less interest in political life; may be they are more career-minded than rural students.

6.32 A Castewise treatment of the sample shows that rural and urban students in large number from almost all castes wish to contest elections; only a Neo-Buddhist student from rural



areas is not at all desirous of contesting elections.

A close view of the table discloses that the percentages of the rural aspirants are almost consistently higher than those of the urban aspirants from every caste. The percentages of the rural and urban aspirants from the minority castes: Brahmins and others, Jains, Gujars etc., Lingayats, Intermediate Hindus, Backward and Scheduled Castes, Muslims, and Christians are considerably high. The percentages of the rural aspirants from Jains (62.50%), Muslims (60.00%), and Christians (100.00%) castes are much higher than that of the Maratha aspirants (54.00%), while the percentages of the urban aspirants from Jains (41.17%), Lingayats (66.66%), Intermediate Hindus (44.00%), Backward and Scheduled Castes (50.00%) and Muslims (50.00%) are much higher than that of the Maratha aspirants (38.79%). It convincingly proves the point that minority castes are more politically ambitious than Maratha caste. All the same, it must be placed on record that the percentages of the Brahmins and others aspirants from both rural (50.68%) and urban (35.46%) areas are lower than those of the Maratha aspirants. It clearly means that Brahmins and others are not as much politically ambitious as Marathas. The lowest percentages of the aspirants belong to Gujars etc. from both rural (14.28%) and urban (20.00%) places. This shows how least interest they have in elections. In the end, it may be observed that caste does not markedly influence the political aspirations of students.



Elections: Bases and Attitudes.

6.33 Elections are contested on party programme and principles. All the same, influences of other issues and external considerations can be seen. With this in view a set of five questions: Nos.4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (From the fifth section of the questionnaire) with alternative answers has been put to students: however, for the question No.8 I have not furnished alternative answers to them. Question Nos.4, 5 and 6 are meant to gain information about the students' understanding of the bases of elections. Question No.7 and 8 are devised to measure their attitudes or mental reactions to the techniques of electioneering and elections. I feel their political maturity will be revealed from the ratings they give to the answers offered; and their likes and dislikes for elections will also be disclosed.

College Elections.

6.34 It is a common knowledge that college elections are so eventful that they warm the blood of students: they are stirred with enthusiasm and frenzy: the whole atmosphere is surcharged with gaiety and festivity. But this spontaneous and powerful gusto is merely an adjunct of the elections; they are always contested on some bases or the other. It would be quite instructive for our purpose to learn how college elections are fought and whether party politics enters them. This would, I should believe, display the political maturity of students. Question No.4 is devoted



to college elections but it is structurally and slightly different from question Nos.5 and 6; College elections are fought on: party politics, personal prestige, scholarship, skill in sports, caste and/or religion, coming from your place (for locality), classmate, and other.

6.35 Table Nos.84 and 85 give the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 34.82% and of the 150 females, 59.33% have successfully resisted themselves from expressing their opinion regarding the alternative bases on which college elections are contested. It is a revelation that a sizable number of students is not at all interested in college elections; females especially are more indifferent towards them than females. This is very much in harmony with the general impression.

Out of the 496 male and of the 61 female reporters the highest percentage of the males (69.75% and female (63.92%) reports that college elections are fought on the basis of "skill in sports". This at once and positively shows the top-most popularity of sports among students. Obviously, besides intellectual pursuits, sports too are equally or rather more valued by them; it would, therefore, not be wrong to say that to win elections one should be an accomplished sportsman. By the by, it is noticeable that sports are more popular among males than among females. The opinion of 57.05% of the male and 57.36% of the female reporters is worth recording; they observe that "personal





prestive" is a factor that matters very much in fighting elections successfully. It evidently means that the one who has status among "students, and commands their confidence and admiration has always the chances of achieving success at the elections: to be victorious in college elections prospective contestants must build up their prestive in the eyes of student community. Males and females appear to be almost unanimous as is obvious from their percentages. There are 46.36% of the male and 45.89% of the female reporters who state that college elections are fought on the basis of "scholarship". It is a clear indication as to how scholarship is highly prized by about half of the reporters. If the prospective contenders possess scholarship, prestige, and skill in sports their victory is indeed ensured. On this point too males and females are almost of one mind. How plain it is that 41.12% of the male and 54.08% of the female reporters notice the fellow-feeling for "class-mates" as a dominating factor in college elections. Devotion to class-mates with utter disregard to merit is verily misplaced; it definitely prejudices the judgement. It is discernible that females are more guided by the consideration for their class-mates than males. It is the observation of 16.12% of the male and 4.91% of the female reporters that allegiance to countryman i.e "coming from your place" governs the voting behaviour of some students. It is a matter of gratification that the majority of students have bade farewell to such regional



considerations. Evidently, males are guided more by this consideration than females. It is explicit from the account of 8.66% of the male and 3.27% of the female reporters that "caste and/or religion" patriotism is invoked during the college elections. Though this appears to be practised on small scale, it deserves to be condemned by all. Males fall more prey to this than females. There are 1.81% of the male and 4.91% of the female reporters (3) who allege that party politics is brought in in the college elections. It is ruinous that party politics plays a role, though insignificant, in the college elections. This is an illustration of how parties unscrupulously intervene in the College elections. All the same, it is clear as daylight that almost all students have banished the leprosy of party politics from the College elections. Thus, it may be said with elation and jubilation that party politics does not constitute the basis of appeal in the College elections are fought mainly on the basis of "skill in sports", and "personal prestige". "Party politics", and "caste and/or religion" do not vitiate the college elections.

