

DHONDO KESHAV KARVE:

A SKETCH

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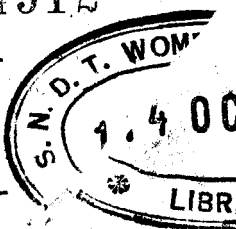
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FOREWORD.

This sketch of Mr. Dhondo Keshav Karve has been written to satisfy the legitimate curiosity of many non-Marathi-knowing persons who have admired the work of this great and earnest reformer on this side of India. For Marathi readers his autobiography is the best guide, and we earnestly recommend them to follow it. For the illustrations we are indebted to the editor of the *Masik Manoranjan*, who kindly lent us the blocks. This sketch has been written in a very great hurry, and it is hoped that its readers will overlook its many faults. It will have served its purpose if it is the means of calling attention to a successful indigenous effort in the cause of women and to a sterling personality which can be set as an example to all.

Fergusson College, }
Poona, }
26th Dec. 1915. }

R. P. Paranjpye.

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Prof. Dhondo Keshav Karve.

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTION.

The Social Reform movement in India is of very recent growth. Contact with the West led thinking persons among us to discuss the origins of our various social practices and to compare them with those in countries far removed from us. Very little thought was required to bring home to the minds of educated Indians that what used to be regarded as all essential for the existence of society in India is not at all necessary for the stability and even the rapid growth and progress of societies in the West; nay, that the non-existence of some of our customs in other countries is perhaps the very cause of that progress. With the spread of English education such ideas began rapidly to gain currency; we began to examine our society historically and we even found that in our own country many of our present customs did not exist in olden times or existed, if at all, in a very different and perhaps a more intelligible form.

Somewhat similar phenomena can be studied in the former history of India. Contact with a civilisation of a different kind has always acted as a ferment. Many notable movements in India may perhaps be traced to this cause. But in old days all such movements have taken a more or less religious garb. Thus, for instance, the anti-caste movement in the Panjab took the form of the Sikh religious

movement, and the corresponding earlier movement in the Deccan had as its leaders the great religious saints in the Maharashtra. Even in our own day contact with the West has given rise to the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj, two religious movements of more or less vitality. But these religious movements have not attained the vigour that similar movements did in olden days. The cause is not far to seek. In those days the contact with foreigners was brought about mainly from religious impulses. A vigorous proselitysing religion like Islam naturally caused a similar religious movement in our country and the vigour of the acting religion was compensated for by a corresponding vigour in the movement which was the form assumed by the reaction. The consequence was that the spread of those movements was in the beginning very rapid; and further that when the antagonism became less acute, they lost a good deal of their vitality and in these days Sikhism hardly makes any new converts and is being regarded more and more as a sect of Hinduism.

The ferment which has been working on Indian society for nearly a century is of a different kind. European nations that came to India have never done so from religious motives and uniformly adopted a policy of non-interference in religion—except to a small extent in the case of the Portugese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Religious neutrality has been the settled policy of the British from the very beginning; even missionaries were not allowed to carry on their propaganda in the early days of the British rule. From the political side

one effect of this attitude was that no religio--national movement antagonistic to the foreign rule cropped up as a consequence of contact with the British. There was thus brought about no sudden change in the religious and social customs of the people, or even a section of the people. The people continued to live, outwardly at least, their old lives though certain of the old ideas had necessarily to be altered.) A reader of Abbe' Dubois's book on Indian Manners, Customs and Ceremonies would find very nearly the same state of things in the villages even at present; only in cities will be find any change from the state of things pictured there nearly a hundred years ago.

The effect of contact with the British on India has been mainly economic and intellectual. So far as any custom had an economic basis, that custom has been greatly affected provided that it did not form an integral part of the religious beliefs. Thus the ideas about ceremonial pollutions by contact with persons of lower castes have now practically disappeared; for with the increased facilities for communications and increased need for travelling for various purposes such rigid rules could not be observed and even the very orthodox now observe them at the time of meals only. Even inter-dining between members of various castes is connived at provided too much fuss is not made about it, as it is almost impossible in the conditions of city life to observe the prescribed conditions rigidly. Changes in dress come to a certain extent under economic changes. The old prohibition against the speaking of a *Yavana* language even at the risk of death is

gone entirely and proficiency in such languages has become a mark of respectability and is even regarded as an asset in the marriage market.

But though no immediate results were seen on account of the policy of non-interference with religion which the British strictly followed, slower though more lasting have been the consequences of the policy of education which was adopted by them soon after their ascendancy was firmly established in the country. The educational level of the Moslem invaders was hardly superior to that of Indians; in several respects they became the pupils of their subjects; and we see even now that the general outlook on life of the Mohammedan does not differ essentially from that of the Hindu when religion is not directly concerned. The civilisation which the British brought with them was of a very different character from our own and in many respects it was more penetrating. The moment therefore that they entered on the policy of education along Western lines they began indirectly to affect our lives intimately. The Indian soon took kindly to it and began to imbibe the broadly rationalist culture of the West. The new leaders of Indian thought were many of them deeply religious men but none of them—not even Ram Mohan Roy—were comparable to Nanak. Only Keshub Chandra Sen and Swami Dayanand were somewhat of that type but they come later in the day and were not favoured by their environments and hence their movements never flourished as those in olden times.

While then under the British rule religion has tended to retire in the background, another comparatively new sentiment—that of nationality—has been gradually coming into existence during the last century. The leading men in our country have begun more and more to think of raising their countrymen in the scale of nations. With some, perhaps far too many, this has assumed the form of a purely political movement. They believe that all the ills to which India is subject are due to the foreign rule, and consequently their attempts are directed to bring about political changes in the country more or less gradually. But others, and these the most far-seeing, realise that a purely political progress is not possible and, if possible, is not even desirable. Advanced political status implies in the large majority of citizens a lively sense of justice and fair play for all. Disabilities due to birth or sex should not be too much emphasised. In a democratic state efficiency is conditioned by every individual having full opportunities to realise the best that is in him, and our old civilisation in India was mainly a civilisation founded on distinctions of birth, race, and sex. It is not enough to talk of political equality; we must learn to live it in all our public and private concerns. This view is obviously the most statesmenlike and just.

But the political part of the agitation has been generally more prominent especially because it need not necessarily be accompanied by a due sense of responsibility. On the other hand that part of our advancement which relates to our own selves is

really much more difficult. In the first place this work which has been called the work of social reform is not always such as to bring one into the glare of publicity. There are again daily and even hourly obstacles in the path. Our religion has till now pervaded all our activities and the process of freeing some of them from the thralldom of religion and restricting the latter to its proper sphere is not at all easy. The vast majority of our men are uneducated and our women are even more so. For only one man in the family or village to act according to the new convictions he has gained is fraught with intense practical difficulties. It has been easy enough for a man in our society to hold all kinds of opinions in an intellectual manner provided he conforms to the usual practices in his daily life. Hence the progress of social reform in the country has been rather slow. Foreign critics have not failed to point a finger of scorn at our public activities and draw unfavourable deductions about our capacity for freer political institutions if we cannot get over various permanent inequalities in our social life. To be frank we must admit that the spirit of sacrifice for the public as contrasted with sacrifice for one's own religious convictions is not very common among us. Even our best men are fond of talking about the line of least resistance, taking the public with them and many such high-sounding theories which are at best a periphrasis for moral cowardice.

Such thoughts occasionally lead one to despair of our future. One is likely to be overwhelmed by

the magnitude of the task before us. Examples of backsliding in social matters among our great men are but too many. Of talk there is a large amount but of action there is a great want. The life of Prof. Dhondo Keshav Karve is however sure to hearten the despairing patriot. Born with no advantages of family or wealth or even transcendent intellectual ability he has shown in his own lifework how an ordinary man with only strong convictions and high moral courage can do a great deal of good in the social sphere and can, by his personal influence, gain even popular sympathy for a cause which was till recently sneered at and for which at best its advocates expected only silent indifference. Many persons who have seen the results of his work have expressed the opinion that a few more devoted persons like Mr. Karve will change the face of India. It is for this purpose that we have undertaken to give in a brief compass the story of his life. For Marathi readers such a book would be a work of super-rogation as Mr. Karve has very recently published his autobiography which should be read by every one who is able to do so. But Mr. Karve is no longer a son of Maharashtra only. His example should appeal to the whole of India and we trust that this short sketch for which our authority is mainly his autobiography will be welcomed by every son of India who has the cause of his country and especially of his backward and often miserable fellow-sisters at heart.

Chapter II.

PARENTAGE.

Dhondo Keshav Karve was born at Sheravali, a small village in the Khed Taluka of the Ratnagiri District, on 17th May 1858 at the house of his mother's brothers. Although born at Sheravali his home was important village of Murud in the Dapoli Taluka. His father's little estate was there and his elder brother and younger sister are still residing there. Murud is a big village about ninety miles South of Bombay on the coast and the Karve garden has the sands of the sea as one boundary. Its population is about two thousand and has a large Konkanastha Brahmin element in it. The village has an interesting history. It was founded about four hundred years ago by some holy man who cleared a part of a jungle and brought some families to reside there. A very interesting history of the foundation of the village and its special customs in early days is extant and was published by the late R. S. Vishwanath Narayan Mandlik in the Transactions of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1865, and well deserves notice at the hands of antiquarians and students of sociology. Village duties were well portioned out among various families and castes; temples were built; even a site for a mosque or an imageless temple was reserved. The main temple in the village is very solidly built and would well repay a visit. Curiously enough it has a big bell--

with ^{lity} present no tongue—on which is embossed the ^{ho c-o} “*Omnes gentes laudate Dominum*” which evidently shows that it must have been procured from the Portugese who held many stations on the west coast for two or three centuries. The village appears to have attained comparative importance soon after its foundation. This importance it has retained still, though with the spread of English education and of facilities for travel it appears to be now on the downward grade as all its intelligent young men are attracted to Bombay and Poona and do not generally return to their ancestral village. The village has no industries except agriculture which consists of the cultivation of rice, betel and coconuts. The climate is very fine and agreeable and with proper communications it, like many other places in the district, would have flourished as a sanatorium. Till recently it used to have a very well-known vedic school and it has produced during the last fifty years some men much above the average level. Among these the most famous was R. S. V. N. Mandlik who was one of the first citizens of Bombay in the seventies and eighties of the last century and was for a time a member of the Vice-regal Legislative Council. The late Mr. Vaman Abaji Modak, one of the first graduates of the Bombay University, for a long time Principal of the Elphinstone High School, and one of the originators of the Bombay Prathana Samaj, was a resident of Murud. Another distinguished son of Murud was the late Mr. Shankar Balkrishna Dixit who is famous among orientalisists as the author of a very scholarly treatise

(unfortunately in Marathi only) on Hindu Astronomy and was the collaborateur with Dr. Thibaut in some of his works. (It is an interesting coincidence specially in a life of Mr. Karve that the first Brahmin widow from the Deccan who took advantage of the Widow Marriage Act to remarry was born at Murud and that another widow, the sister of Mr. Ramchandra Bhicaji Joshi, the well-known social reformer and Marathi scholar, who remarried in 1890, belonged also to a family in Murud.) For one village to have produced three persons who set a personal example in the cause of widow-marriage is certainly remarkable.

