

LEMENTARY



EDUCATION

WITH

SPECIAL REFERENCE

TO

THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

BY THE

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*Chingleput.*



## INTRODUCTION.

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The following pages appeared in the *Madras Mail*, and have been reproduced with a few modifications with a view to place the facts before the public in a more permanent way. The question as to the education of the masses of the Indian population is of great moment in the development of the country, and should be taken to heart by all patriotic minds. If this statement be the means of leading some to take a greater interest in the question, the writer will be much gratified.





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# ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

## CHAPTER I.

Sir Thomas Munro  
on Elementary  
Education.

I should like to draw attention to the backwardness of Elementary Education in South India, especially among girls. Ever since Sir Thomas Munro wrote his famous Minute, calling the attention of the Court of Directors to the subject of education in the Madras Presidency, in 1822, till the present time, there has not been any adequate advance made in educating the great mass of the population in the different vernaculars up to at least the Fourth Standard. In 1822 there were 12,498 schools with 184,110 boys and 4,540 girls reading in them. The increase during the past 87 years has not been commensurate with the increase of the population, or with the needs of the country. In his Minute Sir Thomas Munro asked for an annual grant of Rs. 50,000 so as to improve education, and he added that the expenditure "would be amply repaid by the improvement of the country ; for the general diffusion of knowledge is inseparably followed by more orderly habits, by increasing industry, by a taste of the comforts of life, by exertion to acquire them, and by a growing prosperity of the people." There can be no question that the education of the masses on a comprehensive scale is as pressing at the present day as it was at the beginning of last century. Dr. Bourne has admitted this pressing need. For, out of



48,834 villages and groups of hamlets in South India of 2,000 inhabitants and under, only 13,622 have Elementary schools in them, leaving 35,212 villages without any school whatever, or 72 per cent. of the total number. In addition to these, 299 villages of over 2,000 inhabitants have also no schools. This reveals the true educational poverty of the vast rural population.

Nor is there the proper stability in these village schools. Many of them are in a state of flux and of uncertainty as to their existence. Of these 4,368 schools for boys and 105 schools for girls were

Want of stability  
in Madras village  
schools.

closed in 1907-1908, and 4,945 new schools for boys and 128 for girls were opened, presumably in different villages from those in which so many were closed. Thus about a fifth of the schools for boys came to an end in certain villages; but the opening of a slightly larger number in other villages will not compensate for the loss of education in the villages in which the schools came to an end. What the cause is in producing this shifting of the educational centre of gravity among the rural population we are not informed. Such a condition of educational matters surely demands the most sympathetic and liberal treatment on the part of those whose duty it is to recognise such schools, or to withdraw recognition and the privilege of drawing a Government grant. A more regrettable feature of the educational problem is the fact that

Increase of girls  
not at school.

the number of girls not at school is increasing at a greater ratio than the number of girls at school; that is to say, the existing girls' schools are not receiving the surplus female population of

school-going age in sufficient numbers. This fact should rouse the country and the Government to action. If a tithe of the interest that highly educated Indians take in Indian politics were directed to this clamant educational problem, an instant and marked change for the better would be the result. India is composed of a heterogeneous number of races and tribes that need an intellectual quickening. Education has only touched the fringes of the population, as it were, and demands immediate attention. Only a very small proportion are being educated. This is a truism that requires to be emphasized.

The Census Report for 1901 reveals the striking fact that only one male in every 10, and one female in every 144, can read and write; in other words, 116 million males and 124 million females of over five years of age are wholly illiterate in British India and the Native States, or 240 millions in all; and only 15½ millions can be called literate. This thought should come as a flame of fire to Indian patriots and burn itself into the very fibre of their nature, and stimulate them to long and labour for the intellectual regeneration of the country. The introduction of reforms and the development of representative institutions at the present stage of Indian civilization will not be the means of effecting much good. Before the contemplated reforms can really do good, and be a means of leading the rural population, which is the backbone of the country, to take an intelligent interest in the government and representative institutions, there must be a great expansion in education. Let us look at

Literate and illiterate in British India and Native States.



the details so that the situation may be appreciated, and due weight given to the inferences which may be reasonably drawn from it. If we take British India and calculate the increase of the population since 1901 at the same ratio of 4·8 per cent., as existed in the decade which ended with 1901, the following will be the result:—