**6.36** Facultywise percentages of males and females are separately dealt with. I have treated below the percentages of males in the descending order. It is apparent that a large number of males of every faculty are interested in the college elections: therefore, it may be generalised that faculty does not influence the behaviour of males. All the same, a close view of the table No.84 indicates that the highest percentage of males (94.11%) of the Agriculture



faculty takes interest in the college elections. This is very much explainable with reference to the enthusiasm of first year students. The percentage of males (76.97%) of the Arts faculty is considerably high - rather highest excepting the percentage of males of the Agriculture faculty. This is very much inconsonance with the general observation that the Arts Students (especially males) are more involved in the College elections than their counterparts in other faculties. It may be noted with interest that males prosecuting the post-graduate studies evince keen interest in the College elections as is plain from their percentage (63.16%). Their percentage is higher than those of males of the Science, Commerce and Law faculties. This may be explained as the heritage of the Arts side. Males of the Science (57.71%) and Commerce (56.80%) faculties appear to be almost unanimous in their interest in the College elections. The lowest percentage of males (42.10%) having interest in the College elections hails from the Law faculty. This indeed notable and surprising because the study of Law has not been known to be discouraging to participation in elections; on the other hand, Lawyers are always seen in corridors of power.

In respect of females, table No.85 shows that females of the Post-graduate classes and the Commerce faculty seem to have ostracised the College elections as they are non-reporters. This may be attributed to their minority in number in their Colleges. A female of the Agriculture faculty



has taken interest in the College elections. As expected the percentages of females of the Arts faculty (43.11%) is higher than that of females of the Science faculty (41.93%): evidently, females of the Science faculty do not have as much interest in the College elections as their counterparts from the Arts faculty. This may be ascribed to the nature of the courses of their studies and the lack of spare time.

6.37 Table No.86 and 87 give the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 66.74% of the 472 urban students, 55.94% have interest in the College elections. It is truly amusing and instructive to note that even in the College elections urban students have less interest than rural ones.

6.38 A detailed break-up of the tables shows the rural and urban reporters indicating the alternative answers offered. Their percentages are treated below in the descending order. Out of the 293 rural and of the 264 urban reporters, the highest percentage of the rural (67.67%) and urban (66.29%) reporters reports that the College elections are contested on the basis of "skill in sports". Thus, sports strongly appeal to both urban and rural students; however, it is plain that they are slightly more popular among rural students than among urban students. "Personal prestige" finds more favour with the rural reporters (62.45%) than with the urban reporters (51.13%). It obviously means that rural students attach more importance to the personal prestige than their



counterparts from urban places: they seem to be very much prestige-conscious. There are 48.80% of the rural and 43.56% of the urban reporters who are appreciative of "the scholarship" of the contestants. It is really interesting that rural students are more appreciative of the scholarship than urban students. A sense of scholarship inspiring rural students is verily a matter of pride and pleasure in view of their social and educational background. I feel that this awakening on the part of rural students will eventually improve the quality of our social life. 43.34% of the rural and 41.66% of the urban reporters state that the attachments for "class-mates" influence the voting behaviour. It is apparent that fellow-feeling is quite strong among both rural and urban students; especially, it is stronger among rural students than among urban students. There are 20.8% of the rural and 8.33% of the urban reporters who observe that loyalty to "country-man i.e. coming from your place or locality" matters in the College elections. It is explicit that students owe more allegiance to class mates than to countrymen. It means there is a change in their behaviour pattern upon joining the college; the parochial regional considerations largely disappear. It goes without saying that rural students are more loyal to "Country-men" than their counterparts from urban places. This may be attributed to the social composition of the rural society, and to a sense of belonging to one geographical unit. There are 10.92% of the rural and 4.92% of the urban reporters who notice "caste and/or religion" being used to win the votes. The higher percentage of



the rural reporters suggests that they are more caste and/or religion-minded than their counterparts from urban areas. This may be expounded with reference to their socio-educational background. It is discernible that 2.38% of the rural and 1.89% of the urban reporters witness the play of "party politics" in the College elections. It is unequivocally clear that party politics plays the role but quite insignificant in the College elections; however, it is seen that party politics exerts comparatively more influence on rural students than on urban students. In the end, it may be observed that both rural and urban students highly prize the "skill in sports", and "personal prestige". "Party politics", and "caste and/or religion" patriotism do not bias the behaviour of both rural and urban students.

6.39 A Castewise treatment of the sample clearly shows that a large number of both rural and urban students of every caste are interested in the College elections; therefore, it may be inferred that caste does not govern the behaviour of students. However, a close view of the tables discloses that the percentages of the minority castes from urban and rural places are considerably high; and in case of some minority castes they are even higher than the percentages of Marathas from rural and urban areas. This convincingly means that the minority castes take interest in the College elections without any inhibitions of caste considerations. In this connection, it would be useful to scrutinize the percentages of Brahmins and others, and Marathas. The percentages of rural (69.65%) and urban (66.67%) Marathas are far higher than those of Brahmins



and others from rural (54.91%) and urban (46.79%) areas. Brahmins and others, and Marathas from rural places are more interested in the College elections than their respective counterparts from urban areas. But Brahmins and others from rural and urban places are not as much interested in the College elections as Marathas from these respective areas; this is indeed intriguing.

