

**STUDIES IN
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT,
EDUCATION AND SANITATION.**

28

BY

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PREFACE.

This little book is a reprint of the articles contributed to the Press ; it embodies the results of the Author's experience of Municipal and Local Boards Administration in this Province. A chapter on English Local Government is added in the hope that a knowledge of the European methods of Local Self-Government may be found useful to those who are entrusted with the working of several problems relating to urban and rural boards. These studies do not pretend to be exhaustive of the theory and practice of Local Self-Government in this country ; they are intended to present a critical review of the present day administration. The brochure on "Elementary Education" was published in 1910. The second edition is revised and enlarged and republished as part of this Volume.

The Author received several requests for publication of the articles in a collective form and this has encouraged him to present them in a book form.

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LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Chapter I.

INTRODUCTORY—OUTLINES OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The Resolution on Local Self-Government, 1882, issued during the Viceroyalty of the illustrious statesman, Marquis of Ripon, for the first time initiated measures of Self-Government in India in a tangible form. Lord Mayo's scheme of financial decentralisation was intended to have as its corollary an extension of local self-government, and between 1871 and 1874 Municipal Acts were passed in the various provinces extending the elective principle and largely broadening the scope of Municipal activity. The Madras Act divided the country into local fund circles, and constituted, for their administration, consultative boards nominated by the Government under the Presidency of the Collector. The Government of India in October 1881 addressed the Local Government on the extension of Local Self-Government in Municipalities and rural areas. It was considered that the most desirable and effective policy would be that of concentrating the administration of all local committees in a central board for each district, with subordinate sub-district boards for each Taluq or sub-division. It would

be hopeless to expect any real development of Self-Government if local bodies were subject to check and interference in matters of detail. Therefore it was contemplated to define the powers of the boards and the Government, so that, within the limits to be laid down in each case, the fullest possible liberty of action should be given to local bodies. The final resolution in May 1882 indicated that district committees or Boards had failed to secure the attendance of members possessing local knowledge of outlying parts of the district, with the result that undue attention was paid to the area adjoining the district head-quarters, or that the business fell into the hands of the Collector. The original suggestion made in October 1881 of forming one district committee, was given up, and the smallest administrative unit was adopted for a Local Board. Municipal Government outside the Presidency towns also received large impetus. A wide extension was given to the elective system, and many Municipal Councils were permitted to elect non-official chairmen. Increased financial control was provided for together with powers of taxation under certain conditions. The policy is thus explained: "At the outset, the Governor-General in Council must explain that, in advocating the extension of Local Self-Government, and the adoption of this principle in the management of many branches of local affairs, he does not suppose that the work will be in the first instance better done than if it remained in the sole hands of the Government District Officers. It is not primarily with a view

to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and supported. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education." The aim of the Government of India was to train the people in the art of Self-Government to call forth the best energies of the people to be devoted to public life, to create and foster a healthy civic life by which persons of local knowledge and experience, men of public spirit and interest, may be largely associated with the administration of the district. It is not efficiency that was sought, nor was it considered that good government would be a substitute for popular government with all its defects. "Good government could never be a substitute for government by the people themselves." Improved efficiency will manifest itself in course of time as local knowledge and interest are brought to bear more freely upon local administration. It was anticipated there would be many failures and discouraging features which might throw discredit on the system, but the Government thought that if the officers of the Government only set themselves, as it believed they would, "to foster sedulously the small beginnings of independent political life," and if they come to realise that the system really opens to them a fairer field for the exercise of administrative tact and directive energy than the more autocratic system which it superseded, then the period of failures would be short and that real and substantial progress would very soon become manifest. It was and is an old argument against Self-Government

that the Indian people themselves do not care for the principle of Self-Government and very little interest is shown by the populace generally in public matters, that they look upon the Government officials as *Ma-Bap* and prefer to be guided and governed by them. This argument does not require examination. As education advances, there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public-spirited men whom it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power, to fail to utilise. The Government officials and District officers complain that their work is increasing every year and is growing heavier also; the various departments in their charge have so many ramifications; decentralisation at its best offers no adequate solution. The wise scheme devised in the principles of the resolution, if carried out in spirit and reality, enable the district officials to divest themselves of grave responsibilities and delegate them to the people themselves. It is true the people have to be induced to take up the responsibility and it is also true that proper and competent persons should be persuaded to move in the matter, but the matter is not difficult as I shall prove later on. The Government realised that it was no easy task, the problem "being that of discovering in what manner the people of the town and districts can be best trained to manage their own local affairs intelligently and successfully. The attempts hitherto made with this object have met with but little success; the best men in many cases do not present themselves as candidates for Municipal Office. And

yet there can be no doubt that among the more intelligent classes of the community there is a real and growing interest being taken in administrative matters.' The cause of any failure in the system should be sought not in the nature of the object intended to be realised but in the character of the work. The resolution contemplated that the control retained by the Government over the local bodies "should be exercised from without than from within." The Government officials may check or revise the acts of local bodies, but should not dictate policy or course of action. Outside control over the local boards was to be exercised by requiring previous sanction to certain acts and by retaining the power of intervention in case of neglect or default, this power extending, in the last resort, to suspension of a delinquent board. In the matter of election the boards were to have a large preponderance of non-official members chosen, where practicable, by a system of election. Local Governments had large discretion in adopting the form of election.

The resolution was opposed to the Chief Executive Officers of the town or division being Chairman or President of the local board. They could supervise and control the acts of the local bodies without taking actual part in the proceedings. While laying down no general rule it was accepted that there was great force in the argument that so long as the Chief Executive Officer is as a matter of fact Chairman or President there is little chance of these boards affording any effective training to their members in the management

of local affairs or of the non-official members taking any real interest in local business. "The non-official members must be led to feel that real power is placed in their hands, and that they have real responsibilities to discharge. It is doubtful whether they have, under present arrangements, any sufficient inducement to give up their time and attention to the transaction of public business."

The principles were fully endorsed in Lord Morley's Reform Despatch dated 27th November 1908. Referring to Local Self-Government the despatch says that "the principles that should inspire and regulate measures with this aim can hardly be laid down in sounder or clearer terms than in the Resolution published by the Government of India on the 18 May 1882. I do not know where to look for a better expression of the views that should govern our policy under this important head, and I will venture to quote some passages in this memorable deliverance." The despatch further states that if Local Self-Government has so far been no marked success as a training ground it is mainly for the reason that the constitution of the local bodies departed from what was affirmed in the Resolution to be the true principle *viz.*, that the control should be exercised from without rather than from within.

Thirty years have nearly elapsed since the famous Resolution, and opinions differ considerably on the success or failure of Local Self-Government. The opinions depend on the point of view adopted in the judgment of the efforts, whether efficiency of adminis-

tration or the political education of the people is the real object of the system. "It is recognised, that is to say, that although this European form of Government has been generally accepted by the nations and peoples of India, as far at least as any exotic institution ever is generally accepted in this land of immemorial tradition, and has been assigned a definite place in their social life, it has nevertheless not been altogether successful in attracting to the Municipal Councils an evenly balanced selection of the best representatives of the upper elements of the urban population. Mr. H. T. S. Forest of the Bengal Civil Service in his book on "Indian Municipality" thus writes of the progress made: "Now the fact remains that in spite of all these and many other difficulties that beset the path of the aspirant to civic distinction, Indian Municipal Committees do contain a substantial percentage of the very best men living in the towns, men with no particular axes to grind, who have joined the Committees from motives indistinguishable from those which lead prosperous citizens to seek election on Town Councils and Boards of Guardians at Home. The beginnings of a genuine public spirit are undoubtedly discernible in many parts of the India of to-day; its growth and development will depend on the sort of encouragement it receives." On the other hand, in the light of the "efficiency test" the administration of local boards is condemned. The arguments will be examined later.

Chapter II.

GENERAL SKETCH OF ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

The salutary innovations made by the Local Government Act, 1894, restored the Parish as the primary unit of Local Government in England. The admission of the agricultural labourer to the Parliamentary franchise in 1884 is said to be the main cause. "This extension of the franchise directed attention to the special wants and needs of the rural elector. The parochial system, as it existed in English county parishes, was not calculated to supply any democratic training for self-government, or to promote the recognition of common interest and mutual duties in village communities. The ordinary English farm-labourer was so accustomed to depend on the Clergyman in spiritual matters, on the Squire for his cottage, and on the farmer for his wages, that he did not realise that he was an independent citizen—although he had acquired a Parliamentary vote. It was also a period of agricultural depression and rural depopulation. The same motives that prompted the passing of the "Allotments and Small Holdings Act" had a powerful influence in suggesting the creation of Parish Councils. Finally the constitution of County Councils in 1888 demanded, as its logical sequel, further developments of the representative system outside the towns, where it had long flourished. The vestry is, for all practical purpo-

ses of Civil government, superseded in every rural Parish, and in its stead were established the Parish Meeting and the Parish Council." (William Blake Odgers: Local Government p. 55.) There are now 7250 Parish Councils in England and Wales. There is one in every rural Parish which has a population of 300 or upwards and also in every Parish which has a population of more than 100 but less than 300, if the Parish Meeting has resolved to have one. The County Council has power, with the consent of the Parish Meeting to establish a Parish Council; small parishes may also be grouped together and a council given to it. A Parish Council consists of a Chairman and such a number of Councillors, not being less than five or more than fifteen, as the County Council may fix from time to time. Any parochial elector or any person resident for a year in or within three miles of the Parish may be elected. The Chairman possesses the same qualifications as a Councillor but may be chosen either from within or from without the Council. The Parish Councillors are now elected at the "annual assembly of the parochial electors; at this meeting the electors can ask questions to the candidates. The election is regulated by rules prescribed by the Local Government Board under the Act of 1894 embodied in the 'Parish Councillor's Election Order, 1901.'" The election is by show of hands; if a poll is demanded by five electors present or one-third of those present whichever number is least, the poll is then taken by ballot.

The Duties.

The duties of the Parish Council are numerous. It has inherited most of the civil powers of the old vestry, subject as regards the adoption of Permissive Acts to the control of the Parish Meeting. Overseers and Assistant Overseers are appointed by it; in respect of the valuation list, poor-rate, and the county rate it has inherited the powers and duties of overseers in appeal. It has to provide parish books, offices and fire-engines and to make and maintain allotments. Parish property unconnected with the Church or Ecclesiastical Charities is now vested in the Parish Council. The Parish Council may petition the County Council to purchase or hire compulsory land for allotments, and may manage the allotments thus provided. It may also make statutory representations on the subject of unhealthy dwellings and obstructive buildings. It may provide Parish offices, meeting-rooms, and recreation grounds, may manage and improve village greens and other open spaces, utilise wells, springs, or streams for water-supply, deal with filthy ponds and ditches, accept gifts, acquire rights of way, and repair foot-paths. It administers the Adoptive Acts. It can acquire land by agreement for any purpose authorized by law and by compulsory purchase with the consent of the County Council—no public way can be discontinued or diverted without its consent, no parish boundaries can be altered without its resolution. The Parish Council can borrow money for certain purposes with the consent of the County Council and the

Local Government Board, up to a maximum of one-half of the assessable value of the Parish, but it cannot levy a rate exceeding three pence in the pound without the consent of the Parish Meeting and in no case can it levy a rate exceeding six pence in the pound exclusive of rates under the Adoptive Acts. If a charity has been in existence for forty years, the Parish Council has power to interfere in the administration of the same. The accounts of every Parish Council and also of every Parish Meeting must be made up to 31st March in each year and must be audited by a District Auditor, who is an officer of the Local Government Board.

Parish Meeting.

In defining the duties of the Parish Council, reference has been made to the Parish Meeting. It is therefore necessary that we should have some definite idea of what that assembly is. It is an assembly of parochial electors, who are registered either in the Local Government Register of Electors or of the Parliamentary Register of Electors relating to the Parish, persons not necessarily paying rates to the Parish are eligible to be members of the assembly, but any one who owns property in the parish and who is registered on the Parliamentary Register of Electors for the county in respect of such ownership is a parochial elector. A register of parochial electors is duly prepared and kept; and no one whose name is not in that register is entitled to attend a Parish Meeting or to vote as a parochial elector. The

same person, if duly qualified, may be registered as a parochial elector in more than one Parish. The principal power, possessed by a Parish Meeting, is that of adopting any or all of certain Permissive Acts, *viz.*, Acts for lighting and watching the parish and for providing it with baths, wash-houses, burial grounds, recreation-grounds, and public libraries. It has some control over the disposition of Parish property; it can veto closing or diversion of a highway. When there is no Parish Council its powers are far more extensive, including the appointment of Overseers, Committees and it may levy a rate not exceeding six pence in the pound, inclusive of the rate required for the administration of the Adoptive Acts.

The next instrument of Self-Government is the Municipal borough. The Municipal franchise rests on a firm basis of ratepaying residence. Every person who occupies a house, warehouse, shop or other building for which he pays rates, and who resides within seven miles of the borough is entitled to be enrolled as burgess. The governing body of the borough is the Council which consists of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors; the number of the latter is fixed when the borough is incorporated under the Municipal Act. They are elected by the Municipal voters, etc., by the persons who are enrolled as burgesses. They must be persons who are municipal voters or who being qualified except in the matter of residence, reside within fifteen though beyond seven miles from the borough and have an extra property

qualification. Any Municipal voter may be elected a Councillor. The Election of Councillors is conducted on the model of a Parliamentary election. "In many boroughs the elections are mainly governed by considerations of party politics; a Municipal election is regarded as a means of feeling the political pulse of the inhabitants, and purely local questions seem to have but little influence on the result." The number of Aldermen is one-third of that of the Councillors, which varies with the size of the borough. Any person who is qualified to be a Councillor may be elected as an Alderman. The Aldermen are elected by the Council at the ordinary quarterly meeting. The Mayor is elected by the Council from among the Aldermen or Councillors or persons qualified to be such. Thus the three constituent factors of the Council are directly or indirectly chosen from and elected by the burgesses at large. The boroughs enjoy complete independence as regards the appointment of their governing body. The functions of the Councils are legislative as well as administrative. The ordinary functions of the Council consist in the management of the corporate property, the maintenance of proper police force, the regulation of markets, burial grounds, the levying of rates, and when necessary the raising of loans.

"As we have seen, the controlling powers of the Central Executive is purely negative. It can disallow certain things, such as parting with corporate property or the creation of loans on the security of rates but there its power of interference begins and ends. In all

other matters a Municipality enjoys, within the limits of the law, an unfettered liberty of action." (W. Blake Odgers on Local Government).

Local Government Act.

The Local Government Act of 1881, conferred on the Counties that form of Municipal Government which had previously pertained only to English boroughs. Every County Council was made a Corporation ; it has perpetual succession and common seal. The number of Councillors varies from 28 to 32 or even 120 to 137 as in the case of London. One-fourth of the members of a County Council are County Aldermen. The ordinary Councillors are elected by the County Electors for a period of three years ; the Aldermen are elected at their first meeting ; the Aldermen hold office for six years, half their number retiring every third year. Any one qualified to be a Councillor may be elected an Alderman. Every person, male or female, who was during twelve months preceding 15th July in any year occupied in any building rated to the relief of the poor or has resided in the borough or parish, or within seven miles of it during such twelve months and has paid all rates which have been assessed in respect of such property up to the 20th July immediately following, is qualified to be enrolled or registered as a burgess and an elector. To be eligible as a County Councillor, a man must be a parliamentary voter registered as such in respect of ownership in the county ; or a peer owning property or be qualified to be registered as a Municipal Elector in any borough which is not a

County borough. No women can be elected a County Councillor. The County Council is an administrative body. The control of the County Police is vested in a Joint Committee of the County Council and the County Justices, but in most other local concerns the County Council now governs the County. The extensive powers exercised by the Council are further enlarged by the Local Government Act. The County Council is now exercising a general supervision over Parish and District Councils. The County Council is the local education authority for its county.

All moneys received by a borough in the ordinary course of its affairs, that is, all rates, fees, and the rents and profits of the corporate property, are paid into the fund called the Borough Fund, and out of this fund is drawn all the money necessary for expenditure. The council has no power to contract debts but any deficit has to be made up by levying a rate, and each parish is assessed to pay a certain amount. All payments to and out of the Borough Fund are paid to or by the Treasurer. No payment can be made unless the order of the Council is signed by three members and countersigned by the Town Clerk. Money needed for works of permanent nature is raised by a loan. The powers of the Council to borrow are of great extent and variety. All loans under general Acts of Parliament must be paid within a specified term of years. The authority to sanction is the Treasury or the Home Office but usually the local Government Board. In order to escape from the control of any Government department, borough

councils frequently apply direct to Parliament for a private Act to authorise proposed expenditure. The accounts are audited by the local Government Board, but most boroughs are exempt from this jurisdiction. There is a check to prevent the application of borough funds to improper or unauthorised objects: every order of Council for the payment of money out of the borough fund may be removed into the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice by writ. The High Court is thus constituted a sort of casual Auditor. "A serious defect in our municipal system is the absence of anything in the nature of a town budget, showing its financial position and estimating its financial requirements for the year to come."

A brief description of the instruments of local Self-Government is given above, in order to understand the present condition of Local Boards in this country and the opportunities they provide for improvement and expansion. The English system is an indigenous growth. Speaking of early Local Government it is observed that "most things grow up in England gradually, spontaneously, and therefore irregularly and unsymmetrically. The fact that an institution is anomalous, or that an illogical compromise has been adopted in its administration, does not trouble them, so long as the institution works even tolerably well."

Chapter III.

CONSTITUTION OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

The administration of Local Self-Government is carried on by three agencies, Municipalities, Rural Boards and Panchayats. The former is governed by the District Municipalities Act IV of 1884 while the latter two are regulated by the provisions of Act V of 1884 and the later amending Acts. It will be convenient to deal with the Municipalities at first. It has been asserted that the Municipalities have not been able to draw better classes of people into the Councils; their work is unsatisfactory and inefficient; it is therefore necessary that the foundation for the charges should be sought and explained. The *Statesman* of Calcutta in a leading article exhorted the Anglo-Indian and mercantile community of Calcutta to take more interest in the work of the Corporation and laid the charge against that community that until the Calcutta Improvement Scheme was brought to public notice the mercantile community took no interest in the Corporation; with the transfer of the Capital to Delhi, their responsibilities increase; hence they should bestir themselves to contest the seats in the Corporation. If it is so in the Capital of India, that the European mercantile community stood aloof from the Corporation, it should not be a matter of surprise that the Mofussil Municipalities are not

able to show a better standard. In this province each Municipality could have a Council consisting of not less than twelve and not more than twenty-four persons, of whom the Revenue Officer in charge of the division is an ex-officio Municipal Councillor; the other Municipal Councillors are partly appointed by the Government and partly appointed by election by the tax-payers and inhabitants of the Municipality or of a part thereof, the qualifications of an elected member being that he is an adult of twenty-five years, a resident within the Municipality or within two miles of the limits thereof, not a servant under the Municipality nor an Honorary Magistrate for the town, in which case special sanction of the Government should be obtained, not convicted of an offence proving a defect of character which unfits one for any public service and not an undischarged insolvent or an uncertificated bankrupt. It is provided that the number of officials appointed by the Government, together with the ex-officio Municipal Councillors, should not exceed one-fourth of the number of Municipal Councillors for such Municipality, and power is given to the Government to declare what shall be the maximum number of Municipal Councillors to be appointed for the time being for such Municipality and what shall be the number and proportion, if any, of Municipal Councillors to be appointed by election in such Municipality or in a part thereof and whether the Chairman shall be appointed by the Government or elected by the Council. In any Municipality where the Municipal

Councillors are partly appointed by election, the number of persons so appointed shall, unless the Governor in Council otherwise directs, be three-fourths of the whole number of the Municipal Councillors. Persons not being Municipal Councillors are entitled to be elected Chairmen but when the election is approved by the Government they shall, during the tenure of office as Chairmen, which shall be for a period of two years, be ex-officio Councillors irrespective of the maximum number of Councillors fixed by the Government. No Municipal Councillor other than the Chairman is entitled to receive any salary or other remuneration from Municipal Fund and no Chairman shall receive any such salary or remuneration unless the payment thereof shall have been sanctioned by the Council with the approval of the Government; and where such salary is attached to the office of the Chairman, the Council is entitled to nominate the Chairman for the approval of the Government, subject to the rules laid down for the purpose. Power is taken by the Government for the removal of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Municipal Councillor. For electoral purposes the Municipalities are divided into wards, the number of elected Councillors for each ward is also fixed. No person can vote, even though he is eligible, unless he has been registered as a voter. The persons entitled to a vote in a Municipality are (1) persons owning buildings or lands situated within the limits of the Municipality liable to pay a tax either separately or in the aggregate, of Rs. 4 per annum and upwards or

(2) persons who have paid a professional tax of Rs. 2 in the current year, (3) persons who paid income-tax (4) persons drawing a salary of Rs. 30 per mensem and upwards or pensioner drawing Rs. 15 a month and persons paying a house rent of Rs. 5 per mensem and all graduates of a recognised University. In the matter of persons eligible as Councillors a higher standard is required: persons paying a tax on buildings or on land of Rs. 10 per annum or have paid professional tax of Rs. 10 or an income-tax of Rs. 30. Persons drawing a salary of Rs. 60 per mensem and upwards or paying house rent of Rs 10 a month or a Government pensioner drawing Rs. 30 per mensem and all graduates of any recognised University are eligible. These rules are sought to be amended since 1908 and the draft rules then issued fixed the qualification for the Councillor: persons paying a house tax of Rs. 30 a year as against Rs. 10, profession tax of Rs. 19 as against Rs. 10, income-tax of Rs. 42 as against 20, persons with a salary of Rs. 100 a month or paying a house rent of Rs 20 a month. The latest order of the Government, (G. O. 2269-70 M dated 22 December 1911, General Municipal Review,) states that "the proposals for the revision of the qualification of voters and candidates to which reference was made in para 6 of the last review remained under the consideration of Government, the issue of orders being delayed for want of essential statistics due from certain Municipal Councils." It may be stated generally that the higher standard proposed for the voters in 1910 reduces

the electorates to nearly one half and similarly the number of candidates. Most of the Municipalites also pointed out in their resolutions that the complete adoption of the draft rules will reduce the electorate to property-owners and place the power for good or for evil in the hands of a few individuals.

