

Research Paper

DEVELOPMENT AND SPREAD OF EDUCATION IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY

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ABSTRACT

The first impulse to education in the Presidency was given by a Government inquiry into the matter suggested by Sir Thomas Munro in 1822. This showed that there was approximately one school to every 1,000 of population and that the number of boys taught was one-fourth of the population of school-going age; but it also showed that the instruction imparted in these indigenous institutions was of little practical value, tending rather to burden the memory than to train the intellect.

A Board was therefore appointed to organize a system of public instruction, an annual grant of Rs. 50,000 was sanctioned for the establishment of schools, and in 1826. 14 Collectorate and 81 taluk schools, with a central training-school at Madras, were opened. In 1836 this scheme was pronounced a failure and the schools were abolished as inefficient. The whole policy was then altered, and it was decided that European literature and science (instead of native literature) should be encouraged. The Board of Public Instruction was superseded by a Committee for Native Education. But this latter was not a success, and in 1840 a University Board was instituted by Lord Ellenborough's Government to organize and establish a central school and a few provincial schools to be connected with it by scholarships. In 1841 the central school was converted into a high school, in 1853 a college department was added to it, and later it developed into the Presidency College. Between 1836 and 1852 little progress was made; but in the latter year the University Board was invested with the functions of a Board of General Education, the annual grant of Rs. 50,000 was doubled, and by the end of 1854 there were, besides the central college at Madras, five provincial schools, and a few elementary vernacular schools in Cuddalore, Rajahmundry, and elsewhere.

Some of the indigenous schools still existed, and there were, in addition, a large number of Mission schools. Most of the latter were elementary institutions. The General Assembly's school started in Madras in 1837, by the Rev. John Anderson, the pioneer of higher education in the Presidency – which developed into the present Christian College – is, however, one instance of the foundation of a school of a superior class. There were also a few institutions established by native agencies, the most important being Pachayappa's at Madras, which was opened in 1842.

In the early fifties Mr. G.N. Taylor, Sub-Collector at Rajah-mundry, formed a society for the encouragement of vernacular education, and established elementary schools at Narasapur (the nucleus of the present Taylor high school) and three neighboring towns. In 1855 he organized a system of village schools, which were mainly supported by local subscriptions and were inspected by officials appointed by Government; and by 1861 these numbered 101.

In 1854 the Court of Directors issued its memorable

dispatch regarding education. Thereupon the present Educational department, with a Director of Public Instruction and an inspecting staff, was organized; the so-called Madras University was remodelled and designated the Presidency College; a normal school was established; Zila, or District, schools were opened; and the grant-in-aid system was introduced. This last gave a great impetus to aided education, mainly by its liberal provisions in regard to salary grants and the introduction of the results system. While in 1859 there were 460 educational institutions with 14,900 pupils, by 1881 (see Table XV at the end of this article) these figures had risen to 12,900 and 327,800.

Higher education in the Presidency largely owes its extension and consolidation to Mrs. E.B. Powell and the Rev. Dr. Miller. The former was in charge of the central school at Madras, already referred to, from 1840 to 1862, during which time he expanded it into the existing Presidency College, and was subsequently Director of Public Instruction for twelve years. The latter took charge in 1862 of the school which the Rev. John Anderson had started and transformed it into the present Madras Christian College, the premier private college of Madras. Both gentlemen, moreover, exercised the widest influence in all the many educational questions which have from time to time arisen.

University Education

In 1857 the Madras University was incorporated by legislative enactment. Its constitution was materially altered by the recent Act VIII of 1904. It now controls education in Coorg, Hyderabad, Mysore, and Ceylon, as well as within the Presidency. Its Senate or governing body is composed of the Chancellor (the Governor of Madras) the Vice-Chancellor (nominated by Government from Madras), the Vice-Chancellor (nominated by Government from among the Fellows for a period of two years), 5 ex officio Fellows, and 50 to 100 ordinary Fellows, 10 of whom are elected by the registered graduates and 10 by the Faculties, while the remainder are nominated by the Chancellor. It is divided into the four Faculties of Arts, Law, Medicine, and Engineering. The executive government of the University is vested in a Syndicate, consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the Director of Public Instruction and 10 other ordinary or ex officio Fellows elected by the Senate, 5 of whom must be heads of, or professors in, colleges affiliated to the University. The

powers of the Syndicate include the control of examinations and the appointment of Fellows and others to the boards of studies. There are, fourteen of these boards; and they hold office for three years, nominate examiners in their respective branches, recommend textbooks, and so forth.