#### Elections to the Local Bodies:

6.40 Local bodies signify Municipality, Zilla Parishad, Taluka Panchayat Samiti, and Gram Panchayat. It is thought that the study of elections to these bodies separately is superfluous because they are quite local in their operations. Question No.5 deals with elections to the local bodies; it structurally corresponds to question No.6: answers furnished to students are common: party programme, non-party principles, Caste and/or religion, local issues, provincial issues, national issues, international issues, personal prestige, and other.

6.41 Table No.88 and 89 give the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 98.81% and of the 150 females, 93.33% have answered this question. response to this question is quite warm; but the response of females is not comparatively as warm as that of males.

6.42 A detailed composition of the tables shows the male and female reporters indicating the alternative answers presented. Their percentages are considered below in the descending order. Out of the 752 male and of the 140 female reporters the highest percentage of the males (51.60%) and



females (49.28%) holds the view that elections to the local bodies should be contested on the basis of "local issues". Local bodies are devised, among other things, to attend to local affairs locally; naturally, local problems occupy first and foremost place. In view of this, it is gratifying to note that the majority of the reporters rightly opine that elections to the local bodies should be fought on local issues. It goes without saying that males attach comparatively more importance to local issues than females. There are 39.90% of the male and 32.14% of the female reporters who plead that elections to the local bodies should be fought on the basis of "personal prestige". It affairs prestige of the candidates does matter; by all accounts men of integrity win public confidence: individuals rather than ideology play an important part. It is evident that males value personal prestige more than females. 38.03% of the male and 38.57% of the female reporters are of the opinion that elections to the local bodies should be fought on "non-party principles". This is in harmony with some people's thinking that parties should keep themselves away from the local bodies. Comparatively higher percentages of the male and female reporters holding this view may be attributed to their bitter experience of party politics in the local bodies. The male and female reporters are almost unanimous on this point. Whether one likes it or not parties are well entrenched in local bodies: consequently, 29.79% of the male and 18.57% of the female reporters think that elections to the local bodies should be contested on "party programme". It means a sizable section of



student community favours party politics in the local bodies. This is largely true of males than females. There are 21.94% of the male and 15.71% of the female reporters who hold the view that elections to the local bodies should be fought on "national issues". Though local bodies are mainly meant to devote themselves to local affairs they are not wholly isolated from national problems: they cannot afford to totally remain away from the mainstream of national life. Besides, entrance of parties in local bodies necessitates the consideration of national issues. It is apparent that a large number of students are against bringing in national issues in elections to the local bodies. All the same, males are comparatively more eager to fight elections on national issues than females. 20.21% of the male and 19.28% of the female ~~men~~ reporters opine that elections to the local bodies should be contested on "provincial issues". It is a common experience that provincial issues affect local affairs: regional patriotism prompts local politicians to cash on regional problems. This is evident from the Samyukta Maharashtra Movement. It is a matter of happiness that a large number of students are opposed to provincial issues being exploited in elections to the local bodies. The male and female reporters are almost of one mind on this point. It may be recorded that in elections to the local bodies provincial and national issues receive almost the same degree of rating from the male reporters; in respect of the female reporters a slight disparity between the two ratings is noticeable. It is ~~when~~ really not



encouraging to note that 9.30% of the male and 8.57% of the female reporters express the opinion that elections to the local bodies should be contested on "international issues". Compared to the other ratings this may look fairly low. But actually in the context of the question, this only indicates the students' sense of proportion. In elections to the local bodies, really speaking, international affairs have not any reference. Those who relate local issues to international situations appear to be fairly immature in their understanding. The male and female reporters almost agree on this point. It is clearly seen that the lowest percentage of the male (5.71%) and female (10.00%) reporters thinks that elections to the local bodies should be fought on the basis of "Caste and/or religion". It is a matter of pride to record that majority of students are opposed quite democratically to fighting elections to the local bodies on the basis of caste and/or religion. It may comfortably be inferred that caste patriotism has not dawned upon these students. However, it may be stated here that utmost care should be taken to see that students do not fall prey to the corroding influence of caste and/or religion in future: this would largely invigorate the working of democracy in our country. It is indeed a revelation that females are more caste-minded than males as is evident from their higher percentage. In the end, it may be observed that the majority of the reporters hold the view that elections to the local bodies should be fought on "local issues", "personal prestige", and "non-party principles". This indubitably means



that students are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions about how elections to the local bodies should be fought. Obviously males are slightly more mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions than females.

6.43 Facultywise percentages of the male and female reporters are separately dealt with. I have treated below the reporters' percentages in the descending order. A glance at the table No.88 shows that almost all males of every faculty have expressed their views about how elections to the local bodies should be fought. Hence, it would not be wrong to conclude that faculty does not restrain the freedom of expression and thought: cent per cent males of the Law and Agriculture faculties, and of the Post-graduate classes are reporters; while 99.27% of males of the Arts faculty, 98.71% of males of the Commerce faculty, and 98.03% of males of the Science faculty have given response to this question. Further, a close view of the table shows that the highest percentage of the male reporters of every faculty, except the Agriculture faculty, attaches top importance to "local issues" in elections to the local bodies: the highest percentage of males of the Agriculture faculty values "personal prestige" foremost.