Chapter IV.

ADMINISTRATION OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

Having now known generally the constitution of Municipalities, we shall have to investigate the reason or reasons for their inability to draw better men, as they say, into the Councils. A well-informed writer on municipal questions wrote in the *Indian Review* that "the present rules have, therefore, transferred the power of election to the rougher and the more ignorant element in the population who are either not disposed to exercise or not capable of exercising independent judgment in the selection of Councillors, and the leadership of these men and the manipulation of their votes is naturally falling everywhere into the hands of persons who themselves belong to the class." It is alleged that the electorate is large and the franchise is unduly low. Persons who have real stake in the city or town are swamped by the vote of the lower order and are therefore unable to compete against them specially when the latter are organized by a party or faction. The writer says "an examination of voters' lists of any town will, however, show that nearly three-fourths of the voters in each ward are persons who have just enough qualifying property or who pay the minimum amount of professional tax. These persons who are on the borderland are generally the artisans, the weavers, goldsmiths or toddy drawers, retail merchants

and oil mongers, petty householders and various other men of small means and smaller independence, exercising some trade or calling, in receipt of paltry income. They preponderate in every ward, and the result of the elections now depends mostly on their vote." This is a sweeping indictment. There are two great fallacies in this argument. It presumes in the first place that the lower the franchise the greater is the abuse of the privilege of election, and greater is the security the larger the qualification; secondly that the higher votes or men of property should exercise the power in proportion to their prosperity.

Prof. Bluntschli in his "Theory of State," pp. 499,500 quotes from Lamartine: Every Frenchman who has attained the age of manhood is a citizen, every citizen is an elector, every elector is sovereign. The right is equal and absolute for all. No citizen can say to another, I am more sovereign than thou. Consider your power, prepare to exercise it, and be worthy of entering on the possession of your sovereignty." This sovereignty of the people has been opposed and explained as the sovereignty of the nation or the State—so far as the State appears as a person, so far it has independence, power, supreme authority, unity; in one word, sovereignty. The State as a person is sovereign, and therefore we speak of the sovereignty of the State. If party disputes had not introduced confusion, this sovereignty of the State might conveniently be called sovereignty of the people, if we understand by people not a mere multitude of

separate individuals, but the politically organised whole, in which the head occupies the highest position, and every member has its suitable place. The sovereignty of the State may be looked at from without and within: from within as the legislative power of the body politic. In this sense sovereignty is ascribed in England "to the Parliament at whose head stands the King and which represents the whole nation." How can the Municipal Government be popular if the "people" are excluded from sharing in it or even if they occupy a subordinate position. The deeper and wider the basis, the stronger is the administration. The original conception of self-government is to associate people with the administration of their affairs. An institution in order to be popular and representative must reflect the real life of the people. It is an abuse of terms to call it a popular assembly if a chosen few select their representatives. The real weakness in any of the present systems does not lie in the franchise being low. There are indeed parties and factions in Municipalities and it is by no means a strange phenomenon; it is an inevitable condition of things. "Parties well organised, factions rightly managed, within certain limits, are symbols of activity and life. The social organism must grow and develop; it cannot be in a state of inanition; no one would wish for it." (Macaulay's "History of England.") That spirit is necessary in a progressive society. The laws of England are the birthright of the people thereof and the English revolution was a neces-

sity. Democratic equality is the tendency of modern politics. All civilised nations have recognized not only personal rights but the political rights of the citizen, of the nation and of the individuals and classes composing it and have admitted national or popular representatives to a share in Legislation. The most important reason for the weakness of the Councils is the absence of sturdy patriots who have no axes to grind ; is the extent of official control to which the Councils are subject. There is no freedom of action—a proposal made for the expansion of mass education must be approved by the Educational Department even though it can be shown that the Municipal finances are able to meet the charge ; a scheme for the improvement of sanitation, removal of congested areas, reservation of site for rubbish depot must be approved by the District Medical and Sanitary Officer and the Sanitary Commissioner ; and an estimate for the construction of a building, a proposal for improving the drainage system, must be approved by the Public Works Department. All sanitary works of the value of Rs. 200 and more for the improvement of hospitals, dispensaries, latrines should be approved by the Sanitary Engineer. The whole policy is thus shaped by the Government and no self-respecting and independent Councillor can conscientiously serve on the Council. The work of the Chairman and the Council is subject to the most harassing checks and control. In ordinary matters of increasing the salary of a sanitary peon or purchase of implements for the repair of roads, new stationary not provided in the budget, supply of

paper and pencils to Teachers under Survey training, permission of the Government should be obtained. There are a thousand Government Orders which require the permission of the Government to be obtained before the Council could be free to spend on any proposal for the improvement of education, sanitation, communications; need I refer to the recent Palghat muddle as an instance of official interference. The other reason why better class men are absent in the Councils is that a real sense of civic responsibility has not yet thoroughly grasped the public mind. Educated men are busy with their professional engagements and do not feel the discharge of this duty as part of their life work; in other words, a strong chastened public life has to be awakened to rise to the sense of responsibilities in public life. The General Municipal Review 1910—11, however, observed "that the general standard of Administration remained much the same as in the previous year, a fair degree of efficiency being attained in the majority of cases. Among towns where the administration was otherwise less open to adverse comment, a regrettable degree of friction continued to prevail in Bezwada and Palghat and came into prominence in Rajahmundry, Tinnevely and Vanyambadi. On the other hand, there were many cases in which the relations between the Executive and the Councillors were all that could be desired and the latter rendered services of great value." Out of 61 Municipalities the Government could find about five, in all, where there was a tendency to friction. If

each of these cases are examined in detail, the fault is not that of the voters, the constituency, nor that of the masses who elected them, but due to some personal or private grounds between the Executive and the Councillors to some undesirable interference of the official backing up the one or the other.

Chapter V.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

Section 32 (1) of the Madras District Municipalities Act lays down: The resolutions of the Municipal Council shall be carried into effect by the Chairman, in whom the entire executive power of the Municipal Council shall be vested, and who shall be directly responsible for the due fulfilment of the purposes of this Act. The Chairman shall furnish to the Municipal Council such monthly reports regarding the progress made in carrying out the resolutions of that body and in the collection of taxes as the Municipal Council may prescribe. To carry out the responsibility thus imposed, it is not sufficient to depend merely on efficient organisation and a disciplined staff. These are by no means small aids to sound principles of working, there should also be a general spirit of confidence in the honesty of administration. The Act creates a representative body vested with certain powers of creating a policy and an effective machinery to support it; it also provides for the nomination of an agent on whom the responsibility of carrying out the policy is placed. The success of a Municipality, therefore, depends upon the distinct spheres of action occupied by these two authorities: that is, the Commissioners remain true to their "deliberative functions" and allow the "executive powers" of the Chairman remain separate and inde-

pendent, or in other words, where the fundamental distinction between the deliberative functions of the Commissioners on the one hand, and the executive functions of the Chairman on the other, is most clearly recognised and most consistently acted upon. The Chairman is responsible for selecting the means and the agency by which he would carry into effect the resolutions of the Council, and the Councillors should, therefore, keep themselves aloof from the actual working of the Municipal staff. Every day's experience of the faction in Municipal Councils will enable one to see that the Council should strictly limit itself to its deliberative function. There are various safe-guards provided in the Act—under S. 32 (2) 33, 35 and 37. The Council and the Collector can call upon the Chairman to perform any of the duties imposed under the Act or ask him to carry out any resolution of the Council or suspend the execution of any resolution. The Council should control and guide all matters of Sub-Committees, for example, S. 44 (1) 52 (3) and S. 34 Local Boards Act, this is not generally taken advantage of. There is no standing committee or Sub-Committee in the Mofussil Municipalities. The Municipal Councillors are men of business experience. It may be that they are ignorant of the English language but it cannot be said, therefore, that Sub-Committees will be a failure. I am aware of the fact that in Mofussil Municipalities, as the subjects are referred to "casual" Sub-Committees, there are delays in the submission of their reports; the Chairman in such cases ought to stir

them up a little. In the English system the committees prepare the whole work for the executive to carry into effect. The constitution of our Councils, as one can run through the names in the 'Quarterly Civil List,' most emphatically supports the above principle. Leaving ordinary subjects of a routine character, all subjects placed before the Council should be discussed by a committee appointed by the Council. This would save great labour and time of the Council and would avoid long debates. The general meetings of a Council are called at intervals of a fortnight, and when there is pressure of work, within a week; all complicated questions could easily be discussed in the Sub-Committee and the main points for the opinion of the Council could be easily selected a day or two previous to the meeting. For instance, in S. 30 (4), on questions of sanitation, public works and public instruction and finance, the special knowledge possessed by the members of the Committee will be of greater use and freer expression of opinion can be given in committees than in formal discussions—care, however, should be taken in constituting the committee, both from the point of special knowledge and of members. In the discussions in Council, the Chairman should avoid causes for jealousy and discord,—a free and full disclosure of facts and all the papers connected with a subject should be placed at the disposal of members. Few papers can be treated as "confidential" to Councillors, unless the Sub-Committee desire them to be treated as pending. The Councillors are eager to

interfere with the disciplinary methods adopted by the Chairman and the evil results of such interference cannot be too impressively stated. The Chairman's selection of officers and punishment of officers should, as far as possible, be supported. It should not be open to a subordinate as a matter of right to go in appeal against the Chairman's order. All discipline will be a failure; a full meeting of the Council takes place when an appeal from a dismissed subordinate is to be heard, it is greatly demoralising to the subordinates; on the other hand, the Chairman should always be ready and willing to receive reports against his subordinates and to receive proposals for the better working of the system and any helpful criticism on any of the various details of the working of the executive. In some cases the Ward Councillors are given powers to look into the matters of the Ward—it cannot be very much encouraged, as a rule. The Ward Councillor in any case should have no power to give independent orders to the executive staff. However jealous a Ward Councillor may be to watch the various interests of his constituency, he should not issue orders directly to the staff as this will lead to confusion, but he may criticise and make recommendations to the Chairman. The Ward system is very convenient for the proper supervision of the work of the staff and the Chairman in his rounds will be able to ascertain the real needs of the locality—complaints about encroachments, reports referring to the neglect of cesspools, cleaning of drains, removal of sewage water or rubbish, excessive rigour

in the collection of taxes, improper assessment and levy of rate are among the nature of complaints the ratepayers make in the ordinary rounds of the Chairman. These should be promptly attended to. It is one thing to carry on the work of the existing machinery efficiently and it is another matter to be able to discover the weak points in the administration and confer greater happiness on the ratepayers. It is rightly observed that, if there is one virtue more indispensable than another for a Chairman who wishes to secure and retain the general confidence referred to above, it is, one is inclined to say, 'not so much tact as impartiality.' The Chairman has threefold duties—as guardian of the interests of ratepayers, as representative of the general policy of the Councillors, as the chief Head of the executive; in each case he has to decide without favour or prejudice to either side when there is conflict between any two.

Chapter VI.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

It is not too soon to observe that in our Municipal elections, questions of general policy do not influence the electorate. Personal reasons, wealth, position, influence and brisk canvassing or the number of agents appointed for the purpose and sometimes the extent to which underhand dealings are resorted to, enter largely into the elective system. The general attitude of the candidate towards the Municipal problems affecting the town, the general conduct in relation to any particular question are much neglected. The election of the Chairman also is conducted on similar lines. It is deplorable to see that we have not yet developed the political faculty to discern the element in a candidate. The responsibility heavily lies upon the educated classes. Rate-payers' association is a rare phenomenon. For each Municipality in the Mofussil there should be a rate-payers' association—a feeble attempt is made in the metropolis but it receives life or becomes extinct with each election in the Ward. Social factions and cliques largely govern our elections. This being so what is the remedy and how best can you create general interest among the Councillors? It has been already noted that it is incumbent on the Chairman to rise above these local cliques and infuse enthusiasm among the Councillors. He can encourage the Ward Councillors by requesting them

to look into certain matters relating to the Ward and make reports thereon, by consulting them sympathetically in the sub-committees or individually, and by making frequent local inspection, thus creating an interest among the Councillors and in the rate-payers to follow the policy which he intends to carry out. It is said that the Honorary Chairman of Municipalities have not the required leisure and patience to establish a municipal policy and uphold the same throughout their term of office and their term of office is so short that it does not enable them to continue their work and see to the success or failure of their policy. Various remedies are suggested : (1) that a paid Chairman may be appointed or (2) paid Secretaries may be appointed to work under the Chairman. It is not accurate to say that there are not persons, public-spirited gentlemen, who are not devoting, or do not devote time and labour for the Municipal work. The last Review of the Government unmistakably endorses the view that Municipal Chairmen are generally maintaining a high standard of efficiency. The principle of paid Chairmen defeats the principle of self-government and indicates an extremely morbid state of society—even if a paid Chairman can show an improved state of things, it is no compensation to the rate-payers who must be gradually accustomed to manage their own affairs. The principle of paid Chairman also introduces the greater control of officials in the affairs of Municipality. In practice we see the views of the Divisional Officer and the Collector will freely govern the policy. It is not

suggested that these officers are always wrong, but it should be discouraged, that the Chairman should depend upon their aid instead of looking to his colleagues for advice and support. The Municipal Council under a paid official Chairman would be worse. A paid Secretary with defined powers delegated by the Chairman worked well in some Municipalities, but complaints were also heard in cases where the Secretary created a party for himself and proved an obstruction. A thoughtful writer, one who has large experience in Municipal matters, expressed himself thus: "The retention of the present Secretary working completely under the control of the Chairman will do, I should think, equally well, if the Chairman is empowered to invest him with such of his powers as he thinks desirable with the previous sanction of Government."

Chapter VII.

MUNICIPAL FINANCE.

The Royal Commission upon Decentralisation in India observed: "We consider municipalities should have a free hand in regard to their budgets, though these should go, through the Collector, to the Commissioner for information, and that the only check required is that each municipality should maintain a minimum standing balance to be prescribed by the Local Government. As soon as a Municipal budget is drafted, extracts relating to the outlay proposed on particular services such as education, medical relief and sanitation should, as in the case of rural boards, be sent, for information, to the provincial heads of the departments concerned; but any remarks they have to make on these should be simply for the consideration of the municipal council, and should not affect its liberty of action. It was further urged that municipalities should not be subject to any orders requiring the allotment of a percentage of their revenues to any particular service. The commission was conscious that this freedom may not be worked successfully in some cases and abuse of powers may result in such cases but they considered that municipalities can attain adequate financial responsibility only by the exercise of such powers, and by having to bear the consequences of their errors; no real progress can be achieved if they are "constantly kept in financial

leading strings ; nor can local self-government become a reality if local bodies are habitually protected against themselves." The Municipal Act give enormous powers to the Government over the finances of the municipalities. Section 251 and 252 of the Act and the rules in the Municipal Account Code maintain a rigorous control over the municipality. The Governor in Council may pass such orders as he shall think fit upon the original or supplemental estimate so submitted to him, and such orders shall be binding upon the Council and shall be carried out by them so far as the means at their disposal will permit. The annual reports furnished to the Government and detailed statements accompanying them also provide another opportunity for the Government to criticise and direct their financial policy. It should be confessed that the budget meetings in municipalities generally evoke no interest or enthusiasm among the members. Where there is no financial committee, the chief ministerial officer prepares a stereotyped budget, mostly copying from previous books making such alterations as may patently appear to him. What is required is the information on details which the Chairman and the Council ought to possess regarding the requirements of the various departments. Reports are submitted by the Municipal subordinates from time to time and these are consigned to the records eternally. They are not filed along with budget papers so that they may be brought up at the preparation of the budget. Notes of the Chairman and the Councillors pointing out that

special provision was necessary in any particular case are forgotten; it is absolutely necessary to maintain a special file for the budget and this should be consulted at its preparation. The actuals of one year may not be an infallible guide for another period but they provide a basis on which the figures can be by far accurately given. The Municipal Councils are required to (1) construct and maintain roads, buildings, lighting of streets, (2) preserve public health, provide medical relief, vaccination, sanitation, drainage and water supply and protection against epidemics (3) provide for education. The charges under each head is very large and in addition to these extraordinary charges may be incurred. The rules require that a general balance should be maintained; the closing balance is an absolute necessity under the Account Code.

While the resources of municipalities are limited the expenditure is heavy and obligatory. From the budget one cannot reduce or re-allot one major head to feed another. The council after a careful consideration may deem it necessary to starve one head to provide for another but this is at once denounced by the Government, though the Royal Commission observed "freedom in regard to the budget necessarily implies free power of re-appropriation, which is now in most Provinces subject to detailed outside control." A municipal council should be allowed, subject to the maintenance of its fixed minimum balance, to make supplementary allotments. The Government recently

issued an order in regard to the local boards (Taluk and District Boards) that the District Board is free to re-appropriate the surpluses of the budget independently of Government sanction and can transfer funds from one major head to another ; this rule is also applied to surpluses under special grants. With regard to Taluk Boards the Government gave freedom up to one thousand rupees and transfers or appropriation from one head to another required the sanction of the District Board. Thus the rural boards remain unfettered to a large extent ; for instance a certain grant under Public Works lapsed or could not be utilised during the year ; for utilisation of this surplus which in fact was provided in the budget, the sanction of the Government had to be obtained to utilise the same under another necessary head. This difficulty is now removed. Nevertheless in the case of municipalities the Account Code gives most stringent powers to the Government. For instance the purchase of a pen-knife or book not provided in the budget requires the sanction of Government. So also tools and implements. No doubt in some cases, as was recently disclosed in the Audit report of the Madura Municipality, close scrutiny is necessary, but no one would question the right to audit the accounts, a necessary check on waste and extravagance. With reference to the English Borough Finance it is remarked that "a serious defect in our municipal system is the absence of anything in the nature of a town budget, showing its financial position and estimating its financial requirements for the

year." This system exists in several boroughs but it is not universal. Our municipalities generally are not able to earn more than limited income, the subsidy of the Government for special purposes is also limited and ear-marked. The Government would advance a loan for particular objects such as water-supply, sanitation. Their resources are limited. The tax on houses, land, vehicles, markets, etc., is rendered incapable of great expansion. With these resources is it possible to effect substantial improvements in any one direction? Calculated according to the Census of 1911 the incidence of municipal taxation per head of the population was Rs. 1-4-11 including, and Rs. 1-0-11 excluding tolls; the average incidence of the tax on buildings is Rs. 3-13-3 per house. The average incidence under arts and professions is Rs. 4-3-8 per head. None of these sources are capable of expansion. Under the head of debit and closing balance we find the total number of municipalities in debt at the close of the year 1911 was 36. The aggregate debt amounted to Rs. 2,951,501 but against this sum sinking funds to an amount of Rs. 1,95,600 were held by some councils. The debt therefore per head of population of the towns is Rs. 1-13-3. If, however, the population of all municipalities be taken into account the incidence of debt works out to Rs. 1-5-3, a figure which is almost exactly identical with the average income per head derived during the year from tolls and taxation *viz.*, Rs. 1-4-11. In 17 towns the debt exceeded the income from the sources specified.