Children of School Age=15 % of Population.		At School 1900-01.	Children not at School.
1901.			
Boys	... 17,670,741	3,988,663	13,682,078
Girls	... 17,114,184	429,645	16,684,539
34,784,925		4,418,308	30,366,617
1906-07.			
Boys	... 18,179,658	4,777,366	13,402,292
Girls	... 17,607,073	622,927	16,984,146
35,786,731		5,400,293	30,386,438
Boys	... +	788,703	—279,786
Girls	... +	193,282	+ 299,607
+		981,985	+ 19,821

In 1901 no fewer than  $30\frac{1}{4}$  million boys and girls of school age were not at school and neglected in British India. Six years afterwards the number of neglected children had increased by 20,000, even though there had been an increase of nearly a million pupils in the schools.

Large increase of girls not at schools,

On analysing the figures it is found that, while the number of neglected boys had been reduced in the six years, the number of neglected girls had increased by 300,000, or at the rate of 50,000 a year.

With regard to the Madras Presidency, it will be found that in the six years the number of neglected children has increased by 91,724, if the same rate of increase of population, 7.24 per cent., be taken into consideration as was in the decade ending 1901. If the figures in 1907-08 be taken, an improvement in the education of boys is perceptible. The number of neglected boys was reduced by 19,000, while the number of neglected girls was increased by 103,000 as compared with the figures in 1900-01. Thus in the seven years the average number of girls, which are being added to the list of those not at school, is 14,700 a year. Nearly five million boys and girls are being utterly neglected in the matter of education in this Presidency. What should be done to bring them to school? Is the Department of Education doing enough? I fear that much more might be done, and that strenuous efforts should be made to accumulate funds for this important object.

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## CHAPTER II.

With regard to the Elementary education of boys,  
the new Grant-in-Aid Code leaves the  
Education of boys matter very much *in statu quo*.  
in Madras.

There is no encouragement given to  
managers of Aided Schools to develop their scholastic  
work for boys. There are 13,179 Aided Schools in the  
Presidency. These had 335,956 pupils in daily atten-  
dance in 1907-08, and included 60,645 Panchama children.  
Should there be the same number of pupils in 1909-10,  
the grant expected under Section 15 of the new Code will  
be Rs. 8,74,822. This will show a loss to managers of  
Rs. 496 as compared with the grant earned in 1907-08.  
This loss is not much, but still it is clear that no encour-  
agement is given by the Department for the expansion  
of Aided education—an expansion which has been  
strongly advocated by the Education Commission of 1882  
and by the Government of India. In the Resolution of  
the 11th March, 1904, on Indian Educational Policy, the  
Government of India state that they “cannot avoid the  
conclusion that Primary education

Government of India Elementary  
Education policy. has hitherto received insufficient  
attention and an inadequate share of  
the public funds. They consider that  
it possesses a strong claim upon the sympathy both of the  
Supreme Government and of the Local Governments, and  
should be made a leading charge upon Provincial re-  
venues; and that in those Provinces where it is in a back-  
ward condition, its encouragement should be a primary

obligation." This statement of the Supreme Government in India indicates a true policy, and should be strictly acted on. But it appears that Madras is not adequately carrying out this important policy. This is seen more particularly with regard to the education of girls. The new Code will, unless it is modified, give it a set-back which

The policy of the Madras Government regarding the education of girls.

will take many years to recover, and which will tend to increase the great mass of neglected girls in the Presidency. An analysis of the Director's

tables in Vol. II of the last Report shows this very clearly. There are 16 Government and Municipal schools and 81 Aided schools with forms no higher than the third. The 81 Aided schools have been reduced to Elementary schools, and brought under Section 15 of the new Code.\* The following figures will show the state of affairs :—

1907-08		No. of schools.	Grants.	Average grant to each school.
Government	...	15	Rs. 25,668	Rs. 1,711
Municipal	...	1	„ 1,072	„ 1,072
Aided	...	81	„ 54,770	„ 676
Unaided	...	2	—	—

In the Aided schools there are 556 teachers and 7,867 pupils in daily attendance. The amount of grant expected, when calculated on the basis of the 1907-08 figures, will be only Rs. 23,950, thereby showing a loss

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\* This was written under the impression that all the Schools had been reduced to Elementary Schools. If some had not been reduced, and are receiving grants as before, the loss, as calculated, will be reduced accordingly.



of Rs. 30,820 under the new Code. This loss falls chiefly on Mission schools, of which there are 73 out of a total of 81. The Aided schools get only 37 per cent. of their total expenditure as Government grant ; whereas the Government and Municipal schools get 97 per cent. as grant.