In respect of females, table No.89 conveys that almost all females of every faculty have opined how elections to the local bodies should be fought. Evidently, the freedom of expression of females is not restrained by faculty: cent per cent females of the Science and Agriculture faculties are reporters; while 92.65% of females of the Arts faculty,



80.00% of females of the Commerce faculty, and 75.00% of females of the Post-graduate classes are reporters. A close view of the table pleasantly reveals that the highest percentage of the female reporters of every faculty, except the Commerce faculty, has high regards for "local issues" to fight elections to the local bodies.

6.44 Table Nos.90 and 91 give the distribution of the sample according to the caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 98.41% and of the 472 urban students, 97.69% are reporters. It is interesting to note that rural students have given more response to this question than their counterparts from urban places. Obviously, rural students have more interest in elections to the local bodies than urban students.

6.45 A detailed composition of the tables shows the rural and urban reporters indicating the alternative answers offered: their percentages are considered below in the descending order. Out of the 432 rural reporters, 48.61% and of the 461 urban reporters, 53.57% state that elections to the local bodies should be contested on "local issues". This at once reveals that both rural and urban students highly regard local issues in fighting elections to the local bodies. It is plain that urban students attach more importance to local issues than rural students. There are 45.83% of the rural and 31.88% of the urban reporters who are of the opinion that elections to the local bodies should be fought on the basis of "personal prestige". This immediately discovers the fact that rural students have more regard for personal prestige



than urban students: it appears that they are very much prestige-conscious. 38.89% of the rural and 37.31% of the urban reporters think that "non-party principles" should constitute the basis of appeal in elections to the local bodies. It is apparent that rural and urban students are almost unanimously appreciative of non-party principles. It is instructive to record that the percentages of the rural reporters (33.33%) which has regard for "party programme" is higher than the percentage of the urban reporters (22.99%): the lower percentage of the urban reporters may be, I should think, attributed to the fact that urban students do not as much realize the value of parties in elections to the local bodies as rural students. There are 21.06% of the rural and 19.08% of the urban reporters who hold the view that elections to the local bodies should be fought on "provincial issues"; while 21.99% of the rural and 19.95% of the urban reporters think that election to the local bodies should be contested on "national issues". Obviously, the percentages of the rural reporters are higher than those of the urban reporters. It means rural students attach more importance to provincial issues and national issues in fighting elections to the local bodies than urban students. It may be placed on record that provincial issues and national issues receive almost the same rating from the rural reporters; the urban reporters too seem to be almost unanimous in their regard for provincial and national issues. It is a matter of gratification that "international issues" get quite low rating from both the rural (9.02%) and urban



(9.33%) reporters: however, it is noticeable that they appear to be almost of one mind in this respect. 5.09% of the rural and 5.42% of the urban reporters opine that elections to the local bodies should be contested on the basis of caste and/or religion. It is clear that there is almost consensus of opinion among rural and urban students on this point. Further, it may be said that among the issues provided to students caste and/or religion receive the lowest rating from both the rural and urban reporters. This indicates that the majority of rural and urban students are opposed to caste and/or religion being exploited in elections to the local bodies. This is indeed a healthy and welcome development. In the end, it may broadly be observed that both rural and urban students in large number maintain that elections to the local bodies should be fought on "local issues", "personal prestige", and "non-party principles". This clearly implies that rural and urban students are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions about how elections to the local bodies should be contested. Obviously rural students are slightly more mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions than urban students.

6.46 A Castewise treatment of the sample equivocally shows that almost all rural and urban students of every caste have expressed their opinions about how elections to the local bodies be contested. Hence, it follows that caste does not restrain the freedom of expression and thought of rural and urban students; cent per cent rural students of Jains, Gujars, etc., Backward and Scheduled castes, Neo-Buddhist, Muslims and



and Christians castes; and all urban students from Gujars etc. Lingayats, Backward and Scheduled Castes, Muslims and Christians Castes are reporters. Further, a close view of the tables shows that the largest number of rural and urban students from every caste offer highest ratings to "local issues", "personal prestige", and "non-party principles". In the end, it would be quite pertinent to conclude that students of every caste from both rural and urban areas are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expressions of their opinions.

#### The General Elections

6.47 The General Elections signify elections to the Assemblies and Parliament: generally, elections to the Assemblies and Parliament occur at the same time. The bases of elections to the Assemblies and Parliament are not separately dealt with though an elector may be guided by different considerations while voting. In this connection the ratings offered by students to the various alternative answers would throw light on their understanding of the bases of elections and thereby on their political maturity.

6.48 Table Nos. 92 and 93 give the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males 98.42% and of the 150 females, 94.67% have expressed their opinions regarding the bases on which the General Elections should be contested. On the whole, response to this question is quite warm and encouraging but the response of females is not comparatively as warm and encouraging as that of males.