In his autobiography Mr. Karve has given many very curious historical details about his ancestors. It appears that three generations before Mr. Karve himself they were very rich persons, having occasionally farmed the revenues of Gujrat in the time of second and third Peshwas and a family record is in existence showing that one of his ancestors had lent six lakhs and a half to Damaji Gaekwad. His ancestors bought lands in Murud about the middle of the eighteenth century and in their days of greatness carried out several works of public utility including the rebuilding of the temple mentioned above, and a big tank on the main road to Murud from Dapoli. For these two works his great-great-grandfather appears to have spent over ten thousand rupees—a very considerable sum in those days. But by the time of Mr. Karve's father all this greatness appears to have disappeared. His grandfather was a man of a very quiet nature and was not gifted with the

ability to manage his estates. He left three sons who could barely remember having heard of the greatness of their grand-father but who had personally to bear the utmost degree of poverty--doubly hard to bear for these memories.

It may be mentioned that Mr. Karve's great-grandfather had secured for himself some ceremonial rights of precedence in the village from another family which was originally assigned these rights by the holy founder of the village and which family was on the point of becoming extinct. The Karves still enjoy these rights although they have long ceased to have the old importance attached to them. In fact the family records of the Karves might possibly give some valuable information about several matters touching the economy of a typical village in Konkan.

Mr. Karve's father, Keso Bapuji, had thus to spend his days in great poverty. He lost his father when he was about eleven years old and his eldest brother mismanaged what remained of the old family estate. So in his early youth he had to seek private service with the family of Barve in the village who engaged him to collect their rents at a small village a few miles from Murud. His wife and growing family continued to remain at Murud. In the partition deed between him and his two brothers which is properly attested, three *putalis* (a small golden ornament and coin worth about Rs. 5) are stated to have been borrowed from a neighbour and the three brothers are declared to be proportionately responsible for their return. Well may the subject of our biography write: "What a vicissitude of fortune is

exemplified in the two facts that in the house of the grandfather in A. D. 1762 when a count of *putalis* was made they were found to be 5192 in number and that when in the same house his three grandsons made an inventory of all moveable goods in 1843 it was found that among the paltry ornaments on their wives' persons the three *putalis* were borrowed."

Mr. Karve's mother was from the family of the Paranjpyes and was my father's sister. I knew her intimately from my early childhood and she had a very great affection for me. The family of the Paranjpyes hailed from the village of Adivare in the Rajapur Taluka in the Ratnagiri District but more than five generations ago it emigrated to Dapoli and Khed Talukas. In several villages in these talukas my grandfather and great-grandfather were known as commanding personalities with great influence and both curiously enough had met with violent deaths, having been murdered by some Kunbis with whom they might have had disputes about lands or money. My grand-father in particular bought properties in three or four villages and was a very remarkable man. He left a very large family, his youngest son--my father--being about two years old at the time of his death. Mr. Karve's mother was his third child being preceded by two elder brothers and followed by three younger brothers and one younger sister besides others who did not live to an advanced age or leave children. The Paranjpyes are a long-lived, industrious, and a fertile family. The ages of my father, his brothers and sister at present or at death form a remarkable record

longevity in a family: Ramchandra (died at 79), Lakshman (died at 82), Mrs. Karve (Karve's mother) (died at 81), Bhaskar (living, age 86), Mrs. Modak (living, age 77), Vasudeo (died at about 56), Purushottam (living, age 74). My grandfather's living male descendants through male line number at present 66 and all his descendants through sons and daughters must now be many more and he died only about seventy years ago at the age of about sixty! My grandfather was deeply religious and charitable. All his sons--except my father who was only two years old at the time of his death and who consequently learnt the Rigveda after he was fifty--were taught the Vedas though they had not to practice the priest's profession. No wandering Brahmin was refused a meal at his house, a rule that is still kept up in the house of my father and of one of my uncles.

Mr. Karve's mother fully inherited all her father's religiousness and charity and has obviously transmitted both these qualities to her sons. In her own humble and circumscribed sphere she had all her father's ability and capacity. She brought up her children very carefully and was always being entrusted with the care of many of her little nephews and grandnephews who were fit for school--Murud being a big village with a good school. She died in 1905 at the age 81 being in the full possession of all her faculties till the very end. She had to bear more than her fair share of misfortunes but in her two sons and daughter she had three very dutiful and affectionate children and, even though brought up in

old ideas, she fully appreciated the great work that was being done by her Dhondu. Karve's father was not so fortunate and died while he was at school in Bombay unaware of the greatness of his son.

We need not speak much of his brother and sister. Both are deeply religious and affectionate. The brother Mr. Bhikajipant was a vernacular schoolmaster at various places in the Dapoli Taluka and retired on compassionate pension about ten years ago. He is of delicate health and generally spends his time in reading and thinking about Vedanta with some of his friends in the village. The sister Mrs. Ambutai Kale who has been a widow for about twenty years is of a very much stronger mental fibre and I often think that under favourable circumstances she would have done very great works of public utility. There is a very great resemblance between her and her brother Dhondopant. The two brothers have recently sold away all their ancestral landed property as Bhikajipant has no son who is likely to make Murud his permanent home. Bhikajipant is now-a-days living with his sister who is managing her own little estate. The whole village contains no man who takes so much trouble in the cultivation of his garden as Ambutai. Her hands are always busy with some work while all the time her lips are reciting some sacred hymn.

Such were the antecedents and the early surroundings in which Mr. Karve was brought up. It will be seen that the deeply religious nature and an earnestness for which his whole career has been remarkable found a good nourishing ground in these surroundings.

Chapter III.

EDUCATION.

As has been already mentioned Murud has a big vernacular school and young Dhondu, after a short time at an indigenous school conducted by a Shenavi master, joined it. Bhiku—his elder brother—was also at the same school. It may be mentioned in passing that the two names Bhiku and Dhondu—“beggar” and “stone”—were given by their mother to these boys as her first three did not survive, according to the usual attempt to deceive Fate, so to speak, by giving it to understand that these boys were really not dear to their mother and so it need not trouble itself to take them away. He went through the usual course under the guidance of the headmaster Vinayak Lakshman Soman who had a very great affection for him. In later times after his retirement Mr. Soman came to live in Poona and helped Mr. Karve in his work ; after his death his widow went through the regular course of education under his guidance and is now working in one of his institutions.

At school he was one of the bright boys in the school but was always marked by extreme shyness which has never left him in his whole life. He records in his autobiography several instances of this trait when a few words spoken bravely would have saved him a great deal of trouble. Thus for want of a little pushfulness he has often

missed his train. But on the other hand he has another kind of courage—the courage of conviction which has marked his whole career. At school he went by regular steps to the final standard the sixth but was then too young to appear for the examination which qualifies either for a teachership in a primary school and other low-paid government service and is also a necessary qualification for entrance into the Poona Training College. This College is many times the ideal before bright boys in village school and young Karve intended to join it. But he had many very difficult ordeals to undergo before he passed the sixth standard examination. The first year he with four friends walked to Satara in four days to appear for the examination as the way to Ratnagiri at the end of the monsoon was difficult. But when he reached there, his four friends were accepted as candidates and Karve on account of his small stature was refused in spite of his possessing proper certificates of age and he was too shy to protest in the least about this refusal. So he had to return home. The next year he appeared for that examination at Kolhapur and duly passed the examination.

His intention to join the Training College at Poona was however given up. A gentleman at Murud had engaged an English teacher to teach English to his son and Karve took advantage of his presence to study English up to the first three standards. He also used to receive help from some other English knowing young men who visited the village in the vacations. Once started he got on fairly

well. For a time he was at the Ratnagiri High School where Mr. Vaman Abaji Modak a villager of his and the uncle of one of his friends was the headmaster. But the climate of the place did not agree with him and he returned to Murud. But somehow or other, partly by borrowing and partly by earning money by scholarships and private tuitions, he soon found his way to Bombay where he joined the Robert Money School and passed his Matriculation examination in 1881, standing sixteenth on the list. In his school days he used to chum with one or two of his villagers sharing with them the work of the household when need arose. Later on he formed intimate friendship with Mr. Narhar Balkrishna Joshi a fellow student in the Money School and they afterwards lived together with their families for about eight or nine years. Mr. Joshi is a man of vigorous temperament and pushful nature which scorns obstacles. He had early imbibed reformed opinion on social matters and discussions between the friends must have had a great effect in moulding Mr. Karve's opinions. In early days people who knew both the friends were more impressed by Mr. Joshi, as Mr. Karve's qualities never obtruded themselves on the notice of the casual observer; several had formed high expectations of Mr. Joshi's future; but these expectations were doomed to fail owing perhaps to a lack of a certain steadiness of purpose and sweetness of temper, the possession of which characteristics have been Mr. Karve's main assets. From his school days Mr. Karve had maintained himself to a

certain extent on tuitions and when he joined the College after his Matriculation, he spent two or three hours every day in private teaching to be able to pay his college expenses. He was in the Wilson College for a year and then migrated to the Elphinstone College being attracted to it by the presence there of Principal Wordsworth. He used to be a free student for the whole of his college course and passed all his examinations in the second class. Of course he was handicapped in his studies by having to do a large amount of other work. He never attained eminence as a student though, especially in mathematics, he several times carried off the College prizes. He had not the push to force himself on the notice of the College authorities and I believe that none of his professors except the late Mr. Hawthornthwaite who taught mathematics knew him personally. Some of his class-fellows had a high regard for his capacity and among them was the late Mr. Gokhale, whose knowledge of Mr. Karve led to the unexpected offer of the professorship of Mathematics at the Fergusson College seven years after they were students together.

As said above Mr. Karve could not devote himself entirely to his studies. He is not much of a reading man and is not a great devotee of any branch of literature or history or any other subject. He had, however, a clearness of understanding which enabled him to master any subject which he had to study for his examinations or for any other purpose, but he has not the keen intellectual curiosity of the born scholar. On the other hand his grasp

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Marathi and his autobiography is a masterly piece of work. But Mr. Karve will be remembered more for his epoch-making work than for any revolutionary thoughts. In early days therefore he did not come into prominence. In his own limited circle, however, he did many deeds of charity or public spirit.