The maximum rate of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the value of the building and the same rate of 8 per cent. for water and drainage has been reached in most municipalities. The figures for the last four years are in 1907, Rs. 10,57,992, in 1908 Rs. 10,84,615 in 1909 Rs. 11,20,396, in 1910 Rs. 11,94,970 and in 1911 Rs. 12,57,288. These tell their own tale, they are incapable of any expansion. In 1910-11 revenue from tolls fell off in 22 municipalities and this source is subject to variation. Thus we may investigate from any point of view, the municipalities cannot afford to make a prosperous budget. Retrenchment is the general rule. It was suggested that the charge under medical relief should be legitimately borne by the Government, while the municipalities are bound to provide protection against epidemics and maintain the health of the town generally. Provincial funds ought to bear the entire cost of hospitals in principal towns. Local Boards bear the charge in the taluks for dispensaries and hospitals. The control of the municipalities over hospitals is only "theoretical." The Royal Commission observed: "As a rule, municipalities are theoretically responsible for the public medical institutions within their jurisdiction, receiving contributions from rural boards on account of patients coming from outside municipal limits. We have proposed in the last chapter that the Government should take over the administration of the main hospital at the head-quarters of each district, and as these towns are usually municipalities, the municipal councils there will hereafter only have outlying dispensaries to deal with, while

most other municipalities will only have minor hospitals or dispensaries. Such institutions should, we consider, be under the direct management of the municipality."

Water-supply and drainage, removal of congested areas and encroachments, provision for sewage, protection against epidemics are among the chief functions we noted already. The ordinary income is not adequate to meet the expenditure. Loans by Government are given in aid of providing water-supply schemes. Water and drainage tax, a special tax, was levied in 27 municipalities. The fund was self-supporting in 15 towns, and in the remaining 12 the transactions resulted in a deficit which was adjusted by transfers from the general funds at the disposal of the councils concerned. It was rightly suggested that Government should make over the excise revenue earned in the municipality to the council and thus strengthen its fund, on the same ground that under Local Government Act of 1888, provision was made for the grant and distribution among the County and Borough Councils a portion of Imperial revenue.

The income of a county council is drawn from many sources. It receives a certain amount in the shape of fines inflicted for breach of by-laws and statutes. It derives some small income from its property in the shape of tolls rents, royalties, etc. It also receives a share of the license duties collected by the Imperial Government in the county together with a portion of the Estate duty collected in the United Kingdom. These contributions from

the Imperial Exchequer are carried to a separate account and cannot be used for the general purposes of the country till the prior claims are satisfied. The prior claims are payment of poor law officers, medical officers of health, registrars of births and deaths and other statutory officials. By the Local taxation Act of 1890 a certain portion of the English share of the customs and excise duties may be distributed between county and county borough funds, to be used primarily for payment of the officials mentioned above and then for purposes of higher education. These Treasury subventions to the extra-metropolitan county council amounted in the year 1902-3 to 3,773,240 (Orders, Local Government). In the year ending 31st March, 1903 the total amount expended for local purposes was £128,968,743. In order to meet the outlay for the year 1902-03, £50,328,412 was raised by means of rates: £35,271,367 was defrayed out of moneys borrowed for the purpose. The Treasury contributed £12,782,803; and the rest was raised from fines, tolls, dues, revenues from water, gas, electricity, and tramway undertakings, and other sources of income. Taking these figures we can safely urge there are two ways in which the present financial position can be improved: (1) that the Government should take over the charges under medical relief and sanitation (2) that the Government should subsidise the municipalities with a portion of revenue, provincial or Imperial, raised in the municipal area. A third alternative is the grant of a loan for special purposes spreading

over a period of 30 years, but this should be limited to some productive investment which will guarantee repayment and will not be charged on the ordinary revenues of the municipality. If a substantial contribution is thus made will not the shoe pinch elsewhere, will it not mean retrenchment in some direction in the Provincial finance? The reply is that it does not necessarily bring about that result as economy in a wasteful department and economy in a less important branch and the increase of the annual revenue evidenced by surpluses in the Imperial and Provincial Budgets would easily be able to meet the demand.

Chapter VIII.

ADMINISTRATION OF LOCAL BOARDS.

Commenting on the Resolution on Local Boards moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Legislative Council and the unsympathetic reply given by Sir Fleetwood Wilson, a leading Anglo-Indian journal of Calcutta, observed: "For many years the problem of infusing greater energy and reality into the work of District Boards and Municipalities in this country has been under discussion, but so little has been done to compass this most desirable end that Mr. Gokhale has rendered a public service by bringing it prominently under the notice of the Legislative Council. In Mr. Gokhale's opinion, the efficiency of Local Bodies is largely a matter of finance." Sir Fleetwood Wilson on the other hand, apparently holds the opinion that local authorities cannot safely be entrusted with larger funds until they show greater competence in dealing with the money already at their disposal. *The Statesman* agrees with Mr. Gokhale and finds it hard for public bodies, which have only slender resources wherewith to meet overwhelming needs, to take their responsibilities seriously. If the Government propose to do nothing until the local authorities, handicapped as they are, improve of their own accord, a long time must elapse before action can be taken. It is rightly observed: "There is no reason

why they should improve. But if local bodies are provided with sufficient funds to enable them really to do something and thus permit of their members feeling some pride and satisfaction in their work they may become valuable nurseries of public service and public spirit. Unfortunately, the difficulty only begins when this tentative conclusion is reached." It was proved by unchallenged statistics that the people of India contribute in the form of rates and taxes to the public revenue about the same proportion of their income as the people of England or France. The supreme Government absorbs an excessive proportion of the total revenue of the country and consequently leaves an inadequate share for local purposes ; it was therefore pressed on the attention of the Government to appoint a Committee to enquire into the subject of local finance. It was attempted previously, however feebly, to show that there was no margin for local taxation. " If English experience counts for anything, it goes to show that the successful working of local authorities depends largely on the circumstance that they themselves are permitted to raise the funds which they administer. The fact that they can provide for their local needs by levying rates is in itself an incentive to carry out local improvements, while the knowledge that the cost will fall on the shoulders of the community concerned stimulates public interest in the proceedings of the local authority. Until some such system is established, at any rate in the more progressive districts in India, there is little hope of the awakening of a vigorous and healthy public spirit in the

administration of local affairs." The power of Local Boards to levy railway cess is amply justified in the introduction of Light Railways in the Tanjore and Kistna Districts. The interest awakened by the imposition of the cess is evidenced by the successful working of the Railways and the desire for their expansion. The attempt now made in some quarters to form a syndicate in England to govern all the District Board Railways should be discouraged for if it were brought into existence the Boards will be shareholders to supply capital with no powers of administration. The Local Agent of the syndicate would be supreme in all matters. The note of the Hon'ble Mr. F. Spring advances plausible arguments but is not convincing. Even though the Government of India could not accede to a committee appointed for the whole of India, the local Government can appoint a committee to enquire into the matter whether the people are really unable to provide further funds by local taxation or whether they have only a prejudice to pay local rate, for it is admitted that there is great repugnance to local taxation in the country. In some of the Districts where it was proposed to introduce water-supply and drainage schemes and the house taxes had to be increased, there were public meetings and protests by Mahajans. In the Ganjam District the subject of a railway cess to open the country in the north and connect Ghumsoor with Berhampore, came twice before the Board and the matter was strongly opposed on both the occasions. This is only typical of the rest of the province. An investigation into the

subject is absolutely necessary. It may be said with regard to financial resources that considerable help is given from the Provincial funds not only to District Boards but to Municipalities also, and all large schemes are practically helped by a grant from the Provincial Government and secondly by a loan from the Imperial Government. It cannot be denied that the Boards and Municipalities have to wait for years and press their claims on all proper occasions and at least after ten or fifteen years the grant might be made. The whole work of the Local Self-Government in this Province now rests on the Secretary and the Member in charge of the *Portfolio* who has various other important branches of administration to look after. It is impossible to expect that the member in charge or the Secretary can go touring round all the districts visiting the Municipalities and study their actual condition. The Secretary was no doubt an officer who had district experience but each district or municipality presents peculiar difficulties. It is therefore necessary that there should be a Board who can be in charge of local self-government, a Board consisting of officials and non-officials which will take by delegation or by formal statutory authority several of the powers now exercised by the Governor in Council. It should be a body which would be a kind of agency to look after all the various panchayats and other bodies in the province. The interference which the Provincial Government now exercises should be practically given over to this body, acting somewhat as the Local Government Board acts in England. Powers

of the Government to audit and inspect, however, remain unaltered. The Hon. Mr. A. G. Cardew stated before the Decentralisation Commission: "I consider that the control exercised over local bodies by Government is so detailed that little scope for self-government remains." He cited instances—"There would be a considerable reduction in work if the whole of this control were removed, and if the local bodies and District Municipalities were left to manage their own affairs. Such a change, would no doubt, involve some loss of efficiency, but there would also be a great saving in delays. It would be likely to result in increased encroachments on public streets and roads, less success in keeping roads in order and in maintaining sanitation and probably a considerable increase in the amount of money wasted. But the people would get some real practice in managing their own affairs. If they managed them badly they would themselves be the chief sufferers, and they would, like other people all over the world, prefer managing their own affairs badly to having them managed for them in the most immaculate manner possible." Thus a plea for the establishment of a separate Board, independent of the Government control is indirectly suggested by this evidence. The question of investigating into local finances also could be easily conducted by this Board. The Royal Commission rules "that constant changes in rates in rural areas would lead to general dissatisfaction and possibly to fraud upon ignorant ryots, and this is why we consider that District Boards should not

have power to raise the ordinary land-cess beyond one anna in the rupee on the rent value and sub-district boards should not be independent to levy any independent land-cess of their own." With this limitation they would allow Boards to levy rates allowed by the Acts. In a controversial matter like this, a Local Government Board, of the kind suggested above, would act as an arbitrator between the people, the Board and the Government together. Another instance where a Board would act more effectively is in the appointment and removal of members of Local Boards and Municipal Councils. Penal provisions there are in the various Acts but the nature of the disqualification is so vague and such large discretion is given to the Government that it is dangerous sometimes to leave it completely to the Government. In the recent case of the Palghat Municipality we had an instance where a Board would have dealt with the matter more considerately and perhaps more justly. Where an Act does not prescribe a maximum rate (of taxation) in the case of Municipalities, the Royal Commission was of opinion that an outside authority should be required to sanction any increase in taxation. Such outside authority should be the Commissioner in the case of Mofussil and the Local Government in the case of cities. In this instance also a Board would be able to command greater confidence than the authority of the Collector or the Commissioner. The appointment of Chairman and Members of Municipal Council was proposed to be delegated to the Collector ordinarily. The removal of

a Municipal Councillor also was proposed to be carried out by the Commissioner. We have not got the system of Commissionerships. Our Collectors should not be given these powers. A Board would again be able to deal with the matter more equitably and conveniently. With the growing work which District Officers are called upon to discharge and the various questions that require their personal attention and tax their energies it is preposterous to add more of these burdens to them and make them guardians of Municipal Councils. Thus there are many branches of Local Self-Government which can be more conveniently dealt with by a Local Government Board than the Secretariat and the Member of the Government. The Royal Commission, however, overruled the proposal and said "the affairs of the Local Boards are at present dealt with in special branches of the Provincial Government Secretariats, although the Secretaries in charge of these are also concerned with other subjects. Our proposals will very much reduce the outside control now exercised over the proceedings of these Boards and will provide for such control as is necessary being exercised in a large measure by Commissioners and other local officers." The Local Government Board in England consist of a President and the following *ex-officio* members:—The Lord President of the Council, all the Secretaries of State, the Lord Privy Seal and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The President is paid a salary of £2,000 a year; the *ex-officio* members are un-paid. The President and one

of the Secretaries to the Board may sit in Parliament, and as a fact the President has always been a Cabinet Minister. The President and the Department do all the work—all the powers and duties of Poor Law, of the Privy Council, relating to vaccination, of the Home Office in relation to public health, drainage, and sanitary matters, baths, town improvement, local Government, local returns, local taxation, were also vested in the Board under Act of 1871. Since then very many statutes were passed which have added enormous duties to the Board. "To a large extent this legislation is suggested by the permanent officers of the Board, who know better than any one else where the machinery does not work quite smoothly, and how to proceed to remedy the defect." The Local Government Board has large legislative powers; its orders, rules and regulations have in many cases the force and effect of a statute. Every local authority is entitled to the advice of the Board whenever it is in difficulty even though such difficulty be of its own creation and the local authorities very freely avail themselves of this privilege. The Board has power to demand reports and returns of every sort from local sources and has administrative control over local Boards according to their origin and the statutes governing them. The Board controls the financial engagements and expenditure of local bodies in two ways: (1) In most cases, before any local authority can borrow, it must obtain the sanction of the Board; (2) the Board subjects the accounts of most local authorities to a searching audit. The

suggestion of the Royal Commission that large powers devolved upon the Commissioner and the Collector, and therefore the interference of the Government has become very feeble and a separate Board was unnecessary does not stand examination. In the first place I have shown that the additional powers to Collectors is most undesirable both in the interests of local bodies and the Collectors themselves. There can be no continuity of policy in the administration of local Boards. Secondly the golden view of the Decentralisation Commission cannot be effected in the near future. Thirdly all the powers of the English Local Government Board are not sought to be vested here. A Board consisting of a few official and non-official members delegated with the various powers under the Act will act as an arbitrator, a healthy controlling agency which will help to develop public spirit and self-reliance in the administration of local matters. The Government will still retain the power to audit, inspect, to give aid and to sanction loans. The Local Acts should be amended to constitute such a body whose powers will be defined and its relation to the various local bodies explained. The question of the cost of the Board, that is, whether the non-officials should be paid members and should be staffed in any particular form, is a detail which need not now engage our attention—while the Decentralisation Commission liberally vested all the powers of control now exercised by the Government in the Collector or the Commissioner, as is indicated in paras 774, 798, 839, 855, 871 and in other places of the Report, the

Powers of the District Board over the Taluk Boards to control and guide their policy were indirectly minimised. The Sub-District Boards or Taluk Boards if given certain independent powers in the matter of finance, the utility and desirability of the existence of the District Boards seem to be very little. The Budgets of the Taluk Board will be reviewed by the Local Government Board which will have its own auditors and Inspectors. The executive powers of the District Board will also be worked by the said Board. The District Board as a controlling agency becomes unnecessary. If the view of the Royal Commission is accepted, the Collector in his executive capacity, will control Local Boards; if the other view, namely, that Taluk Boards should be made more independent, then the Local Government Board will be the controlling agency. In any view the existence of the District Boards would then become unnecessary. This is by no means fanciful or idealistic; in another place I would show in dealing with Local Boards—the inter-relations between the Taluk Boards and the District Board—that the functions of a District Board in the view taken by the Royal Commission are more formal than real. The analogy of the English borough and county-councils will be taken to examine the principle.

Chapter IX.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORK BETWEEN TALUK BOARDS AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

It is convenient to take up the question raised in the last article, namely, whether the District Boards in this province in their present condition should be eliminated, whether they serve any real purpose and whether or not the functions now discharged by them can be conveniently performed by the Taluk Boards. The Government of India in its resolution of 1882 did not intend that the District Boards should be controlling agencies over Taluk Boards. The central principle enunciated in that resolution was that the jurisdiction of the primary boards must be so limited in area as to ensure both local knowledge and local interest on the part of each of the members. "Experience proves that the District Committees are, as a rule, very badly attended by members actually residing in the vicinity of the head-quarters' station. Those who do attend have frequently no intimate acquaintance with the wants of the outlying parts of the district. The consequence is, either that undue attention is given to the requirements of the immediate neighbourhood of the central station or that the business falls entirely into the hands of the district officer, the committee contenting itself with formally endorsing his

proposals." Nearly thirty years ago this experience was recorded of District Boards. Can it now be said with certainty that matters have improved, that the elected members of the District Boards and representatives from the Taluk Boards have any better insight into or knowledge of the affairs of the District Board? The whole work is done by the President, and the Board simply endorses the matters already disposed of by him in anticipation, or approves matters about which his opinion has been expressed one way or other. The entire proceedings of the District Board are sometimes mere formal sanction of the proposals made by the President. Even those who desire to go into the details of the agenda papers have no opportunity to do so as the subjects reach them a few days before the meeting and sometimes the agenda paper is handed to the member as he enters the meeting room. It is on rare occasions where a public question of the kind of the "Elementary Education Bill," or "Railway cess" is to be discussed that some members evince an interest and express an independent opinion; otherwise, the proceedings are most uninspiring and formal. The Resolution of 1882 rightly anticipated the difficulty and proposed: "In some provinces it may be found possible to leave these sub-divisional boards to their own independent working arranging for a periodical district council, to which delegates from each local board might be sent to settle such common matters as the rate of landcess to be levied during the year, allotment to be made of district funds, and other questions of

general interest. In other provinces, again, it may be thought best to have a district board with controlling power over the smaller local boards." The taluq boards in this province were found to be larger, more efficient, more independent than the Sub-district Boards in other provinces. The framers of the Madras Local Boards Act V of 1884 also had in view the possibility of amalgamation of the district and taluk boards; the term used in Chapter III and IV is "Local Boards" meaning and including any District Board or Taluk Board. Starting with this definition, a clear distinction is no doubt made in Chapter II in the constitution of the Boards under S.52. The District Board may transfer any immoveable property vested in the Board (under S. 49 public roads, etc) to the Taluk Board and under S. 55 may also transfer funds from District to Taluk Boards. Beyond this and in matters relating to compulsory vaccination the District Board has no independent function under the Act. The District Board is asked to frame rules (S. 46) in respect of servants of all Local Boards. The Collector of the District or Division when he is not the president of the Local Board, may control the actions of the Board and the Government may delegate the power of control to any one to exercise any of the powers conferred on the Collector(S. 159). The functions of Local Boards are in the word of the Act "the duties, responsibilities and mutal relations of Local Boards" disclose to us that the whole work defined by S. 95 is performed by the Taluq Boards or can be more efficiently performed by the latter *i.e.* the

construction, repair and maintenance of roads, bridges and other means of communication. The District Board takes up the main roads or trunk road in the District and appropriates half the land-cess and the whole income from tolls. The main roads lie in each division and within the jurisdiction of the Taluk Board which is required to maintain the branch lines and feeder roads. The District Board Engineer works under the orders of the President, District Board, and the Overseers also are under his authority. This system leads to the neglect of taluk boards and lapses of allotments generally follow. If each taluk board had a graded Assistant Engineer directly under its authority, the main roads need no longer be with the District Board. The point is the president of the taluk board has more opportunities of knowing the condition of the main road and branch roads within his jurisdiction and an Assistant Engineer working under him would produce better results and more profitable expenditure of grant. (1) The work of the Assistant Engineer can be easily supervised. Under the existing rules works of the value of above Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 10,000 require to be sanctioned respectively by the Superintending Engineer and the Chief Engineer with the Government. The Chief Engineer with Government recently drew the attention of Superintending Engineers and District Engineers to the desirability of their taking interest in the work of Local Boards. (2) The planting and preservation of trees are done by Taluk Boards. (3) The construction, maintenance and repair of hospitals, dispensaries, lunatic