6.49 A detailed break-up of the tables shows the male and female reporters pinpointing the alternative answers presented. Their percentages are treated below in the descending order. Out of the 749 male and of the 142 female reporters the highest percentage of the males (45.72%) and females (45.06%) states that the General Elections should be contested on 'national issues'. It is true that welfare of the citizens and thereby of the nation largely depends upon the settling of national issues: it is a universal experience of that they have an indubitable bearing on the problems of the Constituent Units and vice versa: they are publicized, magnified and Vulgarised by the power-crazy parties in order to gain maximum votes: consequently, they invariably dominate the General Elections. In view of this the highest percentage of the male and female reporters holding the above view is indeed not only commendable but also indicative of its political maturity; it is a matter of pleasure to note in this connection that the male and female reporters are almost unanimous on this point. It may incidently be mentioned that national issues get slightly more than double ratings in the General Elections than in elections to the local bodies. This at once and once for all reveals how rightly students comprehend the bases of elections. There are 44.18% of the male and 24.64% of the female reporters who maintain that the General Elections should be fought on "party programme". Parties always approach electors with their programmes which are nothing but the charts of their plans and projects for the welfare of nation. Moreover, party programmes could be



treated, without any hyperbole, as looking glasses that mirror the full images of parties. Consequently they occupy the zenithal place in elections. In this context the high percentage of the male and female reporters expressing the above opinion should be viewed as both praise-worthy and demonstrative of its political ripeness; all the same, it is noticeable that the female reporters do not give as much significance to the party programme as the male reporters. It may be casually noted that party programme receives for more higher ratings in the General Elections than in elections to the local bodies. It clearly signifies that students do understand the bases on which elections to the different bodies should be contested. It is interesting and instructive to note that 33.10% of the male and 38.02% of the female reporters plead that the General Elections should be fought on "non-party principles". It follows from this that these students have expressed their "non-confidence" in parties and their affairs. This may be, I should believe, attributed to their unpalatable experience with party politics. It is indeed astonishing that females have larger share of this experience, than males. Besides, it would certainly be a revelation to learn that the percentages for non-party principles are considerably higher in elections to the local bodies than in the General Elections. It undoubtedly means that students give more weightage to non-party principles in elections to the local bodies than in the General Elections. Though, in the context of the bases of elections, these students are very much right in their views, it may be placed on



record, that they are consistently opposed to party politics in the General Elections and in elections to the local bodies. 33.10% of the male and 31.5% of female reporters hold the view that the General Elections should be contested on the basis of "personal prestige". It is apparent that big number of students are guided by sheer personal prestige of the candidates than by any other considerations. In a party democracy candidates approach voters as the deputies of their party and contest elections on its programme and support but it has made abundantly clear that party alone does not brighten the prospects of its candidates for they themselves should have prestige in the eyes of electors. Interestingly, males have more regard for personal prestige than females: males appear to be rather prestige - conscious. Further, it is discernible that personal prestige is valued more highly in elections to the local bodies than in the General Elections: it means it does not as much matter in the General Elections as in elections to the local bodies: this is in consonance with the fact that personal prestige matters highly in local affairs. There are 32.04% of the male and 33.09% of the female reporters who state that the General Elections should be contested on "international issues". Though the frightful weapons of the atomic age, the deterioration of international relations, and the failure of the most powerful states to devise formulas for living together without the ever-present threat of war have forced us to attend to the problems of international life for our security, welfare, and indeed, our survival; that does not mean the General Elections



should be fought on international issues only: however, international relations and especially the foreign policy are always discussed and debated during the General Elections the high weightage received by international issues in the General Elections should be highly appreciated as it throws light on students' understanding the bases of elections. Curiously, females have more regard for international issues than males. 11.33% of the male and 7.74% of the female reporters opine that the General Elections should be contested on "provincial issues". Reorganisation of States on linguistic principle has indeed unshackled the Jinn of Provincialism which has been affecting and afflicting the inter-State relations: even, it has been baffling the Union Government to effectively resolve some inter-State problems: more-over, the all-India parties too cater to provincial problems with utter disregard to national interests. If provincialism is suffered to blossom in this fashion it will certainly disintegrate the very Union of India in the long run. However, it is encouraging to note that the majority of the male and female reporters are opposed to fighting the General Elections on provincial issues. But this virgin goodness of theirs should be sheilded at all cost: their parochial provincial sentiments should never be inflamed to serve the party designs. Evidently, males are comparatively more provincial in their attitudes than females. Further, it is seen that the percentages for provincial issues are higher in elections to the local bodies than in the General Elections: this is demonstrative of students' proper understanding of the bases of elections. There are 10.26%



of the male and 7.04% of the female reporters who express the opinion that the General Elections should be fought on "local issues". In the General Elections, really speaking local issues have not any reference; therefore, those who hold the above view appear to be fairly immature in their understanding. Apparently, males have more regard for local issues than females. In this connection, it is worthwhile to record that the majority of the male and female reporters are opposed to contesting the General Elections on local issues. Besides, local issues have received the highest percentages of ratings from the male and female reporters in the elections to the local bodies; while in the General Elections they have almost the lowest percentages of ratings. This immediately and undoubtedly implies the students' proper understanding of the bases of elections. It can clearly be seen that the lowest percentage of the male (3.87%) and female (4.22%) reporters thinks that the General Elections should be contested on the basis of "Caste and/or religion". It is indeed gratifying that the majority of the reporters-or it may be said that almost all-are opposed to fighting the General Elections on the basis of Caste and/or religion. It follows from this that students do not suffer from the caste and/or communal patriotism. All the same, it may be said by way of exhortation that this pristine goodness of students should be kept up guardedly so that they will not be vulnerable to the corroding influence of caste and/or religion in future: this would, I should believe, better the quality of the working of our democracy eventually.



