EDUCATION IN CEYLON

A Centenary Volume

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(FROM THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C. TO THE PRESENT DAY)

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CHAPTER 31

EARLY BRITISH EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

RANJIT T. RUBERU

The beginning of British administration in Ceylon was the conquest of the maritime provinces of the Island hitherto held by the Dutch East India Company.[1] on the premise that these territories ' might be restored to Holland '[2] as soon as Holland and England came to a peace settlement in Europe, it was found unnecessary to create a separate government. Therefore, these territories were ' made a dependence of the Madras Presidency and the administration of the Governor in Council at Madras commenced '. This administration continued until in 1798 when the British Government changed the policy and decided to rule the territories ' jointly held by the East India Company and the Imperial Government.'[3]

The system and method of governing pursued by the Madras administration had the most deteriorating effect on educational activities in the recently acquired Dutch territories. The Commander-in-Chief under the Madras administration was the military governor, who had a discretionary authority on military as well as on civil matters. The civil government was carried on by members of the Madras civil service whose duties were administrative, financial and judicial ; the most important being the collection of the revenue. The revolt that broke out in 1797 was only an expression of protest by the people against an administration ' most violent in its operation and much . . . . repugnant ' to their ' feelings.'[4]

RUBERU, T. RANJIT, B.SC.(CEYLON), P.G.C.E. Academic Diploma in Education, PH.D.(LONDON). Dr. Ruberu is a Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. He has made several contributions to learned journals and is the author of several publications on education. He is the author of "Education in Colonial Ceylon."

The Impact of the Madras Administration on the Dutch Educational System

As indicated elsewhere,[5] these territories possessed a well organised educational system under the Dutch. The immediate impact of the Madras administration on this educational system had been one of destruction and ruin.

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The chief concern of the Madras rulers being to consolidate the political power and economic position of the Company, the ' Dutch educational system was allowed to fall into disuse by the military governors.'[6] This has been very well expressed in the writings of the Rev. James Cordiner,[7] in the following manner :—

" Early in the year 1796, all the Dutch settlements in Ceylon surrendered to the British arms. For nearly three years after they were taken possession of, the religious establishments of the natives occupied no attention of the new government. The European clergymen became prisoners of war. The catechists and school-masters no longer received their salaries. The duties of public worship and the education of the youth, began either to be feebly discharged or entirely neglected, and memorials presented by the inhabitants on these subjects were considered by a military commander either as objects in which he had no concern, or matters which he had not power to redress."[8]

Nothing better could be expected from an administration which was in the hands of a commercial company. They cared less for the promotion of education than for the collection of money and riches to the Company. This indifferent attitude towards education was really an expression of the policy of the East India Company at the time. Even in India, this Company did not take any steps to promote the education of Indians until the Company became a political power. It was only after the Charter Act of 1813, that the Company accepted ' responsibility for the education of the Indians. '[9]

Resuscitation of the Dutch School System

The change of administration in 1798 from that of Madras government to one of ' Dual Control '[10] between the Company and the Imperial Government could not bring about the desired political stability. This was evident in the final decision of the British Government, taken in 1802, to declare these territories a Crown Colony. Accordingly on January 1st, 1802, the control of the East India Company ceased and the maritime provinces became a Crown Colony under the immediate control of the Colonial Office in London.

Dual control was not politically successful. Nevertheless, it laid the foundation for the advancement of education in the country because of a civil governor taking over the responsibility of administration. The new Governor, who happened to be the Hon. Frederic North[11], the third son of the second Earl of Guildford, took personal interest in the promotion of Christianity and Education. Consequently, the short period of his administration initiated a revival of schools and the beginning of several new educational developments.

On his arrival, in October 1798, with the commencement of the ' Dual Control,' North discovered that the Dutch educational system in these territories had been allowed to fall into disuse by the military governors of the Company. Only a few schoolmasters continued to work, in spite of their not being paid by the Government. Their position as village registrars kept them faithful to their work. But the

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schools in general were in a very poor state, and, in some cases, the masters could not continue their work even if they desired to do so, chiefly because the school buildings had either fallen down or were on the verge of collapse.

North was however impressed by the Dutch educational system that existed in these territories during their time. This is evident in his observations:

> " . . . . if the plans introduced by the Dutch were quietly and steadily pursued there was good reason to believe that the whole *Cingalese* (Sinhalese) nation might in time be converted. "[12]

A practical difficulty Governor North encountered when he tried to reorganise education in the settlements, was the absence of clergymen who could assist him in such work. North's ambition was to promote a Western education in a Christian environment and, the non-availability of English clergymen was really a great handicap. By releasing the Dutch clergymen who had been imprisoned by the Madras administration, he was able to get the services of about ten of them. Yet, the fact that the Dutch clergymen refused to pray for His Majesty, the King of Great Britain, disqualified them from receiving any authoritative position in the Government.[13] It was only after the arrival of the Rev. James Cordiner and the missionaries of the London Missionary Society[14] at this time, that North was able to overcome the difficulties and work on a planned scheme of educational reconstruction in the settlements.

Reorganising of the Parish Schools

The arrival of the Rev. James Cordiner in the Island could be considered as the starting point of the reorganisation of Parish Schools. Cordiner was invited to Ceylon by North to be Chaplain-in-Charge of the garrison in Colombo. After his arrival, however, he was given the additional task of becoming the

> " Superintendent of all the schools, and the Examiner of the candidates for the Office of Schoolmasters."[15]

He was always referred to as the ' Principal of Schools ' and he worked in this capacity throughout his stay in the country. With the arrival of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society in 1803, it became possible for North to get their assistance as well, for the ' general instruction of the natives. '[16] The appointment of Cordiner as the Principal of Schools, therefore, initiated the State School System in the country.

The first action of Cordiner to bring the Parish Schools on a better footing was to request the Governor to pay the salaries of the school masters. Cordiner recommended that ' eight *Rix Dollars* should be paid to each school '[17] as salaries. This request was granted by the Governor. By doing so, he created a precedent for extending financial grants of government to schools. It is true that the grant given was a small amount, yet, the system of paying grants started with it. The practice of the school masters working as registrars of marriage and keeping such records in the school continued in the same manner they were done under the Dutch.[18]

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The second step in the direction of rehabilitating the Parish Schools was the appointment of preachers and catechists to supervise work done in the schools. The plan was to appoint one preacher to each of the principal towns. Cordiner records that Colombo, Negombo, Chilaw, Puttalam, Mannar, Jaffna and Batticaloa, each had a preacher as an officiating clergyman to the native Christians in the locality. Every Sunday he had to hold divine service in one of the churches in his area. In addition, he had to examine the conduct and efficiency of the catechists and school masters. A report had to be submitted to the Principal of Schools on the progress of work done in the schools he examined.

A majority of Parish Schools were housed in buildings that had been erected by the Dutch. The staff of a Parish School very often had one to four teachers depending on the size of the school. When there were more than one teacher, the eldest as a rule worked as the Headmaster of the school. The Headmaster was responsible for the general administration of the school, and the keeping of school records for the government. He was the counterpart of the *Thombo Holder* in the Dutch Parish School.[19]

The curriculum of the Parish School included Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Catechism; all of which were taught in the mother tongue of the pupils. Reading involved the reading of the Bible. The object of reviving the Parish Schools being to 'promote the growth of religious knowledge',[20] religious instruction took a prominent place in the curriculum. They provided education for both boys and girls, but, generally girls attended in smaller numbers than boys. They were purely vernacular schools that helped the spread of vernacular education among the rural people.

The Parish Schools organised by the British differed from those of the Dutch by the absence of any compulsion on the attendance of children. Having no law compelling children to attend school, poor attendance was a characteristic feature. To overcome this, the Governor issued proclamations in the *Government Gazette* ordering

> "All Protestant parents to send their children to the established schools," and requesting the *Mudaliars* and Headmen, "to see that this order was carried into effect."[21]

From the foregoing account, it becomes clear that North's scheme to revive the Parish Schools was successful. He rebuilt schools where they were required. School masters were appointed and their salaries were paid by the government. By the appointment of the Principal of Schools, the catechists and preachers, some amount of superintendence became possible. Finally, by means of proclamations, North attempted to encourage children attending these schools.

The revival of the Parish Schools was only a part of the plan of educational reforms envisaged by North. While the Parish Schools were to give an elementary education in the vernacular to a bulk of the population, North recognised the importance of making provision for English education among the better off in

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society. For such purpose, he embarked on the building-up of a Superior School System, recommending to the British Government the feasibility of giving Scholarships for a selected few to go to England and receive University education.

Superior Schools and Scholarships

The purpose of establishing Superior Schools had been explained by North in the following manner :

> " . . . . it is my wish to establish few others (schools) of a superior nature, for the education of the children of *Burghers*, and of those natives, whose families are eligible to the office of *Mudaliars* and to other Dignities and charges given by government to the native servants."[22]

The education given in these Superior Schools was to be of a higher order than that imparted in the Parish Schools.

These Superior Schools were of two kinds. There was the Academy or Seminary in Colombo, that gave the highest possible education in the country. The other category of Superior Schools included the Preparatory Schools that performed a dual function of giving superior instruction as well as preparing candidates for the Academy. The Superior Schools collectively served the purpose of providing ' well qualified candidates for all the offices' of the Government recruited from native families.[23]

The Preparatory Schools admitted boys at the age of eight and they were to stay in school for eight years. There is no evidence of any girls being admitted to the Preparatory Schools which were perhaps exclusively boys' schools. The purpose of the Preparatory Schools was to impart ' a rudimentary English education ' and, the curriculum included ' English, the native languages and the lower humanities '[24]. By giving an education for eight years with English as a subject, these schools were sufficient to prepare candidates for government service.

The other function of these Preparatory Schools was to prepare candidates for the Academy. Children in the Preparatory Schools who ' showed extraordinary application and ability ' in their work were to be admitted to the Academy. They were to be educated at the expense of the Government.

The Academy or the Seminary as it was sometimes called, was established in Colombo. In its organisation, the Academy consisted of three separate schools described as the Sinhalese school, the Tamil school and the European school. The three schools, although they were housed in the same building, worked independently of each other.