asylum, markets, drains, water-works, wells, the payment of all charges connected with the object for which such buildings have been constructed, the training and employment of medical practitioners and vaccinators, sanitation of towns and villages, cleansing of roads, drains and other works of a similar nature. The District Board has ordinarily no charges to incur under grant III except Medical Schools and Medical Officer's Establishment. The funds which the District Boards spend on the maintenance of any hospital can be spent by the Taluk Board: therefore it is that the Act uses the word "Local Board" meaning either Board. (4) Diffusion of education and with this view, the construction and repair of School houses, training of teachers. All expenditure under grant II is spent by the Taluk Boards. (5) Establishment and maintenance of relief works in times of famine is carried out by the Taluk Board. (6) Other measures of public utility and also salaries, allowances, gratuities to servants employed by the Local Board. Thus all the duties and responsibilities are discharged by the Taluk Boards. Even vaccination is now delegated to Taluk Boards. Under S. 144 the Government takes power to make rules as to the respective duties and responsibilities and mutual relations of District Boards, Taluk Boards and Union Panchayats; and as to the matters in regard to which, and to what extent, the orders of the Taluk Board or Panchayat shall be subject to appeal or revision by the District Board or Taluk Board as the case may be. The Act (S. 167) contemplates cases where

the District Board performs all the functions of the Taluk Board where no such boards exist, *e.g.* Koraput Board. The Madras Local Fund Code creates large powers for the President of District Board to control the actions of the Taluk Board and such control is quite unnecessary in many instances as the periodical audit and inspection is a sufficient check over extravagance, and is unnecessary in view of the extended powers recommended by the Royal Commission on Decentralisation. We shall give some instances of control: (1) Sanction of the President of District Board is required by the Taluk Boards for the employment of medical subordinates, compounders and midwives in dispensaries managed by the latter. (2) Sanction of the District Board is required for the employment of watchers and sweepers in Rest sheds and Dawk Bungalows in certain cases under the management of Taluk Boards. (3) The Taluk Board has power to open new schools, close or transfer elementary schools without the sanction of Government while sanction is required for the entertainment of teachers. (4) Sanction of the District Board is required to continue lien on the appointment of a teacher though he can be given leave by the Taluk Board to serve in another department. (5) Sanction of District Board is required for the purchase of tools and plants including petty scavenging tools required by the Panchayat, though the Unions are under the direct control of the Taluk Boards. (6) Sanction of the District Board is required for allowing permanent advance to all institutions under the

management of Taluk Boards. (7) The Engineering Department is completely under the control of the President of the District Board while a contribution is received from the Taluk Boards—a District Local service is undesirable as each Taluk Board can employ a sectional Engineer to manage its roads and buildings. Sanction of the District Board is required for transfer of funds of above a certain limit from one major head to another major head or to appropriate the surplus balances. Some control or scrutiny of accounts is necessary and it is amply provided by audit inspection of the accounts of the various departments by the auditors of the Local Government Board. The Local Audit Department of the Collectorate exercises a healthy supervision provided the Account Code is amended in most of the details. The budgets and administration reports are submitted to the Local Government Board. The allotment of land-cess, division of work among the Taluk Boards, distribution of special grant, approval of the famine programme, recruitment of certain branches of work can be more conveniently dealt with by an Advisory Board with the Collector as President. The Advisory Board consisting of representatives of several Taluk Boards will meet periodically and can more practically dispose of these matters. The proceedings of the District Board are in reality the orders of the President. The Collector of the District as President of District Board cannot adequately give thought and patience to complicated problems of local boards and evolve schemes.

for the working of each Taluk Board as their circumstances require. The demands on his time, energy, intelligence are daily increasing. It will be a relief to him if this responsibility is shifted on to an Advisory Board, consisting of accredited representatives of the Taluk Boards and Municipalities and the District Officer as President.

The Commission overrules the suggestions made for either the abolition of the District Board or for transformation of the District Board into an advisory board of the Collector. The Commission gives reasons why they do not agree with those who would eliminate the District Boards as "a direct instrument of local self-government. (1) The Sub-District Boards hitherto enjoyed limited powers and it is undesirable to give them full powers at once. (2) The District Boards are more fitted to exercise certain functions, such as, the upkeep and construction of the main roads of a District, recruitment for certain branches of work which the Sub-District Boards will control but which are common in character to the whole district. (3) The District Board will be in possession of funds so that the poorer Taluk Boards in the district may be subsidised out of the district funds as occasion arises. (4) The resources of the rural boards will be largely supplemented by Provincial grants and in the matter of such grants it would be much more difficult for the Local Government to deal adequately with the large number of Sub District Boards than with entire districts. These separate functions are now assigned to District and

Sub-district Boards ; it is desirable that these bodies should be possessed of resources, as far as possible independent of one another. We shall briefly examine these reasons. A distinction has to be drawn between the jurisdiction and work of Sub-district Boards in other Provinces and in this Province. It is conceded by the Commission that the jurisdiction of Madras Taluk Boards extends over a revenue division and they enjoy greater freedom and consequently produce more efficient work. If they enjoyed limited powers, it is not their fault. Unless powers are given to these bodies it cannot be said they failed to discharge them satisfactorily. When it is conceded that the Taluk Boards generally discharged their work satisfactorily and the powers given to them were properly exercised, it is but right that they should be given extended powers. The second ground has already been dealt with. A district service is necessary in some instances but the service has proved to be inefficient under the control of the District Board. The Advisory Board can work out a scheme for the approval of the Local Government Board which will be acceptable to all Taluk Boards in the district. For instance, an Inspector of Local Fund Accounts is appointed for a circle consisting of three or more districts—a Superintending Engineer will similarly supervise the work of Assistant Engineers under the Taluk Board. The portions of trunk road within the Taluk Board limits and new bridges and culverts thereon will be managed by them. No separate service will then be required for the district.

Hospitals and dispensaries are supervised by the District Medical and Sanitary officer. Vaccination is looked after now by the Taluk Boards. There is, therefore, no separate branch of the Local administration which the District Board is now directly in charge of. The third objection relates to the distribution of land-cess among the Taluk Boards according to their needs. This can be more conveniently done by the Advisory Board instead of leaving it to the arbitrary descretion of the President of the District Board; similarly the provincial grants and other subsidies can be rateably distributed by the Collector and his Advisory Board. It may not be convenient for the Government to deal with all the Taluk Boards individually but the Local Government Board and the Advisory Board would have better knowledge of each Taluk Board in order to supplement its resources. There are no insuperable difficulties in the way of entrusting Taluk Boards with the functions now performed by the District Board at great expense. The Act in defining the functions and responsibilities of Local Boards made it possible for the Taluk Boards to discharge the same duties and undertake the same responsibilities as the District Board. The time has come for this change and with this reform Taluk Boards will become the real and effective instruments of political and popular education in rural areas.

Chapter X.

REGULATION OF LOCAL BOARDS.

“ We must notice that Local Governments have a wonderful power of adapting themselves to circumstances. By undertaking a higher quality of work they attract to their boards higher ability. Hence difficult undertakings calling for tact, large knowledge, and perhaps some genius, which cannot at first be safely placed in the hands of local bodies without the most zealous supervision, may in a few years be wholly handed over to them with perfect confidence” (Local Government and State Aid: Sydney J. Chapman). The Local Boards Act defined the constitution of local boards. Since then the full complement of privileges and powers remained unutilised. A district board may be constituted with a President and not less than twenty-four members and power was given to the Government (S. 9) to appoint one of the members of any District Board to be the President of such Board or authorise the members of any District Board to appoint their President by election from among their own number, subject to the approval of the Government and in accordance with rules and conditions as may from time to time be prescribed by them. In any district where the members of the district board are partly appointed by election, the number of persons so appointed shall, unless Government otherwise

directs, be three-fourths of the whole number of members of such board. It is a matter of satisfaction to observe that in all the 23 district boards, except Anantapur, South Canara and Nilgiris, the average strength is about 30 members but the number appointed by election is very limited. For instance, the total strength of North Arcot Board is 30, of which ex-officio members are 5, nominated 10, and elected 15; Ganjam, total strength is 31, of which 5 ex-officio, 11 nominated and 15 elected, in Godavari the strength 30, ex-officio 5, nominated 13 and elected 12; Tanjore, strength 40, ex-officio 7, nominated 13, elected 20; Vizagapatam strength 30, ex-officio 5, nominated 11, and elected 14. All the district boards taken together cover an area of 1,32,544 square miles with a population of 39,004,860, and 579 persons enjoy the privilege of being members of the district boards. The Governor in Council may appoint one of the members of any Local Board to be Vice-President of such Board or he may authorise the members of any local board to appoint their Vice-President by election from among their own number, subject to the approval of the Governor in Council and in accordance with such rules and conditions as may from time to time be prescribed by him. All the Taluk Boards enjoy the privilege of electing their Vice-Presidents but not the District Boards. The system of election was introduced into the Taluk Boards in 1909-10. At first a third of the number of members was to be appointed by election and in some instances the privilege was latterly

extended to a half. In the case of District Boards, neither the Presidents nor Vice-Presidents are appointed by election. In the majority of cases the Vice-President is nominated and is generally an official. Thus the District Board has for its President and Vice-President generally officials. In a few cases retired official and non-official members are appointed as Vice-Presidents. In the case of Taluk Boards the Act prescribed that members other than the ex-officio members may be wholly appointed by the Governor in Council or partly so appointed and partly appointed by election by the members of the Panchayats in the Taluk from among their own number or by the tax-payers and inhabitants of the Taluk, but none of the Panchayats enjoy the privilege of electing a member to the Taluk Board. The working of the Panchayats was on the whole found to be satisfactory, except in a few cases in Anantapur and Godavari. The Government Review observes that generally speaking Taluk Boards continued to work satisfactorily. Hence as in the case of District Boards, the Taluk Boards should consist of members of whom three-fourths are appointed by election. The Panchayats should have the right of representation, such of the Panchayats as have been doing useful work and represent large groups of villages should be given this privilege specially in view of introducing the principle of election into the Panchayats. The population within the area (117,037 square miles) of Taluk Boards is 33,539,392, the total number of members in Union Panchayats are 3,721 of

whom 832 are *ex-officio* and 2,889 are nominated. These represent a population of 3,167,502 covered by Panchayats. Government has the power of declaring what shall be the maximum number of persons to be appointed for any Local Board and what shall be the number or proportion, if any, of such members to be appointed by election. The evidence given by Mr. H. D. Taylor, I. C. S., then Secretary of the Government in Local and Municipal Department, (Q. 7396 and 7400) before the Commission, discloses that our growth in District Board or Municipal self-government is very much at the stage where it was in 1884, so far as Government control goes and these Boards were not given larger freedom. Mr. C. J. Weir, I. C. S., who was for some time Local and Municipal Secretary, deposed before the Commission on Decentralisation, that the local Boards might be given larger powers with advantage and he was in favour of delegating to a special member of the Board of Revenue certain powers to look after the working of Local Self-government and the member should be touring over the Presidency so that he may be in touch with the condition of things in the district in regard to local and Municipal Government, sanitation, education and other matters (Q. 6662 to 6673). The Hon. Mr. A. G. Cardew, I. C. S., said that it was his deliberate judgment that the control exercised by the Government is so detailed that the municipal bodies cannot do very much independently, and that it destroys the object of self-government. "If you are going to have local

bodies you should make them a reality, and let them run their own show and make their own mistakes and learn wisdom thereby." Such is the opinion of experienced officials of the Government. Whether it is possible to eliminate the District Boards and substitute advisory boards in their place was discussed in the last article. The preponderance of official evidence before the Royal Commission was against it but certainly the Indian opinion and a portion of official evidence supported it.

The position of the President of a District Board as it stands is one of great responsibility. He is the Chief Executive and administrative officer of the Board and even disposes of matters sometimes independently of the Board. He controls the Engineering Department of the Local Funds and allots funds for each Taluk Board out of the land-cess; he distributes the special subventions given by Government and reviews the budgets of Taluk Boards; he has general control over vaccination and medical subordinates; he has to carry on correspondence with the Collector and the Government. The question is whether the time has come for the appointment of non-official members of the Board as Presidents of District Boards, whether Indian public life has developed so far as to take up the responsibility and whether we are prepared to sacrifice our time and energy for the work. It is not easy to answer but it can be said without any reservation that in head-quarter stations there is local, political and business talent to discharge the responsi-

bility. There is no harm in trying the experiment; taking the advantages with the disadvantages, it is worth trying at least in a few carefully selected centres. Surely there is no justification for the Government that the Vice-Presidents of District Boards should not be appointed by election. The non-officials who were entrusted with this responsibility have taken great interest in their work and worked satisfactorily. Year after year such of them as were appointed by nomination proved efficient and it is time that the privilege of election should be given to the Boards without any reservation. Recently a resolution in the Legislative Council drew the attention of the Government to the question of appointing non-official Presidents of Taluk Boards and such a strong case was made out in favour of the resolution, that the Government conceded the justice and expediency of the request and appointed Presidents by election in some localities. One cannot, however, sympathise with the attitude of Government in this matter, while accepting the reasonableness of the principle in practice it is enforced in a half-hearted manner. The policy is not one of caution but of cowardice, it is not policy but perversity, when a few stations are selected, apparently on no principle. It was open to Government to confer the franchise on all the head-quarter and principal Taluk Boards either appointing Presidents by election or by nomination as the circumstances of the locality justified. There are retired officials and educated members on the boards who have experience in public life and have the neces-

sary knowledge of local matters and ability to deal with public questions independently. There are some minor difficulties. The Revenue officials through whom a large part of the work has to be done may not be as easily open to discipline and carry on the work given to them by the President as readily and willingly as they would if the work was entrusted to them by the Divisional Officer; a Divisional Officer, if unsympathetic, may be a real obstacle in the working of the Board. But these difficulties will only be temporary, and as officials are accustomed to the work and as Presidents prove themselves to be just, industrious, independent and tactful, the course becomes smooth and easy. It would afford opportunities for patriotic people and local talent to associate themselves with the administration of the taluk or district and realise the responsibility of Government. The leading men of the taluk would feel confident that the officials of the district are not unsympathetic but are their friends and guides and co-workers in the great cause of educating the people of the country.

It was shown elsewhere in dealing with Municipalities that the local institutions should have much greater independence than they now possess with regard to the functions discharged by them. It is essential for the freedom of local boards that they should control the service for which they pay, and, where it is found necessary that there should be outside control, it should be with the local government to take over that service altogether. It was recommended that the restrictions

on the local boards in the matter of Public Works estimates should be abrogated. These restrictions hinder the progress of work—estimates relating to building or masonry over Rs. 2500 and 5000 require the sanction of the Superintending Engineer or the Government. The estimates are sent backwards and forwards many times before final approval and ultimately the work has to be given up or the allotted funds remain unutilised. Similarly the existence of a sanitary board to scrutinise estimates and plans is a fiction. The working plan and estimates pass through the Sanitary Engineer and he advises the Secretary of the department on the merits of the scheme. The Sanitary Commissioner and the Engineer tour round the district and are in touch with the actual needs of the districts. It is a waste of time that after this expert advice estimates and schemes should go before the Sanitary Board which in most cases formally approve the recommendation. The Local Boards are obliged to spend on roads and education a definite proportion of their income from land-cess and tolls. These restrictions should be done away with. The budgets are subjected to close scrutiny at the Secretariat and these restrictions are vigorously imposed. The Local Boards should not be fettered in their descretion of spending their resources. These boards should have full power to deal with their budgets, but the prescribed minimum balance should be maintained. The Royal Commission remarked : “As soon as a rural board’s budget is drafted, extracts relating to the

out-lay proposed on service such as education, medical relief and sanitation, should be sent for information to the Provincial head of the departments concerned, but any remarks he may have to make should be simply for the consideration of the Board, and should not affect its liberty of action." The Government recently passed orders regarding reappropriation of funds from one head to another and from balances; one point which should be seriously taken notice of is that Local Boards should be able to delegate administrative functions to committees. The Local Boards Act provides for the appointment of committees for various subjects including outside persons, there is no room for finance or public works committee. There should be standing committees delegated with administrative functions. So we cannot agree with all the conclusions of the Royal Commission in what they suggest as the principal steps for remedying existing defects. The recommendations do not touch the real defects in the administration, namely the principle of representation, the proportion of elected members and the part to be played by non-official members and presidents in Self-Government. If the basis of representation is widened and greater freedom is conferred on local boards in matters of finance, local self-government will be a reality.

Chapter XI.

LOCAL BOARDS AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

The Imperial Rescript (1872] was published in Japan along with the educational code of Japan with the following object:—"The acquisition of knowledge is essential to a successful life. All knowledge, from that necessary for daily life to that higher knowledge necessary to prepare officials, farmers, merchants, artisans, physicians, etc., for their respective vocations is acquired by learning. A long time has elapsed since schools were first established. But for farmers, artisans and merchants as well as women, learning was regarded as beyond their sphere. . . . Now an educational system has been established, and the schedules of study re-modelled. *It is designed henceforth that education should be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family, nor a family with an ignorant member.* Persons who have hitherto applied themselves to study have almost always looked to the Government for their support. This is a erroneous notion proceeding from long abuse, and every person should henceforth endeavour to acquire knowledge by his own exertions." (Educational system of Japan—Occasional Reports No. 3 p. 28). The Hon. Mr. W. H. Sharp observed that the *italicised* portion was remarkably ambitious, but Japan has come as near to fulfilling as any nation could have done in 30 years. "It is of

interest," says the writer, "to ask in this connection what proportion of the nation was reached by the old system of schools—practically all the *Samurai* could read and write; for the rest of the population no statistics, of course, are available, but there is this clue. On the abolition of feudalism a system of military conscription was introduced the conscripts being drawn from all classes; and it was found that between 30 and 40 per cent. of them had some education. This agrees thoroughly with the educational returns of 1873, which give 40 per cent. of boys as attending school. Girls, it need hardly be said, were in a worse position. In 1873 only 15 per cent. were under instruction. Still, if a third of the male population, and of the female perhaps a sixth, had received some schooling, it is evident that the indigenous institutions provided a very fair basis on which a system of general education might be reared." Recent statistics show what has happened since the war with China. Primary schools have increased from 23,000 to 27,000 and the percentage of children receiving instruction rose from 58,091 secondary schools for boys have risen from 74 to 258, those for girls from 28 to 80, and technical schools of various kinds from 100 to 850. The budget of the Educational Department in 1890 was about £133,000, in 1902 it reached £700,000. In 1893 the educational expenditure of local bodies was about £1,000,000; it has now about £4,400,000 forming 21 per cent. of the total expenditure. The average expenditure by the Local Boards in this Province on education is between

7 to 15 per cent. on their total income excluding Government subsidies (*vide* General Review 1910-1911). Till a system of national education is organised the progress of education in our country will remain slow. We must recognise the laudable efforts made by the Government for the expansion of mass education, but the Imperial or Provincial grants are quite inadequate for the object in view. It has been demonstrated by the Hon. Mr. Gokhale that in spite of the efforts of the Government the percentage is very low, and the progress of education among the masses cannot be better or more substantial under the present system. Recently the Hon. Dr. Bourne, C.I.E., has devised a plan in accordance with the conclusions of the educational experts who met at Allahabad at the end of the year 1910, by which Board schools would be established for a group of villages, centrally located, well equipped and staffed as models for the neighbouring villages. For the Municipalities special grant was given for opening new schools to provide buildings ; it is hoped that in two years more the scheme would be completely brought into force so that there may be a board school in every chief or central village and the Municipal funds would be further supplemented to meet the additional cost of education. Even this is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the Province. With the aided schools and indigenous schools, generally ill-equipped and unsuited for the modern requirements of education, the percentage is only 23·6 per cent. of the school-going population in the Province.