The higher percentage of the female reporters may be treated as symbolic of their being comparatively more caste-minded than the male reporters. In this context, it may be noted that the percentages of the male and female reporters desirous of exploiting their caste and/or religion in the elections to the local bodies and in the General Elections are the lowest; again, the percentages for caste and/or religion in the General Elections are lower than those in the elections to the local bodies. This once-more elucidates the students' proper understanding of the bases of elections. In the end, it may be observed that the majority of the reporters express the opinion that the General Elections should be contested on "national issues", and "party programme". This Categorically indicates that students are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions about how the General Elections should be fought. Evidently males are slightly more mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions than females.

6.50 Faculty-wise percentages of the male and female reporters are separately dealt with: they are considered below in the descending order. A glimpse at the table No.92 conveys that all males of every faculty, except the Science faculty, have expressed their opinions about how the General Elections should be contested. Even the percentage of the male reporters of the Science faculty is considerably high (95.26%). It is safe, therefore, to infer that faculty does not exert any restraint upon the freedom of expression and thought. Further, a close examination of the table displays that the largest number of the male reporters of the Arts, Law and



Agriculture faculties have highest regard for "party programme"; while the biggest number of the male reporters of the Science and Commerce faculties, and of the Post-graduate classes attach top importance to "national issues".

In respect of females, table No.93 shows that all females of every faculty except the Arts faculty, have expressed their views regarding how the General Elections should be contested. Even the percentage of the female reporters of the Arts faculty (92.65%) is considerably high. It goes without saying that faculty does not restrain the freedom of expression and thought. Besides, a close view of the table reveals that the largest number of the female reporters of the Arts, Science and Commerce faculties have expressed their highest regard for "national issues"; while the biggest number of the female reporters of the Post-graduate classes favour "party programme".

6.51 Table Nos.94 and 95 give the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of the 439 rural students, 98.64% and of the 472 urban students, 97.05% are reporters. Obviously, rural students have given more response to this question than their counterparts from urban areas. It is really instructive to place on record that even in matter of expressing opinions urban students lag behind rural students: they do not evince as much interest in the General Elections as rural students.

6.52 A detailed break-down of the tables shows the rural and urban reporters indicating the alternative answers pre-



sented: their percentages are treated below in the descending order. Out of the 433 rural reporters, 48.03% and of the 458 urban reporters, 34.49% state that the General Elections should be contested on "party programme". This indubitably means that rural students attach far more importance to party programme than their colleagues from urban areas. The markedly and comparatively lower percentage of the urban reporters is indeed intriguing. There are 42.02% of the rural and 47.37% of the urban reporters who are of the opinion that the General Elections should be contested on "national issues". This at once elucidates the fact that urban students have more regard for national issues than rural students. 37.64% of the rural and 28.60% of the urban reporters maintain that "personal prestige" should constitute the basis of appeal in the General Elections. Curiously, rural students value personal prestige more highly than urban students: they appear to be prestige-conscious. It is unequivocal that 33.25% of the rural and 34.49% of the urban reporters hold the view that the General Elections should be contested on "non-party principles". It is explicit that non-party principles attract slightly more protagonists from urban places than from rural areas. It may be said that urban students seem to have slightly more unpleasant experience with party politics than rural students. There are 30.02% of the rural and 34.27% of the urban reporters who express the opinion that the General Elections should be fought on "International issues". Evidently, urban students attach more importance to international issues than rural



students; this may be attributed to their back-ground where the impact of international happenings reach earlier and linger longer. 12.24% of the rural and 9.38% of the urban reporters feel that the General Elections should be contested on "provincial issues". It is as clear as day-light that rural students have given higher rating to provincial issues than urban students: they appear to be slightly more provincial in their attitudes than their counterparts from urban areas. It is rather astonishing that 11.55% of the rural and 8.08% of the urban reporters opine that the General Elections should be contested on "local issues". This means a few students from both rural and urban places are very much influenced by local issues; evidently, rural students are more influenced by local issues than urban students. It is worth recording that only 5.08% of the rural and 2.84% of the urban reporters hold the view that the General Elections should be fought on the basis of "Caste/ and/or religion". Rural students appear to be little more caste-minded than urban students. Further, it is noticeable that among the bases of elections provided to students "Caste and/or religion" receive the lowest weightage from both the rural and urban reporters. This undoubtedly means that the majority of rural and urban students are opposed to caste and/or religion being exploited in the General Elections. This is indeed a healthy and welcome development. In the end, it may be observed that the majority of the rural and urban reporters are of the opinion that the General Elections should be contested on "party programme" and "national issues". This clearly indicates that



rural and urban students are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions than urban students.