One important function of the Academy was to prepare youths for the public service. In addition, the scholars whom North intended to send to England for university education were also to be selected from the Academy. On their return to the Island, they were to supply the needs of the Church as well as fill posts in government. By such means North planned to place in the country,

> " respectable individuals connected with England by education and by office ; and connected by ties of Blood with the principal native families in the country."[25]

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The curriculum of the Academy included English, the mother tongue of the children, and ' subjects which were common in the English Seminaries '. Special attention was paid to the teaching of ' oriental and native literature ' with a view ' to bring to light any extraordinary talents' of the children ' which might otherwise pass through life dormant and unobserved.' [26]

The Academy was to be a free boarding school where children were to be lodged, fed, educated and even clothed at the expense of the Government.[27] But owing to the heavy expenses the Government had to incur, fee-paying scholars were also admitted later. In 1802 there were 85 students of whom 49 were fee-paying day-scholars and, 36 free boarders. The first appointment to Government service from the Academy was made in March 1802 when, two of the oldest students were ' selected as Interpreters to the provincial courts of Colombo '. The Government began to reap the benefits of the Institution much sooner than expected.[28]

The scholarships envisaged by North at the outset of his educational reforms did not materialise. The Secretary of State considered the feasibility of the plan as ' liable to considerable doubts.' [29]

Under North's educational reforms, the Orphan-Houses of the Dutch also received attention. These Orphan-Houses were to be preserved and revived for the benefit of

> ' the children of lower classes of Burghers of both sexes, and for foundlings ' and, ' half-caste children born to native women by European fathers '.

Such children were to be brought up in these Institutions at Government expense and given a vocational education. It is evident that Orphan-Houses were established in the principal towns of Colombo, Galle, Trincomalee and Jaffna.

The establishment of Madrasas or Muslim schools was also a part of North's plan. North considered the education of Mohammedans as a service of great value. This is evident in his remarks :

> ' the gross ignorance of the professors of this religion in matters of their own law ' is a ' source of constant tumult and dispute among them. '

By improving educational facilities for the Muslims, North hoped to ameliorate such a situation.[30]

Financial Stringency of the British Government and the Curtailment of Educational Reforms of North

The rapid rise in the cost of education because of the reforms undertaken by North did not receive the approval of the Home Government. The Secretary of State considered the expenditure as excessive, and advised the Governor to curtail such expenses. The Despatch dated 8th February, 1803, instructed the Governor in the following manner :

> ' In the educational establishment it will be proper that a considerable reduction should be made, and you will, therefore, not consider yourself at liberty to charge the public revenue with a sum exceeding £ 1,500 annually, for the purpose of that establishment.' [31]

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This was a drastic reduction from about £ 5,000 to £ 1,500. North realised that such reduction on the educational expenditure would curtail the progress he already had achieved. Yet, it was not within his power to ignore the instructions of His Majesty's Government, and finally began to economise on education by closing down some of the educational establishments and retrenching the staff of the others. The Orphan Houses were closed. The Academy was made smaller and was ultimately removed to new premises which did not involve any house rent. The salary paid to the teachers of Parish Schools had to be withdrawn and they ceased to be maintained by public funds any more.

Both North and Cordiner felt deeply about the destruction of the school system they laboured to build up in the colony. They were anxious to leave the colony not with the intention of forgetting about the educational needs of the country, but, with the determination to agitate in England on the Government's responsibility to promote education. Cordiner left in March 1804 with the arrival of a successor, the Rev. T. J. Twisleton. North retired only after the arrival of Major General Sir Thomas Maitland in July 1805. With the departure of North, two pioneers in the field of education in the Island were lost to the country.

Education under Maitland

In the chequered history of education in the country, the next seven years that constituted the period of administration of Sir Thomas Maitland[32] saw very little progress in education. This was a consequence of the economic measures enforced by the Home Government referred to above. The decline of education in the country, nevertheless, caused much alarm in England, and Maitland's administration was criticised by his own countrymen. This happened to be an interesting period in which much discussion on education took place although material progress remained at a low level.

Maitland was ' by temperament an administrative reformer ' and it was the administration of the colony that attracted his attention. He introduced several administrative changes for which he is still remembered. Although the administration improved, education continued to be neglected. There was no increase in the number either of schools or of school masters. There was no evidence of any attempt on the part of Maitland's Government to spend money on education, and the schools that were closed on the orders of the Home Government continued to be closed. The Academy in Colombo also faced the same calamity. It was reduced to a comparatively small school under the name ' United School ', maintained at the very low cost of about 275 *Rix Dollars a* year.[33] Therefore, it must be concluded that during the years which followed the retirement of North and Cordiner, educational progress in the colony came to a standstill. This is well expressed in the words of Maitland himself in the statement made to the Home Government to the effect that,

> " the religion of the Island and the facility of education stands in all its points exactly where it did when I arrived." [34]

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Repercussions in England

Both Governor North and the Rev. James Cordiner agitated in England about the neglect of education in the colony. They made representations to the Secretary of State about the adverse effects of the withdrawal of the allowances which had been paid to school masters by the Government. The Secretary of State wrote :

> " it is stated by Mr. North that the restriction of allowances for the support of the public schools seems to have been carried too far." [35]

The same ' is confirmed ', continued the Secretary of State,

> " by the report of Mr. Cordiner, who was at the time Head of this establishment there and has lately returned." [36]

The most effective criticism came from an outsider, the Rev. Claudius Buchanan.[37] He happened to be an eye-witness of the Ceylon scene and made agitation in England about the deplorable state of Christianity and education in Ceylon. Buchanan was very successful in criticising the administration of Maitland and, highlighting the ' official neglect ' of Christianity and education in the British settlements in Ceylon. He was able to arouse public interest in England by pointing out that,

> " . . . . from want of Protestant instruction, the secession to the Romish Communion, and to the idolatry of the Idol Boodha (Buddha), is as might be expected, very great . . . . Our first measures in supplying instruction are claimed by the Protestant Christians of the Island." [38]

Such observations of Buchanan, on the neglect of Christianity and education in the colony, together with the view held at the time that Maitland was even ' encouraging paganism ' prompted the well known philanthropist, William Wilberforce, to make representations to the Secretary of State accusing Maitland's government. Wilberforce was able to enlist the support of the Secretary of State to question Maitland on ' the measures supposed to have been taken ' by him, tending to ' the suppression of school masters in the Island ' and even ' encouraging the natives, actually converted, to relapse to paganism.' [39]

When one recalls the circumstances that led to the suspension of school masters, such criticism seems unfounded. It was on the orders of the Home Government that the salaries of the school masters were withdrawn in 1803, much before the commencement of Maitland's government. Maitland's retaliation to such criticism by stating,

> " . . . . it was not my business to interfere with an arrangement made under a positive order long before I assumed the government." [40]

had been quite justifiable.

Nevertheless, Maitland took such criticism rather seriously. This is evident from the pledge he gave to the Secretary of State in reply.

> " . . . . Since I received your Lordship's orders, it has naturally occupied considerable share of my attention, and I have very soon found it would be a

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matter of no difficulty whatsoever to set up any nominal establishment of school masters and scholars I might have wished . . . . I shall venture to promise that in the course of the ensuing two months all the schools in the Island will be in a full state of activity."[41]

Accordingly, Maitland submitted a scheme of reform to the Home Government. The suggested reforms included among others the repair and maintenance of school buildings, payment of salaries to school masters, the training of them, and improving the quality of teaching in schools.

The Home Government readily approved the scheme submitted by Maitland. When granting approval, the Secretary of State observed,

" . . . . His Majesty is pleased highly to approve of the establishment made by you of public schools for the improvement of Education and the extension of the knowledge of the Christian Religion."[42]

Moreover, the Home Government considered it feasible to send a few youths to England for higher education.

" 'Much advantage might, I conceive', observed the Secretary of State when writing to Maitland, ' result from the plan you suggest of sending home a certain number of the children of the most powerful natives to be educated and ordained in Scotland'. "[43]

As a result of this change of attitude on the part of the Home Government, Maitland was able to introduce some reforms into the school system. He restored the payment of salaries to school masters. The Academy was placed on a better footing by raising the salaries of the teachers. A system of scholarships was also initiated by sending ' native youths' to England for further education. Thus the repercussions in England on the neglect of education in the colony brought about the desired results even on a humble scale. Maitland could not stay any longer to see the results of his endeavours in education. For reasons of ill health he had to retire, to be succeeded by Sir Robert Brownrigg[44] as the governor of the settlements.

Brownrigg's Contributions to Education

Sir Robert Brownrigg took over the government on 10th, March, 1812, and his administration lasted till 1820. Owing to the perfection of the administration by Maitland, Brownrigg had only a very few administrative changes to make. Therefore, he could pay more attention to the spread of Christianity and the promotion of education—two activities in which he was always interested. Consequently, Brownrigg's period of rule in Ceylon witnessed outstanding developments and progress in education.

Several factors were responsible for the achievements of Brownrigg. Of them, the personality of Brownrigg ranked high. Brownrigg, who was most appropriately described as ' a friend of Christianity ', took considerable interest in such matters.

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He was also fortunate in receiving positive instructions from the Home Government expressing willingness to promote religion and education in the colony. The Secretary of State, when writing to Brownrigg, observed :

> " . . . . His Majesty's government are most anxious to afford means of education and religious instruction." [45]

Besides these, several movements in England to ' spread Christianity and education in non-Christian lands' inspired him greatly.[46] All these collectively favoured Brownrigg in his endeavours to promote Christianity and education in the country.

Political changes under Brownrigg's administration also promoted the consolidation of educational work in Ceylon. The annexation of the Kandyan territory to the British Crown in 1815 made it possible to organise education on an Island-wide basis. Brownrigg was very anxious to see the spread of Christianity and education in the newly acquired provinces, and had been looking forward to the time when ' . . . . after a mutual confidence had been established ' between the British Government and the Kandyan subjects 'a system of Education and the effectual introduction of the Gospel ' could be carried out. He was waiting for the opportunity to come so that the ' . . . . blessings of Christianity (could be) diffused among the lately acquired subjects. '[47] The quelling of the rebellion of 1818 and the strengthening of British power in the Kandyan areas provided an opportunity for him to make such a policy effective.

Legalisation of the Church of England

A significant development under the administration of Brownrigg that had tremendous influence on the progress of education was the establishment of the Archdeaconry of Colombo in 1818. For the first time in the history of the Church of England in Ceylon, the creation of the Archdeaconry gave this particular Church official recognition. The Archdeacon so appointed became the Superintendent of government schools in the country, because of the privileged position this Church enjoyed under the British.