Coming to Elementary Girls' schools with Standards above the Fourth, and with Fourth Standards and under, the same discouraging feature prevails. The figures are as follows:—

	Schools.	Grants.	Average grant to each school.
Government .	160	Rs. 1,10,733	Rs. 692
Boards ...	14	„ 5,497	„ 392
Aided ...	681	„ 1,11,833	„ 164
Unaided ...	118	—	—

There were 1,875 teachers and 28,636 girls in average daily attendance in the 681 Aided girls' schools. The grant for teachers and the capitation allowance will amount to Rs. 81,818, showing a loss of Rs. 30,015 to be sustained in the current year, as calculated on the figures for 1907-08. Altogether there will be a loss of Rs. 60,835 per annum on the two classes of girls' schools, of which about 75 per cent. falls on Missionary bodies, who are doing so much for the intellectual and moral uplifting of the people of India. It is inconceivable how

this serious reduction of £4,000 can be made annually by the Educational authorities and the Government in view of the fact that the number of girls of school age is being increased at a sorrowful rate.

Let us compare what England and Wales are doing in regard to the extension of Elementary education with Madras. The comparison will show how far Madras lags behind. The population of England and Wales stood at  $34\frac{1}{2}$  millions in 1905-06. Of this population 6,041,364 scholars were on the rolls of the Elementary schools, or 17 per cent. of the entire population. I have not the figures for 1907-08, but the number of boys and girls at school cannot be very much different from the number stated. The Education Board spent on Elementary education £11 $\frac{1}{2}$  millions in that year. This works out at the rate of Rs. 28-12-0 per scholar. The amounts spent on Secondary, Technical, and College education, and the cost of administration, were separate items. Taking the Madras Director's tables on pages 47 and 54 of Vol. I, we find that there were 786,823 boys and girls on the rolls of Primary schools on the 31st March, 1908, and that the education of these cost the Government and Board Funds nearly Rs. 18 lakhs, or at the rate of Rs. 2-4-4 per scholar. If the Madras Provincial and Board Funds had to provide grants on the English scale, they would have to find Rs. 215 lakhs instead of only Rs. 18 lakhs. These Rs. 18 lakhs provide for 22,822 Elementary schools. To provide Elementary education for the five millions of neglected boys and girls in Madras it would take, at the modest



rate of Rs. 2-4-4 for each pupil, an additional annual outlay of Rs. 213 lakhs in Grants-in-

The need for more  
Elementary schools.

Aid. This amount would provide for about 145,000 additional Elementary

schools. This calculation reveals the appalling leeway that requires to be overtaken ere the great mass of the population can be granted the privilege of improving their unhappy intellectual condition.

In paragraph 72 of his Report for last year the Director admits that about seven times the number of elementary schools are necessary to provide education for the entire population of school-going age, and that an additional annual expenditure of something between Rs. 150 lakhs to Rs. 200 lakhs would be required. The question may be asked, why should this additional expenditure not be made? Why should savings not be made in other Departments of the Administration in order to meet the crying need for Elementary education? Why should there not be a direct educational cess levied, with a view to bring every child to school? It seems to me that the people would not stand in the way of helping on this great cause.

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### CHAPTER III.

The Director is to be congratulated on his praiseworthy efforts to establish rural schools among the villages, and train the

children who attend them to understand their environment aright. The majority of the children, however, leave the school before they reach the Fourth Standard, and steps should be taken by all interested in the matter to keep them longer at school in order that they may gain as much useful knowledge as possible. The village

people are generally indifferent as to the education of their children, simply because the great bulk of them are

Indifference of village people. destitute of the rudiments of education themselves, and care little for the educational welfare of those in their parental charge. This is especially true of the working classes. Moreover, if the right kind of education be given, the amount of good done will be incalculable. A healthy moral education should be imparted, and the rules of good citizenship taught. This would produce a good moral and ethical result and a genuine

Loyalty to be taught. loyal spirit towards the King-Emperor, and those in authority under

him in India. The King's portrait should be placed in every school, and the children taught to sing the National Anthem. There can be no real objection on the part of reasonable men to this, because there are moral and religious elements common to all



religious systems, which are founded on truth. These might be compiled and used in schools without rousing animosity. But above all the essential element in all

The quality of the teacher of great moment.

moral and religious instruction is the kind of person who has the teaching to do. If he possesses a good character, and has high and noble aims, his personal influence will be very great and beneficial. A healthy moral life by such means as these may be infused into the rising generation, and an intelligence and steadiness imparted to them, which will go a long way to prepare them for local self-government on an extensive scale, and enable them to perform the duties of citizenship in the proper spirit.