Mr. Karve records many little incidents of these early days which show the germs of his great public spirit. When he was in his Vernacular school and doing nothing as he was too young to appear for the final examination though he finished all the studies, he used to read in the papers about joint stock companies and some gentlemen at Murud under the inspiration of Mr. Soman the head-master decided to start a joint stock concern to sell general goods. They raised a capital of Rs. 800 by means of shares of Rs. 5 each and young Karve was chosen as the manager and salesman under the general direction of the Board. He, however, did not know how to keep the accounts regularly and credit was allowed to too great an extent. In about a year and a half it was decided to sell off the stock and wind up the concern. Most of the share-holders lost a good portion of their share-money and some were paid off in kind. Young Karve took the failure too much to heart as he thought that it was due to his carelessness. He had no money himself and so could not suffer in his pocket, as his own part in

the concern was his personal work. But thinking that he himself ought to suffer as his friends had done, he got hold of one of the poorer share-holders and asked him not to claim his share money back ; he gave him his own personal promissory note which was accepted through the medium of a friend. The directors were asked not to bother about this share-holder as they were told that he had taken credit to the extent of his share-money. Karve was eighteen at that time. He returned this money in full and five rupees as interest, soon after he came to Bombay even before he passed the matriculation, with the money he earned from his tuitions. The balance of interest, he adds, was let off.

“When I began to earn some money by scholarships or tuitions,” writes Karve in his autobiography, “I regularly began to set aside one pice in every rupee for charity. Besides this I also used to put any unexpected earnings into this fund. I do not know whence I got this idea but I have followed this practice since I got the first stipend of a scholarship. I did not spend anything out of this fund till it accumulated to three rupees. A good opportunity offered itself when the fund amounted to so much. Nagopant Datar of Murud used to keep an eating house—*Khanaval*—in which I used to take my meals. He suddenly fell ill and returned to Murud. It appeared that he had not a month to live. He had once borrowed five rupees from me in Bombay which he had not repaid. He, his wife and mother closed the *Khanaval* and returned to Murud for good. When I returned to Murud during

the vacation, I went to him to inquire after his health. All the three persons looked very careworn and Nagopant felt very sad on seeing me. "Have you come to ask for the return of your loan?" he asked of me. "Please understand," said I, "that that money has been already returned. To help you in your need I have come to give you these three rupees," and I placed the three rupees before him. His face immediately changed and he shed tears of joy and gratitude. I thus tasted on that day the indescribable pleasure one feels by doing good."

He tells us that although under great pecuniary difficulties he chose to rely on his own work and would rather earn money by taking more tuitions than follow the usual practice of taking meals at other people's houses by regular turns once a week. This custom is very common in Maharashtra and some gentlemen who had a good opinion of him offered to introduce him to seven gentlemen who would each give him free meals one day a week. He never missed an opportunity of legitimately saving money by economising on railway tickets by walking to the College at Byculla or of earning a few honest rupees by taking odd jobs like that of a census enumerator. Personal manual work he is always ready to do. I remember that when I was one of the boys learning under his guidance in his house we had occasionally to do the cooking ourselves in

case of illness or other difficulty : and Anna * never left his share to be done by us. On one particular occasion he forestalled us boys by coudunging the eating room when we happened to be out of the room for some work.

* Mr. Karve is familiarly called Anna by all his friends and relations.

Chapter IV.

chool.

LIFE IN BOMBAY.

After Mr. Karve passed his B. A. examination he settled down to the life of a teacher in Bombay and continued in this way to the end of 1891. He had early made up his mind not to accept permanent Government service though for a few months he held a temporary assistant mastership in the Elphinstone High School under Mr. Vaman Abaji Modak. He was a very good teacher of mathematics and he was thus always in demand, some of the institutions or pupils with whom he was engaged undergoing considerable inconvenience as to hours &c., to be able to suit his convenience. He was especially associated with the Cathedral High School, the Alexandra Girls' School, the Fort High School and the Maratha High School. He worked very hard, often leaving his house at 5 a. m. and returning home at 8 p. m. He generally taught only mathematics—in private even to college students—though occasionally he also taught other subjects especially Marathi to some Europeans. His tuitions brought him about Rs. 175 rupees per month and he worked so hard that he might make some provision for his family at Murud once for all and then enter on his philanthropic work. The Maratha High School especially was founded by the late Mr. Rajaram Shastri Bhagwat and Mr. Karve was one of his early coadjutors. They intended to work it somewhat on the lines of the New Eng-

case of school, Poona, but it has never been lucky left, though to enlist many enthusiastic young men.

In Bombay he chummed with Mr. Narhar Bal-krishna Joshi, the families of the two friends living together and sharing expenses. Mr. Karve was married at fifteen to a girl in his own village. She was a typical Hindu lady and I, like the other two or three boys who lived in his family, have lively recollections of the kind treatment we received from her. His first son—Raghunath, who is now an assistant professor in the Elphinstone College—was born before Mr. Karve graduated. Mr. Karve had seen the difficulties in which poor boys had to get education. So as soon as he graduated and settled down he began to smoothen for others the way to learning. He began with me and the youngest brother of his wife. For about two years he kept us at Murud and Dapoli at which latter place Mr. Joshi's younger brother was a teacher in the Mission School. He brought us to Bombay in 1888 and with us was associated Mr. Joshi's youngest brother. Soon afterwards he got his brother's daughter married to a poor boy in the village and he brought him also to his house for his education. Two years later another boy, a brother of a school fellow of his, was also brought by him. Thus his lodgings in Girgaum were always crowded and, I am afraid, rather boisterous. When at the end of 1891 he moved from Bombay, one of the boys was provided for in the Gokuldas Tejpal Boarding School and three of us—myself, his brother-in-law and his nephew-in-law—accompanied him to Bombay, myself being just ready to join the

College and the other two being still in the school. Unfortunately his brother-in-law—Damu Karve—died soon after passing his Matriculation and his nephew-in-law—Bhiku Biwalkar—also died a few years later. Mr. Joshi's youngest brother—Bhargav—remained in Bombay and soon after completing his sub-assistant surgeon's course died quite young. So of the merry group of boys brought up in the Bombay establishment there remain only myself and one other. Mr. Karve wanted to teach us the lesson of self-reliance. He made us write regular accounts of the money he spent for us and asked us to regard it merely as an advance, though he did not take back that part which was spent till we passed the Matriculation. Altogether I was in his house and under his direction for ten years and I quite remember the time when he gave me my first lesson in the English alphabet in May 1885 when he had come to our house to visit us during his holidays.

Although not a vocal reformer he practised reform whenever there was an opportunity. Thus even before he graduated he taught his wife and sister to read and write whenever he could. The thread ceremony of his son he performed at the smallest possible expense in a suburb of Bombay and gave the amount of Rs. 200 which he should ordinarily have spent on the occasion in charge of the Murud Fund Association of which we shall directly speak. In this matter he persuaded his old mother and his wife to appreciate his point of view. When in 1891 his wife died, about three months before he moved to Poona, he hardly showed any outward signs of grief and went

about his usual avocation without any change. Her funeral ceremonies were performed as expeditiously as possible and Mr. Karve gave Rs. 500 to the Murud Fund Association in her memory for the advancement of female education in his village. He early made an agreement with his brother about the family estate giving him practically the whole and also some portion of his own earnings.

But while he was engaged in his teaching work he was all the time busy in thinking about starting useful public movements. Of these the most important was the Murud Fund. Several educated men from Murud were earning their living in Bombay and other places and Mr. Karve counted many of these as his intimate friends. He got these together and started this association with the object of doing good to the village. Any Brahmin inhabitant of Murud could be its member. Those members who had regular employment had to give at least one pie in every rupee they earned and landholders and others habitually resident in Murud had to give a minimum amount of one rupee. The Fund thus collected was to be employed for the good of the whole village and the association has had its regular meetings twice every year—once in Bombay where a large number of members usually reside and once at Murud—and publish six monthly reports. As long as he was in Bombay, Mr. Karve was its Secretary and now even though he has made Poona his home and the scene of his principal activities he still occasionally goes to Bombay to attend the meetings. Several works of public utility have been already done by the Fund

especially one to protect the drinking water supply of the village and another to make convenient arrangements for funeral rites; temples have been repaired and roads occasionally mended. The work of the association is carried on in a modern systematic manner and the money is invested in the Post Office. It has at present a balance of Rs. 3,652-8-3. The movement is a very interesting one and almost the whole credit is due to the initiative and interest of Mr. Karve. If the village panchayets of which there is now much talk can be revived at all, they ought to adapt themselves to altered circumstances in the manner of this Murud Fund Association.

Among other matters for the good of Murud may be mentioned his work for the building of the vernacular school at Murud and the starting of an English School. The latter had a chequered existence and at present is now existent. The former was however carried through and Mr. Karve worked hard for it both in the matter of collecting subscriptions and corresponding with the educational department about it. His idea of a girl's school at Murud has not taken shape, the people being rather prejudiced against it by his remarriage.

Another interesting association that he started was *Snehavardhak Mandali*. The object of this association was to bring together all the educated men of the Dapoli Taluka at least once a year in the month of May at some centre in the Taluka for purposes of social intercourse and for informal discussions of various matters. These educated men consisted to a great extent of school masters. The

first meeting took place at Murud under Mr. Karve's guidance and this meeting and two or three subsequent ones were very successful. But in 1903 Mr. Karve married a widow and the meeting that took place soon after practically came to grief on the hotly debated question of allowing him to be present at the meeting or even in the village. The meeting practically ended in a row and the *Mandali* soon lost its vigour and is now, I suppose, extinct. Mr. Karve had an idea of starting a similar association for the whole district of Ratnagiri but his removal to Poona and remarriage soon afterwards caused him to abandon all these ideas.

Thus by the end of 1891 Mr. Karve was known among his villagers and other friends as an energetic man fond of doing public work with great enthusiasm even though it may be comparatively humble in character. The end of this year was to see him remove to a wider stage and to open out for him a new career of usefulness in Poona.

Chapter V.

WORK IN THE DECCAN EDUCATION SOCIETY.

In this manner Mr. Karve was passing his time in Bombay when one day about August 1891 he received a letter from the late Mr. Gokhale offering him the professorship of Mathematics in the Fergusson College and requesting him to go to Poona to see him personally. Gokhale and Mr. Karve were fellow students in the B. A. Class in the Elphinstone College in 1884 and were learning the same voluntary subject. Since then Gokhale had formed a very good opinion of his fellowstudent's ability and character. The Fergusson College which had been started in 1885 had just obtained permission to open the B. A. Class. At the end of 1890 Mr. Tilak who used to teach mathematics in the College resigned as he could not pull on with his colleagues. For a year Gokhale himself took his place. But his services were required for English and other subjects and the then life-members thought—at Gokhale's suggestion—of asking Mr. Karve whether he would accept the post on Rs. 100 per month and give an agreement to continue in service for two years.