Unless a system of compulsion in some form or other is introduced, progress of education must for ever remain slow considering the general character of the people. The results of the Elementary Education Act of 1870 and the subsequent Act of 1894 and 1896, the Reports of Commissioners (1895-1896) relating to the English system are worth studying. A full account of the provisions of the Code would be too extensive but I shall only give an outline with regard to compulsory education. To increase attendance and produce more uniformity the Act of 1876 was passed, which declared it to be the duty of the parents to cause their children to receive efficient elementary instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic; it also enacted that no person should employ a child under 10 years of age, nor between 10 and 13 unless he had a certificate of educational proficiency or was attending school according to the provisions of the Factory Acts, or by-laws of a school board. This had some slight effect, but as in several of the Factory Acts there was still a large loop-hole. Firstly the enforcement was difficult. Secondly merely forbidding the employment of children did not place them in school—only 15 per cent. of the population of England and Wales was under the management of the School boards in 1875, and the question arose as to how the provisions of the Act were to be enforced and the beneficial results of by-laws secured for the remaining 42 per cent. According to previous Acts, school boards could be

created only where the locality desired or where school boards could be created or where school accommodation was deficient, and in localities coming under neither of these there was no school authority. To meet these difficulties it was provided that wherever school boards did not exist, a new authority was to be created, known as the School Attendance Committee. The members were to be chosen by the borough council or board of guardians, and were empowered to pass by-laws regarding the attendance of children of school age, subject to the same regulations as school boards. Mr. M. R. Maltby (English Local Government of To-day) writes that "the present system is still far from perfect. In 1893 it was found that in thirty-one districts the by-laws applied only to children between the ages of five and ten, and between ten and fourteen, standard IV of the Code, a very low grade had to be reached to permit a certificate of proficiency to be given. With the exception of about ninety others, the age limits were five and thirteen, but in the definitions of "reasonable excuses," "times of attendance" etc., there was still great variety. Each year beholds the revision of upwards of 140 by-laws, and as these show great improvement, the prospects are bright. Absolute uniformity can never be expected, neither will the same standards of proficiency be found in all districts. Social and economic conditions will vary greatly; consequently the by-laws differ. The department has never hesitated to use all of its persuasive powers, and it is to-day exerting a wide influence in

this direction." The results of the Act are thus summarised: "a new plan was adopted in 1890, a plan providing for local action with central supervision and interference in case the local authorities failed to perform their duties, thereby reaching all the localities whether influenced by state aid or wholly beyond its grasp. The effects of this system have been noted to be beneficial. The large number of boards established compulsorily shows its influence, for it is proper to assume that had this plan not existed these localities would have remained lacking in sufficient accommodation, at least for some length of time. The power to act when a local authority is in default, and to determine when it is in default is a most effective power, and is the cause of a large portion of the improvement since 1870. The powers regarding compulsory education raised the percentage of population on the rolls and in average attendance and the provision for better educational facilities has a great influence in inducing a larger attendance. The establishment of free grants also contributed its share. In the light of the experience of the English system and the various stages it has passed through, the difficulties that were surmounted, the schemes that were adopted at each stage to meet the difficulties and to provide facilities for the expansion of mass education, a practical working scheme could be devised for this country. It is never too soon. It is therefore with the foresight of a statesman, the illustrious patriot, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale introduced the Elementary Education Bill

in the Imperial Council. It is a very cautious measure and made it optional with the Local Boards and Municipalities to apply the principles of the Bill to any area. In the memorable speech in introducing the Bill he said : “ It is obvious that the whole working of this Bill must depend, in the first instance, upon the share, which the Government is prepared to bear, of the cost of compulsory education, wherever it is introduced. I find that in England the Parliamentary grant covers about two-thirds of the total expenditure on Elementary Schools. In Scotland it amounts to more than that proportion, whereas in Ireland it meets practically the whole cost. I think we are entitled to ask that in India at least two-thirds of the new expenditure should be borne by the State.” The Bill was rejected but a heavy responsibility is cast on all public bodies to work towards the practical operation of the principles of the bill. The local bodies have to set themselves to work and find funds for the greater expansion of mass education. We should know clearly what is the proportion of school-going boys that are now under instruction, and what is the net expenditure now incurred and the probable financial burden on the boards if the full scheme is introduced. If the situation is thus ascertained, the problem can be easily solved. Let us take an example. In Ganjam District, for instance, the male population of school-going age was 109,620 (1909-1910), the total number of boys under instruction in Board schools was 11,843;—including the boys in the aided Schools the percentage

was 30·4. The aided schools are now directly given aid out of provincial funds instead of through Local Boards. The total number of schools in Ganjam admitted to aid in 1910-11 is 1223 (including Boards). The net expenditure on education was Rs. 52,406. Provincial funds bore a sum of Rs. 56,522 being the total subsidy under grant-in-aid. Thus about Rs. 108,935 is the total expenditure on the education of about 30·5 per cent. of the school-going population. Roughly speaking a sum twice as much more has to be found to introduce the scheme fully and immediately. But that is not the object of the scheme nor could it be enforced at once. There are three (and will be four) Taluk Boards and 14 Union Panchayats. Suppose for instance the experiment will be tried in one advanced Taluk, the burden will be very much reduced and probable cost would be one-third, that is, about a lakh of rupees. The expenditure now incurred is about Rs. 40,000 ; therefore the grant should be doubled. The contribution of land cess should be increased and a special rate should be levied in addition. The population under Taluk Board is very large. Is it too much to say that the people should bear this additional burden ?

Let us take the case of Municipalities. The total population of the Berhampore Municipality is about thirty thousand roughly. The total cost under education (1910-11) was Rs. 4,583. The total population of school-going age was 4718 boys and girls ; the total number of pupils receiving instruction including aided schools was 1182 boys and 272 girls, thus about

51·4 per cent. of boys and 11·2 per cent. of girls are under instruction. It may be observed here that there is a rapid increase in the strength of the schools. Comparing the figures of (1909-10) and the previous year, there is an increase of 4 per cent. To educate the total number of school-going age boys the expenditure need not necessarily be doubled. The Government have recently granted a subsidy to Municipalities, and this grant is proposed to be a recurring one. The Municipality has therefore to provide about Rs. 1,500 to 2,000 annually. The increase in the number of scholars does not necessarily mean increase of cost in proportion. The scheme can thus be worked for each Municipality. Take again the Vizagapatam Municipality. The total population of school-going age is 3,138 boys and 3,225 girls of which the number of pupils receiving instruction in the town, including schools not aided from Municipal funds, is 3,179 boys and 864 girls. The net expenditure on education is Rs. 6,504, whereas the total income from taxation, including tolls but excluding the water and drainage tax, is Rs. 43,090, that is, about only 15 per cent of income is spent on education. In some District Boards, for instance—Godavari had 22·6 per cent., Guntur 24·66, Tinnevely had 13·1 per cent., Vizagapatam 19·6 per cent. of the total number of boys under instruction. The District Boards in general do not spend 20 per cent of their income on education (Review of 1909-10). It is therefore the duty of the non-official members to discuss the question dispassionately with the educational officers and to suggest a

practical scheme to the Presidents of Local Boards. Our first attempts may be a failure. With renewed energy, with better information, better organisation, the proposals may be repeated to provide for the expansion of elementary education. If a workable scheme is presented, it is bound to meet with sympathetic consideration from the Boards. Hard facts cannot be overlooked for any length of time, sincere work cannot remain long without appreciation and support. It is incumbent upon us to investigate the subject fairly, accurately, and with genuine devotion to the work.

Chapter XII.

THE PANCHAYAT SYSTEM—POSSIBILITIES OF MORE USEFUL WORK.

The village in India has always been the unit of administration. It was an organic body with the elders as the governing agency and the various officers to perform several functions relating to the village. The communal basis of the unit disappeared long before the British power was established in this Province. The growth of individualism and the introduction of ryotwari settlement tended to destroy rapidly the village community; Act II of 1894 and Act III of 1895 tended to disorganise the village—nevertheless the village maintains some elements of communal life. Successive invaders passed over the country. The village contributed the usual revenue, and its internal administration was little touched; communal land still exists and the village common fund for festivals and public reception is still maintained. The old craft guilds and Panchayats disappeared but the inherent desire to refer all matters to arbitration by the Panchayat still remains. In village life, in villages where the blighting influence of modern system and procedure has not had time to reach, and where the factious spirit has not contaminated the pristine purity of union and brotherhood, the elders of the Panchayat exercise a real and abiding influ-

ence over the village. Their influence extends not only to civil matters but also to the social and religious sphere. In caste disputes, villagers of other and different castes are admitted to the Panchayat thus showing the common feeling of brotherhood and mutual confidence. For every important matter to be disposed of by the elders the village barber sends round the cry that the elders assemble at a central place; it is indeed an interesting spectacle—the deliberations of the village council. The parties are asked to explain, the audience will state their experience and the elders discuss the question from various points of view and a conclusion is arrived at. In the majority of instances their verdict satisfies both parties. There is no previous canvassing, there is no complicated procedure and technical rules, the whole discussion is public.

The Circuit Committee appointed to investigate into the claims of various proprietors of land and collect materials for the permanent settlement (5th report relating to Madras Presidency) observed that the state of village community is a self-contained constitution. Their experience was that there was a perfect organisation for revenue and civil administration. The Permanent Settlement Regulation XXV of 1802, designated the Village Accountant or Karnam as a public official responsible to the people and the Government (S. 11). The British Government also recognised the unity of continuing the Panchayat for certain purposes. Regulation IV of 1816 recognised the village head as a

Munsiff for deciding certain disputes of a simple nature among the villagers and Regulation V of 1816 advanced a step further and constituted Village Panchayats for the adjudication of civil suits for sums of money or other personal property, without limitation as to amount or value, within the jurisdiction of the Village Munsiff, and the regulation defined the powers and authority to be vested in village Panchayats. The preamble says: "It being desirable, with a view to diminish the expense of litigation and to render the principal and more intelligent inhabitants useful and respectable by employing them in administering justice to their neighbours, that civil suits between the native inhabitants of territories subject to the Presidency of Fort St. George should be referred for adjudication to assemblies of denominated Panchayats and that for the purpose of facilitating such reference the Village Munsiff should be authorised to summon a panchayat on the application of both parties to a suit." The village panchayat shall always consist of an odd number, never less than five nor more than eleven, and the majority shall decide. The Panchayat shall be composed of the most respectable inhabitants of the village, who shall be called upon to serve in rotation whenever their number is sufficient for the purpose and any inhabitant refusing to serve on a Village Panchayat shall be liable to be fined. Any respectable inhabitant of a neighbouring village may be placed on a Village Panchayat. Provision was made for the selection of equal number of castemen or men of the same

profession being selected by the parties and the Munsiff selecting a panchayatdar of a different caste to sit with them. A retired member of the Indian Civil Service, a shrewd observer of public life in this country deposed before the Royal Commission, his experience of 1866 : "There were still cases of them (panchayats) and the people wished to have them again. I think they should be restored now, they died out to the regret of the people, their work was good ; I think the people of this country are inclined to mediate in matter of disputes between them rather than to go to Law Courts ; I think they believe in the system of arbitration. There was no difficulty in those former days in getting people to serve upon these panchayats." He gives one of the reasons for their decay, that the district officers disapproved of them ; it would want a good deal of fostering care on the part of the Government as they are out of practice now ; the people are not accustomed to them, he thinks that the panchayat might deal with sanitation, education and any civil dispute between themselves. The Hon'ble Mr. A. G. Cardew, I. C. S., suggested that the village communal life was undoubtedly in existence but the tendency was to decay ; education made a man stand on his legal right, and he goes to the courts : communal life has not so far decayed that it might not be easy to resuscitate it. There is no other effective method to interest the people in the administration and make them feel and realise the beneficent influence of British Raj, than the restoration of the village Panchayat system ; it was

referred to in the beginning that the Village Service Acts while protecting the rights and interests of village servants operated as a most disintegrating power in the village. The village munsiff and the watcher, no longer care for the welfare of the villagers, they act as independent men irrespective of the common feeling of elders in the village.

It was found expedient to make better provision for the organisation of local boards in this Presidency for the construction, repair and maintenance of roads and communications in local areas not included in municipalities for the diffusion of education and for other objects of public utility calculated to promote the health, comfort and convenience of the inhabitants of such local areas; therefore Act V of 1884 declared there should be established for each Union a panchayat having authority over that union, and consisting of not less than five persons, who are called the panchayat. The headman of the village comprised in the Union is an ex-officio member; the other members of the panchayat may be wholly appointed by the Governor-in-Council or partly so appointed and partly appointed by election by the taxpayers and inhabitants of the Union or part thereof. The Government delegated the power of appointing chairman and members of the panchayats to the Presidents of Taluk Boards. The Unions are doing useful work but they are not popular; the reason, I believe, being that taxes are levied on houses, markets, cart stands, etc. But if special power of taxation is also coupled with the power of spending the

money themselves, they will not complain about paying taxes. The villagers are quite in darkness about the doings of the panchayat ; if the body is elected they would feel the responsibility. If there are elected panchayats, the unions will be of no use. If the present unions are to be maintained under the Taluk Boards, the Chairman should also be elected ; otherwise they cannot be popular. Now there are about 390 union Panchayats for a union population of 145,987, paying an average house tax of Rs. 0-12-7. The total population of the local board area is 3,167,502 (1910-1911). The sanctioned maximum strength of these bodies is 3,834 ; of these about a fourth are village headmen. The working of the Panchayat was on the whole found to be satisfactory. They look after village roads, provide public latrines, keep the water supply in order and generally attend to bettering the sanitary condition of the Union ; if funds permit lighting the village is also attended to. It is unjust to these Unions that market fees earned by them should be appropriated by the Taluk Boards. The Taluk Boards supply the deficit in the Union funds but there should be more independence in the expenditure of Union funds, and a larger contribution is necessary from land-cess. If the union panchayat is to be maintained alongside the village panchayat which should be fostered under the care of a special officer, it should be remodelled on the lines of the English Parish. In England for two generations prior to 1894, the Parish was disregarded, not to say despised, as an administrative unit. The Parish is not

regarded as a civil area ; it is taken as the basis of modern English system of Local Government. There are 14,797 civil parishes in England and Wales ; of these 12,982 are rural parishes and 1,912 are urban. Of the rural parishes, 7,250 have a parish council ; the remainder are managed each by its own Parish meeting. The Parish meeting is an ancient institution, older than the House of Lords or House of Commons but has only received in 1894 its full recognition at the hands of Parliament. The Parish Council, or the Parish meeting, as the case may be, controls all parish property. The Parish meeting is in every case, the assembly of the parochial electors, who are " simply the persons registered in such portion of the Local Government register of electors or of the parliamentary register of electors as relates to the parish." Thus many persons are parochial electors who do not contribute to the rates of the parish at all, such as owners who reside out of the parish, lodgers, and persons enjoying the service franchise. A register of parochial electors is duly prepared and kept ; anyone who owns property in the parish and who is registered on the parliamentary register of electors for the county is a parochial elector. The Parish meeting must assemble at least once in a year. At this assembly the Parish Council is usually elected. If there is no Council, the Parish meeting must meet at least twice a year. The principal power possessed by a Parish meeting is that of adopting any or all of certain Permissive Acts. Acts for lighting and watching the Parish, and for provid-

ing it with baths, wash-houses, burial grounds, recreation-grounds, public libraries etc. There are now 7,250 Parish Councils in England and Wales. There is one in every rural Parish which has a population of 300 or upwards and also in every parish which has a population of more than 100 but less than 300, if the Parish meeting has resolved to have one. The County Council may establish a Parish Council, if it thinks fit, in a parish with less than 100 and may group small parishes together under a common Parish Council. The Parish Council consists of a Chairman and Councillors not being less than five or more than fifteen as the County Council may fix from time to time; any parochial elector, male or female, may be elected. The Parish Council has the civil powers of old vestry; it has power to adopt Permissive Acts subject to the control of the assembly; it appoints overseers and assistant overseers. In another place we detailed the Powers of the Parish Council but it is sufficient to mention here that it can borrow money with the consent of the county council and the Local Government Board but it cannot levy a rate exceeding three pence in the pound without the consent of the Parish meeting; and in no case can it levy a rate exceeding six pence in the pound, exclusive of rates under the Adoptive Acts. The English system has again been referred to here so that we may know what should be the constitution of the panchayats and the powers to be exercised by them. No uniform rule can be laid down for all villages. Villages with a

population of a thousand and more should first be empowered to have a panchayat, and villages with a population of between 2000 and 5000 should have a panchayat varying in strength to reach the full complement of members, the strength gradually rising up to the maximum. In all cases the Chairman and a portion of the members should be elected. The observations of the Royal Commission are to the point—"What we have in view is a system of informal selection by the villagers at a meeting called for the purpose etc. At this meeting the ryots should be asked to indicate the persons whom they considered best fitted to sit in the village council. Smaller Villages can be grouped together for the purpose—where there are admittedly notorious factions exception has to be made in appointing the Chairman or members. The term of office should not exceed five years. The powers now exercised by Union Panchayats be given to these Panchayats but they should not be subordinate to Taluk Boards. A special officer, on the lines of the Registrar of Co-operative Credit Societies should be in charge of the panchayat administration; he would no doubt consult the District Collector in all important matters but he should not be a subordinate of the District Collector. The powers to be entrusted to the panchayat will depend upon the locality and their work in course of time. The panchayat should be delegated with civil jurisdiction from Rs. 50 to 100, power of appeal from their decision should be refused and all petty offences in the village may be tried by

the Bench. Works of sanitation, providing water-supply to the locality or repairing the drinking-water sources, maintaining roads and communications, construction of village schools and advising the Government Inspectors of Schools on the educational needs of the locality are among the powers that can be very usefully and conveniently exercised by the panchayats. Before the Forest Committee there is a large volume of evidence, statements made by villagers, that grazing in forests and fuel reserves can be very efficiently managed by village panchayats. It is therefore one of the legitimate functions of the panchayat to arrange for and decide the rights of ryots of different grades. The Royal Commission is very conservative in recommending the powers to be given to the panchayat and they make no reserve in granting the management of village pound and market to the panchayat. It was pointed out that the formation of the panchayats should not be associated with fresh taxation ; there is wisdom in this suggestion, but to meet all the demands of a big village, the residents must contribute their share. House-tax in Unions is not popular but as people begin to realise civic responsibility and as they are educated in public life, they will find that the tax is no burden but a duty to discharge. Therefore in all villages with a large population of 3,000 to 5,000, there should be a fund formed out of the taxes supplemented from the land-cess. Special contributions from Government educational and sanitary grants, grants under water-supply would strengthen their resources ; fees from markets,

ferries, suits, etc., would further add to the finances of the panchayat. No uniform rule can at present be devised for all villages. We can only indicate general lines of organisation. The experience gained in the working of Union Panchayats and Taluk Boards will largely help us in devising a scheme for a particular locality; the principal aim should be that the inhabitants of the locality should be made to feel that a real power is entrusted to them and they have a real responsibility to discharge, a consciousness that they have a duty to their neighbours and to the community. Referring to the Local Government Act of 1894, it is noted that "it is perhaps too soon to pass any judgment upon the changes effected by the Act of 1894, an Act which in some quarters was expected to change the face of rural England. It certainly has not done all that some people expected it to do. But it has undoubtedly aroused in the middle of our rural population a sense of citizenship and responsibility and their conception of the powers and duties of each individual elector. And it is not unreasonable to hope that the next half century will produce as notable a development of civic life in the country side as the last two generations have witnessed in the towns." So in India in this Province enthusiasts may claim that the country will soon see great transformation; but it is a matter of time. Education of the masses must progress rapidly and local bodies should earnestly devote themselves to larger expansion of popular education. Government promise to render

aid but the people must prove that they are earnest and are prepared to bear the responsibilities of citizenship. The introduction of the panchayat system together with the expansion of popular education is sure to rouse a sense of citizenship and responsibility and is bound to widen the conception of powers and duties of each individual in the Village. Already we see the dawning of a new life, the glimmering rays of the rising sun over the ocean-waves of time. In the fulness of time, in the divine dispensation of Providence, the English race may fulfil its Mission in India, the Indian people may grow to the consciousness of full political and social power so that India may take her proper place in the British Empire.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION,

CHAPTER I.

ITS NATURE AND SCOPE.