The expansion of Elementary education demands the serious attention of all. The Hon'ble An Indian's appeal.

B. N. Sarma, in his address at the recent Provincial Social Conference, remarked that "the cry must go forth from every town, village, from every community and every class, that the people should be furnished by Government with the means of obtaining education. Hundreds and thousands of numerous signed petitions must go forth to our own Government, the Government of India, the Secretary of State, the Houses of Parliament, appealing for provision for Primary education, both for boys and girls; and, above all, the people must put forth their best exertions, evince a noble self-sacrifice in the cause to convince the Government of the country of their desire for education." He appealed to all philanthropists to come forward to help in this great cause. It would be a happy day for India if his excellent advice

were taken to heart. But much social reform is also necessary before the desired expansion can take place. Many of the social customs of the people will have to be

Social reform  
needed.

radically changed. The Hindu marriage customs have much to answer for. The habit of marrying girls under the age of puberty, and when they are unfit to become wives, is to be deplored, and should be stopped without delay. The sentiment which is being created among certain high caste families, prompting them to delay the marriage of their daughters till they are at least 18 years of age, is to be commended. Still, there is much of the old

Inferiority of  
women in Indian  
minds.

feeling regarding the inferiority of women in existence. This feeling is probably the most powerful incentive to keep back the education of

girls. For, a girl is not valued as a boy is in any Hindu household. A family of daughters is still considered a dire calamity. Their education is not pressing, and no great value can be attached to a girl with a well informed mind. Education, it is thought, may destroy her domesticity, and render her unfit to be the drudge of the household. All this is but the result of the treatment that Hindu women have received for many generations in the past, and of the legal position assigned to them in the Hindu law books.

In Vasishtha's *Dharma Sastra* it is said that "A woman is not independent, the males

Teaching of the  
*Darma Sastras*  
about women.

are her masters." "Their fathers protect them in childhood, their husbands protect them in youth, and their

sons protect them in age. A woman is never fit for



independence." Baudhayana adds to the same teaching the following Sutras :—"Women are considered to be destitute of strength and of a portion." "Those who strive to do what is agreeable to their husbands will gain heaven." The wives of all castes must be more carefully guarded than wealth." Manu teaches a similar doctrine about the gentler sex. There can be no question that teaching like this has led to the perpetuation of the inferiority and degradation of women in India, and much of the backwardness of female education lies at the doors of the male sex. In other countries such primitive and unsound thoughts about women have been set aside. The education of the sexes has proceeded equally in Great Britain, America and other countries that profess the most advanced civilization. But it is in America where the emancipation of women has reached its highest level. There women have been regarded as equal, if not superior to man, and this sentiment has been reflected in legislative enactments.

In India a woman's degradation begins at birth,  
 when sorrow fills the parents' heart,  
 Equal education of the sexes needed. at the fresh burden imposed upon  
 them by the birth of a daughter.

A woman cannot perform worship in her own name; the study of the sacred books is denied to her. She must be all her life in leading-strings; and too often she is secluded behind the purdah as if unfit to be seen of men. But education can do much to remove the singular disability of women. The equal education of the sexes is absolutely necessary, if India is to be a power in the East. The training of the children in the home demands

an educated motherhood. The Christian churches are doing much to raise the status of women in India. Many educated girls are conspicuous for their talent and exemplary behaviour.

The uplifting of Christian girls.

Some have risen to eminence such as Mrs. Sathianadan, of Madras. The *Hindu* has admitted that the Christian girls are far ahead of the Brahmans. It has stated on one occasion that "the progress of education among the girls of the Native Christian families, and the absence of caste restrictions among them, will eventually give them an advantage for which no intellectual precocity can compensate the Brahmans." The

The *Hindu's* opinion.