As mentioned before Mr. Karve used about this time to make about Rs. 175 per month by his tuitions and undertaking the post offered to him meant a considerable reduction in his income. But it was not this which made him hesitate. Money was a matter of small consideration to him and he

was already used to simple life. But he had doubts about his capacity for the task. He had obtained considerable fame as a school teacher of mathematics in Bombay and had occasionally coached private students for the first two years of the College course. But he himself had studied mathematics up to the B. A. only—having once attempted to take the M. A. in physical science afterwards—and that was about seven years ago. Poona students used to be feared in Bombay as specially intelligent and naughty and he was not certain whether he would be able to acquit himself well in his new capacity. But on the encouragement of friends especially of the late Mr. Rajaram Ramkrishna Bhagwat who was associated with him at the Maratha High School, he made up his mind to accept the offered post. The preliminaries were soon settled, and he soon gave up his private truitions in Bombay and in November 1891 he finally bid good-bye to Bombay which had been his residence for about fourteen years. During the few months that remained before he actually took up his new appointment I remember how hard he worked in getting up again the subjects which he had to teach in Poona. He knew he had to take the place of Mr. Tilak who even then had caught the fancy of the young generation and that he would consequently be judged by a high standard.

He soon attained popularity as a teacher of mathematics in the Fergusson College. He was not a brilliant teacher if by brilliance is meant being of use only to the few exceptionally bright boys in the class and neglecting the ordinary student. But he

could put mathematical ideas into the heads of even the dullest and many a student blesses him for his careful teaching of this dreaded subject. He generally confined himself to the book, but he worked through it very carefully with his class. I myself passed my Matriculation in 1891 and when he came to Poona, I came also to stay with him. He used to encourage me to do extra reading in mathematics and I had him always available to explain to me any difficulties, and I passed all my examinations in the Bombay University with his coaching. He was very careful in his regular work of taking exercises and papers and in this way he soon came to be considered one of the most competent professors in the College.

Within four months of his coming to Poona he made up his mind to cast his lot permanently with the life-members and become a life-member of the Deccan Education Society in April 1892. After a service of more than twenty years he finally retired last year. Without being a very prominent member like Gokhale he was always regarded as possessing sound judgment and his advice was always greatly valued. For the first year of his life in Poona he was hardly known to the outside public as he never saw anybody or mixed himself up in any public movement. In 1893 he, however, married a widow and so came prominently into public notice. We shall speak of him in this connection later. He soon began to engage himself in those other activities with which his name is very intimately associated and confined himself to his

teaching work only in the Society. He used to say that he was by temperament unfitted to fill an administrative post like the Superintendentship of the New English School, though he later acted as assistant to one of the life-members who was far junior to him. In fact notions of dignity or seniority and inferiority never once entered his head. When I returned from England at the end of 1901 he voluntarily offered to make room for me in the College, and the thought that I, a boy whom he himself had educated and who was very much his junior in the staff, was apparently taking his place, never once trouble him. For a few years after that he worked entirely in the school though some other new men had also been taken to teach mathematics in the College; only for the last two years of his life-membership he was brought once again to the College, the increasing members in the College requiring addition to the mathematical staff.

As to the attitude of Mr. Karve towards educational matters in general and with respect to the Deccan Education Society in particular, he was always an advocate of keeping up our independence and self-respect at any sacrifice. As he was associated in the public mind with his widows' home, he never did any subscription work for the society. He appeared to have begun to feel uneasy in his mind that he was not giving his full energies to the work of the society just as every life-member is supposed to do. Not a word was uttered by his colleagues on this point—nay they even realised that Mr. Karve's renown with the outside public in

an analogous educational sphere cast a reflected glory on themselves and they always did what they could to help him in his work. But with his keen sense of self-reproach he appeared to entertain the above idea. To do a sort of penance for his fancied neglect he started what he called a students' fund for the New English School. It was intended that old boys of the School and College should contribute their mites to it and build up a big fund for their *alma mater*. One of the conditions of the fund was that it should be touched on no account till it accumulated to at least one lakh. The other contributors failed but Mr. Karve kept up his practice of paying ten rupees per month into this fund. He got himself made its secretary and regularly at the end of the academical year used to give a lecture to the boys who were going to appear for the Matriculation on this fund. He used to tell them that he himself was going to contribute monthly to it while he was a working life-member and asked them to verify when they chose whether he was keeping his promise and if he failed to do so to expose him in public. He had an idea of paying his pension into the fund after his retirement from life-membership as long as he was capable of doing active work but about this time he lost all his savings in the bank failures of 1913 and he had to educate one of his sons at the Medical College and so could not begin to act according to his intention. When he retired at the end of last year this fund amounted to Rs. 3186-5-5 and at his retirement he handed over the amount which was standing in his name till then to the Secretary of the Society.

By his simple life and earnestness of character Mr. Karve was greatly respected by his pupils though from a certain want of the more social qualities he did not come into intimate personal contact with them. At the end of last year at the time of his retirement all the students of the College presented him with an address to which he replied in very feeling terms. The Governing Body of the Deccan Education Society placed on record the following resolution on his retirement :—

“ That the Governing Body parts with Professor D. K. Karve with great regret not unmixed with satisfaction as he is going to devote the rest of his life solely to the amelioration of the condition of women generally. Prof. Karve has throughout been a zealous life-member of the Society and discharged his duties as Professor of Mathematics with a single-mindedness of purpose. His sincerity and directness combined with suavity of manner have been an example to all who devote themselves to the promotion of public objects. ”

The Board of Life-members passed the following resolution.

“ That on the eve of his retirement the Board wishes to place on record its high appreciation of the service rendered by Prof. D.K. Karve as a life-member of the Society. He has fulfilled his pledge by working actively in the institutions of the Society for twenty years during which his sobriety of judgment and wise guidance have been of the greatest help to the Board and his life embodying the principle of plain living and selfless devotion to duty has served as a model to his juniors. ”

Chapter VI.

SECOND MARRIAGE.

Soon after he received the offer of the post at the Fergusson College but before he actually moved to Poona, Mr. Karve's first wife Radhabai died at Murud where she had been sent for a change. The steamers were not plying at the time on account of the monsoons and he was not with her at her end. We all regretted her exceedingly as she was like a mother to us and we were especially sorry to see her die when her husband was on the point of entering upon a wider stage.

On coming to Poona Mr. Karve was approached by some persons as to his future intentions about matrimony but he quietly brushed them off as he was bent on doing nothing against his convictions. When his mother and brother asked him about his future, he said that he had resolved upon not marrying a young girl of twelve or thirteen and that if he married again at all he would marry a widow; but that if his mother was dead opposed to it, he would yield to her so far as to remain unmarried altogether. When she saw that he was fully resolved, she nobly gave him permission to do as he liked although it went sorely against her old ideas. By the way this has always been his method, to carry his point by persuasion and not to make a frontal attack. He had always been very considerate to his mother and other relations. He was always willing to give money to them, according to his power, to

satisfy their personal wishes about any religious rites or ceremonies even if he did not believe in them provided they did not require him to do anything against his convictions. But he drew the line at marriage with a little girl. He hoped and in fact soon succeeded in winning back their affections by his delicate attentions and real love.

Early in his career Mr. Karve had been convinced of the justice of widow remarriage by discussions with friends and by reasoning with himself. He had never made his views on this subject public because he was not fond of publicity and by temperament always avoided it. He had also observed illustrations in his own village and in his own circle where the heavy hand of society had fallen on young widows who had gone wrong but had allowed their male accomplices, who are generally the greater culprits, to escape scot-free and preserve their respectability in society. "Another example occurred in the case of one of my distant relations. The woman had gone wrong and her people were considering in what way to get rid of the visible fruits of her sin. She had come to Bombay; when I heard of this I saw her and her guardians. I undertook to put her at school and educate her after she returned from Pandharpur."—where there is a foundling orphanage and where many such women go for delivery—"and, if they were agreeable, to take her with me and accept all further responsibility about her; but they would not agree. * If I had only told them that I would hand her over back to them on her return from Pandharpur, they would

have immediately agreed. But they did not like the idea of educating her and were greatly surprised how I thought of this in the case of a woman who was already disfigured according to the usual custom. As my proposal was not accepted, I did not concern myself with the matter any more."

(He had an instinctive passion for the uplifting of women. He had done what he could to educate his wife and sister. The eldest sister of Mr. Joshi used to live in Bombay; her husband died and Mr. Karve who regarded her as his elder sister tried to persuade her not to undergo the usual trials; but she could not bring her mind to resist the opprobrium of her social circle.) She never recovered her spirits after her husband's death and did a few years afterwards. He educated her daughter with his son. In fact he always did what he could to persuade any girl or woman who came under his influence to go in for education. He keenly felt the disabilities under which the sex laboured and resolved internally to do nothing himself to continue this state of things and if possible to set a personal example against it.)

The remarriage of widows has now got over the intense opposition of the orthodox. In 1893 the case was far otherwise. Only one such marriage had taken place before in Poona and less than a dozen in the whole of Maharashtra. The old arguments against it were still being brought forward and believed in by the vast majority. But in the last twenty years things have considerably altered. The repeated outbreaks of plague in all

parts of the country have carried off so many married young men and consequently produced so many widows who have never been wives that the hearts of the most obdurate have been softened on seeing their sad fate : even the orthodox who theoretically regard widowhood as only a consequence of the *Karma* in past lives cannot reconcile their minds in practice to the hard facts and have been often heard to say that it would be very desirable, even though against religion, if some remedy can be found for this state of things. Twenty years ago especially in villages and smaller towns a man who had married a widow was a monster whom it would be worthwhile going far to see. He used to be really ostracised and intercourse with him was forbidden. Now such a man passes unnoticed, and in Poona the remarriage of a widow is fairly common and barely calls for a remark.

(Mr. Karve's friend Mr. Joshi had a second sister Godubai who had become a widow before she was ten.) For many years she had lived in Konkan and had been living the hard life of the villages working even in the fields with other members of the family. She had come to Bombay for some time in 1889 when the two friends were living together. (About this time Pandita Ramabai opened her Sharda Sadan in Bombay as a school professedly for the education of Indian widows. Mr. Joshi determined to send his sister to this school and Godubai was the first widow pupil of the Sadan. She was then about twenty-five. After about a year Pandita Ramabai transferred the school to Poona and Godubai went

with it to Poona also.) A short time after, a great agitation arose about the real as against the professed objects of the school. It was soon evident that proselytisation was the real object, though education was adopted as the method, of the institution. The Indian Advisory Committee consisting of the late Mr. Ranade, Principal Agarkar and others resigned and soon the school ceased to have any interest for the Hindu advocates of social reform from within and now it has taken the form of a missionary institution pure and simple. About a year after Mr. Karve came to Poona, he was asked why he did not remarry and Godubai's name was proposed. He had never till then had any idea of the kind as her parents were very orthodox in their views and as he had been regarding her as his sister. But when once the idea was put in his mind, he soon found the eligibility of it and went and directly asked Godubai's consent. Apparently she had also been sounded and the marriage was soon settled and celebrated in Poona on 9th March 1893. It is interesting to observe that the priest also officiated at this ceremony was an old man of a very orthodox manner of life who however had somehow convinced himself of the advisability of widow remarriage and offered to officiate at any such function while speaking privately in Bombay to a friend. He was immediately asked to go to Poona where Mr. Karve's marriage was to be celebrated the next day and he went and offered himself unexpectedly to Mr. R. B. Joshi who was making arrangements for the ceremony and thus removed a great difficulty.