6.53 A Castewise treatment of the sample explicitly shows that almost all rural and urban students of every caste have expressed their views regarding how the General Elections should be contested. Hence, it may be concluded that Caste and/or religion do not restrain the freedom of expression and thought of both rural and urban students: cent per cent of rural students from Jains, Gujars etc., Backward and Scheduled Castes, Neo-Buddhists, Muslims, and Christians are reporters; while all urban students from Gujars etc., Lingayats, Intermediate Hindus, Backward and Scheduled Castes, and Christians are reporters. Moreover, a close examination of the tables shows that the largest number of rural and urban students from every caste give highest weightage to "national issues" and "party programme". In the end, it would be relevant to generalise that students of every caste from both rural and urban areas are fairly mature in their thinking and responsible in expression of their opinions.

#### The Seamy Side of Elections.

6.54 It is true answers to the question No.7 could not be taken to be precise or even reliably correct. Such a type of information is generally drawn from hearsay reports. Besides, in the questionnaire I have not devised any other questions, the answers to which might be used as a check on answers to them here. This question is asked to see merely



if students have any awareness of the seamy side of elections and, if so, whether they believe in elections: the question regarding their faith in elections is put just below this question. I have offered five alternative answers to students: Casteism and Communism, Goondaism and Hooliganism, Groupism, extravagance of money, and other.

6.55 Table No.96 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of 761 males, 98.15% and of the 150 females, 94.67% have answered this question. It is clear as day-light that almost all students are aware of the seamy side of elections. It is indeed deplorable and despicable that the less presentable aspect of elections is discernible even to college students. It follows from this that elections are pervaded by the unfair and undemocratic practices. If this is not denounced and eventually ~~man~~ renounced people will come to distrust elections and consequently the representative type of government will be discredited and ultimately discarded. Obviously, females are not as much aware of the seamy side of elections as males.

6.56 A detailed composition of the table shows the various elements being indicated by the male and female reporters. I have treated below their percentages in the descending order. Out of the 747 male reporters, 58.65% and of the 142 female reporters, 44.36% have seen "groupism" in elections. Even though the ideology and programme unite people together a monolithic unity in a party is not ensured because of internal factions struggling to dominate one another in order



to seize its leadership: the contest for leadership within a party is universal in space and time; it naturally operates in elections too. Groupism seems to be an influential feature of elections as it has attracted the attention of the largest number of the reporters, especially males. There are 56.10% of the male reporters and 50.70% of the female reporters who report that there is "an extravagance of money" in elections. This proves beyond a shadow of doubt that huge amounts of money are prodigalised quite disproportionate to the amount stipulated in the Representation of the People Act, 1951. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that electioneering in our country has become prohibitively expensive: only a croesus can think of contesting elections: money being a power always buys commodities and services but it may also buy over electors: under the circumstances, an impecunious citizen thus comes to be deprived of his political rights. If this goes on unbridled democracy, in the long run, it is feared, will cease to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people; it may finally give way to a demosophic plutocracy. Evidently, males have observed more extravagance of money in elections ~~have~~ than females. "Goondaism and hoolganism" in elections have been noticed by 53.02% of the male and 34.51% of the female reporters. This undoubtedly means that goondaism and hoolganism seem to have become an integral part of the electioneering. This is an illustration of how parties, when they stoop to conquer, cast away all the canons of democratic life and un-

with their victory and survival. The unbridled alliance of



scrupulously resort to unfair practices to serve their designs. This irresistably leads one to generalise that elections in our country unfortunately have become undemocratic. In this connection, it would not be an exaggeration to say that if a candidate is a son of a Kuber and collects some goondas and hooligans, his victory at the polls is almost ensured. The rampant prevalence of goondaism and hooliganism in elections frightens away many an intellectual; hence, the quality of democracy naturally deteriorates and that is why it is a government by the incompetent. Plainly, males have noticed more goondaism and hooliganism in elections than females. There are 40.97% of the male reporters and 42.25% of the female reporters who have observed "casteism and communalism" in elections. It is clear as crystal that casteism and communalism are prostituted brazen - facedly by the power hungry parties to translate their dreams into reality. Further, it unequivocally indicates that when the usual methods of propaganda fail to attract the large number of votes the casteist and communal sentiments of the people are invoked: indeed, man becomes primitive and barbarous on the question of caste and religion with utter disregard to the civil and democratic way of life. It is the irrefragable evidence that both the people and parties have not yet developed a democratic outlook. It may be said, in this context, that parties must set lofty democratic goals before the people: they must have clear vision of the future of the country and not be content with their victory and survival. The unholy alliance of



casteism and communalism with politics is fraught with calamitous aftermath: it will finally ruin the democratic set-up in our country. It is apparent that females have observed casteism and communalism more than males. In the over-all context, it may be observed in the end, that there can be no clean and orderly elections unless the parties taking part in them abide by the democratic rules, whether they are put into a code or not. Besides, it may confidently be said that males and females are not passive spectators but active observers of the political affairs.

**6.57** A facultywise consideration of the sample shows that all students of almost every faculty are aware of the seamy side of elections. It plainly means that faculty does not obstruct the observation of students: cent per cent of males of the Law and Agriculture faculties and of the Post-graduate classes are in the know of the seamy side of elections; while 99.27% of males of the Arts faculty, 98.71% of males of the Commerce faculty, and 96.05% of males of the Science faculty have seen the less presentable aspect of elections. In respect of females, it is explicit that cent per cent of females of the Science, Commerce and Agriculture faculties, and of the Post-graduate classes are aware of the seamy side of elections; while 92.65% of females of the Arts faculty have the knowledge of it.