The colleges affiliated the University, including those in Native States, numbered 50 in 1891 and 61 in 1904. They comprise the Government colleges of Law, Medicine, and Engineering at Madras, the Law college at Trivandrum, a Government training colleges at Saidapet and Rajahmundry; and 55 Arts colleges, of which 15 are first-grade and 40 second grade. Of the first-grade colleges 3 (the Presidency College and the institutions at Kumbakonam and Rajahmundry) are maintained by Government, and 8 (the Madras Christian College, Pachayappa's Colleges, the Jesuit and S.P.G. Colleges at Trichnopoly, St. Peter's College at Tanjore, the Noble College at Maulipatam, the Maharaja's College at Vizianagram, and St. Alysus's College, Mangalore) are managed by private agencies. Of the second-grade institutions one of the best known is the Victoria College at Palghat, which is managed by the local municipal council.

The University has been self-supporting since 1879, and now has a balance in hand of over 5 lakhs. In 1904 its expenditure was Rs. 2,12,000 while its receipts from fees were Rs. 2,31,000 and from other sources Rs. 15,000.

The number of degrees conferred in recent years is given in Table XV A. The minimum length of attendance at a college for the attainment of a degree is four years. To deliver students from the unwholesome surroundings of native lodgings, a number of hostels have lately been opened for their accommodation. The first was started in connexion with the Christian College by Dr. Miller in 1882. Three others were afterwards added by him, partly at his own expense. The Victoria hostel attached to the Presidency College has accommodation for 178 students; five smaller ones for members of different religions and sects have been established in connexion with the Saidapet Teacher's College; and others are being erected for the Government colleges at Rajahmundry and Kumbakonam. Many mission institutions already possess boarding houses, and other private colleges and schools are erecting similar buildings.

Secondary Education

The secondary course of education consists of two stages. Boys from the primary schools enter the lower secondary classes, of which there are three, remain in them three years, and then pass to the upper secondary classes. These are similarly three in number, and the course again lasts three years. In the highest class boys are prepared for the University matriculation. In lower secondary schools reading, writing and arithmetic are compulsory, and there are a number of optional subjects. Instruction is at first entirely in the vernacular, but English is introduced gradually. In the upper secondary classes English, a second language, arithmetic, Euclid, algebra, history, geography, drawing, and science (physics and chemistry) are compulsory subjects; and while in the lowest of the three forms some instruction is still given in the vernacular, in the two highest it is almost entirely in English.

Of the secondary schools in existence in 1904, Government maintained 2 per cent., the local boards 19 per cent., and the municipal councils 4 ½ per cent., while 54 ½ per cent were aided, and 20 per cent. Unaided institutions. Aid is given from public funds by grants towards the salary of the teachers proportioned to their qualifications, by fixed grants; by grants varying with results obtained at the public

examinations; or by contributions towards the cost of buildings, hostels, books, furniture, and so forth. In 1904 one boy in every forty-five of a school-going age was in the secondary classes.

Primary Education

Primary education has two stages, the lower covering four years and the upper a fifth year. Lower primary schools are those in which there are only four standards – infant and first to third – and upper primary those in which there is a fourth standard. The compulsory subjects are reading, writing, and arithmetic. Instruction is given entirely through the vernacular, but English may be taught as an optional subject in the third and fourth standards.

Of the public primary schools in existence in 1904, 53 per cent, were aided and 33 per cent. Unaided, while 12 per cent were maintained by local boards, and the small remainder by Government or municipal councils. To schools which satisfy the conditions required for recognition by the Educational department, aid is given in the shape of fixed grants, the amount of which is determined chiefly by their efficiency; schools which only partially fulfill these conditions are aided either with fixed grants or with results grants calculated upon the results of the standard and primary examinations; while schools under public management gain salary-results grants, half the results grants earned being paid to the teachers, who receive fixed salaries in lieu of the other half.

In 1904 one boy in every five of school-going age was in the primary classes. Table XV shows how considerable has been the advance in recent years. The introduction of results grants in 1865 and the provisions of the Towns Improvements and Local Funds Acts of 1871 authorizing local bodies to devote funds to education were instrumental in giving the first impetus. Except that agriculture is an optional subject, there are no special arrangements for the instruction of children belonging to the agricultural classes. The qualification for teachers in upper and lower primary schools is a pass in the lower secondary or upper primary examination respectively, and the receipt of the teacher's certificate of those grades. But the supply of men so qualified is less than the demand, and teachers approved experience are considered qualified even though they have not passed these tests. Their usual rates of pay are from Rs. 7 to Rs. 12 a month.