In the recent discussion of the subject both by the *Spectator* and by Special Correspondent of the *Times*, there is some confusion of thought as to the scope and nature of primary education as such that is in progress in this country. The article in the *Spectator* on Education in India, after the memorable Resolution of the revered patriot and talented statesman, the Hon. Mr. Gokhale, in the Imperial Legislative Council, advocating free and compulsory elementary education, betrays lack of information to a remarkable degree, in maintaining that free compulsory education is impracticable in India, not because of the magnitude of the task, but because "it would mean taking away the children from the training which they now receive from their parents in what must be their life-work as cultivators of the soil" and that it is a great hardship inflicted on the humble ranks of craftsmen in the cities, who follow hereditary professions and caste trades. A similar line of argument is maintained by the writer on "Indian Unrest," in what he terms *festinalente* of the case. It is said that "whilst there is a very general consensus that more should be done by the State for

primary education, there is no unanimity as to its being made free and compulsory—various Indian members of Council have expressed themselves against it on different grounds. Some contend that many parents cannot afford to be deprived of the help of their children; according to others, there is already much complaint amongst parents that school-going boys do not work in the fields as beneath their dignity; others again ask, and with some reason, who is going to care for boys of that age who may have to leave their homes and be removed from paternal control in order to attend school." This line of argument completely overlooks the deliberate observation of Lord Lawrence in 1868 that "among all the sources of difficulty in our administration and of possible danger to the stability of our Government, there are few so serious as the ignorance of the people," and the recommendation of the Education Commission in 1883 that, "the elementary education of the masses, its provision, extension, and improvement should be that part of the educational system to which the strenuous efforts of the State should be directed in a still larger measure than before." The *Times* in reviewing the Indian problems and education concluded: "In the past the Educational Budget has often been the first to be reduced in times of financial stress—no species of economy is more disastrous. There will be no very definite progress until it is recognised that it is as imperative to find money for a set of schools as it is to pay for a regiment; for upon the right solution of the education problem

the whole continuance of the British rule in India very appreciably depends.”

There is some justification for the confusion above indicated, as primary education was not clearly defined till very lately. A final attempt was made in this Province in 1906 as would appear from the Report on Public Instruction for 1906-1907 when the use of the expression Primary education was dropped in favour of the term ‘Elementary Education,’ meaning thereby the instruction of the masses—the two stages of primary education formerly recognised as upper primary and lower primary have now no significance. An elementary school may now contain all the standards from the infant to the fifth or any number of these from the infant standard upwards. Primary education was not organised by the State till a system of secondary education had for long been adopted. In the early part of the century elementary education was not considered a State service. Primary education and schools were under private management. The real concern of the British Government with primary education may be said to date from 1854, when the famous despatch was issued by the Court of Directors. Lord Dalhousie’s policy was directed to the teaching of reading, writing, arithmetic and mensuration. Knowledge of these matters would, it was held, give the ordinary Indian a sufficient equipment for practical life. The policy of Lord Dalhousie will be dealt with in detail later on. The system of secondary education had two branches, middle

and high school stages. The former consisted in the study of English as a special language as a medium of general instruction, of the vernacular, of history, geography, arithmetic and mensuration. In Bengal, vernacular middle schools existed, in which instruction was given in the vernacular and it was found to be satisfactory. The report of the third quinquennial review of education in India (1896-1897) states it is almost as difficult a task to define primary as it was to define secondary education. The attempt made by the Education Commission is not a very happy one. "That primary education be regarded as the instruction of the masses through the vernacular, in such subjects as will best fit them for their position in life, and be not necessarily regarded as a portion of instruction leading up to the University." This was evidently meant to include the instruction in secondary schools, the "middle" state, for, of the total number of pupils in secondary schools throughout India, about three-fifths are in one or other of the primary stages. The education which they receive is primary instruction in secondary schools. This aspect of primary education has not been kept in view in the discussion of this question. Now, primary education as defined above recognised a "dual aspect" of primary education. On the one hand, its dominant object is to provide every child that can be brought under its influence with some knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic and such other simple and useful subjects as may be possible. On the other hand, it should

include courses for those whose means, inclination or ability enables them to proceed to higher stages. But the means adopted are different in different provinces. "In Bombay, where the Government was the moving spirit and is still the guiding hand, the whole of education is organised on a system that extends continuously from the Primary school to the University." The primary school is essentially a lower stage of the secondary school, the distinguishing feature being that English is not taught in it at all. In Bengal, as already noticed above, "indigenous instruction has always been popular and widely spread, the Government being for the most part content to develop the existing *Patasalas* or village schools by grants of money and by departmental inspection." This was solely primary school system, it was not ambitious, but intended to meet the needs of the agricultural and industrial classes. In Madras, however, the early advent of missionary work, the interest of the Government in its early settlement, the indigenous system working in the Andhra and Dravidian communities contributed to make the system more elastic. English was optional. In Burma, Buddhism has fostered a system of religious instruction, universal and gratuitous, extending even to girls. The report states that in Bombay the representative school is one maintained from the Local cess, but entirely managed by the Department, with a strength of about 70 boys. In Bengal, the representative school is an aided or unaided one, largely dependent on the

popularity of its teacher, who can rarely collect more than 35 pupils. It stands to reason that the efficiency and stability of these two extreme types of school must vary greatly, as is revealed by the proportion of pupils, each has in the Upper Primary stage. The difficulty lies further in that indigenous schools and their work are not considered at all. It is well known to us that the indigenous schools answer a real purpose in society and many of them differ little in character from the lowest class of primary schools which may be said to grow out of them. The consideration of these schools is an important factor in determining the expenditure required for free and compulsory education. Of the two primary stages, upper and lower, the first forms part of a curriculum finally leading up to the University, and the second the limit of elementary learning for the great majority of the population. The actual limits between these two stages vary in different Provinces, being determined by the standard of examinations. In some cases, the Upper Primary is scarcely to be distinguished from the middle-vernacular: elsewhere the lower consists of a stage in which printed books are not used. The Resolution of the Government of India (11th March, 1904) defined primary education as "the instruction of the masses through the vernacular, in such subjects as will best stimulate their intelligence and fit them for their position in life." This is a departure from the policy of 1854 and is intended to get over the confusion which existed in 1897 by defining a course of study.

Such a course was enforced in 1906 as evidenced by the educational rules and their working described in the report of the Director of Public Instruction, Madras (1906-07). The Indian educational policy of 1904 further laid down : “By the extension of railways the economic side of agriculture in India has been greatly developed, and the cultivator has been brought into contact with the commercial world, and has been involved in transactions in which an illiterate man is at a great disadvantage. The material benefits attaching to education have at the same time increased with the development of schemes for introducing improved agricultural methods, for opening agricultural banks, for strengthening the legal position of the cultivator, and for generally improving the conditions of rural life,—such schemes depend largely for their success upon the influence of education permeating the masses and rendering them accessible to ideas other than those sanctioned by tradition.” The course of instruction in primary schools naturally consists mainly of reading and writing in the vernacular and arithmetic. Kindergarten method and object-lessons are also introduced in some parts. In this Province a clear line of demarcation is drawn between the two systems. The elementary schools can no longer be treated as feeders of secondary schools—either the Aided school or Board school is required to maintain standards subject to the departmental supervision—the old system of collecting boys in one central place for examination is discontinued. The primary examination

certificate is abolished, syllabuses suited to local needs and circumstances are prepared in consultation with the Inspectors of Schools, a special scheme of studies for these schools has been issued by the Education Department. "The aim of the rural schools," laid down the Resolution, "should be, not to impart definite agricultural teaching, but to give to the children a preliminary training which will make them intelligent cultivators, will train them to be observers, thinkers, and experimenters in however humble a manner, and will protect them in their business transactions with the landlords to whom they dispose of their crops." It is this policy that is now asked by us to be carried into effect in a larger measure. The history of Elementary Education in all civilised countries discloses that without compulsion the education of the masses cannot be advanced. Ceylon and Phillipine Islands in the East are examples of the system. In our own country the enlightened State of Baroda sets an example to British Provinces.

CHAPTER II.

ITS HISTORY.

Primary education under State aid may be said to date from 1854, when the Court of Directors resolved that the Government should promote general education in India in a more extended and systematic way. It was for the first time recognised that it was the duty of the conquering race to sow seeds of learning and carry the torch of education among the masses of this country—education was recognised as the royal remedy for the many prejudices they found afflicting the Indian society. The Indian mind could not be more effectively opened to the consequences of their losing status, than by instilling into the race principles of culture and progress. The vast resources of the country could not be advanced, unless the masses are subjected to a general system of instruction permeated through the various ramifications of Indian society. The policy of Lord Dalhousie has already been referred to; various measures were prescribed; a special Department of Education was founded; Public Schools for the training of teachers were established; the then existing schools and colleges received the recognition of the Government; the number of schools was increased; the most important feature of this policy was the increased attention paid to all forms of vernacular schools, and the

introduction of a system of grants-in-aid which is intended to help local interest and enterprise, by supplementing its resources by State aid. This beneficent policy was reaffirmed in 1859, though in the interval the efforts of the Governor-General received a certain amount of check by the out-break of the Mutiny in 1857; the attention of the Government was diverted to the strengthening of Military, and Political and Administrative matters. Primary education has, therefore, progressed very slowly.

In the first part of the nineteenth century, primary (elementary) education was not thought of by the State. The commercial policy naturally lead to the utilisation of Indian talent to the material benefit of the rulers—Government wanted a large number of Indians who could be conveniently employed to work in the subordinate ranks of service, and hence a certain amount of knowledge in English was necessary. The motive for introducing Western education is thus explained: "Is it not better to deal only with a picked element of the population, so as to obtain there the subordinate officials whom colonising people find it useful and politic to recruit on the spot, or to shape the native auxiliaries, of whom the agricultural, commercial and industrial settlers have need? Apart from such utilitarian considerations, this method may also seem the best, and in the long run the most rapid instrument for spreading education. The mass of the people will surely acquire a taste for knowledge when they get visible evidence of the advantages which it brings to

members of their own race." This is the European view of explaining the introduction of English education, available only to certain advanced classes as against the general spread of education among the masses.

At the advent of British Raj, India had a high standard of culture in Sanskrit, Persian and in the vernaculars. There were many centres of learning in which advanced systems of culture in philosophy, logic and literature prevailed. There were indigenous vernacular *Pathasalas* throughout the country. The masses were accustomed to the village schoolmasters. The 5th Report of Circuit Committee describes the existence of the schoolmaster as an essential factor in Indian villages and the maintenance of village schools by voluntary contributions. Both among the Mahomedans and Hindus ancient systems of education prevailed. The sacred books ordained that *Vidyâdâna*, giving instruction, is one of the great gifts which entitled a man to eternal bliss—schools were attached to Mutts and Mosques. The Hindu and Mussulman Sovereigns found endowments for the support of these schools. The history of the Mutts discloses the original object of these institutions to be to impart knowledge to the people, though latterly sectarian methods took the place of liberal education. All the elementary schools in the village were maintained on voluntary contributions of ryots and the common fund of the village. The term "Private Institution" has been recommended by the Education Commission of 1882, to

all such indigenous schools. These schools do not accept the departmental standards of instruction, and the course of instruction in some of these, however advanced, does not conform to the standards prescribed by the Education Department or they would not submit to any public examination or test. "A private or indigenous school, as opposed to a public institution, is a school of any kind not recognised by the Department, and not under inspection." But this distinction is not exhaustive, as many private institutions are recognised by the Department and grant-in-aid is given to them. For purposes of classification they are treated as public institutions. The elementary institutions *not recognised by the Department* give instruction in vernacular and differ little from "Unaided Public Schools."

These institutions furnish the groundwork for the construction of a practical scheme for free and compulsory primary education. European critics of this principle do not count these institutions and their work as of any consequence in the discussion of this question. It was, therefore, explained in the first part that it is necessary to be acquainted with these schools. The third Quinquennial Review dealing with the progress of education in India from 1892-93 to 1896-97 affords statistics under this head for 'advanced institutions' and 'elementary institution' for boys and girls. In 1886-1887 there were 24,950 elementary schools, in 1891-1892 the number was 23,584 and in 1896-1897

the total rose to 36,959 ; in the strength of the pupils the figures show 503,106 with 65,382 in "advanced institutions." The next Quinquennial Review would reveal an increase varying from 9 to 19 per cent., but it is not possible to obtain accurate figures for the same—"considering the uncertainty that attaches to all returns for Private Institutions, it is difficult to draw any conclusions from these figures. Two facts seem to be clear : first, that advanced institutions are not tending to increase and, secondly, that a very large number of elementary schools still exist outside the influence of the Department." Elementary vernacular schools are doubled in number, and the pupils in them have nearly doubled, so that they now make up more than half the total of all pupils in private institutions. The number of private institutions for girls is 1,459, the total number of girls is 42,152, of whom about 54 per cent. prefer to attend schools for boys. The private schools in the Madras Presidency amounted to 5,167 (1892-1898). There was an increase of about 52 per cent. over the last ten years ; the total number of pupils were 104,548 or 62 per cent. increase.

This rate of increase is much larger than in any other Province. If a more complete registration be effected more accurate figures for the last ten years up to 1907 could be obtained. The Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, for 1907-1908, gives general statistics. From the supplemental statistics furnishing the number and strength of insti-

tutions of all classes and grades at the close of the year, it will be observed that the total number of public institutions rose from 23,252, to 23,797 or by 2·3 per cent. and their strength from 875,666 to 932,398 or by 6·5 per cent. The increase in the former case was by no means marked, but that in the latter affords evidence of spread of education in the country. Private institutions declined both in number and strength, owing presumably to the transfer of some of them to the list of public institutions. Taking, however, public and private institutions together, there was an increase in their numbers from 28,734 to 29,026, of which "the unaided" at the beginning of the year were 5,192. This is the result of the new classification of schools and the revised educational Rules and the Grants-in-aid Code. Thus, in this Presidency, more than 25 per cent. of the total number of elementary schools are private schools not aided by the State. The percentage of the strength of all schools to total population of school age, is 26·4. Thus, we have seen the nature and scope of elementary education that was in existence from the advent of the British Raj to this date.

To go back to the history of elementary education, the first attempt for the solution of the educational question was made in 1815. The Charter Act of 1813 required an expenditure of a lakh of rupees a year on education. The East India Company warned the Marquis of Hastings that the education of the masses might prove dangerous to the interests of British Raj, and

might rouse political ambition in India to the detriment of their power and prestige. Lord Hastings strongly opposed the suggestion, and true to the traditions of British statesmen, his liberal policy succeeded. There were two Colleges in Northern India, the Madrassa (1782) and the Hindu College at Benares (1781). The teaching in these Colleges was on Oriental lines. India is ever grateful to missionary enterprise; though the object of founding Schools and Colleges was to place the truths of Christian religion before the people, yet the immediate result of the noble work of the pioneers of Western learning and culture was to open the Indian intellect on new lines, widen their mental horizon and create a desire for search after truth. The scientific method introduced in these early days produced men like Rajah Ram Mohan Roy, the illustrious founder of the Theistic Church in India. In 1835, the Minute of Lord Macaulay as President of the Council of Education in Bengal, exposed the erroneous methods pursued by the Government and succeeded in obtaining recognition of the principle that Indians should be taught Western Science and Literature through the medium of English language. The memory of this illustrious nobleman is writ in letters of gold in the history of India. No reform ever rendered such signal service to us as the change Lord Macaulay brought about in India.

Down to the last renewal of the Charter in 1853, the progress of education was very slow. The despatch

of 1854 supported the education of the "upper classes." The interpretation and practical working of this scheme was left to Lord Dalhousie, the general outline of which was foreshadowed above. Special efforts were made by grants-in-aid to encourage private enterprise; educational reforms made, however, slow progress and the spread of popular education met with many obstacles. Lack of support from the people, lack of necessary trained machinery and the Mutiny of 1857 contributed not a little to thwart the generous work begun by Lord Dalhousie, two of whose successors also continued the liberal policy, yet with no substantial success. It fell to the illustrious representative of the Crown, the father of Local Self-Government in India, the true exponent of British liberty and statesmanship, Lord Ripon; to overhaul the whole system by instituting a Special Commission of twenty Members, ten of whom were Indians, and to recommend ways and means for the expansion of education among the masses. They "advised increased reliance upon and systematic encouragement of private effort" and their recommendations were approved by the Government of India. Shortly afterwards, a considerable devolution of the management of Government schools upon Municipalities and District Boards was effected, in accordance with the principles of local self-government then brought into operation.

"The practical result of the Commission tended towards the promotion of secondary education to the detriment of elementary education." We have

primary schools numbering 98,538 with 3,268,726 boys. Four villages out of five are without a school; three boys out of four grow up without education and only one girl in forty attends any kind of school. The Resolution of the Government of India dated 11th March 1904, dealt with the present state of education and noticed that, in the pursuit of English education, the cultivation of vernacular is neglected, with the result that the hope expressed in 1854, that they would become the vehicle for diffusing Western knowledge among the masses, is as far as ever from realisation. The Government of India review the present state of education and conclude that "on a general view of the question, the Government of India cannot avoid the conclusion that primary education has hitherto received insufficient attention and an inadequate share of public funds (1901-1902)—from Provincial funds Rs. 19,92,514 and from Local and Municipal Rs. 46,10,387, thus making a total of Rs. 66,02,901. 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 on provincial revenues." In the Madras province there were 22,002 public elementary schools with 746,343 pupils, (including 81,659 girls) the percentage of the strength to the total population of school age was 26.4. In indigenous elementary schools there were 101,714 boys under instruction at the close of 1908; grouping the villages according to population, there

were 15,000 villages with a population of above 200 without any school. The total expenditure on elementary schools for boys was Rs. 28,46,549, towards which public funds contributed only Rs. 16,32,391, fees Rs. 6,35,134 and other sources Rs. 5,79,024. Public funds met 58 per cent. of the total expenditure, fees 22 per cent. and other sources 20 per cent. The average cost per pupil is estimated at Rs. 4. (The charge under public funds includes Local and Municipal.) The expenditure by the State on elementary education is thus very inadequate.

We find from the above that prior to the advent of British Raj there were indigenous institutions, advanced and elementary grade, and do also exist now in large numbers, doing useful work, though not subject to the control of the Education Department; that for the first time in 1815, educational responsibility was realised, and in 1835 the policy was remodelled in the light of the famous Minute of Lord Macaulay, but primary education made slow progress till 1853 when, under Lord Dalhousie, a definite policy was created and an Educational Department was inaugurated with a full scheme for the expansion of education among the masses. In 1882, the Education Commission re-enunciated the policy and urged on the Government for the encouragement of private enterprise, but its effect was to give greater impetus to secondary education, and lastly the Resolution of the Government of India in 1904, reviewed the existing system, proposing means for the develop-

ment of elementary education and laying down the lines in which that progress should proceed. We have also seen the expenditure under this head and the slow progress of elementary education, and the place which "indigenous" or "private schools" occupy in the development of education of the masses. With special reference to Madras we have noticed the grossly inadequate expenditure under the head of elementary education. Indian people are grateful to find that His Imperial Majesty desired the expansion of mass education and the Special Coronation contribution is an indication of the anxiety which Lord Hardinge and his Government have in spreading education among the masses. The conference of experts at Allahabad and the recent Imperial grant are unmistakable proofs that the Government do agree with the people with need for rapid expansion of mass education. I shall next deal with the causes for the slow progress of elementary education and the possibilities of future expansion.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEGLECT.

“ The rate of increase, whether for the last twenty-five years or for the last five, is very slow when compared with the distance that has to be travelled before primary education can be universally diffused.” This is the keynote to the review of primary education by the Director-General of Education. Mr. Joseph Chailley writes: “ Primary education has continued to advance slowly; in 1901-2 there were about 98,000 public schools with 3,200,000 scholars—to what must be ascribed the extreme difficulty of organising primary instruction in India, and the scanty success of such repeated efforts ?” The answer to the question was anticipated to some extent in the last article. Resolution of the Government of India, March 1904, in defining the Indian Educational Policy, notes: “ On a general view of the question, the Government of India cannot avoid the conclusion that primary education has hitherto received insufficient attention and an inadequate share of public funds. They consider that it possesses a strong claim upon the sympathy, both of the Supreme Government and the Local Governments.”