In the absence of an Archdeacon in the country to ordain local clergymen, those appointed to such office ' had to perform their ministry under an order only from the Government. '[48] The organisation and administration of the schools in the Island were also affected by the absence of any systematic form of Church establishment. It might be recalled that the rapid progress in education under the Dutch had been primarily due to the well established Protestant Church in the country. The absence under the British Government of an authoritative body to take the responsibility for organising schools resulted in a position where schools ' established under one governor ' were very often ' abolished under another. '[49] The people who had been used to an organised system of education under the Dutch, therefore, ' lost much of their confidence in the plans of the Government. '[50]

The Rev. T. J. Twisleton was appointed the first Archdeacon in Ceylon and he ' enjoyed the same authority and privileges ' as the Archdeacons of Madras and Bombay. With the appointment of the Archdeacon, the Church of England became

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officially established in the Island. Under the Archdeacon there was a Senior Chaplain who stayed in Colombo and four colonial chaplains stationed at Galle, Trincomalee, Jaffna and Kandy. To begin with, the Senior Chaplain acted as the Principal of Schools. This position was held by the Senior Chaplain until 1831 when it was transferred to the Archdeacon under the title '*Principal of Schools and the King's Visitor.*' With the delegation of authority over the schools establishment to the Archdeacon, the Church of England in Ceylon became the body responsible for conducting education in the country on behalf of the Government. In other words, the Church of England took the place and responsibility of a government department of education. This anomalous position where, a particular Church organization enjoyed the benefits and privileges of the State, created a position of distrust and jealousy on the part of others who worked for the spread of education in the Island. The repercussions of this situation were felt later particularly under the administration of education by the School Commissions.[51]

The most outstanding contribution of Brownrigg to the progress of education in the colony had been the encouragement he gave to the several Christian missions that arrived in Ceylon during his tenure of Office. Unlike his successor, Sir Edward Barnes,[52] Brownrigg did not show any discrimination as far as the Christian missions were concerned. For him all Christian missions were equal and enjoyed the same privileges and powers in the country. He treated all of them alike with no special favour to any particular sect. With the 'courtesy and kindness' extended to all missionaries who arrived in Ceylon during Brownrigg's time of administration the country became a stronghold of Christian missionary enterprise. Brownrigg's own words.

> ". . . . it has been a matter of peculiar satisfaction to me that I have seen under my Government, Wesleyans, Presbyterians, and Baptists, uniting with regular clergy of the Church of England. "[53]

bear witness to the position. Therefore, it is nothing but correct to assume that Brownrigg laid the foundation for the Missionary school system in the country which in course of years expanded to occupy a formidable position in the State school system.[54]

Educational Pattern at the Time of the Arrival of the Colebrooke Commission in Ceylon

Educational developments since the arrival of the British in 1796 led to the formation of three school systems in the country. These comprised the State or Government school system, the Missionary school system dominated by Protestant mission schools, and the Private school system consisting of schools maintained purely by private individuals on a commercial basis. The Colebrooke Commission when making recommendations to reform education in the colony, had to take into consideration the existence of these three systems of schools. As a matter of fact, the recommendations were primarily concerned with the reforming of the already existing system of education. Some knowledge of this system of education becomes necessary to understand the proposals and reforms suggested by the Colebrooke Commission, and what is attempted here is to give a glimpse of the pattern of education as found at the time of the arrival of the Colebrooke Commission.

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The State school system had come into being as a result of the efforts of North as early as the beginning of the 19th century, when for the first time he attempted to establish schools financed by the government. The Parish Schools and the Academy as well as the Orphanages maintained by the government entered into the composition of the State school system. Although they experienced a setback immediately after the departure of North and Cordiner, later they were revived chiefly because of the change of the Home Government policy on education discussed earlier.[55]

According to the statistics submitted to the Coleboroke Commission by the Archdeacon in Colombo, there were 97 Parish Schools under the management of the Government. They were found exclusively in the coastal areas which came under the British long before the annexation of the Kandyan territories where no Parish Schools were in existence.

All Parish Schools were under the control of the Government. With the appointment of the Archdeacon in 1817, the management and supervision of these schools fell under the Archdeacon. As the Principal of Schools and the King's Visitor, the Archdeacon became virtually the Director of Education in the colony. The curriculum of the Parish School did not differ much from what was described earlier. The main subjects were Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Christianity, all of them taught in the mother tongue of the pupils. The schools also served as centres of registering births and marriages as happened under the Dutch.

Besides the Parish Schools, the State school system included the Academy or Seminary in Colombo. As a result of reduction of funds, the Academy had to be transferred to Hultsdorp, and continued to exist as a poorer institution under a new name, 'The Native School' at Hultsdorp. It functioned as a useful place for the dissemination of instruction in the English language. In 1830 there were 143 students on roll.

Although the Academy was also described as a Seminary, it had never been the counterpart of the seminaries of the Christian world in any sense. It was a state institution where English was taught. The Parish Schools being vernacular schools, there was no other school besides the Academy under the Government to give an English education to those aspiring for government employment. The Academy should not be considered as an institution of higher learning. It gave an education comparable in contemporary times to an average secondary school. Therefore, the government school system included a large number of Parish Schools, and a single English school, namely the Academy or the Seminary.

The schools organised and maintained by the Christian missionary societies in Ceylon constituted a separate system which under the administration of Brownrigg expanded by leaps and bounds throughout the country. They constituted a wide variety of schools described under different names and giving different kinds of education. Vernacular Schools, Native Schools, English Schools, Central Schools, Charity Schools, Boarding Schools as well as Colleges and Seminaries collectively formed the Missionary School system. While the administration of these schools was entirely in the hands of the missions, they always received government support and benefactions regularly.

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The Christian missionary school system as well as the Christian work on education in Ceylon will be dealt with elsewhere in this publication. Therefore, no attempt will be made here to discuss this school system other than to stress the fact that there existed in Ceylon at the time of the arrival of the Colebrooke Commission an extensive system of missionary schools. It should also be mentioned that the recommendations of the Colebrooke Commission favoured to a considerable extent, the consolidation of this missionary school system in later years.[56]

The Private School system came into existence to supply the increasing demand for English education in the country. With the government administration expanding more and more opportunities of employment in government service became available. The only qualification was a knowledge of English, and it was to educate future government employees that these private schools came into existence. The Government never declared as a matter of policy whether or not to support these private schools. Nevertheless, the *laissez-faire* attitude of the Government promoted the growth of such schools.

According to the figures submitted to the Colebrooke Commission, it is apparent that the private schools were quite widely distributed in the country. The total number on record was 640, a number much larger than all government and missionary schools put together. Of these schools 618 were for boys ; 12 exclusively for girls and 10 co-educational.[57] The total student population had been recorded as 8,424 for the year 1830.

Comparative distribution of schools and school children in Missionary, Government and Private schools in 1830

Kind of school	*Total number*	*Number of children*	*Percentage of school-going age in attendance*
Missionary	236	9,274	47
Government	97	1,914	10
Private	640	8,424	43

The Private Schools, were in all respects modest establishments with very small numbers of students attending them. They were, nevertheless, liked by many because of the English instruction given in them. The rapidity with which these private schools increased in numbers shows that parents were prepared to pay for the English education of their children. It was really this demand for English education which the government could not provide that promoted the growth of the private schools movement.

Another group of schools found in the country at the time of the arrival of the Colebrooke Commission that could be justifiably discussed under the Private Schools was the Roman Catholic schools. They were found in small numbers, and also were private in the sense that they charged fees. According to the Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Private Schools were ' not

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permanent ' and were ' left off according to the attendance of the boys, and interest of the masters, some after 1 or 2 years, others after 4 or 5 years'.[58] The schools were exclusively for boys and the curriculum included Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Religion and English. For the year 1828 there were 68 private Roman Catholic schools on record.[59]

Before concluding this chapter on the school system in Ceylon just prior to the arrival of the Colebrooke Commission some mention should be made of the Buddhist schools which were sparsely found in the country. They comprised those conducted by the Buddhist priests in their temples and represented the survivals of the indigenous school system in the country.[60] There were 94 such schools in the year 1827, and perhaps there were others in the unexplored remote areas of the Island. When making recommendations to the Government on the reforms of education, the Commission however did not consider these schools as of any significance. This is explicit in the observations of the Commission, to the effect that ' . . . . the education afforded by the native priesthood in their temples and colleges scarcely merit notice '.[61]

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[54] For a description of the missionary school system *see* below, Chapter 38

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CHAPTER 32

INFLUENCE OF THE ENGLISH EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT ON EDUCATION IN CEYLON

KINGSLEY M. DE SILVA

INTRODUCTORY

The Evangelical Revival in England

In the late 18th century and early 19th century a religious revival which was to exercise a profound influence on modern England had been spreading 'a rejuvenated Protestantism' particularly in the old industrial regions of the north-west. To this—the Evangelical revival in the broad sense of that term—the Protestant churches were greatly indebted. In England its repercussions were felt both within the Established Church, and among the Non-conformist sects. If it produced Wesley and Whitfield, the founders of modern Methodism, equally it was also responsible for the growth of the Calvinist wing of the Evangelical movement, whose outlook on most issues was much the same as that of the Methodists, but who stayed within the Church of England. Among the characteristics of this common outlook, were a demand for personal conversion and holiness of life ; the Anglican wing of Evangelicalism added to these basic requirements an intense sense of civic responsibility which found its normal expression both in such movements of reform as the campaign for the abolition of slavery and in the zeal for missionary endeavour.[1]

The first centre of Evangelical revival was Cambridge University, from where the Revd. Charles Simeon, the great incumbent of Holy Trinity, sent out a notable band of pious missionaries whose influence was soon to be felt both within England and throughout the Eastern Empire. The Evangelicals organised themselves with centres of propaganda, and techniques and methods of evangelization peculiar to themselves. The Cambridge group was supported by another at Clapham near London, a group of laymen who linked the Evangelical clergy with the hard

DE SILVA, KINGSLEY M., B.A. (CEYLON), Ph.D. (LONDON), Lecturer, Department of History, University of Ceylon. Author of "Social Policy and Missionary Organization in Ceylon 1840-1855" "Letters of Ceylon 1846-1850", and "The Administration of Viscount Torrington and the Rebellion of 1848," edited with notes and introduction. Mr. de Silva is also the Managing Editor "Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies."

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world of politics and business to which they belonged, thus providing the financial backing which enabled the clergymen trained by Simeon to employ freely under their patronage the new methods of evangelization, secure from episcopal interference. The Clapham group known as the Clapham sect consisted chiefly of members of Parliament ; their leader was the distinguished parliamentarian and philanthropist, William Wilberforce.[2]

The Clapham sect had the support of many austere businessmen hard-headed and greedy of gain, who considered it their two-fold duty to amass a fortune in business, and to help propagate the gospel. They were zealous philanthropists, possessed of a practical turn of mind.