Special Schools

Perhaps the first attempt to train teachers in India was that made by Dr. Andrew Bell at the end of the eighteenth century. He brought into prominence the mutual or monitorial system of instruction (sometimes also called the 'Madras system') which was the forerunner of the English 'pupil-teacher' system. On returning to England in 1797, he wrote a pamphlet upon it and introduced it into several schools there, of which he was a kind of inspector; and eventually a school was started in Edinburgh on his plan, and the system spread through England and Scotland and was adopted in Europe and America. But a few years experience revealed its inherent defects, and it has now passed into the limbo of forgotten educational methods.

In 1856 the Government normal school, the nucleus of the present Teacher's College at Saidapet, was started, and it was soon followed by others. Statistics appear in Table XV. Other special schools now in existence include three Medical schools with 400 students; the school of Engineering and Surveying, which forms a department of the College of Engineering; and the Government School of Arts in Madras City, which has about 300 pupils. The technical schools

include this last, the District board Technical Institutes at Madura and Tinnevely, the Anjuman for Musalmans in Madras City, the Art Industrial (mission) schools at Nazareth and Karur, the Reformatory school at Chingleput, and the Government School of Commerce at Calicut. Besides this last institution, which has 135 pupils, there are four smaller commercial schools, of which three are managed by missions. The only institution for the study of agriculture is the Agricultural College at Saidapet, which is to be removed to Coimbatore; but the Free Church Mission in Chingleput has recently started an experimental school for teaching the subject.

Muham-Madan Education

Among Muhammadans, education has required special encouragement. The long course of instruction in the Koran enjoined by their religion hampers them in the race with Hindus, and they have been slow to adapt themselves to the changed circumstances which make learning the one road to advancement. In 1860 the Madrasa-Azam, established in 1851 by the Nawab of Arcot, was taken over by Government. The only other high-class institutions for Muhammadans then in Madras were the Mylapore middle school and the Harris school, a missionary institution opened in 1857 with an endowment. In 1872 elementary schools for Musalmans were established in large Muhammadan centres in the Presidency, and schools for the Mappillas of Malabar were organized and brought under inspection. Muhammadans obtained concessions in the matter of fees and were aided with scholarships, a training-school was started in Madras City, and a deputy-Inspector of Muhammadan schools was appointed. The result of these measures has been a marked advance in the number of Musalmans at school, and at present the percentage of Muhammadan pupils in primary classes to the population of that religion of school-going age is higher than the corresponding figure among Hindus. In all the higher stages of education, however, the Hindus are ahead of the Muhammadans, the similar percentages in the secondary classes being for Hindus 1.69 and for Musalmans 1.45, and in the collegiate stage 0.09 and 0.03 respectively. Of those who passed the Matriculation, First Arts, and B.A. examinations respectively in 1903-4, 86, 89 and 90 per cent were Hindus, and only 2, 1, and 2 per cent were Musalmans.

Education of De-pressed and Back-ward Classes

Of late years special efforts have been made to educate the depressed classes or Panchamas as they are officially termed. In 1904, 3, 100 schools with 78,000 pupils were maintained for them at a cost of 3.59 lakhs. The hill-tribes in the Agency tracts of the three northern Districts and a number of back-ward tribes in other localities also now receive particular attention.

General Educational Results

Statistics of the expenditure upon education appear in Table XV B. The percentage of the total population of school going age under instruction rose from 7.1 in 1881 to 12 in 1891, to 14.7 in 1901, and to 16.1 in 1904. At the Census of 1901 it was found that in every 1,000 of the male and female population, 119 and 9 respectively could read and write, but that only 9 and 1 respectively could read and write, English. Excluding the exceptional cases of Madras City and the Nilgiris, the Districts in which education is most advanced are the three rich areas of Tanjore, Malabar, and Tinnevely, while it is most backward in Salem and Vizagapatam. Of the various communities the Europeans and Eurasians are by far the most literate. In the education of boys, the Brahmans come next, but their girls are less advanced than those of

native Christians. The most backward communities are the Panchamas and the hill-tribes.

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