The marriage was widely noticed in the papers and many thought that if the movement was to succeed at all it can only be by such marriages being practically seen by the people. The *Mahratta* of Poona edited by Mr. Tilak wrote as follows on the event: "The marriage which took place yesterday at the residence of the late Annasaheb Bhandarkar in Shukrawar Peth, was, except being a remarriage, in every way decent, and was performed according to the strict orthodox ritual. Whatever may be our opinion on the general question about the necessity of widow remarriages, we must say that if the thing is worth trying at all, it ought to be made in a way that would make it popular. Mr. Karve, though never known to have been a blustering reformer, has set a practical example of moral courage which not a whole legion of social quacks have shown in their conduct." The *Jagaddhitechhu* a very reactionary paper, said: "If widow remarriage is really against our religious books, then on religious grounds only can we find fault with this marriage and the parties to it. But looking at it purely from a rational point of view we say that Mr. Dhondopant has set a very good lesson to his contemporaries. It is quite true that there is very little to blame in this remarriage." On the other hand many other papers made the usual remarks about such remarriages. But on whole the public opinion as manifested in the press was very hopeful.

On Murud and the adjoining villages where Mr. Karve was well known and respected the news of this remarriage fell like a bomb shell. It became the



Dinkar.

Prof. R. D. Karve.

Shankar Karve.

Mrs. Anandibai Karve.

Bhaskar. Mrs. Malatibai Karve.

Prof. D. K. Karve

unceasing topic of conversation and some expressed a sense of regret that a promising career was cut short by this mad deed. About a month and a half afterwards Mr. Karve wanted to go as usual to his village to see his people. This news was flashed from mouth to mouth and an emergency *Gavaki* (meeting of the villagers) was called to determine the manner in which he should be treated and especially to lay down a line of conduct for his brother. It was resolved that nobody should sit on the same carpet as Mr. Karve, that nobody should go to a meeting in which he was present, and that if he came again to his own family house his brother Bhikajipant would be excommunicated. Mr. Karve is so very yielding in his nature that he did not mind the first two conditions but the last by which he was prevented from seeing his mother and his relations pained him exceedingly. For the next two or three years he did not go again to Murud but then he went and lived for a few days in a broken-down house and saw his mother and sister secretly at dead of night. After eight or ten years the rage of the villagers cooled and he can now go to the meetings of the Murud Fund and even live in his brother's house, though he has to eat separately still. As mentioned before, one result of Mr. Karve's remarriage was the practical extinction of almost all movements in the village and taluka with which he was associated and of which he was the leading spirit. Only the Murud Fund is still existing though not with its old vigour.

The second Mrs. Karve is an energetic lady and she considerably helped Mr. Karve in his work and

especially in the practical side of it. Her education has not, however, gone very far and she cannot take that part in it which she might have taken otherwise. Of their children three sons have survived, one of them, Shankar, is in the Medical College, the second, Dinkar, is in the Fergusson College and Bhaskar the youngest is in the New English School. As already mentioned before, Mr. Karve has by his first wife one son Raghunath who after passing his M. A. was appointed assistant to the Professor of Mathematics at the Elphinstone College.

Chapter VII.

WIDOW MARRIAGE PROPAGANDA.

(After Mr. Karve's second marriage he came to be looked upon as one of the leaders of the widow remarriage movement and his advice and help was always in demand by persons intending to remarry.) (He also resolved to do what he could to further the cause. One of his first moves was to get into touch with all the men who had personally married widows.) (Their number was not large. The most influential among them were R. B. Wamanrao Kolhatkar and Mr. S. G. Paranjpe of the Forest Department C. P. With their help he started a fund for the help of those families among the remarried who were not well off; these are not likely to meet with considerate treatment from the general public and their misery is certain to be used as an argument against the reform.) Some of these families were in out-of-the-way places where there were no facilities for the education of children. (So he offered to take care of the education of such children in his own house in Poona and he thus got three or four such children and put them to school.) (One or two of these he helped with the small fund he had collected.)

oo In his own family he also encouraged the reform. His brother's daughter was married to a man who was educated in his own house.) But he remained in Poona while he was studying for the bachelor's examination. Then he put his niece to

school and got her to complete the full course in the Female Training College of Poona. For some time she was a schoolmistress in Berars but soon with her uncle's advice she married his colleague at the College, Prof. Govind Chimnaji Bhate, who is now such a leading personality in the reform cause on this side of India. Curiously enough just when the last *mantras* in the ceremony were about to be recited, Mr. Karve received a wire from me from England that I had obtained unexpected success at Cambridge and he says he could not help shedding tears of joy on this doubly auspicious occasion.

(His idea of encouraging social intercourse among all the remarried families and having an organisation for the movement was approved of by all. He formed an association for the encouragement of widow marriage, *Vidhawa-Vivahottejak-Mandali*, the members of which were either remarried themselves or were prepared publicly to associate with them in all ways. The association intended to encourage widow-marriage without transgressing as far as possible the caste system and old ways.) The idea was not to enrol any and every person who had even a very dilute sympathy with the cause but to include only the staunchest advocates of the cause. The association also engaged a paid priest to perform all religious ceremonies in the houses of the remarried families as the ordinary priests would not do them. Under the auspices of the association several gatherings were held of remarried families.

(The association in 1895 changed its name to an association for the removal of the pre-
 led

of widow marriage—*Vidhavā-vivāha-pratibandhanivāraṅk-Mandali*—at the suggestion of the late Principal Agarkar. Mr. Karve remained its secretary. He was always very careful in matters of money. He knew that several public movements founder on the rock of carelessness in money matters.) How many public funds, e. g. memorial funds, have entirely disappeared without anything being heard about them when once public enthusiasm about their object cooled down! The debacle of Indian banks two years ago was due to inadequate realisation of the responsibility for public money. Mr. Karve always kept the accounts of his various institutions scrupulously carefully and he is always blaming himself that some of the money of his institutions was lost in Swadeshi banks through his carelessness.

(The association made definite rules about the conduct of its members. One rule laid down that for the time being intermarriages except between Deshasha, Konkanastha and Karhada Brahmans be not allowed. Another directed that thread ceremony and marriage ceremony should be performed according to the usual rites at least so far as to ensure the applicability of the Widow Marriage Act of 1856. A third recommended the observance of the usual restrictions about interdining at least on public occasions. In fact he expressed his association as present-day Hinduism *plus* widow-remarriage. It must be remembered that these rules were formulated in 1897) and perhaps some of these rules might not have been necessary in these days after

the lapse of eighteen years. The Association is still existing but Mr. Karve gave up its secretaryship when his work in the direction of the education of women grew in amount.

Along with the marshalling of the stalwarts in the cause of widow marriage Mr. Karve also made great efforts in focussing public opinion in favour of the cause and gauging its extent. He divided people into five classes and tried to get written opinions from all educated people about their own classification among (i) those who are prepared to interdine with the remarried publicly, (ii) those who are willing to express their sympathy with the cause publicly, (iii) those who sympathise with the cause but are not prepared to say so publicly (the opinions of these were kept secret), (iv) those who are in favour of some particular kinds of remarriage e. g., only that of virgins widows or childless widows, and finally, (v) those who are entirely against widow marriage in any shape or form. He had collected a mass of opinion on this question but the papers he says are now lost. When he travelled anywhere he used to give lectures and get the people to express their opinions on his printed forms. In about three years he says he travelled for 130 days and spent on it Rs. 95-5-9. In this connection it may be mentioned that he always travelled third class and also frequently on foot when a railway journey was not possible. Among the opinions that he collected may be mentioned that of Mr. Tilak who had expressed in writing that there is no objection to interdining with the remarried. Of two members

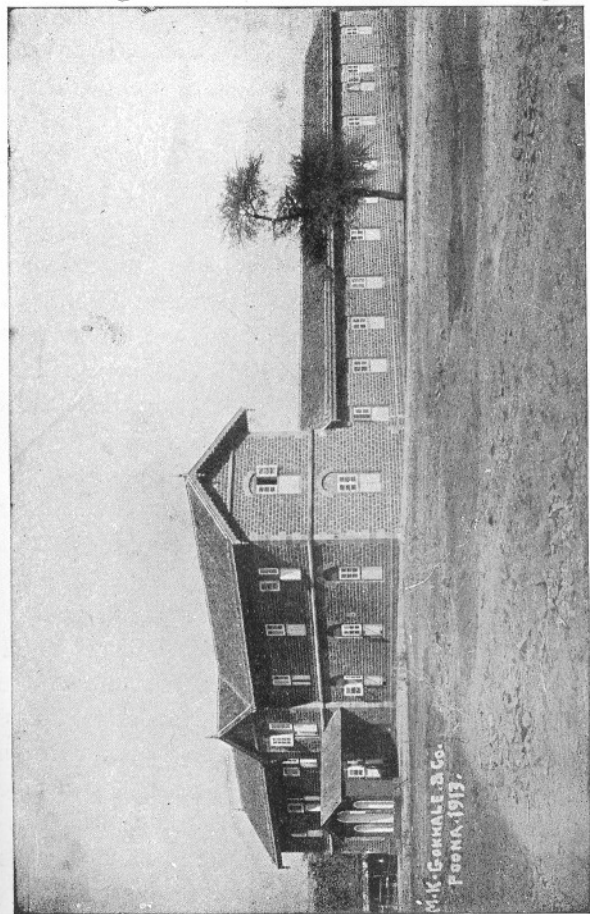
of the Legislative Council that he saw, one gave a favourable—though secret—opinion while the other bluntly said “I do not wish to be consulted in this matter”. One gentleman who with great difficulty gave a favourable opinion on certain conditions had the courage later on to marry a widow himself; while one headmaster of a high school who had given a favourable opinion later on changed and became an opponent of the cause.

Mr. Karve is not a great orator, but his sweet and sincere words always command respectful attention. In his lectures he touched the various points directly and never minced matters. He denounced the marriages of old men with very small girls as brutal. Replying to the argument that perpetual widowhood is a higher ideal than marriage he rightly said that the married state is the one natural to humanity but that if anybody from nobler motives remained unmarried, that person was deserving of all praise. Society should not expect this supreme sacrifice of domestic bliss from all widows while letting any man marry as many times as he liked—even during the life time of one wife. In questions of morality man and woman should be judged by the same standard and a second marriage in the case of a man should be looked upon in the same light as that in the case of a woman. As a practical course he recommended that widowers should marry only widows.