The Evangelicals were notable for their refusal to speculate on the niceties of doctrine. This made it easy for them to work with Protestants of every denomination. While they adhered to the theological principles which were the foundation of all the doctrinal systems of Protestantism, they consistently refused to interest themselves in the theological differences which held Protestants apart. Their philanthropic activity constituted a bond with the non-conformists ; and in the Eastern Empire, their efforts at evangelization, and the undermining of the indigenous faiths it necessarily involved, found support from other forces and groups, the Utilitarians in particular, who themselves, looked upon oriental religions as an obstacle to social reform, and to modernization.

The Missionary Societies

The immediate result of this new release of Christian energy was the rapid geographical expansion of Christianity. Christianity was on the way to becoming a world religion. This unforeseen religious awakening which accompanied the economic and imperial upsurge of Europe in the early nineteenth century affected almost every Christian denomination in every country in Western Europe.

This was the great age of the missionary societies. The Protestant Churches as such were unable or unwilling themselves to take up the cause of missions. This task was left to voluntary missionary societies, dependent on the initiative of devoted individuals, and relying for financial support on the voluntary gifts of interested Christians. The first of the new missionary societies was that of the English Baptists (1792). It was followed by the London Missionary Society (1795), which started with the aim of preaching to non-Christians without being tied to any particular form of church order or government. Next came the Anglican Evangelical, Church Missionary Society (1799), and later, the Wesleyan Methodists. Other European countries followed with missions of their own in due course. The United States entered the picture in 1810 with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, mainly congregational, and in 1814 with the American Baptist Missionary Board.

The first English mission society to arrive in Ceylon was curiously enough also the one which was the first to abandon its missionary activities in the Island, the London Missionary Society which came to the Island in 1804/5. It was followed by the Baptists (1812), the Wesleyan Methodists (1814–5), and the Church Missionary

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Society (1818). The American Board of Missions established itself in the Island in 1816. There was also the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel whose mission work began with the establishment of the Bishopric of Colombo in 1845, and the Roman Catholics who had been in Ceylon since the time of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, and whose activities had been rigorously curbed by the Dutch, revived their activities under British rule.[3]

The Techniques of Evangelization

In the propagation of the Gospel, the missionaries pressed into service almost every area of human activity, and to meet the demands of different situations, an almost infinite variety of missionary methods was used.

The early missionaries were primarily preachers, and the first problem that faced them was that of language. This barrier of language, however, was soon surmounted. By the first decade of the nineteenth century some languages in every known family of languages had been learned, and in many cases had been reduced to writing for the first time by the missionaries. No language had been found in which it was impossible to propagate the gospel. At the end of the eighteenth century the Bible had been translated in whole or in part into not less than 70 languages. The techniques of translation, like the translations themselves, were often crude and unscientific, but given the enormity of the task facing the translators, their achievement was considerable. The achievement, also, was almost totally a Protestant one.[4]

In Ceylon, the Baptist Missionary, the Revd. James Chater, had compiled a Sinhala grammar in the 1820's, and assisted by others had commenced work on the translation of the Bible into Sinhala, an undertaking which was continued by the Methodist missionary, the Revd. Benjamin Clough. In 1821 Clough published an English-Sinhala dictionary, and nine years later, a Sinhalese-English dictionary and a Pali Grammar.

The work of translation was accompanied by the establishment of printing presses, and the publication of tracts, pamphlets and text-books.

And from the beginning of English missionary activity in Britain's Eastern empire, education was used as a means of conversion to Christianity, and of producing an educated Christian population.

Evangelicalism and Education Policy in Ceylon

Education was always the core of the Evangelical programme of action. The time-honoured method of missionary penetration had been preaching and education. Tennent in his study of *Christianity in Ceylon* thought that the most effective means of conversion was

> " the conjoint influence of education and preaching not conducted as independent operations, but as subsidiary, co-operative and mutually sustaining . . . ."[5]

But by the 1830's and 1840's, the heyday of Evangelical influence on education

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policy, much greater emphasis was placed on education, though other methods of conversion were not entirely discounted. Governor Torrington writing in 1848 commented that :

" Education is the best preparation for conversion to Christianity . . . . Experience has taught every church whose clergy officiate among the natives of Ceylon, that preaching makes but a transient impression, if any, unless the way has been first prepared by the process of mental conversion ".[6]

Indeed one of the most notable features of the education provided both in missionary and government schools was the importance attached to the teaching of Christianity. It was generally believed that " . . . . Schools and a preached Gospel must go together . . . . ". The Baptists described the education imparted at one of their girls' boarding schools thus :

" (The) children are carefully instructed in the great doctrines and duties of Christianity, and their conversion is sought as the first and paramount object ".

This was the general pattern in the schools of the other missions as well. The Wesleyans explained that,

" . . . . the education given in (our) institutions is essentially a Christian education. Instruction is so communicated that Christianity is made to appear the end for which all other mental processes are conducted . . . . ".[7]

If the Evangelicals viewed education largely as a means of eroding the foundations of the indigenous religions, it must also be remembered that their pressure was largely responsible for the acceptance of education as a responsibility of the State—in Ceylon and India—at a time when this principle was still a matter of acute controversy in England. And in Ceylon, as in England, educational activity was marred by the conflicts of religious bodies, these conflicts being in the main an extension into Ceylon of the general conflict between Anglicans and Non-conformists for the control of education in England. The stakes were high—the control of education meant the control of what was generally accepted as one of the main means of conversion of the indigenous population to Christianity. And it was in this sphere that missionary influence on the Ceylon government was most sustained, and at its strongest, though it may have been stronger still, and more effective, had there been fewer sectarian squabbles. For it was here that missionary disunity in Ceylon was seen at its worst.

The Evangelical Influence on Education Policy in Ceylon 1800–1832

The British missionary societies were welcomed by the colonial authorities in Ceylon with formal correctness, but in the first two decades of British rule there was no consistent support for them from the State ; instead there was, apart from Governor North, a general reluctance to encourage their endeavours, and mission work in the Kandyan areas (after the cession of Kandy in 1815) was severely restricted. This was in keeping with the practice in India where the East India Company actively discouraged missionary organisations for fear that their work might result in

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religious strife. But North and some officials—Sir Alexander Johnston, for instance—were sympathetic to the missionaries and assisted them in every way. It was a typical British compromise ; the state was neutral but its officials were not always that.

In the years before 1832, it is difficult to see anything like a coherent government policy on education ; and State intervention in education was slight and sporadic. Education, at this time, was not regarded as a normal function of the State. More important, for two decades or more after the establishment of British rule in Ceylon, the Island was looked upon as fundamentally a strategic outpost, valued for the protection it afforded the expanding British possessions in India. For a long time there was no change in this regard. This conception of the Island as a strategic entity served to inhibit reform and innovation in all aspects of economic and social activity. To a large extent the chronic near-bankruptcy of the economy effectively prevented the adoption of measures of reform entailing substantial expenditure. The Colonial Office was opposed to financing even the most beneficent projects as long as the Colonial revenues could not meet the basic expenses of the administration and the armed forces. In these circumstances, education was regarded as a luxury.

The Dutch indeed had left behind a rudimentary system of private schools in the Maritime Provinces, in which children were taught Reading, Writing and the Christian religion. The Madras Administration neglected these schools and allowed them to fall into ruin. Governor North, however, attempted to revive the ecclesiastical and educational system of the Dutch, but he received no support from Whitehall. During North's administration the parish schools barely survived, and their survival was due to the efforts of the Revd. James Cordiner without any consistent support from the administration.

The situation changed with the arrival of Governor Maitland ; not that Maitland, as an individual, was enthusiastic for the propagation of Christianity or the support, much less expansion, of the system of parish schools. The formidable Protestant missionary, Dr. Claudius Buchanan, visited Ceylon in 1806 and 1808, and his letters home severely condemned the ecclesiastical and educational policy of the Ceylon government. The Evangelicals in England stepped in.[8] Their leader Wilberforce called on the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Castlereagh, and protested

> " about the conduct of the (Ceylon) Government in breaking up, for the purpose of saving . . . . about £ 1,800, nearly all the schools in Ceylon ".[9]

Castlereagh himself was by no means enthusiastic about the schools but Evangelical pressure was too strong to resist, and he wrote to Maitland explaining that the Government was being censured for discouraging Christianity, and enjoined on him the necessity of promoting education.

Thus, because of Evangelical pressure on Whitehall the parish schools in Ceylon were revived. This revival owed a great deal to Sir Alexander Johnston and other officials, and above all else to the missionary societies whose educational activities,

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particularly those of the Wesleyans " were considerable and widespread at a time when the Government appeared to have no real policy of its own, apart from asking the missionaries to superintend the very few and badly neglected government schools and relying on the missionaries to open any new schools they could ".[10]

The revival of the parish schools which began under Maitland was continued under Brownrigg, with the missions bearing the burden of actively organising and administering the schools.

When the Kandyan provinces came under British control, Brownrigg was reluctant to permit evangelistic activity there, and discouraged the Wesleyan missionaries who sought to establish a mission station in Kandy. But with the increase of the civil and military establishment in Kandy, Brownrigg appointed the Revd. Samuel Lambrick as Chaplain to the forces there in 1818. Lambrick, however, began evangelistic work among the Kandyans and eventually opened a vernacular school in the district. The C.M.S. moved in to continue this work and by 1823 their Kandy mission station controlled 5 schools.

Brownrigg's successor, Barnes, was far from anxious to maintain the parish schools. He thought that the education system, such as it was, was expensive, inefficient, and far from useful, and he imposed rigorous cuts in expenditure on education. Nor was he enthusiastic about teaching children the tenets of Christianity. Indeed he expressed his disapprobation of this in principle.

> " as all experience shows us that, whenever we attempt to force religious tenets on others, we thwart our own views. The reading and writing of their native tongue should therefore, in his opinion, be their first acquirement ".[11]

But if the State was lukewarm, if not actually hostile, to the expansion of education the missions were now better equipped to continue their work. Though their financial resources were still meagre, their administrative skills and their zeal for conversion more than made up for this.

Evangelicalism and Education Policy 1832 to 1855

Though the British government was reluctant to support missionary enterprise actively, that reluctance was bound to be worn down by the passage of time, for the nineteenth century was the great age of British missionary endeavour, and the strength of missionary organizations at home and their influence in the highest circles of British political life were to guarantee their success in the colonies ; their appeals for help struck a responsive chord in the hearts of those who governed the Empire. The first two decades of Queen Victoria's reign saw the triumphs of Evangelicalism in the Empire. Evangelicalism brought with it an inevitable hardening of religious attitudes, a positive assertion of the superiority of Christianity over other religions, and a general contempt for oriental religions and cultures.