**6.58** Table No.97 gives the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of 439 rural students, 98.63% and of the 472 urban students, 96.62% have answered this question. It is not an exaggeration to say



that almost all rural and urban students are aware of the seamy side of elections. It appears that the use of undemocratic methods is universal in its operation: it does not suffer from the geographical considerations. It may be placed on record that rural students are slightly more in the know of the seamy side of elections than their counterparts from urban places. This may be because rural students take more interest in elections and thereby notice the less presentable aspect of them more than urban students.

6.59 A detailed break-up of the table shows the various elements being indicated by the rural and urban reporters. I have treated below their percentages in the descending order. Out of the 433 rural reporters, 56.10% and of the 456 urban reporters, 56.36% have noticed "an extravagance of money" in elections. It is a revelation to note that parties lavishly spend money in both urban and rural areas: the use of money seems to have become an integral part of electioneering. Rural and urban students are almost unanimous in their observation. There are 54.03% of the rural reporters and 58.55% of the urban reporters who have seen "groupism" in elections. It clearly follows from this that groupism is not a characteristic of a particular place but haunts ubiquitously both rural and urban areas. It is explicit that urban students observe groupism in elections more than rural students: they appear to be more vulnerable to groupism than rural students. "Goondaism and Hooliganism" in elections have been observed by 52.41% of the rural repor-



ters and 47.80% of the urban reporters. It goes without saying that both rural and urban places are frequented by goondaism and hooliganism: the difference in frequency is a matter of degree and not of kind. Evidently, goondaism and hooliganism seem to operate more vigorously in rural places than in urban areas. 44.10% of the rural reporters and 38.37% of the urban reporters state that they have noticed "casteism and communalism" being exploited in elections. It is indubitably apparent that casteist and communal sentiments are whipped up in both rural and urban areas. Evidently, casteism and communalism seem to play more important role in rural areas than in urban places.

6.60 A castewise consideration of the sample shows that all students of almost every caste from both rural and urban places, are aware of the seamy side of elections. It convincingly means that caste does not obstruct the observation of students: cent per cent of the rural reporters of Brahmin and others, Gujare etc., Backward and Scheduled castes, Neo-Buddhist, Muslim and Christian castes are in the know of the seamy side of elections: while 99.00% of the rural reporters of Marathas, 96.87% of the rural reporters of Jains, 96.65% of the rural reporters of Intermediate Hindus, and 96.54% of the rural reporters of Lingayats have noticed the less presentable aspect of elections. In respect of the urban reporters, it is explicit that cent per cent of students of Lingayats, Backward and Scheduled castes, Muslims and Christians know the seamy side of elections; while 97.04% of students of



Brahmins and others, 97.05% of students of Jains, 90.00% of students of Gujars etc., 96.97% of students of Marathas, and 96.00% of the students of Intermediate Hindus have the knowledge of the less presentable aspect of elections.

#### Faith in Elections:

6.61 Elections are the very soul of a representative democracy: citizens should have faith in them, otherwise a democratic set-up will collapse like a house of cards: they are the rulers and ruled; they alone can choose the government they desire. In view of this, it is envisaged to know whether students have faith in elections; a question of their faith in elections assumes wider significance as it immediately follows the question regarding their knowledge of the seamy side of elections.

6.62 Table No.98 gives the distribution of the sample according to sex and faculty. Out of the 761 males, 76.08% and of the 150 females, 74.00% have liking for elections. It is a matter of elation and jubilation that the majority of students have unflinching faith in elections. It is supremely encouraging to note that they are not at all disillusioned in spite of their awareness of the seamy side of elections. It follows from this that they have undiminished trust in a representative democracy. However, it would be the height of folly to underrate the percentages of those males and females who have developed dislike for elections. It is the bounden duty of every citizen to impress upon them the indispensability of elections in a representa-





tive democracy: herculean efforts, therefore, should be untiringly made to make elections clean and orderly so that they will ultimately shed all their prejudices about elections and will come to believe in them. Evidently, males have more faith in elections than females.

6.63 A facultywise consideration of the sample indisputably shows that the majority of students of every faculty have liking for elections. It clearly means that faculty does not influence the likes and dislikes of students.

6.64 Table No.99 gives the distribution of the sample according to caste and place of origin. Out of the 439 rural students, 78.59% and of the 472 urban students, 73.10% have liking for elections. It is a matter of pride and pleasure that the majority of rural and urban students have faith in elections; this, further, indicates the popularity of elections in both rural and urban areas. It is a revelation that rural students have more faith in elections than their counterparts from urban places: in fact, they are more in the know of the seamy side of elections than urban students (6.58%).

6.65 A castewise treatment of the sample shows that the majority of students of every caste from both rural and urban places have liking for elections. It obviously means that all castes have faith in elections: they do not suffer from any inhibitions. In this connection, it may be placed on record that a Neo-Buddhist student who is a typical example of non-response has explicitly expressed his liking for elections.