About this time he delivered a lecture on the cause in the autumn series of lectures in Bombay. Mr. Justice Ranade was present at the lecture. The

lecture appeared to have produced a good effect on the audience. At its close one young speaker got up and said that the whole responsibility for the unpopularity of the cause of widow marriage must be laid at the door of Mr. Ranade who failed to act up to his convictions when he could have done so. But Mr. Ranade then got up and coolly said "We are lame and halt; you had better go ahead; we shall sooner or later limp after you" and then made a speech full of his usual information and advice and at least brought the audience to think sympathetically of the difficulties of pioneers though acknowledging at the same time with admiration the greater merit of action

In 1900 Mr. Karve went on a lecturing tour with Prof. Bhate and Mr. B. N. Bhajekar of Bombay to the Southern Maratha Country. They lectured as well as visited the leading people privately and won some sympathy for the unpopular cause and a great deal of respectful attention to themselves. These lecturing tours were given up since as his work in other directions increased. "There is, he says, a great want in our country of people who devote themselves to their own special causes; and hence the same persons have to do work of various kinds and no one work is done properly. There is hope for the revival of our moribund country only if it can command the services of thousands of young men and women devoted to her cause."



Building of the Hindu Widows' Home.

Chapter VIII.

WIDOWS' HOME.

Till 1900 Mr. Karve remained Secretary of the Widow Marriage Association and then his place was taken by Prof. Bhate. He had already begun to work seriously in another direction. He had already found that the great difficulty in the advancement of widow marriage was how to persuade people to take the step. (It is education alone that can occasionally give one the strength to oppose the tyranny of custom and the supposed binding of religion.) Mr. Karve saw from his experience that there is not much likelihood of the cause of widow remarriage progressing by itself; but he also saw that while there was considerable reluctance in many quarters to take a step against what was considered to be a fundamental principle of religion, there was all the same a considerable amount of sympathy with the lot of widows and that earnest efforts in this direction are likely to prove immediately successful.) (Of course the obvious means for bettering their lot was education.) (It was easy to persuade people to allow their widowed daughters or sisters to be educated and thus bring some ray of light into their hapless existence. Intellectual sympathy with widow marriage is likely to result in action only rarely, but sympathy with the cause of their education may be immediately reduced to action without rendering one liable to suffer great personal difficulties. Again a promising effort in the cause of the education of widows

was frustrated in the case of Pandita Ramabai's Sharada Sadan as has been before related in another connection. At the height of the agitation against the Sadan in 1893, many talked of starting an indigenous institution of a similar kind; but the talk came to nothing as Mr. Karve was not then ready for the work.)

Two indigenous and partially successful attempts had been previously made in this direction. Babu Shashipad Banerji had started such a home in Bengal and closed it after a career of fifteen years as he himself was getting old and as he found nobody to continue his work. The other attempt was made by R. B. Vireshlingam Pantulu. His little widows' home was started in Madras and transferred later on to Rajahmundry, but he did not receive sufficient help from the people, though he dedicated his whole fortune to the cause. The latter institution is still going on though not in a very flourishing condition.

(Mr. Karve in 1895 thought of starting a widows' home under the auspices of the Widow Marriage Association but he soon felt that the home would start with an initial prejudice if begun in this manner and hence he determined to start it independently.) Nevertheless he realised that his having married a widow is sure to cause some prejudice against it and he determined to live it down. The widow marriage association appreciated his point of view and the little sum collected at first for a new home was handed over to him for the use of his independent effort. Feeling however that before he appealed for public assistance he must

prove his own zeal in the cause, he gave his own savings of Rs. 1000 to the cause in the beginning and with the assistance given by a friend he started with two widows. A separate institution was out of question at the time, so he put them in the Female High School Boarding House and paid their expenses out of these amounts. He published a letter about it in the *Sudharak* and on the 18th June 1896 the Widows Home Association was started with Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar as president and Mr. Karve as secretary. The report presented to members on 24th January 1897 contains the following: "Mr. D. K. Karve toured for about two months and visited Thana, Bombay, Baroda, Ahmedabad, Akola and Amraoti to secure support for the institution. Besides he also attempted to secure help in Poona itself. There are at present seven pupils who are learning under its auspices. The balance to the credit of the association is Rs. 3220-14-11."

Such were the humble beginnings of the institution. Next year he thought of having a home—however humble—for the institution. But he determined not to touch the balance in hand but to secure fresh funds for it. If he could not get enough money—about five thousand rupees was all he wanted—he resolved to pledge his own life insurance policy for it. After a short time he changed his plan slightly and hired a house in Poona for it but he carried out the idea of handing over his insurance policy of Rs. 5000 to the institution and this has been appearing till now anonymously in the reports of the institution.

The actual home for the residence of the pupils—as against the association for it—was started in a hired wada on the 1st January 1899 with only one widow pupil resident there. To avoid any misunderstanding scrupulous care was taken to keep the home free from any taint of the cause of widow marriage. But still the numbers rose only very gradually. The figures at the close of the first five years were successively 4, 7, 11, 14, 21. But this gradual growth enabled him to consolidate the foundations and build up some permanent fund. (R. B. G. G. Gokhale was one of the great friends of the movement; he offered some of his land at Hingne Budruk, a village about four miles from Poona, for the building of the home. At first this was thought to be too far from Poona; but during a severe epidemic of plague in Poona the home was located in a temporary shed on that land and on Mr. Karve's insistence the Council of the Widows' Home agreed to locate it there permanently and a small hut was built at the cost of Rs. 500. At that time there was not even a cart road to the village, so all provisions had to be carried by men.) In the beginning there were only eight inmates. He used to walk to the college every morning for his work and return every evening often with some load of provisions with him. His family used to live in Poona itself as there was not enough room in the hut and as his children had to attend school. Mr. Karve did most of the teaching himself at night and early in the morning. The internal supervision was in the hands of a respectable elderly widow, the sister of his first wife. He almost always spent his nights

there as he did not like to leave the women only in a desolate place and often had to leave some sick child in his own house in Poona. But all these troubles and anxieties were cheerfully borne as it was a labour of love. The hut is still in existence and is now considered hardly fit for cattle. Soon however it was decided to build a *pucca* building in the form of a quadrangle and one side was built within a year.

The college vacations he used to spend in touring for subscriptions for the home. He is very shy in seeing people and he used to be content with whatever was given to him. He did most of his journeys on foot especially those in the Kolaba and Ratnagiri districts. When the college was in session he also used to spend his Sundays in Bombay and to lecture in various chawls or visit people privately. His lectures and visits did not bring in much money but they produced in many people sympathy for the cause of widows. Some well-known and rich men gave money to build rooms in somebody's name. In this manner the home continually grew both in size and in public sympathy.

Mr. Karve realised from the first that an institution like the Widows' Home ought not to remain permanently under the superintendence of a mere man and he was always trying to interest some ladies in the management and if possible to get them to volunteer for the work. After two or three years his attempts began to succeed. The first lady to join him was Mrs. Parvatibai Athavale, a younger sister of his second wife. He put her in the Poona Female Train-

ing College, and when she qualified as a teacher in 1902 he made her the superintendent. Mrs. Parvatibai is an energetic lady of great determination. She soon got full control of the internal management and used also to do a good deal of the teaching work. A year afterwards he enlisted Mrs. Venubai Namjoshi and Mrs. Kashibai Devadhar of whom the former—a cousin of the late Principal Agarkar—was a matriculate and the latter an F. A. of the Madras University. These were thus better qualified for teaching and one of them was made the superintendent of the school. Mrs. Athavale and Mrs. Namjoshi are still active members of the Home and its sister institution; Mrs. Devadhar resigned in 1912 from some difference of opinion. Since last year Miss Krishnabai Thakur, M.A., has also joined the institution and is now headmistress of its school.

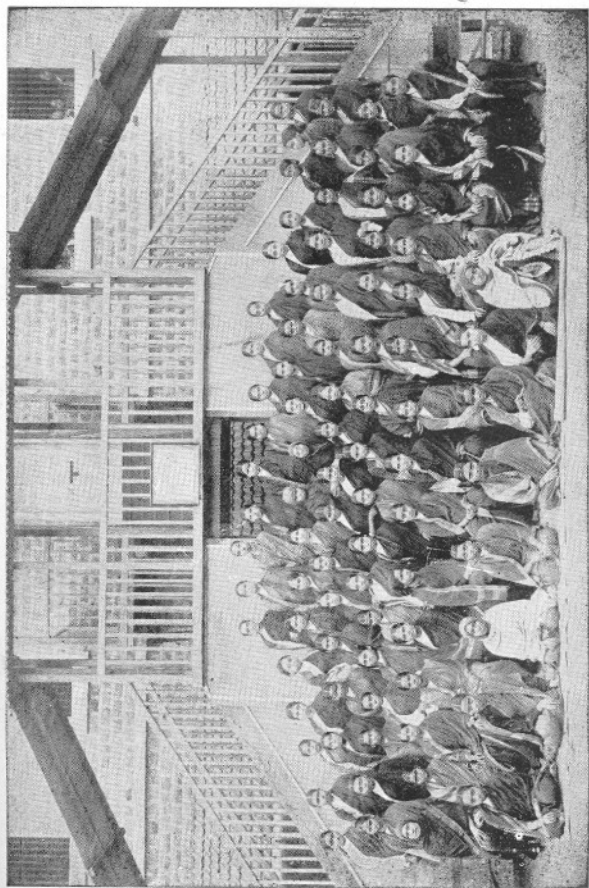
It was soon discovered that ladies could do the work of collecting funds for the institution much better than Mr. Karve himself. Mrs. Parvatibai, in particular, became a very successful collector of funds. She has eloquence, ready wit and boldness and often takes a meeting by storm. A good example of this occurred at the Bombay Social Conference of 1904 when her speech was by far the most impressive of all, though in one or two particulars her words were, perhaps with justice, resented by real social reformers. Mr. Karve is now the secretary of the institution and of course its directing genius and looks to the correspondence but he does not often go out touring for support.

The growth of the Home during the last nineteen years is given in the following table.

Year	Number of pupils at the end of the year.	Receipts.			Expenditure.			Balance at the end of the year.		
		Rs.	as.	p.	Rs.	as.	p.	Rs.	as.	p.
1896	4.	3715	8	6	194	9	7	3520	14	11
1897	4.	2872	12	9	460	0	4	5953	11	4
1898	4.	4779	13	11	842	0	6	9871	8	9
1899	4	4103	15	6	757	7	7	13218	0	8
1900	10	3773	2	1	1787	11	10	15203	6	11
1901	14	2915	3	4	1843	7	4	16275	2	11
1902	18	7371	11	11	9579	7	10	14067	7	10
1903	30	13974	10	9	9068	13	6	18973	5	1
1904	38	20855	15	1	9187	14	4	30541	5	10
1905	60	18047	10	10	23453	0	0	25236	0	8
1906	75	29840	11	4	12106	15	0	34969	13	0
1907	65	15851	13	0	8778	11	0	42042	15	0
1908	80	13407	4	2	10988	6	10	44461	12	4
1909	95	16287	14	0	14629	5	3	46120	5	1
1910	100	19173	1	9	14093	13	7	51199	9	3
1911	100	21133	14	1	15180	12	2	57151	11	2
1912	105	20247	12	1	16276	5	3	61124	2	0
1913	105	18973	15	4	18372	9	0	61725	8	4
1914	110	15320	13	10	31809	6	5	45236	15	9

The Home has had very gratifying support from all classes. Many have been giving liberal annual donations and several have given large contributions. But beyond all this it has educated the public to their responsibility towards widows. Even the very orthodox has begun to see that education is the means whereby they can be made happier and their lives can be made useful to their relations and their country. The home is now a regular sight which every visitor to Poona must go to see and the little known village of Hingne Bubruk is more famous than many towns of much large size.