In Ceylon the impact of this Evangelical drive in imperial policy was first perceptibly felt with the appointment of Stewart Mackenzie as Governor in 1837.[12] The Colonial Office, under the influence of the formidable James Stephen, the Permanent Under-Secretary and a distinguished member of the Clapham Sect, was

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a stronghold of Evangelical influence. Of the Colonial Secretaries of this period, Glenelg like Stephen was a member of the Clapham Sect, and the Third Earl Grey (1846–1852) was strongly sympathetic to the Evangelical impulse.

In education, however, a remarkable change in government policy was evident from 1832 with the publication of Colebrooke's report. With the implementation of Colebrooke's recommendations on education, State intervention in education assumed a regular and definite form. Indeed the view that education was a legitimate sphere of State activity was one that men of a pronounced liberal outlook like Colebrooke shared with the Evangelicals.

Colebrooke's views on education were prosaic and disjointed, extraordinarily so for a man who is generally believed to have been a Utilitarian. He was clear, however, on the purposes that education was to serve. These were two : as a preparation of candidates for public employment, and as an aid to " natives to cultivate European attainments ". Missionary organisations in Ceylon, however, looked upon education solely as a means of propagating Christianity at the expense of the indigenous religions. Colebrooke himself was not unsympathetic to this line of thinking.[13]

Colebrooke observed that the schools maintained by the Government were " extremely defective and inefficient, " and he did not hesitate to acknowledge the superiority of the schools run by the missionaries. Nor was he inclined to encourage the establishment of government schools in areas served by the missionary schools. To ' facilitate the reform of the government schools ' he recommended that they be placed ' under the immediate direction ' of a School Cammission composed of the Archdeacon of Colombo and the clergy of the Island, as well as the Government Agents of the provinces and other civil and judicial officials.

With the establishment of the School Commission the State had acknowledged its responsibility for the supervision if not the organization of education.

The Evangelical impact on education in Ceylon became more pronounced with Stewart Mackenzie's appointment as Governor in 1837. In his instructions to Mackenzie, Glenelg, the Evangelical Secretary of State for the Colonies, remarked that the moral and religious education of the people of Ceylon was the most important subject to which the Governor's attention could be directed. For the first time the Governor was instructed not only actively to encourage missionary enterprise but to treat it as his most important task. Glenelg's despatch marked in fact the beginning of a closer State interest in evangelization, and up to well past the mid-nineteenth century active evangelization was never far from the minds of the administrators.[14]

Mackenzie, a great believer in the social benefits of education, apart from its uses as an instrument of conversion, found that the greatest obstacle to the educational progress of the Colony was the School Commission itself. Though he could not immediately reconstruct the Commission he devoted his time to developing plans for far-reaching changes in education.

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The most radical change he had in mind concerned the medium of instruction. He was convinced that exclusive reliance on the English language as the medium of instruction was short-sighted ; and that it was in fact an impediment to progress in education. Colebrooke had placed great emphasis on the need to organise instruction in English ; indeed, in the Eastern Empire, the current theory of education placed very great emphasis on English and denigrated the vernaculars.[15]

Mackenzie reached this conclusion both from his brief experience in Ceylon, and from his longer acquaintance with education in the British Isles, particularly Scotland, Wales and Ireland. His ideas on education were influenced also by the opinions of the Wesleyan Missionary, D. J. Gogerly, and the practical experience gathered by the Wesleyans in their South Ceylon mission which had concentrated on educating the Sinhalese in their own language in its schools. But it was not intended that Sinhala or Tamil should replace English as the medium of instruction in schools; indeed education in these languages was to be ' a prelude to education in English '.

Mackenzie had also come to believe—though with less precision than on the question of language—that an attempt must be made to educate the masses and not merely an *elite*. Here his ideas were vague and tentative, perhaps necessarily so because the extra outlay in money would have evoked a peremptory refusal by the Colonial Office. Besides, this was contrary to the then accepted views on education in the Eastern empire with its faith in the idea of ' filtration ' and the education of an *elite*.

He proceeded next to outlining the basic principles for the reform of education in Ceylon. In this scheme, the emphasis was essentially on the religious aspect of education, that is, its use as a weapon of conversion. The purpose, and indeed the primary aim of education, was essentially religious. There was no attempt to consider the deeper political implications of education policy, the possibility which men like Elphinstone in India faced up to and encouraged, that the spread of western education would lead eventually to political freedom—' our high-road back to Europe ' as Elphinstone called it.[16]

At the Colonial Office these recommendations on vernacular education drew heavy fire, notably from James Stephen who shared the widespread belief in the exclusive virtues of the English language as the medium of instruction in the Eastern empire.

All that the Colonial Office approved of in Mackenzie's comprehensive programme of action was a remodelling of the School Commission, by breaking the hold the Anglican Establishment had on it, and through it, on education in Ceylon.[17]

The years 1841–48 may be looked upon as years of quiet achievement in education. The Anglican preponderance on the School Commission was gone, and a lay head kept sectarian jealousies under control. But the chief feature of this period was the gradual acceptance of many aspects of Mackenzie's education policy, despite their original rejection by the home government. The man chiefly responsible for

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this remarkable renewal of policy was D. J. Gogerly who came to dominate the School Commission as much by the strength of his personality and his erudition as through the fact that in that body he alone had a definite policy.[18]

Between 1843 and 1845 the Government was prevailed upon to accept the principle of vernacular education. And Gogerly put into effect a carefully planned programme of vernacular education in 1846 and 1847.

With the creation of a Bishopric of Colombo in 1845, the new Bishop was appointed head of the School Commission. With his appointment sectarian disputes began once again to disturb the work of the School Commission. Indeed the disputes that emerged culminated in the stormy resignation of the Bishop from his post in the School Commission, the re-appointment of a lay head for that institution, and a very significant curtailment of its powers.[19]

Despite all this, the years up to 1848 were remarkable not only for a very notable increase in expenditure on education, but more important there was, thanks to Gogerly, a sense of direction and purpose in educational work, and a consciousness of the value of the work that was done. Gogerly forced those with whom he was associated into seeing that education in the vernaculars had its place, and his achievement is all the greater when one considers that the keenest intellects of his day were still insisting on the exclusive virtues of the English language. He had to sacrifice his other ideal of a wider expansion of educational facilities. But he could hardly have persuaded the State to accept both vernacular education and education for the masses. Persuading the Government to accept vernacular education was an achievement enough at that time. (It must not be assumed that once the Government accepted the principle of education in the vernaculars, it concerned itself mainly with vernacular education and vernacular schools thereafter. English schools and English education remained the main concern of the Government.)

After the seven years of achievement which ended with the appointment of Sir James Emerson Tennent to the post of Chairman of the School Commission (1847), the next eight were years of frustration and disappointment. Above all, these were years of retrenchment in education when a good deal of the achievements of the period 1841 to 1847 were undone. But the Evangelical impulse in education did not peter out even thereafter, though it was less pronounced. Indeed the imprint of Evangelicalism on the education system of the Island was, by the middle of the nineteenth century, indelible, for better or worse.

Though its energies were directed at undermining the ancient religions and the traditional culture of Ceylon, its achievements in education were substantial and not unenlightened.

Conclusion

What indeed was its impact on British education policy in Ceylon ? In the years before 1832, at a time when there was no perceptible policy on education in the Island, the parish schools survived at all only because of Evangelical pressure in England and the efforts of the missionaries in Ceylon. In 1832 the acceptance of

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education as a legitimate sphere of State activity may be viewed as springing from the conjoint influence of Evangelicalism, Utilitarianism and Liberalism. The Evangelicals naturally looked upon this as another aspect of State support of evangelization, but the principle of State intervention in education could be developed on purely secular and social if not political lines as was to happen later. Education, to the Evangelicals, was a means of evangelization, and their conception of education was essentially, if not purely, religious though it was never without a secular undertone. There were individuals like C. J. Mac Carthy who, in 1848, sought to justify interest in education on purely secular and fundamentally political grounds,[20] but because of the all-pervading influence of the Evangelical outlook as regards the purpose of education, few people in Ceylon at this time, thought of education as designed for much more than conversion to Christianity. To twentieth century eyes this would seem a narrow and unenlightened attitude—which indeed it was—but in the circumstances of early and mid-nineteenth century Ceylon some form of education was better than none. Besides, even a system of education designed for purposes of evangelization was not without its secular aspects or liberating effects of a purely secular nature—it opened new vistas of secular knowledge and helped to widen the intellectual horizons of the students. The social changes generated by this system of education seldom conformed to the ideal patterns envisaged by the missionaries. If it did result in the gradual emergence of a western educated *elite*, that *elite* was not Christianised to the degree anticipated by the missionaries.

The mid-nineteenth century State lacked the guiding principles and administrative machinery necessary for the purpose of administering and maintaining a system of schools. And so the missionaries, possessing a rudimentary organization, stepped in. Thus the Evangelicals laid the foundations, during the first half of the nineteenth century, of the system of denominational schools which prevailed for over a century thereafter. The content of education in their schools, always distinguishing between that in the common run of village schools and that in the better schools in the urban areas, served as a model even for the schools run by the State. Again, the Evangelicals demonstrated the value of vernacular education, even if little was done after 1848 to sustain their achievements in this field.

Briefly, after 1832 Evangelicalism gave to education policy such consistency and sense of purpose as it possessed. The pattern it imposed on education policy in Ceylon persisted well into the twentieth century, by which time, however, an entrenched Evangelical tradition in education was faced with the opposition of a Buddhist revival on the one hand, and of a pronounced secular outlook on education on the other. The demand now was for a system of State education, and for a sharp break from the established pattern of denominationalism.

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CHAPTER 33

THE COLEBROOKE COMMISSION AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

LAKSHMAN S. PERERA

Appointment of the Commission

Robert Wilmot who was later to become Governor of Ceylon[1] proposed in Parliament on 25 July, 1822, that a Commission of Inquiry be appointed to report on the three Colonial territories, the Cape, the Island of Mauritius and Ceylon.[2] He admitted that " such a commission might be less necessary in the Island of Ceylon ". But Ceylon did present the Colonial Office with many problems chief among which was the recurrent deficits in the finances. It was an opportunity, however, to review the entire administration of this Island even though Governor Barnes protested that there was no real need for a commission and no one had asked for one.[3]

The Commission of Inquiry was led by Lt. Col. W. M. G. Colebrooke[4], who had some experience of Indian and Colonial affairs, assisted by C. H. Cameron, a Scottish lawyer,[5] who was detailed to report on the judicial establishments and procedure. Colebrooke reached Ceylon in 1829 and Cameron followed in 1830. The report they submitted consisted of three parts. The first two on the administration and the revenues of the Island by Colebrooke were handed over in late 1831, and the third on judicial establishments by Cameron in early 1832.[6] The proposals in regard to education were included in the first, on administration.

