

## *Book Review*

*Quaid-i-Azam and Education*, S.M. Zaman, National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Islamabad, 1994, pp.596+cxv; price Rs.200.00.

Because of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's crucial role in the emergence of Pakistan, most studies on him concentrate on his role as a political leader and strategist, as a statesman of his age, and on how he willed a nation into being and created a state out of next to nothing. This is understandable, if only because gaining a "political kingdom" represents the core of a leader's or nation's accomplishment, and without it, as Nkruma says, nothing else is gained or becomes available.

Although Jinnah laid claim only to the political leadership of Indian Muslims, yet his numerous statements, speeches, addresses, messages and letters do have a bearing on other aspects and ingredients of national life, besides politics. These include, among others, his views and ideas on fundamental rights and civic issues, on the role of the bureaucracy, of the press, of education and of the students in the all too crucial tasks of nation-building. That there has been a felt need for thematic compilations of his ideas and views on these issues, if only to guide the leaders in various fields, cannot be gainsaid. That need in respect of education is sought to be fulfilled by the present volume.

Its editor, Dr. S.M. Zaman, is a learned scholar, having been in teaching and research vocation for over four decades, and having held some important positions in institutions of

them to acquire three things — “education, commerce and industry, and ammunition” (i.e., defence. To him, “without education it was complete darkness and with education, it was light. Education is a matter of life and death to our nation. The world is moving so fast that if you do not educate yourself you will be not only completely left behind but will also be finished ...”

Of course, Pakistan still exists but it is lagging far behind. Imagine a dismal literacy rate of 25 to 30 per cent after fifty years of independence, and a functional literacy of about 15 per cent. Today, Pakistan is way down in the educational ladder even among the developing countries.

The high priority that Jinnah and his lieutenants gave to education is indicated by the fact that a National Educational Conference was convened to decide upon and determine an educational policy in November 1947 when Pakistan was still in a life and death struggle for survival. But successive governments have paid little heed to education, and the two educational policies devised in 1960 and 1970 fell prey to political vicissitudes and considerations. The “Nai Roshni” project for adult education initiated by Junejo in 1985 was likewise abandoned by Benazir Bhutto’s first regime for political reasons. If and when education and research are made subservient to politics, the result are bound to be disastrous. And they have been in Pakistan.

**Sharif al Mujahid**

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