The home stands for an idea. It intends to improve our conditions only just so far as they need improvement but no further. It does not aim at denationalising Indian women. It aims at keeping the pupils Indian still ; so it adapts its ways to the usual life of the ordinary middle class Indian homes. The girls are required to do a part of the domestic duties in their colony. They are not taught to look upon domestic work like cooking, washing and grinding as beneath an educated woman. Every day they are collected together in their Gita Hall—presented by Mr. G. B. Deval—and go through some sacred texts. The usual religious observances like fasts etc. are not forbidden. Even in the case of the tonsure of widows, those who prefer it are allowed to continue their usual custom though in this matter public opinion in towns is changing rapidly. Needlework is taught, but hand-loom weaving which was introduced as an experiment for



Inmates of the Hindu Widows' Home.

a few years has been given up, since it is not economically paying and the girls do not come from classes that take kindly to the work. The course of studies is the usual course for primary and high schools. Till recently the school had not all the classes up to the Matriculation and girls studying the higher standards were sent either to the New English School Poona or to the Female High School. Some girls are sent up for the vernacular final also.)

Of the pupils of the school about ten have passed their Matriculation, one has passed her B. A. and is appearing for the M. A. next March, one has passed her L. M. & S. and several are studying in Colleges. Some have gone in for nursing or the medical profession, some have taken up the position of teachers and many have gone away after going through a part of the course only. A few have remarried. As to this subject the home maintains an attitude of strict neutrality. At one time it was even feared that this striving after strict neutrality was likely to degenerate into active opposition to widow marriage. It was whispered that widows coming as pupils were required to give a bond that they would not remarry within a certain definite period of their leaving the home. But better counsels soon prevailed and the feared antagonism of the education of widows to their remarriage was not maintained, but strict neutrality only continued to be observed. (Nobody wants the home to be a matrimonial agency; but neither is it desirable for it to be a home of obscurantism and unmeaning opposition to new ideas. The usual con-

dition, that interviews with girls with the object of matrimony are prohibited while the girls are in the guardianship of the home, is quite enough to secure this strict neutrality. (Give widows education and they will be able to judge of their future themselves.)

(For a mere man to start and manage an institution for women is obviously a very difficult task. Indian society—perhaps under the influence of degenerate Moslem ideals—has in recent times come to regard women from a very low standpoint, however high the ideals that might have been cherished in the dim hoary past. The idea of a woman being only fit to minister to the pleasures of the man and serve him like a slave had all but taken the place of of the higher ideal of her being an equal companion to him; so deeply and so long has this idea been current among us that our women themselves have begun to regard it as their natural state, and we have heard from women the comparison of women with an earthen pot and of man with a metal pot. Consequently the average person cannot regard without suspicion any efforts by man on women's behalf.

(The work of Mr. Karve was thus very delicate; similar work by some other leaders has been the occasion of libel suits. But hardly a breath of scandal has blown over Mr. Karve's work. The great confidence that the public have in him is shown by no fact so much as by this negative fact.)

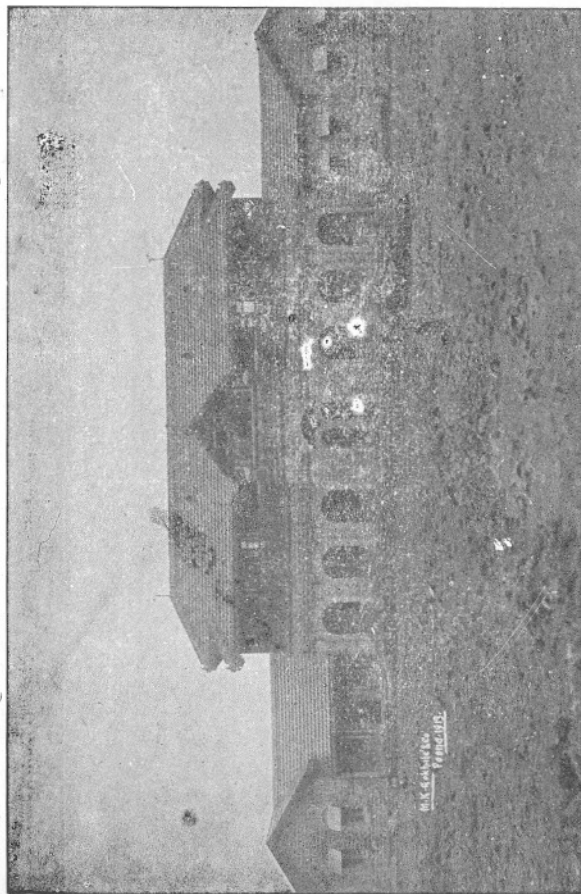
(To quote Mr. Karve, "the greatest benefit that has come from the home is the germ of hope that has been created in the hearts of widows them-

seves. The object of the home is to infuse confidence into widows from those Hindu castes that do not usually allow remarriage, and to show them that education puts into the hands of young widows a means of improving their minds, and making them self-dependent and enabling them to make good use of their lives by working for a public cause; and these objects are being fairly well realised. Our society usually treats widows in such a way as to make them often say to themselves "What is the good of our continuing to live? Better if this life which is a burden to ourselves and to others were ended once for all!" When such heart-broken women come to the home, they soon hearten themselves, and begin to feel that life is a God-given gift which can be useful to themselves and to their country. In this direction of changing the mental outlook of widows the work of the home has been of great importance to our society.)

CHAPTER IX.

MAHILA-VIDYALAYA.

Almost from the beginning of the Widows' Home, Mr. Karve used to get occasional applications, from the guardians of unmarried girls for admissions to it and some such girls were, and are still being, admitted. Many guardians of young girls felt that it would be very good for their girls to receive cheap education in a Hindu atmosphere and in Hindu middle class surroundings. The Female High School in Poona served this purpose to a great extent but in recent years it has not been able to entertain all the applications that it received. Again though the education there imparted is very efficient yet there is something in it which some guardians don't like, as a purely Hindu atmosphere can hardly be kept up in an institution under the direct supervision of a European or Christian lady. The education of girls has been rapidly extending and in towns at least parents are beginning to feel some responsibility about it. The marriage age of girls has also been rising considerably and education is becoming a valued qualification for girls in the marriage market. Only in Poona and Bombay are there some facilities for such education, but in other places there are none at all—at any rate unless the guardians are prepared to put the girls in a boys' school. In the present state of our society grown-up girls are likely to hear remarks about their unmarried state which guardians would not wish them



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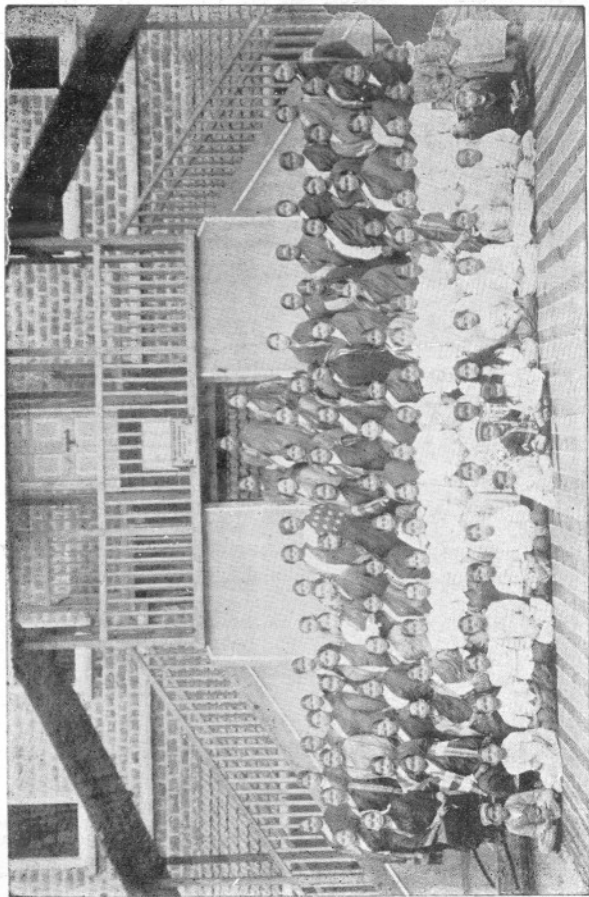
Building of the Mahila Vidyalaya.

to hear, and thus if a man wishes, or is by circumstances compelled, to postpone the marriage of his daughter, he naturally thinks of giving her some mental pre-occupation.

In these circumstances the need of a boarding school for unmarried girls was very much felt. The Widows' Home could not take in all such girls as it was primarily intended for widows only. The Council laid down a definite proportion beyond which the number of non-widows in the home should not go, and this attitude was evidently just from their point of view as the funds were obtained from the public on a definite understanding. Mr. Karve began his life-work with the education of widows, but he never intended it to stop there. He wishes for the uplifting of the whole female sex and believes that in this uplifting lies the great hope of the salvation of our country. From some points of view the education of unmarried girls is even more important than the education of widows. The latter can only indirectly transfer the thoughts they receive to the next generation as our society is not yet very much in favour of widow marriage. Young unmarried girls on the other hand are to be the mothers of the next generation and any influences for the good that can be brought to bear upon them will be directly transmitted to future India and will be fruitful of immediate good. The work of reform in all directions will be very much easier if mothers be enlisted as auxiliaries in the cause. Conversely no reform movement will be permanent if it is confined to men and makes it appeal to them only.†

Mr. Karve, therefore, began to think of starting another institution for girls only. As in the case of the Widows' Home he started with small beginnings. First of all he opened a small hostel for them in the city and sent those girls to learn either in the Female High School or the New English School—the latter being a school for boys. There were two reasons which led him to send them to the boys' school; first of all he himself was working in the school and could thus be of some help to them there; secondly, for some years some subjects like Sanskrit were not well taught at the Female High School. He had also an idea of showing a possible way for the education of girls in places where there is a boys' school but no girls' school. This experiment proved quite successful as far as it went. The N. E. School has now practically discontinued the practice of admitting girls as the Female High School has removed the second cause of complaint and as Mr. Karve's school can give room enough to all applicants who can't find room in the former; it does not wish to come into competition with the regular girls' schools. But in case of necessity the experiment can be tried again. After some time some classes were opened in connection with the hostel that was started and only the girls in the higher classes were sent to other schools.