PERERA, LAKSHMAN S., B.A., Ph.D. (CEYLON). Professor and the Head of the Department of History, University of Colombo. Dr. Perera is a contributor to the University History of Ceylon. He has also contributed articles to several journals on historical subjects.

Terms of Reference

The instructions issued to the Commissioners were wide and specific and common to all three territories but specific

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problems pertaining to each were also included.[7] The directive dealing with education was common to all and ran thus :

> " You will not fail to direct your attention to the state of religion—to the support afforded to the Church of England and to her religious institutions ; and as connected with this subject to the Public Establishments for Education, (for charitable purposes in particular) and you will report whether and in what manner the national system of instruction may be advantageously introduced."

Colebrooke made a preliminary study of the problems from documents and reports available in England and then travelled widely in the Island and made exhaustive enquiries partly through questionnaires and partly through interviews. He also had various petitions that had been submitted to him. He seems, therefore, to have had at his disposal extensive material for his report and the report itself is detailed and exhaustive.

Although Colebrooke took advantage of the wide terms of reference and reported in detail on almost every aspect of the Island's administration and economy he was expected to deal with, he completely ignored the instruction with regard to religion and religious institutions and his observations on education are scrappy, haphazard, inaccurate and incomplete and appear to be a hastily written addendum at the very end of his report on administration.[8] It was not for lack of material that he failed to expand this section for he states,

> " For more detailed information on the subject of education in Ceylon reference may be made to the replies given by the colonial clergy and the English missionaries to inquiries addressed to them, also to the communications of the American missionaries at Jaffnapatam, and further to the printed reports of the state of these institutions, which I visited in my progress through the Island ".

Religion and education formed only a very small part of the terms of reference and were not apparently the main concern of the Commission. There were more pressing administrative and financial problems that awaited solution. The urgent need to recommend economies and retrenchment and to explore ways and means of increasing revenue were no doubt uppermost in the minds of the commissioners. It is also possible that this clause dealing with religion and education which from the beginning was considered an item of heavy expenditure where economies had been urged[9] was included in deference to the Church of England and the Evangelical group. Though Colebrooke's review of the education system at the time leaves much to be desired, the few proposals and recommendations he made had far-reaching repercussions. They cannot, however, be regarded as forming a well-considered, integrated plan for educational expansion in the Island and cannot in any sense be regarded as an adequate treatment of the terms of reference.[10]

Motivation for Recommendations

Colebrooke's motivation with regard to education can only be judged from what he has written in his report. What he has not written is probably more significant

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than what he has written. From the time North took over the Governorship of the Island up to the time of Colebrooke's report, three motives may be discerned in educational activity namely, religious, humanitarian and utilitarian.

It is difficult to trace any religious motives behind the recommendations of Colebrooke. For one thing, he ignored completly the subject of religion and the relation between the State and the Church of England. There is nothing in the report commending the task of conversion and the spread of Christianity though he did commend the educational work of the missionaries. He did not advocate any grants or facilities for missionary work.[11] Though his recommendations served to leave a free-hand to the missionaries to expand their missionary activities through education, Colebrooke's main concern seems to have been to make use of the missionaries for his purpose which was to provide education without much cost to the Government.

It might be contended that humanitarianism was the key-note of his educational reforms, since liberal ideas influenced so many of the recommendations he put forward for the reforms of the administration. Though there are a few references that bear out the belief he had that education will enable the people to shed their "absurd prejudices" and, benefiting from "a liberal education", "cultivate European attainment," and take their place alongside the Europeans in the administration of the country, yet a perusal of the report and a careful examination of the recommendations will show that the main interest he had in education was utilitarian and that too from the narrow point of view of the public service.[12]

It is significant that his reflections and recommendations on education follow logically from the recommendations that he makes on "the civil establishment" and "the employment of natives".[13] These two sections of the report throw a flood of light not only on his attitude to education but also on the purpose that lies behind his recommendations and the objects he hoped to achieve. He points out that the Civil Service at this time which was recruited entirely from Britain consisted of thirty-eight members but that there were twenty-five senior appointments reserved entirely for them. "The means of selection therefore", he argues, "are much too limited," and the Government had been forced to employ military personnel in civil appointments in the Kandyan areas. A few "descendants of European settlers" (Burghers) who had profited by education and had been employed in Government Service and "have been extremely useful" and proved their worth. He makes a very strong plea that the public service should be freely open to all classes of persons according to qualifications; the exclusive principle of the civil service should be relaxed and the means of education held out to the natives whereby they may in time qualify themselves for holding some of the higher appointments.[14]

Colebrooke does not quite reveal his real motives behind these bold proposals. There is no doubt that he was a convinced liberal and that he sincerely wished to remove all barriers of caste and privilege and "the distinction between Europeans and natives" and to associate the people of the country in the administration, and to open to them the door to higher appointments. It is also valid that extensive recruitment to public

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service from England was not possible due to the state of the colony's finances and an educated public service would enable retrenchment without loss of efficiency. This latter motive is quite explicitly stated.

> " The offices which may be retained should be adequately remunerated. A competent knowledge of English should however he required in the principal native functionaries throughout the country ".[15]

Just before he begins the section on education he even defines the kind of knowledge a prospective civil servant should have.

> " Some knowledge of the general principles of law would be of great advantage as well as the acquirement of such information on subjects of trade and finance as would lead them to just views of the effects of the system under which the Island has been administered ".

Colebrooke realised of course that such knowledge could be had only in an institution of collegiate status or a University . Colebrooke's proposals for education derive logically from these utilitarian considerations.

Specific Proposals and Recommendations

(*a*) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COLLEGE AT COLOMBO

This was for Colebrook the king-pin of his recommendations for educational reforms and that which excited his interest most. He even went to the extent of suggesting that,

> " the buildings and grounds on ' Slave Island ' near Colombo, forming the late botanical establishment of the Dutch Government, should be appropriated to this object ".

and also that it should receive " some support from the government " meaning financial support.[16] Though nothing came of this proposal, this more than any other, reveals Colebrook's attitude to educational reforms.

Colebrook set a high standard of education for those seeking entrance to the higher rungs of the public service and assumed that it could be obtained only in an institution of University status. Up to this time, the principal avenue of advancement to the public service was to be selected by Government for education abroad in an English University. The Dutch had a similar scheme. North began the practice and it was continued intermittently as and when funds and suitable candidates were available.[17] Colebrooke also points out that it was not possible for those " even of the most respectable classes " to afford " a liberal education in Europe ". On the contrary, he seems to have been convinced that even apart from the cost of such an education,

> " the advantages of affording to them the means of education in their own country are in many respects greater."

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He reiterates this again when he says that,

> " the proficiency of several of the young men who have been educated in the seminaries formed in Ceylon by the Christian societies, attest the superior advantages to be derived from local instruction, the expenses of which are inconsiderable. "[18]

Colebrooke is not here comparing the merits of a liberal education in a British University with the education provided in a Christian seminary. The end of education for him was the acquirement of certain qualifications to enter the public service and he was convinced from his experience particularly of the American seminary in Jaffna that the kind of qualification a candidate to the public service should have could be acquired cheaply in Ceylon itself.[19] He even quotes the estimated cost for a student per annum according to a plan for a College drawn up by the American Mission in 1823. He also hoped that this institution " would give great encouragement to the elementary schools ".

In using the term " College " Colebrooke had in mind an institution similar to a University, for it was to serve the needs of those who up to this time were sent abroad. He even suggests that " an English professorship should be maintained by the government. " On the other hand, he had in mind institutions such as the seminary of the American Mission at Vaddukoddai (Jaffna) and of the Church Mission at Cotta,[20] where a superior education was imparted along with English. The Colombo Seminary or Academy[21], run by the Government was nothing more than a secondary school where English was taught. It was not his intention that the College should replace, the Colombo Seminary for he mentions that,

> " the Government seminary at Colombo would hereafter afford the means of providing competent teachers for the country schools."

According to Colebrooke's scheme the Colombo Seminary would be just one of the government schools he envisaged.

Though Colebrooke advocated economies in so many spheres he recommended the establishment of this College though it would have involved new expenditure. It may be that he hoped that " it would be effectually supported by the inhabitants " in the form of fees and that it would in the long run be a saving to the Government. Viscount Goderich in September, 1832 instructed Sir R. W. Horton to report on the establishment of the College.[22] In a further dispatch in March, 1833 he forbade its establishment, stating that,

> " Important as this subject certainly is I do not feel at liberty to sanction any undertaking of this nature at present."[23]

However in 1836, the Colombo Academy was founded and it incorporated some of the features Colebrooke had planned for his College.[24] The kind of institution Colebrooke envisaged and hoped for really materialised only in 1921 with the establishment of the University College.

(*b*) THE REFORM OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

There were, according to Colebrooke, at the time of his investigations 90 schools in the Sinhala areas, 4 in the Tamil areas and none in Kandy.[25] For Colebrooke

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schools in order to justify their existence had to fit into his scheme of recruitment to the public service. He had a very poor opinion of the Government schools particulary in comparison with those run by the missionary societies.

> " The school masters are not required to understand the English language of which many are wholly ignorant, and they are often extremely unfit for their situations. Nothing is taught in the schools but reading in the native language and writing in the native character and as the control exercised is insufficient to secure the attendance either of the masters or of the scholars, many abuses prevail and the government schools in several instances exist only in name ; children being assembled occasionally for inspection, many of whom had received instruction in the schools of the missionaries, of which the government school masters are alleged to be jealous. "[26]

This vivid description of government schools at that time was probably not an exaggeration and demanded a drastic remedy. Though Colebrooke did not specifically recommend the abolition of these schools, the net effect of two of his recommendations would have been the closure of most if not all of these schools. They were in fact abolished shortly after Colebrooke submitted his report.[27] For the reform of the schools, Colebrooke made two proposals both of which had far-reaching effects.