The *London Times* in reviewing the articles of its Special Correspondent on “ Indian Unrest ” says:—
“ His survey of a very wide field discloses conditions

which are anything but reassuring compared with the enormous population, there is little real education in India at all—only ten million males and less than one-and-a-half females are literate. But only a million Indians have any knowledge of English. The Dependency contains well over 280 millions of people who could neither read nor write. These are humiliating figures, for which no degree of achievement in the construction of roads and railways, canals, no success in the creation of great and prosperous cities, no confirmation of the blessing of universal peace and security, no uplifting of the material well-being of the masses, can sufficiently atone." Compared with the percentage of educated people to the population and with the amount of expenditure either in total or per head obtaining in all European countries or with Ceylon and Japan in the East, India stands miserable—Baroda represents the type of a Reformed State. This indicates the gross negligence displayed by those responsible for the government of the country.

The early policy of the Government was purely commercial. The Company's Government was interested in providing for itself subordinate officials and clerks to carry out the work entrusted to them, hence secondary education only received some little support. Primary education, though it received official recognition for the first time in 1854, under Lord Dalhousie's policy, the education of the masses received considerable check by the unfortunate outbreak of forces known as the Indian Mutiny. The people

were very indifferent to the new system as the old *pial* school system of *patasala* found favour with the villagers. Like many other village functionaries the office of schoolmasters also was hereditary. He was usually the friend and adviser of the chief ryot of the village and would stoutly protest against any innovation (Sir H. Maine, Lec. IV, Village Communities). The system of fees introduced by the policy also was in the way of progress of primary education. The policy of 1854 required that fees should be levied in all schools receiving assistance from public funds. The Provincial Codes contained provisions to this effect. The object was not that gratuitous education is valued far less by those who receive it than one for which some payment, however small, is made, but that the payment induces a more regular attendance and greater exertion on the part of the pupils.

The fallacy that underlies this suggestion is that it ignores the symptoms of the disease and its diagnosis before fixing the diet or the medicine. A race accustomed to indigenious education, schools maintained by voluntary contributions, sometimes from a common fund and at other times by a Zemindar or local chief, cannot be said to attach no value to education for its own sake. Grants-in-aid were given only to such schools as required some fee from the students. Mr. Joseph Chailley in his "Administrative Problems of India" thus states the difficulty:—"Unfortunately, too, the education thus sold does not find willing purchasers; though the fees are usually very low, they are a serious

burden on the purse of the Indian parent, and to induce him to undertake this burden, he would have to be convinced, as the French Democracy is, for example, of the utility, nay, of the necessity, of education. This might have been remedied by making primary education compulsory if not gratuitous, but so far from being compulsory, it is not even adequately controlled." This will be dealt with more fully in reply to the critics of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale.

There was and is another impediment to the progress of primary education in the very little remuneration given to schoolmasters. In old days they had various perquisites attached to the office. Bereft of all the customary contributions, the schoolmaster must have a salary to induce him to take an active interest in the school. "A parsimonious policy prevents the enlistment of competent men and the primary school teachers remain as a body far below their tasks." Another obstacle must also be considered, however small may be its general effect. The success of rural schools depend often on the vicissitudes of the season. Failure of crops and scarcity of food have their own effect on the development of rural schools. One thing, however, is certain, that whatever may be obstacles for the progress of primary education, Government did not lift its little finger towards removing the same. It has cost the Government but little. In 1902, an Imperial grant of 40 lakhs was made for purposes of education in general, and a further grant of 35 lakhs was specifically assigned to primary edu-

education in 1905. It is from the latter grant Madras Government allotted to Local Boards the educational grants, about nine lakhs, by which the Local Boards built rural schools on standard design and fitted them with the requirements of new rules. The Governments of Bombay and Bengal distributed about four and five lakhs, respectively, on primary education. With reference to these grants, the Hon'ble H. W. Orange, C. I. E., observed: "The figures of total expenditure on primary schools in 1902 and 1907, respectively, show that the expansive power of primary education chiefly depends upon the public funds which can be devoted to the purpose." This expansion depends on:—1. Utilisation of the existing indigenous or private institutions, (about 5 per cent. increase in Madras). 2. Division of the Rural and Urban Schools. 3. Reorganisation of the existing institutions, giving the full complement of strength to a school. Thus, larger number of boys will be under education without necessarily increasing the number of schools, or the cost. 4. Adequate control over education by the District Boards and village *Panchayats*. 5. Free and compulsory education given by large Municipalities and Unions (*Panchayats* under the Local Boards). 6. Revival of the *Panchayat* system or formation of committees in rural areas under the direct control of the Local Boards. These will be dealt with in the next chapter, relating to the scheme of primary education.

The criticisms of various persons to the scheme of free education will now be dealt with. The criticism

of the writer in the *Spectator* of London, of Mr. Gokhale's resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council, advocating free compulsory elementary education are thus summarised.—1. Lack of machinery to put into force the legislation that is designed to help the people, that is the absence of a sufficiently reliable and competent subordinate staff for carrying out the orders of the higher authorities. 2. The cost of the scheme is prohibitive, that the education rate is an unjustifiable addition to the taxation of a country already oppressed by as heavy a burden as it is able to bear. 3. Difficulty of providing an adequate staff of trained teachers. 4. Education is not valued by the people, they are too poor to be educated as it would take away children from their parents and their work as cultivators, or craftsmen. The Special Correspondent of the *London Times* also maintains this on the ground of cost, the paucity of teachers and because parents are too poor to spare their children for the school and no uniform curriculum could be devised to suit the requirements of rural and urban schools and the various parts of the country and that uniformity is impossible. The first objection relates to the institutions of proceedings in law courts for disobedience of compulsory regulations. The critic is solicitous for the welfare of the people and sees to protect them against the rapacity of corrupt Magistrates. I believe he is not serious in this argument, nor is he aware of the condition of the country. He gives a character to our countrymen for which

they are not noted. If the regulations relating to vaccination, obligation to report births and deaths in towns, levy of local cess and village cess, etc., are properly and fairly administered, how does the incapacity arise in this case? The third objection depends on the solution of objections, two and four. A leading Anglo-Indian journal of Calcutta, the *Statesman*, May 1910, dealt with these objections thus: "Now if there is anything that, more than another, is the undoing of the Indian peasant, it is the ignorance that makes him a prey to the money-lenders and the landlords, his traditional oppressors. He cannot read a lease or sign a receipt, he is at the mercy of every swindler who is unscrupulous enough to profit by his helplessness. And next to this drawback is his inability to turn his hand to any alternative work, to relieve the congestion on land or to earn a living in times of scarcity—education, however elementary, would be some relief to him from both of these evils. The illiterate craftsman in the bazars, too, who has to hire a petition-writer to fill up a money order, is severely handicapped by his inability to read and write. The *Spectator* says the bulk of the people of India are too poor to be educated; but it fails to apprehend that ignorance is one of the main causes of their poverty. The ignorance of the *Spectator* about Indian matters is exposed in the fabulous amount made out to be the cost of education. It is surely very fallacious, however, to assume that as you multiply the number of pupils you multiply in direct proportion.

the cost." This is so because the "private schools" could be improved and the Local Boards and Municipalities could be compelled to spend a certain proportion of their income. (This is fixed in Madras by the L.B. Act on primary education and the strength of many of the existing schools could be conveniently raised.) In many primary schools in India, probably in the vast majority of them, the number of pupils might be doubled without any increase in the expenditure. One boy in ten is at present being educated and there is a school for one village out of four. Probably the multiplication of the number of schools fourfold—placing one in every village would provide ample accommodation for ten times as many pupils as are now being educated. The suggestion that State-controlled colleges in India are hot-beds of sedition, the *Statesman* totally disapproves and asserts that even if it were true the wisest remedy would not be to discourage education, even in the elementary grade. It concludes that "if education in India has brought the evil of sedition in its train, it must be by more education and better education that the evil can be cured." There can be no greater danger to stable Government than the presence of a huge mass of population whose ignorance makes them a ready fuel for inflammatory mischief-makers. The same was the matured observation of Lord Lawrence in 1868. It is agreed on all sides that the present state of things is very unsatisfactory. When practical suggestions are made, they are ignored. The Hon. Mr. Gokhale proposed

to meet the financial difficulty by raising the import duty from 5 to $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., curtailing expenditure in directions not very necessary in the near future and even by raising an additional tax. No better and more practical suggestion could have been made. The country wants improvement and the country is prepared to pay for it as far it is able to sacrifice—for in sacrifice lies the root of progress. Compulsion is necessary if any appreciable progress is possible. It is not intended that full effect should be given at once. The possibilities of expansion should be provided. Cautious experiments should be made in specified centres.

I shall, in the next article, deal with the subject in detail, with special reference to this Province.

CHAPTER IV.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I have very briefly referred to the criticisms on the proposal for free and compulsory education. I would now consider the position in this Province as to the possibility of extending primary education. In discussing any scheme in respect to this province, we must remember the requirements of the country. One uniform system of general or mass education cannot be introduced, nor can the whole country be at once taken into the scheme. (The advocates of reform urge that the principle should receive due recognition and the experiment should be tried first in all big and advanced Municipalities and Taluk Boards.) The distinction between rural and urban schools should also be clearly noted, so that in the matter of cost and competency of teachers the difficulties may not be exaggerated. "Every Province in which the teachers are told to base their instruction upon objects familiar to the children and are given some freedom in instructing the curriculum, may be said to provide the framework for differentiating between urban and rural primary schools." Bombay provides for the rural schools a smaller range of subjects than for the urban, and easier standards. In the Central Provinces, the main difference is that the school is not a full-time institution, a portion of the day is allowed for the boys

to assist parents in agricultural operations. Elsewhere, the schools for agriculturists are provided separately. The special character of rural schools, nevertheless, remains unaltered.

In this Province the indigenous institutions and *pathasalas* exist in large numbers. In the Punjab they are known as 'Zemindari schools,' which taught only reading, writing and arithmetic, and taught these subjects up to lower standard than in the Urban schools. The Director of Public Instruction, Madras, observed : " I have no wish to depreciate the value of private effort but any systematic development of elementary education must depend upon the opening of new schools under public management rather than upon the sporadic work of private agencies. The tendency to bind the educational system with departmental ties is very great in this Province. The Royal Commission on Decentralisation, however, emphasized the need of fostering and developing indigenous schools and they considered Rural Boards should, as far as possible, promote education by grants-in-aid to private institutions rather than through Board Schools. (Para 756 of the Report). There are in this Province 22, 822 primary schools for boys and girls recognised by the Department with a strength of 786,824 scholars, while private institutions number 4,931 with a strength of 117,430. Classifying villages according to population of from 1000 to 2000, from 500 to 1000, from 200 to 500 and less than 200, there are 7,334 villages in the first group, in the second 9,180, in the

third 11,471 and in the fourth 20,849 ; 78 per cent. in the first, 51 per cent. in the second, 23 per cent. in the third and three per cent. in the fourth group were provided with one or more public or private elementary schools. (*Vide* Statement 59, Statistics to the Director's Report 1907-1908.)

The inference that is drawn from the above is that taking the first three groups, villages with a population of more than 200 population are about 15,000 in number and are without any school. It is, therefore, argued that to maintain schools in these it will be necessary to secure at least 15,000 more teachers and to provide an annual cost of more than 20 lakhs. The fallacy in this last argument lies in the fact that it completely ignores the "group" system. Under the two Acts II of 1894 and III of 1895, the villages are grouped together for purposes of revenue administration. Two to eight villages are formed into one unit under the control of one Village Head and Karnam. It is agreed on all hands that one village Panchayat may be formed for each group. The village Panchayat encouraged to take a share in the management of village schools, money would be saved by letting them build and maintain simple school-houses. The area over which the work has to be begun is thus limited, and the necessary expenditure is likewise reduced.

The second fallacy that underlies the above argument is that it presumes that schools should be simultaneously established in every village or group of villages. Every Taluq Board and Municipality has to begin the

work. There are about 60 Municipalities and 82 Sub-District or Taluq Boards in this Province, with 384 Union Panchayats. About 55 Municipalities have a population of between 10,000 and 100,000. Under each of the Taluq Boards there are about 4 to 5 Union Panchayats.

The District Municipalities Act provides that a certain percentage of the revenue from House Tax should be spent on education. The Local Boards allot a lump-sum for education every year, but the management is entirely with the department. In places where there are Board schools there are also aided schools. The Local Board (Rural Board) has no power to locate schools as it resolves proper to distribute them. By emphasising the difference between rural and urban schools, by the grouping system and by judicious distribution of schools, the initial outlay is very much reduced and the number of schoolmasters required are also correspondingly reduced.

There is a more important factor which should be counted. It is admitted that the existing schools, as described above, do not contain the full complement of strength. The strength of most of the existing schools could be conveniently raised. The proportion of boys now under primary education to the total strength of the school-age children is 31·3 per cent., if the average full strength of a school be attained, the percentage will be much larger, without necessarily increasing the cost or demand for larger number of teachers. The average net cost on a boy also falls. The lowest esti-

mated cost per head is Rs. 2-11-3 in South Canara. With the increase of 867 Board Schools in the year, the average net expenditure (cost for the Boards) rose only from 6·8 to 7·1 per cent. of the income. Examined in the light of the above facts the conclusion of the Department that to provide education for the entire population of the school-going age, it would be necessary to have about six or seven times as many schools as at present and the annual cost of about Rs. 150 to 200 lakhs, does not stand as a serious obstacle.

The objection regarding trained teachers has some force; nevertheless it is not insurmountable. There are 22,002 schools in all, by the end of March 1908, and 32,706 teachers for these institutions. Distributing the schools for the children, we have about 33 children for each school and about 23 pupils for every teacher now employed. In the Board Schools the average is 29·8. In every district there are Sessional and Normal Schools. The Sessional School is maintained by the District Boards; it is removed from Taluq to Taluq as occasion requires. Unpassed teachers are also given certificates for approved service. By the extension of primary education, the Sessional Schools must be multiplied. When the percentage of pupils is raised in schools, the number of teachers will not increase in corresponding proportion to the rise in the number of pupils. The number of schools aided from or through Local Funds rose from 12,119 with 263,408 pupils to 12,766 with 308,952 pupils. The net expenditure, however, rose from 6·8 per cent. of the income to 7·1

per cent. The cost of providing teachers did not materially affect the progress of education.

The receipts (in 1907-08) on account of Provincial Funds amounted to $498\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs and were higher than those of 1906-07 by $7\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. The gross revenue of the Presidency under Imperial, Provincial and Local other than Municipal funds, amounted to Rs. 1,597 lakhs and exceeded that of the previous year by $41\frac{1}{2}$ Lakhs. From land Revenue alone the Provincial receipts amounted to 313 lakhs. Of the entire cost of expenditure on public schools, public funds met 47.38 per cent. (Administration Report, Madras, 1907-1908, para. 82), fees 22 per cent. The contribution under this head is Rs. 6,35,134. Free and compulsory education does not extend to the remission of this whole amount. In rural areas the elementary schools contain up to the fourth standard and sometimes higher; these latter would still continue to contribute fees. Fees met 18 per cent. of expenditure in Board Schools and 6 per cent. in Government schools. There are many free schools under the Local Boards. Remission of fees does not, therefore, throw very large burden on the Boards or on the Government. The annual recurring expenditure is met from savings in other departments. The Boards should have power to raise a small cess and support the Panchayats. The increased revenue from re-settlements must give the Government large surplus. The aggregate land revenue demand of districts, either newly settled or re-settled, was 26 per cent. in excess

of the demand prior to the re-settlement, and even if 10 per cent. of the ryots' money be devoted to primary education, it will cover a large portion of the cost of the scheme.

The Local Boards have now no adequate control over education. They are required to sanction funds as estimated by the department. The appointment of teachers, etc., apparently rests with the President, but virtually the Department has the last word. The inhabitants of a particular locality apply for the opening of new schools in their locality; the matter would be referred to the Sub-Assistant Inspector of Schools, the Officer in charge of the sub-division, and he would generally veto the proposal. In such cases the Village Panchayat is the best interpreter of the needs of the locality, and failing that, the Board is the better informed agency. As, in the case of opening village roads, the villagers are required to contribute a portion of the cost, the same may, with greater convenience, be applied to this case. In Madras and Bombay, the Boards do little more than vote money for their upkeep and sanction the proposals of the Educational Department. The Provinces in which the Boards have most real control appear to be the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and the two Bengals. In the United Provinces, the Deputy Inspectors of Schools are under the Boards; in Madras, even the Supervisors are provincialised; the result of this last change is that there is no adequate inspection of the work of rural schools; the work of a supervisor is now limited to

certain schools that are decided to be inspected at a conference of Supervisors and the Sub-Assistant Inspector of Schools.

The Royal Commission answers the contention of the Department in para 753 of the Report. "The Local Governments make substantial contributions towards the educational expenditure of the Boards, but we do not think this a valid argument for taking the practical management out of the hands of these bodies. Evidence has been given that they do not take any real interest in educational matters; and this is not unnatural since they are so closely restricted by departmental rules and Provincial Educational Codes, which settle the school curricula, the extent to which the grants-in-aid may be given, the proportion of masters to scholars, holidays, etc., that their management can be little more than nominal. We think that the Sub-District Boards, which should deal with education, should have reasonable latitude in these matters; that they should have discretion in regard to the extent to which they will aid private institutions, and that they should not, as now, for instance, in the Central Provinces, have to obtain the sanction of the Director of Public Instruction before they can close a school. We think, too, that the Boards should be encouraged to maintain their own inspecting staff." The Commission very rightly observes also that, in the absence of an inspecting agency of their own, they cannot be in a position to know the circumstances of the schools within their jurisdiction and the nature of aid to be

given to private schools or to the organisation of the Board Schools, and the recruitment of staff, etc., will, therefore, be in the hands of the Educational Department.

The Municipalities are required to spend 15 per cent. of the revenue from house-tax, the main source of income, on education. Certain Municipalities maintain high schools and secondary schools; this is desirable where funds permit, but in many other Municipalities even the percentage is not devoted to education. There are about 12 high schools maintained by the Municipalities; very few pay any attention to the education of girls. The Budget discussion evokes no interest in the Municipal Council, Public Works and communications take up the major portion of the revenue, hospitals and dispensaries stand next, but no adequate provision is made for education. The Royal Commission insist that it is obligatory on the Municipalities to confine their functions to primary instruction. Secondary education should be in the hands of the Government if a Municipality is able and willing to devote money to Middle Vernacular Schools, it may well be occupied with it. It is recommended that Municipalities and Local Boards should be relieved from the hard-and-fast rules and restrictions of the Provincial Educational Codes. The present restrictions are calculated to weaken the responsibilities of the Municipalities for educational work, though periodical inspection by the Government staff is very desirable.

Free and compulsory education first begun in large and most advanced Municipalities and Union

Panchayats will educate the people, and the system could, therefore, be easily carried into rural areas. It has already been observed that the Local Boards receive very little from fees—(the Note on Berhampore Municipality which is of an average type in this Province, will also show that very little income is derived from school fees in Municipalities also). In the Ganjam District, 1260 elementary schools were admitted to aid in 1900-10; these include the Municipal and Local Board Schools. In the Municipalities there are 35 elementary schools for boys with an average strength of about 30. The strength could be conveniently raised to 40 in each, that is, about 30 per cent. of the school-going boys could be educated without any extra cost. If the 15 per cent. of expenditure is insisted on in every Municipality, comparatively small amount of additional revenue is necessary. In some cases (to make the system compulsory) the deficit, if any, can be met from economising in other directions, supplemented by Provincial Funds or even by raising the tax on Arts. The same applies to rural Union Panchayats. It cannot be too well repeated that, under sympathetic control and guidance, the Panchayats can be made useful and willing instruments to carry on the work.

Beginning, therefore, with Municipal towns and Union Panchayats, the administration can work out the scheme gradually and extend it finally into all rural areas. The expenditure by the Government on Government Schools (Elementary Schools) is Rs. 65,174, Public

funds meet 58 per cent. of expenditure on Board aided and unaided schools. Primary education has until now cost Government but very little. It is time that the public should more actively move in the education of the masses. Unless an awakening is created in the country and a desire is really felt by the people, the action of Government will not bear fruit. It is time that public attention should be more largely engaged on this subject and until the masses are able to appreciate the altered conditions of life and the spirit of nationality that is moving the country, the new life principle, all reform and progress become impossible, extensions of local self-government, development of agricultural and industrial resources of the country, social reformation, elevation of the masses will end in a philosopher's dream. So action, immediate action, is necessary with the poet's faith :

“ The Angels that live with you
And are weaving laurels,
Over your youthful brows are
Toil, truth, and mutual faith.”