In 1914 there were about 90 girls in this school and the number was continually increasing. In the meanwhile Mr. Karve had formed another plan about the organisation of the school which had taken shape. From the very beginning his idea was to



Inmates of the Mahila Vidyalaya.

train ladies to take up this work of the uplifting of women and he had secured three or four ladies for the Widows' Home. But they were not joining in as great numbers as he desired. In our country real sacrifice is appreciated by everybody and Mr. Karve desired to give this instinct for sacrifice a new form. The Servants of India Society started by Mr. Gokhale, the members of which sacrifice their lives for the country's good and are prepared for any public work that has to be done, gave him hints about the details of the organisation. This organisation he called the *Nishkāma-Karma-Math* "the hermitage for selfless work". The members were to sacrifice their whole lives to it and to do any work that may be given to them. All members old and young were of equal weight. To learn humility they were required to beg from house to house in the beginning and in this manner to provide funds for their work. Both men and women were admitted as members; educational status was not much insisted on in the beginning. Only a determination to be ready for any selfless work was the qualification.

On the 4th November 1908 Mr. Karve and two others took the following vows: "In the name of the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe I hereby, dedicate myself to the Indian Ladies' Mission that is to be started to conduct institutions like the Widow's Home, the Mahila-Vidyalyaya and other similar ones. Henceforward I have no claim over my own existence. The association may make any use it likes of me. I agree to any arrangement that may be made for my own and my family's mainten-

ance". Two other gentlemen with their wives soon joined this *math*. Mrs. Parvatibai' Athavale and her son a student in the Fergusson College also agreed to join it, the latter to actually begin to work in it after he completes his education. Some other young girls—pupils of the home—also agreed to come in after the completion of their education. In this way the *math* consisted of about a dozen persons. Almost in the very beginning they prepared to take the bold step of building a home for the Vidyalaya which was the first institution to be managed by it.

They had no funds to start with. But they made plans for a building of about forty-thousand and immediately commenced the building operations borrowing money on their own personal security. Luckily the trustees of the late N. M. Wadia came to their help and contributed a goodly portion of their expense. Some money was raised by public subscriptions, but till last year there was a debt of a few thousand rupees still left outstanding. The building was built in close proximity to the Widow Home on a piece of land bought for the purpose, the members of the *math* expecting to be asked to take over the management of the Home some time or other and Mr. Karve being of course the common originator of both. The building can now accommodate about a hundred pupils.

The close proximity of the Widows' Home and the Mahila-Vidyalaya and the two associations which managed them with some common members and some devoted to only one of the two objects soon led to difficulties. Apparently the lady workers in

the Widows' Home except Mrs. Athavale did not wish to join the *math* but wanted to continue on their old terms with the Home. They were well educated, while some of the members of the *math* were not. On the minds of the girls the impression caused by the juxtaposition of two sets of public-spirited workers, one of which avowedly made a bigger sacrifice than the other, was anything but conducive to sound discipline. It was alleged that attempts were made by the less far-sighted members of the *math* to get the better pupils of the home to pledge themselves to join them. On wider grounds of policy also, many sincere will-wishers of the cause of women's education were opposed to some of the principles and methods of the *math*. They were entirely against the close association of male and female members which was apparently at first contemplated and which, however unobjectionable in the beginning in the case of pioneers, carried within itself the fatal seeds of decay and corruption. The enrolling of young boys or girls as members before they could very well understand and realise the great responsibility involved in the sacrifice of their whole lives, was totally against the spirit of rational reform, which, e. g., opposes early marriage as an imposition of responsibilities without an adequate realisation of the consequences. The idea of self-humiliation—as opposed to self-sacrifice—involved in the practice of going out to beg alms of rice, &c.,* is repugnant to modern ideas of

* Several of these methods were soon found impracticable and given up after a short time.

self-respect, which has to be firmly implanted in the minds of Indians. For these and similar reasons, the institution of the *math* did not recommend itself so universally to the public mind as the Widows' Home and the Mahila-Vidyalaya.) Newspapers occasionally voiced this public opinion. It was at one time feared that the unhealthy rivalry may be the ruin of both these promising institutions. For some time each institution maintained a different school. The classes in each were very small. In fact, each separate institution had not enough members to make a good class. But mutual jealousies for a time opposed their amalgamation. Some of the members of the Council of the Home also thought that the Vidyalaya was not necessary as there was already a girls' school in Poona. But at last better counsels prevailed.

(Within the last year the three institutions—the Widows' Home, the Mahila-Vidyalaya and the *math*—were amalgamated. The life workers of all the institutions are to form one joint body of workers in one association for the advancement of women.) All persons who had given contributions exceeding a certain amount were made members of this association in imitation of the constitution of the Deccan Education Society, and these contributors elect a certain number on the managing committee. The internal management is looked after by the life workers who will have to form a committee consisting only of the better educated workers to look after the school which is to be one for both the institutions. The two hostels were to be kept separate,

one for widows and the other for the unmarried—and the few married—girls. The property and the liabilities of all the institutions were taken over by this joint association. Dr. Sir Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar is the President of this joint body formed of the three old constituents. The *math* has for all practical purposes ceased to exist in the old form as all its members have been taken up among the life-workers. The bye-laws of this Board of workers have not yet been completely formulated. It is hoped that in future some definite educational standard will be laid down for enrolment as life-workers as otherwise it is likely to be an asylum for the unfit who are prepared to prate of sacrifice and that all the workers will as far as possible be on one level so as to do away with artificial distinctions.)

Under this new constitution the association is now making very good progress. The joint school has been made a high school and will soon begin to send up students for the matriculation. The present head-mistress is Miss Krishnabai Thakur, M. A. The school will have to place high ideals before it and try to be the best possible of its kind. The eyes of all India are on this institution as it represents a purely Indian effort pregnant with great hopes of the future, for does not its success mean hope after the steady rise of one half of our submerged population ?

CHAPTER X.

HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS.

In the preceding pages Mr. Karve's work on behalf of the public, and especially of women, has been considered. For devotion to a single idea and ceaseless endeavour to act up to it we can scarcely find in India his equal. The way in which he has nursed his institutions from the beginning, loved them and sacrificed for them, must extort admiration from even those who do not appreciate his objects. The future of the joint institution now formed seems secure if its future workers keep Mr. Karve's single-minded devotion as their ideal, and do not let any personal bickerings come in the way of their work. Hingne Budruk is already an example to the whole of India and points out one sphere of activity for public workers which, perhaps, is more necessary and pressing than many others.

Mr. Karve's life-work has shown stages of a regular evolution. Has the process of this evolution stopped with the consolidation of all his educational institutions into one institution? He does not think so. Before his mind's eye he finds floating a Women's University evolving out of his school. He aspires to make Hingne the centre of all work for the uplift of women. A Women's University is certainly the normal course of evolution for women's educational institutions. But, if we may venture to give a word of caution, we will say that *festinalente*—hasten

slowly—is still fit to be the guiding principle of conscious evolution. His little hostel in the city with two or three widows took twenty years to become a full high school. That school has yet to pass its first matriculate. Its funds are not very great, though what funds it has are all to be ascribed to the indomitable energy of Mr. Karve himself. Let women show that they can—with men's help, if necessary, but under their own direction—manage such institutions properly, for after all the presence of Mr. Karve is a happy accident, and even he cannot be expected to last for ever. We have full confidence in their ability, but the province is one which is new to them. A large number of women—and men—of a very much higher calibre than he has just now got are required to launch out into a new and more ambitious scheme. We are sure that his institutions will certainly produce them in time. The foundations have been securely laid and the superstructure may take some time to rise.

Though a few women may consider it desirable to abstain from matrimony and live an independent life, the normal career of every woman, especially in India, is that of a wife. Mr. Karve's Mahila-Vidyalaya was started with the object of educating girls so as to render them fit for this career. The studies in the school and its way of life are generally suited to this end. But a purely academic education may not be altogether fit for this career. Some subjects must surely find a place in the curriculum of a girls' school that need not find one in a boys' school. The public must be educated to feel that

for a girl a course of training is all important and not the stamp that certifies to this training, though for boys who have got to seek employment the stamp may be necessary in the interests of the employers. It ought to be regarded as a qualification for a girl in the marriage market that she has had a course of training at Hingne. From this point of view the school at Hingne can try any number of educational experiments which are not possible for a boys' school. Thus, for instance, it can make a serious attempt at imparting education through the vernaculars, regarding English as a second language. In any case the school should place before itself a high ideal and not be satisfied with a mere name when the reality underlying it is not immediately attainable.

The life-work exemplifies very well what earnest devotion to public cause can attain. Though he has not got the renown of a political leader, real workers in the national cause have kept a secure niche in their hearts for him, some may even feel that his work is found to prove more fundamentally useful than that of many who for the moment occupy such a large portion of the public stage.) But it is a matter of gratification to his friends and admirers that even public recognition is slowly coming to his share. When a few years ago Government awarded him the Kaiser-i-Hind Silver Medal, everybody thought that the award was richly deserved. The Presidentship of the National Indian Social Conference to which he has been called just now will be adorned by him, and everybody will feel that a few

more like him will rapidly change the social face of India.

Mr. Karve has been known to the public for his devotion to a single cause and all his efforts have been devoted to it. But that does not mean that he does not look with sympathy and interest to other ways of the advancement of our country. His special work has of course direct reference to all reforms which have to do with the advancement of women; but he considers that other reforms, e. g., the crusade against caste, are equally—if not more—important, and he has not taken active part in it because he believes in a specialisation of functions. He is equally keen on the political advancement of our country and his admiration for leaders like Ranade and Gokhale is unbounded. As regards his religious opinions, he has shed many of our old religious dogmas and his position may be called broadly theistic. As far as art is concerned, he takes no interest in the drama and not much in literature; but he likes music exceedingly and is himself master of a sweet voice though it has never been trained.

Mr. Karve's life is simple almost to a fault; but the simplicity of his life is often more effective than the knowingness of many who fancy themselves clever. He has his faults; what human being has not? But this can be certainly said that they all lean to virtue's side. He is likely to fancy others as truthful, earnest and public-spirited as himself; but though he may be mistaken in this view, still it is the best means to make them so. Simple as he is himself and small as are his needs, he

is prone to think that others can cheerfully live in the same style. But he impresses upon every one the important lesson of plain living and high thinking, for which this ancient land of ours was so long famous and which in these days we are so apt to forget.

(To the writer of this sketch Mr. Karve has been guide, philosopher and friend from his earliest years. His family now extends to the whole of Maharashtra and even beyond it. It can hardly be said of any man that he has no enemies; if it can be said at all of anybody, it is of Mr. Karve. The admiration, respect and love that Mr. Karve has inspired among such large numbers are indeed a happy augury for our future; for next to being great oneself it is at any rate something to be able to appreciate real greatness in others. "He who calls the oppressed and the down-trodden his own kith and kin is to be considered the true saint, and the real God is to be seen in him, alone" says the Marathi poet, and Dhondo Keshav Karve is a true saint from this point of view. May he be spared long to continue his saintly work in the cause of our women!)