He suggested that the government schools should be placed,

> " under the immediate direction of a commission, composed of the Archdeacon and clergy of the Island, the agents of government in the districts and some of the principal civil and judicial functionaries at the seat of government. "

He also recommended that,

> " it would be the duty of those resident in the districts to inspect and superintend the schools in their respective districts and to report on their efficiency and management. "

Government schools at the time Colebrooke arrived in Ceylon were under the Senior Colonial Chaplain of the Church of England who acted as the Principal of Schools.[28] These schools were really old Dutch parish schools now resuscitated by the British and these were in effect church schools.[29] But they had been neglected owing to lack of supervision, lack of funds, and lack of enthusiasm particularly after the establishment of schools by the Christian missions. Colebrooke's proposal for a commission which is reminiscent of the Dutch Scholarchal Commission, removed the government schools from the exclusive control of the clergy and associated public servants both in Colombo and in the provinces in the task of management and supervision of schools. This is the first time that the State came directly into the field of education and this has continued unbroken till today where there is almost complete control of education.[30]

But the significance of this measure can only be evaluated in the light of the other reforms and the context in which they were made. At the time Colebrooke reported, there were only 94 government schools to 236 mission schools and 640 private schools.

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It was not Colebrooke's intention that the two latter categories were to come under the control of the Commission. They continued to be run by mission societies and private organisations assisted sometimes with funds from the State. Furthermore after the reforms there were only about four or five schools left for the Commission to control. The Schools Commission was appointed in 1834 on the lines suggested by Colebrooke.[31]

The second proposal made by Colebrooke was that,

> " the school masters should be appointed on the recommendation of the commission, and should in all instances be required to possess a competent knowledge of English to enable them to give instruction in that language. "

There were at that time very few who could qualify as teachers on this basis. Colebrooke hoped that such teachers could be recruited from among the clerks who would be retrenched from Government service according to his proposals and from " the descendants of Europeans ". But apparently it was not as easy as Colebrooke imagined. The effect of this proposal, though it meant for the time being a reduction in the number of Government schools, was that English was made the medium of instruction and for some time the only Government schools opened were English schools.[32] The requirement of English for the public service, another of Colebrooke's proposals gradually compelled the mission schools to fall in line with government policy in this matter. Colebrooke was under a misapprehension that the mission schools had neglected English and hoped that " they would co-operate in this object." But in point of fact the missionaries had made provision for the teaching of English in their senior schools and seminaries.[33] Though today such a measure would be condemned from the point of view of education, it should be remembered that Colebrooke thought of the school system primarily as a channel of recruitment for the public service. He was also probably convinced of the educational value of English and had a poor opinion of " the native languages " and " the native character. "

The third proposal which affected the Government school system was that,

> " as the English missionary societies have formed extensive establishments in various parts of Ceylon, it would be unnecessary to retain the government schools in situations where English instructions may already be afforded."

Colebrooke had a very high opinion of these mission schools, for in referring to them he says,

> " to the labours of these societies in the Cingalese and Malabar provinces the natives are principally indebted for opportunities of instruction afforded to them since the decline of the government schools."[34]

All the Government schools were established in the coastal belt stretching from Negombo to Tangalle apart from the five in the North. Mission schools too had been established in most of these areas, though English instruction was not available in all of them. The Government at the time drew the logical conclusion from these three proposals and closed down almost all the government schools.

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It has been suggested that the closure of the government schools gave an impetus to the mission schools. But the government schools were, in fact, poorly-run Christian schools under the management of the clergy, and the mission schools in 1830 far out-numbered the Government schools and had already attracted students away from them.[35] No particular advantage accrued, therefore, to the mission schools as a result of these reforms.

(*c*) THE AMERICAN MISSION

The American Mission in Jaffna had up to this time a chequered history.[36] It was by necessity and not by choice that they came to Ceylon. The British Government from the beginning viewed them with suspicion and hostility. They were able to establish themselves and carry on their work solely owing to the generosity of North and later of Brownrigg. Maitland was openly hostile to them. Colebrooke, however, visited their establishments and was very favourably impressed with the work they were doing particularly in regard to the teaching of English and the education imparted in the seminary at Vaddukoddai. 'He made special mention of this mission and stated,

> " as the nothern districts of the island are chiefly indebted to these missionaries for the progress of education, the benefits of which are already experienced, it is but just to recommend that they should receive all the encouragement from the government to which their exertions and exemplary conduct have entitled them."[37]

From this time on the American Mission was accepted and no distinction was made between them and the English missionaries.

Private Schools

It is surprising that Colebrooke is completely silent about the private schools. He would have known from the evidence submitted to him that there were 640 private schools registered with a student enrolment of 8,424.[38] Most of these were small fee-levying schools and their main purpose seems to have been the teaching of English for which there was an increasing demand. These schools, therefore, fitted admirably into Colebrooke's own proposals. There was, however, no over-all organisation such as existed for the mission schools and this may be the reason why Colebrooke omitted to mention them.

Colebrooke's general policy in regard to the missionary schools and the private schools was one of *laissez-faire*. He permitted them a free hand in education and did not suggest any kind of control or supervision. He hoped, however, that they would give due emphasis to English which was his main interest in education. This policy was also in accord with the economies he was attempting in Government expenditure and he was willing to pass the burden of establishing and running schools wherever possible to the mission societies and private bodies with sometimes a little financial aid. It does not appear from the report that he was particularly interested in mission schools as agencies for conversion and the spread of Christianity.

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The Neglect of National Languages and the Ancient Educational Systems

Colebrooke dismissed these in one sentence.

> " The education afforded by the native priest-hood in their temples and colleges scarcely merits any notice. "[39]

It is possible that these schools particularly in these areas which had been under foreign domination for a long time were now in a state of decline. It is also possible that Colebrooke, since he did not know the native languages, was not in a position to appreciate the ancient system of learning. For his evaluation of education his main criterion was its usefulness for the public service where English was made a compulsory requirement. He had, therefore, no use for the ancient system of education. He was convinced that English was what the people themselves wanted. He would have considered any assistance given to these schools a waste of public funds. His instructions required him to report whether and in what manner a national system of instruction may be advantageously introduced. The word ' national ' here did not carry for Colebrooke the connotation it has today. It meant for him only the introduction of English as the medium of instruction. It was not his intention either to foster the national languages and cultures or to create a nation-wide system of schools for the benefit of the people.

Evaluation

Colebrooke was essentially a colonial statesman whose task was to effect economies and reform the administration in the light of the liberal and humanitarian ideals which inspired him. But these ideals did not extend into the field of education and culture where his proposals were brazenly utilitarian.[40] His educational reforms have probably been over-rated and some of them were not new. The School Commission was based on the Scholarchal Commission of the Dutch but its range was limited to the few government schools that came to be established. The need for and value of English had already been emphasised by governors such as North and Brownrigg particularly, and the mission societies had already begun the change into English. English was for all practical purposes already the language of administration. His only significant recommendation, the foundation of a college, would, however, have been premature and it was dropped. But since the report itself and the reforms it advocated embraced the whole field of administration and inaugurated significant changes, his educational reforms too have been invested with a certain degree of finality and importance for the decades that followed and form a landmark in the history of education.[41]

REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] Robert Wilmot Horton, Governor of Ceylon, 1832–38, added Horton to his name in 1822 and had the task of carrying out the reforms recommended by Colebrooke and Cameron

De Silva, C. R., *Ceylon under the British Occupation*, 1, p. 269

Mendis, G. C., (Ed.) *The Colebrooke Cameron Papers*, Oxford University Press, 1956, 1, p. 1, 233–319. *Parliamentary Debates*, Hansard-new Series, VII, April to August, 1822

[2] CCP. 1, p. XIII

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[3] CCP. II, p. 24

[4] CCP. 1, p. XXXII, n. 1

[5] *Ib*

[6] *Parliamentary Papers*—House of Commons, No. 274 of 1831-32 (XXXII, 65)

Report of Lieutenant-Colonel Colebrooke, one of His Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry, upon the Administration of the Government of Ceylon, dated 24th December, 1831 (with a map of the Island of Ceylon)

Report of Lieutenant-Colonel Colebrooke, one of His Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry, upon the Revenue of Ceylon, dated 31st, January, 1832

Report of Charles Hay Cameron Esq., one of His Majesty's Commissioners of Inquiry, upon the Judicial Establishments and Procedure in Ceylon, dated 31st January, 1832

CCP. 1, p. 9–188

[7] CCP. 1, p. 4–8

[8] CCP. 1, p. 71–75

[9] Ruberu, Ranjit, *Education in Colonial Ceylon*, Kandy Printers Ltd., Kandy, (1962) p. 75–77, 82–86

[10] De Silva, K. M., *Social Policy and Missionary Organizations in Ceylon*, 1840–1855, Longmans (1965) p. 143

[11] There were two aspects to Christian organisation in Ceylon, the established Church of England represented by the Archdeacon and the Colonial clergy who were maintained by the Colonial Government and the missionary societies, Anglican, Wesleyan, Baptist and American whose activities were not financed directly by the Government but whose educational institutions were aided since their establishment under Governor Brownrigg. ECC. p. 229–242

[12] CCP. 1, p. XIII. It is difficult to envisage that Colebrooke had in mind anything so far-reaching as changing a feudal society into a commercial society by means of " a knowledge of English " though this was an inevitable consequence of his recommendations

[13] CCP. 1, p. 68–71

[14] CCP. 1, p. 68

[15] CCP. 1, p. 70

[16] CCP. 1, p. 74. This location should be along the present Kew Road in Slave Island.

[17] ECC. p. 41, 74–76, 107–108, 118, 252

[18] CCP. 1, p. 71, 252

[19] CCP. 1, p. 74

[20] *Ibid.* ECC. p. 190–199, 220–225

[21] ECC. p. 66–71, 87, 233–235

[22] CCP. 1, p. 252

[23] CCP. 1, p. 277

[24] Mendis, G. C., *Ceylon under the British*, The Colombo Apothecaries Co., Ltd., Educational Publishers, Colombo (1952) (Third Edition), p. 76

[25] CCP. 1, p. 72. A more accurate table adopted from a letter of the Archdeacon to the Commissioners, dated 15th February, 1828, is quoted in ECC. p. 230. The total number given here is ninety-seven.

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[26] CCP. 1, p. 72. For reasons for the state of the Government (parish) Schools at this time refer ECC. p. 244–246.