CHAPTER V.

THE MEANS.

The Report on Public Instruction in some of the Provinces for 1909-1910 are published. The Provincial Governments reviewed the educational condition of the Provinces and laid down the policy for the guidance of the Department for the next official year. These reports disclose, in a very striking manner, that the desire for education is making progress among the agricultural population. The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, observed that the increase in the aided and unaided primary schools is a sign of the people's efforts, however feeble, to provide some sort of education for their children. A good agricultural year brings such schools into being by hundreds: a bad year sweeps them out of existence: but the desire is there, and, given the requisite amount of support, mass education is sure to spread rapidly. The Report for the Punjab also records that there has been a pronounced increase in the number of pupils in practically every class of institution, and notes further that several District Boards have had the intelligence to raise the initial rate of pay for trained teachers to Rs. 14 and Rs. 16 a month; and elsewhere efforts are being made to improve their lot.

The Government of Madras, in reviewing the work of the Department, appreciate the progress of mass

education and emphasize the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation that Local Boards should direct their attention exclusively to the spread of elementary education. The question of opening elementary schools in important villages, where they do not already exist, demands careful attention on the part of the District and Taluk Boards and the Government assure us in their review that they will consider the question of assisting financially such Boards as cannot provide funds for the purpose. Speaking of the resources of the Local Boards in Bengal, the Director of Public Instruction observed, since the Local Self-Government Act came into operation about a quarter of a century ago, practically no augmentation has been made of the resources placed at the disposal of the Boards, for financing the primary schools, which were then placed under their control. Many of the Boards are anxious to advance primary education, but they are faced with difficulties. In the Madras Presidency, the Government give subsidy to the Local Boards towards the grant-in-aid to be given to the aided schools and the capitation allowance in Boards Schools. This is now given directly out of the Provincial Funds.

The provincialisation of Supervisors of Schools is a step in the right direction. The Boards and Municipalities are relieved of a serious financial burden, thus leaving them with an additional fund which can be judiciously applied to the advancement of Primary education. In the Punjab, the figures show that there

has been a pronounced increase in the number of pupils, but, owing to scarcity of funds, the extension of school accommodation could not proportionately be advanced. It is, therefore, argued in some quarters, the paucity of funds, which lies at the root of the evils described, is an unanswerable argument against the ill-considered proposal to abolish school fees. This demand is based on the erroneous idea that conditions in India are analogous to those which prevail in European countries; the granting of free education in England was the necessary accompaniment of the institution of compulsory attendance, but the introduction of the compulsory principles in this country is out of the question, and the abolition of fees would be a retrograde step which would have disastrous effects upon educational progress. This criticism is based on two fallacies, that general education of the masses is not wanted and that if a reform is opposed to a theory upheld in the past, it should not be advocated.

It is needless to examine the remarks at length. The Editor of the "Pioneers in Education" series, Mr. Gabriel Compayre, has answered this that the early struggles in European countries bear strong analogy to our struggles in this country. In the sketches of the work of representative men of the epoch "Rousseau and Education from Nature," "Pastalozzi and Elementary Education," we find the real solution to the problem of free and compulsory education. We are shown face to face ideas held long ago with modern

opinions, with the needs and the aspirations of society to-day, thus to prepare the way for the solution of the problems confronting us. It is very truly said, "the progress of education is the question of life and death for society and the individual alike." The regrettable lack of information on the real conditions of the country displayed in the criticism quoted above is typical. The Reports of the Department prove the great eagerness on the part of the masses for education. That with a prosperous year the schools and the pupils multiply is an unanswerable argument to the opposers of free education.

"The demand that is being put forward, for a great extension of primary education in India, opens up large questions of finance which those who are clamouring for greater facilities show no willingness to face." This is the criticism of a leading Anglo-Indian Journal of Calcutta. It betrays ignorance of the nature of discussion that is carried on in various provinces, and the deliberate forgetfulness of the scheme proposed by the Honourable Mr. Gokhale in the Imperial Council. "If all boys of school-going age were at school to-day the additional cost that would have to be incurred for their education would be four crores of rupees." Even this is overdrawn as the full scheme of free and compulsory education is *not sought* to be introduced *at once*. The gradual extension of the system might take a decade or two before its completion. Beginning with the Municipalities and Unions or with Special Centres in each Province, the system has to be

worked out. As in Europe, so in India, educational reform has its obstacles and facilities alike. While it took longer time in Europe to break through "the routine of tradition" and to break short off with the past, we may expect that the lessons from the struggles and progress of civilised races and the altered conditions of our country will facilitate progress in a shorter space of time. We are now in the wake of the new spirit of Union and Nationality and are willing to sacrifice and are more ready to take up the responsibility. The country is prepared, as the leader of Indian Public opinion has observed, to bear a small rise in the salt tax. The unexpected surplus of finance is a pleasant surprise to the Finance Minister and judicious retrenchment of expenditure, in more than one direction, points to the goal most unmistakably. The recent discussion on the financial resolution in the Imperial Council assures us that retrenchment of expenditure will be possible. All things are now leading up to the financial facilities of the scheme. "In reality the question is merely one of the Government having the will to extend primary education. As for the way there is enough of it."

Referring again to the requirements of our Province, we must insist on the Local Boards to be more active than they have been hitherto. Section 34 of the Local Boards Act empowers the Board to make rules consistent with the Act and with any rules framed by the Governor-in-Council in regard to the division of duties among the members of the Board and the appointment

and procedure of a committee consisting wholly of a certain number of Taluq Board members or partly of such members and partly other inhabitants of the local area for the superintendence and management of educational institutions maintained by the Board. It will be interesting to learn how many of the Boards have taken advantage of this provision. The grants-in-aid being now a charge entirely on provincial revenue, the Boards are unable to start more schools. The revenue under the head of fees from primary schools is very little. In standards up to the third where the teacher is entitled to take the fees, it is entirely optional; in higher standards fees are levied. In Board Schools capitation allowance is granted to the teacher. In rural areas representative committees should be immediately formed, always taking care to enlist the support of leading ryots (avoiding local factions of course); these committees should be attached to and work under the Board as advisory committees. The Board then will be in a position to know the real wants of the people and adequate provision could then be made to meet the necessary demand. These advisory committees do not conflict with the Government inspecting officers; they will be real help to them. No question of increased financial responsibility would arise. Construction of rural school buildings, encouragement of attendance of boys, location of schools can be entrusted to these committees. There are 23 District Boards with a maximum strength of 747 and 82 Taluk Boards with a maximum strength.

of 1225. Union Panchayats exist for important villages or groups of villages in all the districts except South Canara and the Nilgiris, the total number being 384 (1907-08). The sanctioned maximum strength of these bodies is about 4767.

Now, it may be noted that some members of the District Boards are also members of the Taluq Boards and some members of the Union Panchayats are also members of the Taluq Boards. Since the introduction of the elective principle in the Boards, the old indifference has begun to disappear; experience will show that the Presidents of the Boards are not generally now unwilling to sympathise with and support a practical scheme for progress, provided matters are clearly set out in a businesslike manner. Without the sympathy of the local officials it is impossible for non-official members to carry out any proposal, but this would not imply blind obedience to the wishes of the presiding officer—a certain amount of work, study, experience and tactfulness is required in dealing with these questions in the mofussil. The assurance given by the Government, that financial assistance will be given, ought to be an incentive to the Boards to extend primary education. Budgets of the past few years, when studied carefully, will disclose the amount of receipts from school-fees and the amount expended under this head, together with the subsidy received from Government. The list prepared by the Department at a Conference of Inspectors will show the number and the name of schools decided upon to receive

aid for the year. The village list and the revenue group of villages will help one to see if villages of a certain population have or have not a school. With this information it is possible to adjust the Board's finance, the savings of grants-in-aid, the special subsidy, to make education free and compulsory in special areas.

It is a well-known fact that every year large sums of money are allowed to lapse from grant I., as the works are not completed and paid for within the year. The construction of rural schools is also debited to this head. The lapsed sums go to swell the general balance which can be tapped to some extent for the educational grant. Under the head of communications and water-supply, special grants are given to Boards and Municipalities. In some cases it happens that the full amount cannot be spent. It is no doubt expected that before the special grant is applied for, the Boards have their estimates in readiness and are prepared to utilise the amount during the year. The unexpended balance can, with the previous sanction of the Government, be diverted to the education grant. The object of referring to the above method is to direct the attention of those interested in the education of the masses to the importance of study of local conditions and the practical application of funds.

With the help of the committees as described above, the real defects can be known and remedied; with the adjustment of finances, elementary education can be extended very rapidly. There are about

422 non-official members in the District Boards and about 821 members in the Taluq Boards; a few out of this large number must combine in each district. By their united effort can be worked a practical scheme of extending education among the masses, without which substantial progress in any direction is not possible.

RURAL SANITATION.

The question of rural sanitation should not be confined to providing water supply for human beings only. The dumb creation is entitled to merciful treatment. Cattle mortality is very large in certain places and that happens during the dry season. The diseases of cattle mostly prevail in the wet weather, the foot and the mouth diseases principally. In other seasons where the irrigation tanks are cut up for raising the second crop and the bathing tanks are reserved, when there are no nullahs and gorges, storage of water, the hardships which cattle owners are subject to are indeed great. There are instances where herds of cattle, cows, bullocks, she-buffaloes are driven for a distance of over three to four miles to provide them a drink. The number of agricultural stock, during the agricultural year 1909-1910, in Ganjam, is reported to be as follows:—actuals, bulls and bullocks 22,408; cows 99,793; male buffaloes 38,524; cow buffaloes 24,393, young stock 94,870; sheep and goats number 109,115. This calculation excludes a large number of cattle not used for agricultural purposes. The number of tanks in the District are as follows:—Government 2,476 and private 207; spring channels total 262; in addition to these, Government anicuts are three and ayakat wells private 2,694 and supplemental 374. Taking these sources of water supply (relating to irrigation

works only) and distributing them over the whole extent of land, acres 5,362,976, or net area under cultivation, acres 1,817,047, the provision for water supply seems alarmingly defective. We have not got materials to ascertain definitely all the sources of water supply but the non-irrigation tanks and wells would not raise the percentage very much. It should also be noted that though the total average rainfall in Ganjam is 41 inches, in the dry weather (January to March) the average is 1'61 but often the mango showers fail as in this year. In the hot weather (April and May) the average is 1'56 ; when the north-east monsoon fails (October to December) the condition of the District becomes deplorable. There are not many tanks now for storage of water. In the Taluks where the canal system was introduced, all the available irrigation tanks were sold for profit by the revenue department and after the irrigation season, no water is available in the other tanks. The storage, if any, is utilised for second crop. For each district and taluk and for each firka we can work out the available sources of water-supply and prove that provision should be made for cattle. But this is only to clear the ground.

The resolution before the last meeting of the Madras Legislative Council for providing medical aid in the agency tracts was withdrawn after the vigorous attack from the Government. One cannot pretend to know all the details regarding the whole area in the Ganjam and Vizagapatam agency or in Godavari. Even a small acquaintance with the large agency tracts in

Ganjam would show that local authorities have adequately provided medical aid in the Maliahs. Taking the average area in the plains for which local funds provided relief, it is not at all surprising it should be so in the agency. There no urgent demand can at once be seen when the list of halting stations and Police Stations in the agency tracts is taken up. At most of the principal centres through which traffic passes or at all accessible places provision of some sort is made. It is absurd to say that the provision can be made in the agency tracts as easily as it can be in the plains. The Agents take with them medical officers in their periodical tours and endeavour to distribute stock of medicines. The Khonds and Sowras or the more civilised inhabitants of the agency tracts do not care for treatment in the dispensaries. They have their drugs and juices which sometimes work miraculously. The second difficulty is that qualified men are not easily procurable to service in these tracts. I would not labour the point any more at present. It was wise that the resolution was withdrawn.

Rural sanitation requires to be urgently attended to as it is an admitted fact. It is treated under three main heads, prevention of diseases by medical aid, vaccination and water-supply and improvement of village sites, namely, scavenging, sweeping and miscellaneous works, including removal of prickly pear, destruction of rank vegetation, removal of weeds from tanks, covering stagnant pits and pools. There are two classes of relief-works, major

sanitary works in Municipalities and other works in the local board areas. We shall discuss the latter at first. Under the head of Grant III-d, sanitation, the budget of the District Board, Ganjam, for 1910-11 provided Rs. 23,311 under the head of sanitation. This includes a sum of Rs. 5,134 for Berhampore Taluk Board and Rs. 2,237 and 1,355 for Chicacole and Gumsoor Taluk Boards respectively. The Union Panchayats provide Rs. 14,587. The total revenue of the Board for 1910-11 with the opening balance was Rs. 4,94,068. Thus about 5 per cent. of the revenue is devoted to sanitation. For the Districts of Vizagapatam the total receipts including opening balance is shown to be Rs. 4,35,293 for 1910-11 and the total expenditure under sanitation is shown to be Rs. 27,236. It must be explained that a large portion of this expenditure is increased by the Union Panchayats. The Panchayats maintain the improvements of village sites, etc., the Taluk Boards only provide for water-supply and in very special cases pay for scavenging in non-Union villages through sanitary committees. Under the present system the duty of improving village sites falls entirely on Union Panchayats. The Sanitary Inspectors are a luxury except in times of epidemics. Improvement of water supply ought to stand foremost in the programme of local boards. The schemes for various Municipal towns have been long pending for disposal. The Government have not been able to provide funds in

some cases and in others adequate staff for working out the plans have not been provided—a detailed enquiry is very necessary. The Municipalities taxed themselves to the maximum in all respects. Fresh taxation on the face of it seems impossible—Municipal finances should be readjusted. In recent years, the Government have been making liberal provision under the head of sanitation for local Boards. The special grant is ear-marked for improvement of rural water-supply or for removal of congested areas in Unions and towns. The responsibility of carrying out the work and administering the funds falls largely on the Taluk Boards. The District Board has nothing whatever to do except that it disburses the funds according to the demand shown by the Taluk Boards. The next year's grant depends upon the ability and the efficiency with which the last year's budget grant was utilised. In 1910-11, Government provided Rs. 1,70,707 out of provincial funds in aid of sanitation. In Para 12 of G.O. No. 1253 L. dated 4th September 1912, the Government while reviewing the sanitary history of the year 1911, commended to the special consideration of all local boards the remarks of the Sanitary Commissioner regarding the importance of providing each town or village with at least one properly covered well and observed that as the existence of such protected sources of water-supply is of particular value in the Cholera season they would always be ready to look favourably upon applications for assistance towards works of this character from the Special

provincial grant-in-aid of sanitation. In the last G. O. 247 L, dated 12th February 1913, Government indicated the action which should be taken to initiate an organised attempt to improve and protect rural water-supply with a view to check outbreaks of cholera and proposing to make an allotment to District Boards of five lakhs from Provincial Funds during the year 1913-14 for the protection of some 500 wells by the provision of pumps and other improvements. In addition to this Special Grant, the Taluk Boards are called upon to prepare a programme for sanitary works for five years and to forward it to the sanitary Commissioner so that works in their order of urgency may be approved. The practical difficulties in the preparation of this programme and in the execution of works sanctioned are threefold.

For the preparation of the programme Taluk Boards completely depend upon the reports of Revenue Officers—so far as the Union Panchayat is concerned it is able to make out its own requirements and that of its neighbourhood. Beyond that no help can be obtained from these bodies. References made to landholders and managers of estates and appeals made to representatives of circles do not generally elicit any useful information. It devolves upon the executive to look for itself and find from village officials the needs of the locality and enter a village well or a tank in the programme. It is very discouraging that members of the Taluk Boards do not realise their particular responsibility. The people sometimes send in *arjis* to the

Collector who forwards them to the Board for disposal. What ought to be done is this: that at the time of last Jamabandi, a proclamation should be issued to all villages calling upon them to state the defects of water-supply—sometimes the irrigation sources may be confounded with drinking, water-supply; nevertheless, a register prepared at the time can be conveniently scrutinized and works in their order of urgency and importance can be taken into the programme. It is here again the necessity for popular education shows itself. With the formation of a village panchayat for a group of villages, the local Boards can at once refer the matter to them and ascertain the real needs of the locality. The report of the Royal Commission upon Decentralisation, Chap. XVIII, thus summarises the functions of the Village Panchayat. It is most desirable to constitute and develop Village Panchayats for the administration of certain local affairs within the villages. The functions of Panchayats must be largely determined by local circumstances and experience. They should be allowed to incur expenditure on the clearing of the village and minor village work. Panchayats should receive special grants for particular objects of local importance—gradual introduction of the system is sure to bring immense practical benefit to Local Boards. The object of the Government in providing Special grants for water-supply can be more effectively achieved.

The second difficulty, in addition to the little co-operation of the members, is that estimates for

sanitary works should be prepared in stereotyped form. All estimates above Rs. 500 must go before the Sanitary Commissioner and estimates of still higher value must be approved by the Sanitary Board. The said authorities on technical objections or on suggestions of deviation from the original plan or estimate return the same for amendment. Thus most valuable time is lost and the season passes without any relief to the locality. The Sanitary Engineer in his tours and the Sanitary Commissioner in his inspection of localities can only make suggestions in the municipal area. Regarding the Taluk Boards, there is absolutely no need for this delay—a separate department should be created as shown elsewhere. If works are executed on the responsibility of the Taluk Board, the Audit Department will make the whole expenditure invalid. In times of scarcity or in seasons of epidemics when water-supply is most needed the Taluk Board has to look at the situation without being able to afford any relief. Over and above the difficulties is the proper administration of the allotment, the apathy of the people themselves is most deplorable.

A third difficulty is that Local Boards should not always be made to depend upon Special Grants from Provincial Funds. This is contingent on surplus from provincial budget. The amount of the subsidy must necessarily be a fluctuating amount. Pressing demands on Provincial revenue from other sources are sure to reduce it, if not eliminate the grant that should go under this head. The Government should place the

rural boards on a sounder financial footing. The Decentralisation Commission (para 773 of the Report) recommend the means by which such a result can be achieved: (i) By letting the rural boards have the whole of land cess. (ii) By rateable distribution of the Special Grant of 35 per cent. on the land cess now made. (iii) By increasing this grant when circumstances permit by taking over charges, inspection of trunk roads, relief of famine and plague, local veterinary work. Famine and plague charges are now borne from provincial funds. The successful working of rural sanitation does not entirely depend upon funds. The enthusiasm displayed and the interest taken by the members of the Local Boards will enable the Board to discover the real necessity of a locality. There are Sanitary Committees attached to some Boards and these advisory Boards are capable of collecting information, but it is generally impracticable to get them together and make them go round the Taluk. There is a vast field for active and useful work. Local patriotism and sincere devotion to work must prevail. It may not be possible for every one to be a hero but it is given to every member of the Taluk Board and Union Panchayat to study the local conditions of the taluk and render help in the proper administration of the grant. If this cannot be done thoroughly and if the people's needs cannot be properly understood all our political agitation becomes meaningless. The masses are indifferent to the water they drink during epidemics, cattle and men are freely let into the tanks,

clothes are washed in the pond or at the well—unclean vessels and pots are let into the well or pond. No outlet is provided at the base of wells for dirty water to drain off, pollution is not cared for—people carrying corpses plunge themselves into the tank and wash their clothes in the tanks or at the wells thus contaminating the whole village. Last season in these two Districts cholera raged high, the mortality in certain localities was very great. It is not till after it was late that help could be given by the Local Board President. There was ample opportunity for the members to work and bring the state of things to the notice of the President and the Medical Officer. Small tracts in the Vernacular explaining the methods of keeping clean the village well and the village tank will serve useful purpose. People will not listen to the preachings of a Sanitary Inspector or Sub-Assistant Surgeon. They are accustomed to do these things, their habits must be changed. Is it possible for others to help them to do better? It is people's representatives that should do the work. It is the work among the people and for the people that becomes our primary duty. Any amount of special grant or subsidy or any scheme by the sanitary Board or expert advice will not be effective; people must know their own need and only then could expert advice be of any use. Education of the masses and formation of panchayats are indeed the remedies but these cannot be worked from the Legislative Councils but only from Local Boards and Union Panchayats.

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