*Hindu* goes on to say that Hindus ought to be wise in their generation and strain every nerve to accelerate the raising of women, and to promote their education; that freedom should be granted to them; and that they should be made to move with the times and become the companions, guides and helpmates of man. These suggestions should be carried out throughout the length and breadth of the land. Women have been sorely held down in India in the past, but, with the new moral and social forces which are arising on every hand, they may take their legitimate place in the social scale. The spread of female

Hope through the new social and moral forces at work.

education, and the inauguration of social reform can do wonders, if free scope be allowed. Let the Government, the people, and Missionary bodies all strive to bring about this happy condition, so that the many millions of neglected boys and girls may be afforded an opportunity to drink something out of the well of knowledge, and derive the benefit of which they stand so much in need.



## APPENDIX.

The following letters appeared also in the *Madras Mail* in support of the article on Elementary Education. They throw some striking sidelights on the system of education in vogue at present.

i. SIR,—Touching the admirable article of the Rev. Mr. Andrew in your issue of the 24th July, will you allow me to mention that there is a Girls' School at Vizianagram which is one of the sufferers from the new rules? The school was receiving a grant of Rs. 600 from the Department and Rs. 120 from the Municipality. Now the former has been cut down to a little over Rs. 200 and the latter has been altogether withdrawn, on the plea, I am told, that the same institution cannot be rendered aid by both the Department and the local body. The result is that the school will have to be closed, as it cannot be maintained with the meagre sum now allowed. The Vizianagram school must be but one of many to suffer in this manner. Is this a method of encouraging the spread of female education?

*Vizagapatam.*

PERPLEXED.

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ii. SIR,—I should like to offer a few remarks on the article published in your issue of the 24th July on "Elementary Education." The writer thereof animadverted upon—(1) The backwardness of Elementary education

among girls. (2) The great mass of the population not being educated in the different vernaculars up to at least the 4th Standard. (3) The inappreciable increase of pupils in recognised schools commensurate with the increase of population or with the needs of the country. (4) The immediate necessity of educating the masses on a comprehensive scale remaining as pressing at the present day as it was at the beginning of the last century. These and many others are all truisms which are admitted on all hands, and one would be surely happy to be supplied with remedial suggestions to put an end to this undesirable and unenviable condition. Let us see who are the agencies that are interested in these highly important questions. They are :—(1) The officers of Government who take an interest in education but who do not belong to the Educational Department proper. (2) The leaders of native thought. (3) The Local Fund Boards. (4) The Municipalities. (5) The Christian Missionary Bodies. (6) The Schoolmaster Managers. (7) The Educational Department consisting of its officers. (8) The Book Publishing Agencies. (9) The villagers. (10) The public bodies. The above-mentioned ten agencies have each their own interests to look after—sometimes conflicting.

*First*, the Government are guided by the Educational Despatches and recommendations of Educational Commissions, and they believe in theory that rules cannot be altered at the binding of one man or two men but must be regulated by the proved experience of experts. They would not take a leap in the dark, and they are right. If definite proposals are laid before the public by particular individuals and memorials submitted to Government



then they will take them into consideration and issue such orders as are recommended by the head of the Department. You have the chance of moving the Government only if conferences are held, and presided over by distinguished personages, where resolutions are adopted as the result of discussions and such resolutions are further supported by the Head of the Department.

*Second*—With reference to this class, namely, leaders of native thought, I should like to take the hon'ble gentleman referred to by Mr. Andrew as the type, and I am tempted to quote the portion of his speech :—" The cry must go forth from every town, village, from every community and every class, that the people should be furnished by Government with the means of obtaining education. Hundreds and thousands of numerously signed petitions must go forth to our own Government, the Government of India, the Secretary of State, the Houses of Parliament, appealing for provision for Primary education, both for boys and girls; and, above all, the people must put forth their best exertions, evince a noble self-sacrifice in the cause to *convince the Government* of the country of their desire for education." Such pious wishes as this are always expressed during the Christmas Season and also once again during the Midsummer holidays. In short, the prayer is "Oh, Viceroy, Oh, Secretary of State, give us free Primary education." But nothing transpires about the ways and means, and the problem is as far from solution as ever.

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*Third*—The Local Fund Boards hold their meetings once in a month, and the members are invited by the President to express their opinions on so many questions,