[27] Mendis, G. C., *op. cit.* p. 76–77

[28] CCP. 1, p. 72. Colebrooke does not record the fact that in 1831, probably after he left Ceylon, the post of Principal of Schools was taken away from the Senior Chaplain and made part of the duty of the Archdeacon. It was conceived as a measure of economy as the allowance the post carried was suppressed. (ECC. p. 231). This duty was, according to the recommendations of Colebrooke, handed over to the School Commission which was established in 1834. (Mendis, *op. cit.* p. 77)

[29] ECC. p. 57–64

[30] Although the State took the responsibility for education and even made it a charge on the revenues of the Colony, Governor North handed over complete responsibility for the control of education to the colonial Chaplain and later the Archdeacon of the Church of England. Though, since the Church of England was established, they could be regarded as Government officials, Colebrooke's recommendation for the School Commission, for the first time associated government officials who were not clergymen in the task of education. Events proved, however, that the clergy continued to dominate over the School Commission.

De Silva, K. M., *op. cit.* p. 145 f

[31] Mendis, *op. cit.* p. 77

[32] Mendis, *op. cit.* p. 76, ECC. p. 248–251

[33] ECC. p. 169–170. Colebrooke's conclusion was " based purely on statistical information about the numerical distribution of English schools which was supplied to the Commission."

[34] ECC. p. 253–254

[35] According to the Table constructed from contemporary statistics there were 97 Government Schools with 1914 scholars, 236 Missionary schools with 9,274 scholars and 640 Private schools with 8,424 scholars.

ECC. p. 236

[36] ECC. p. 186–200

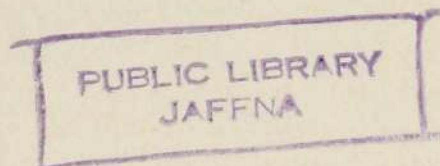
[37] CCP. 1, p. 74

[38] ECC. p. 236

[39] CCP. p. 74–75, ECC. p. 277

[40] De Silva, K. M., *op. cit.* p. 143

[41] For an evaluation of the Educational Reforms introduced by the Colebrooke Commission *see* ECC. p. 248–257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CHAPTER 34

THE SCHOOL COMMISSION

CHARLES GODAGE

Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, who was appointed Governor of Ceylon in 1831, was directed by the Secretary of State to implement the recommendations of Colebrooke and Cameron as early as possible. Horton took immediate action to close down the existing Vernacular Schools, and discontinue the teachers who did not know their English.[1] Regarding the setting up of the School Commission, Horton consulted the Archdeacon who vehemently opposed the scheme. The Archdeacon said that he was not willing to serve on such a Commission commenting that it would " only lead to disagreement, confusion and mismanagement. "[2] Horton generally agreed with the Archdeacon, but under pressure from Home set up the Commission[3] and later informed the Secretary of State, in a half-hearted way, that it was untimely for him to express an opinion whether the new arrangement would lead to beneficial results.[4]

Horton did not take immediate action to establish the College, as the Secretary of State[5] took more time to consider the matter further and also as his spiritual adviser, the Archdeacon did not give him enough encouragement. But, in spite of the Archdeacon's adverse advice, the half-heartedness of the British Government, and the indecision of Horton, the actual foundation for the College was laid by the Revd. J. Marsh, M.A., who had come to Ceylon originally as the Classical and Mathematical Tutor, to the Christian Institute (later Christian College and now Jayawardhanapura Maha Vidyalaya) at Kotte, under Christian Missionary Society. The private school opened by Marsh in 1835, for the benefit of the Burgher children in Colombo took the new name Colombo Academy. This is the modern Royal College, which has served the nation for the last one and a quarter centuries, as the foremost Government Secondary School in Ceylon.

GODAGE, CHARLES B.A. (HONOURS) LONDON, M.A. CEYLON, M.A. LONDON, DIP. ED. LONDON, DIP. ED. CEYLON. Mr. Godage is the Principal of Moratu Maha Vidyalaya and author of "Development of Public Education in Ceylon, 1832-1868" and "Place of Indra in Early Buddhism."

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The School Commission

The mere appointment of a Commission composed of " the Civil, Judicial and Ecclesiastical functionaries," was obviously no guarantee for an efficient school system. The Head of the Commission, the Archdeacon was no doubt expected to take the required initiative and organize his Department and give an outline of the measures the Commission proposed to take, in planning the work of education. But it was unfortunate for the cause of education that the Archdeacon was expected to run a department against his own will and it is very doubtful whether he had the success of the School Commission at heart at all.

We are told that for one year little could be gathered [6] of the activities of the Commission or the Sub-Committees. In 1835, the Revd. Joseph Marsh, acting Colonial Chaplain at St. Paul's Church, was appointed Secretary of the Commission and within a week of his appointment the Commission's ' first and last report was adopted. ' According to this Report progress in the establishment of schools had been slow owing to the difficulty of obtaining suitable teachers. The name of Marsh is specially remembered as the author of THE PROSPECTUS OF GENERAL RULES AND SUGGESTIONS which the Commission adopted in March 1837.

The Archdeacon picked a quarrel with Marsh, as a result of which Marsh was compelled to resign.[7] As prophesied by the Archdeacon, there was " disagreement, confusion and mismanagement"[8] in the Commission. Horton who sent a Despatch to the Secretary of State, prior to his resignation, said :

> " . . . . the Commission is not found to work well—probably it is too numerous or there may be some want of proper arrangement. I am not, however, prepared to submit any proposal for an amendment—which I shall leave for the consideration of my successor. "[9]

J. A. Stewart Mackenzie, who succeeded Horton in November 1837, could not gather any information of any plan the Commission had in view for the advancement of education in the Island.[10] He discovered that members of the Commission had not been working in harmony to discuss matters pertaining to education, but there had been ' bitter squabblings ' among the clerical members, which had prevented the business of the Commission.[11] We are told that, during the later period, the work of the Commission was carried out by the Government officers such as Turnour and Buller.[12] Regular meetings were not held for want of a quorum.[13] Thus the Commission became virtually dormant,[14] and the education of the country suffered enormously as the Commission neglected its duty. These circumstances confirm Mackenzie's view that it was unfortunate in the interest of Religion and Education that the Archdeacon was placed at the head of the Commission.[15] Mackenzie was quite right in thinking that the Archdeacon presented an obstacle to the good working of a Government Scheme for education.[16] Therefore the only solution to the problem was the removal of the Archdeacon from the Commission, but Mackenzie could not effect that change for two reasons : In the first place, the Archdeacon, as the Head of the Ecclesiastical Department, was at the time considered responsible for the education of the Island, more specially, the religious education of the people.[17]

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Secondly, the Archdeacon and the Colonial Clergy had been specially nominated members by no less a person than the Secretary of State for the Colonies.[18] The Bishop of Madras too favoured a scheme in which the Archdeacon retained ex-officio chairmanship of the Commission.[19]

The Anglican Clergy thought that it was the duty of the Government, to leave the question of Public Education solely in their hands and that no other Missionary Body should be held responsible for it. Mackenzie, however, did not think it advisable to give more power to the Church by allowing them to have a vital share in matters of education, for he was bent on evolving a system of education, more permanent than the existing ones, by inviting the Missionaries to assist the Government. This tussle between the Church and the State continued for nearly two and a half years, without a solution being reached, and the education of the country suffered a great deal in consequence.

At last, the British Government proposed to dissolve the existing Commission and substitute a new one in its place.[20] It was thought advisable to give more weight to lay members in the composition of the new Commission. Seven or nine members were suggested ; in the former case, four were to be laymen, and in the latter five or six were to be laymen. To this number a clergyman of the Church of England, a Presbyterian clergyman, and a Roman Catholic Priest were to be added. The need to nominate clerical members who could work together in harmony was stressed. In suggesting this plan, the Secretary of State had, no doubt, given full consideration to the causes that led to the inefficiency of the first School Commission. Lack of true leadership, the unsuitability and indifference of the Archdeacon, the inability of the members to work in harmony, the lack of proper understanding of educational matters and the intolerant spirit of the clergymen were some of the defects the British Government saw in the School Commission, and there is no doubt that they hoped to remedy these defects by suggesting the appointment of a new Commission. There is no doubt that the Secretary of State was greatly influenced by what happened at Home with regard to the administration of education. The distribution of the Government Grant for Education in England had been left in the hands of the religious societies till the year 1839, but a change was effected that year and the distribution of the Government Grant for Education was handed to a Committee of the Privy Council.[21]

Governor Mackenzie published a Minute[22], dated 27 March 1841, dissolving the old Commission, constituted by the Minute of Governor Horton, dated 19 May 1834, and substituting the new Commission in its place. George Lee, in addition to his permanent appointment as Post Master-General, was appointed Inspector of Schools and Secretary of the Commission. Thus, the Central School Commission was given due authority to enter upon its duties.[23]

Mackenzie was pleased to place the School Establishment in the hands of such a Commission, and was quite confident that the recommended nominations would create a very greatly improved body to carry out the great work of education in the Island.[24] Mackenzie could not finish the task of nominating all the members as he resigned office and left the Island. Sir Collin Campbell who succeeded him attended

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to that important task. After the completion of the Commission the new Governor published a Minute dated 26th May, 1841,[25] offering some observations for the guidance of the new Commission.

The administration of the funds voted by the Legislative Council for purposes of education was one of the very important duties of the Commission, and it was also vested with the power to appoint teachers and fix their salaries, to purchase school books, furniture and other equipment, but it was not authorized to erect new buildings or repair existing ones without the sanction of the Government.[26] A very important part of the duty of the Commission in the administration of funds voted for education, was the liberty given to it, to give grants and assist private schools that deserved encouragement, subject to the full rights of inspection and examination of such schools without interfering in their management.[27] The Central School Commission for which Mackenzie had striven so hard during the entire period of his administration, facing various difficulties, including personal attacks from the local press supported by the Anglican Clergy, at last came into being, invested with all the powers envisaged by him.

Sir Collin Campbell was in charge of the administration of the Government from 1841 to 1847. The School Commission, as expected, worked in harmony and peace, and it can be said that this was the most successful period in the history of the School Commission. During the period several changes took place in the composition of the Commission.[28] The most important change was the appointment of the Lord Bishop of Colombo as Chairman in 1845, in place of the Colonial Secretary who departed in 1844. In 1845, George Lee was relieved of his duties as Secretary and Inspector of Schools, because of his increasing duties as Post Master-General. The post of Inspector was separated from that of the Secretary of the Commission.

When the second period of the history of the Commission began in 1847, with the administration of Lord Torrington, a very important change was made in the constitution of the Commission, which caused the resignation of the Bishop of Colombo from the presidential chair of the Commission. This resulted in a series of events, which were calculated to harm the work of the Commission and threaten its very existence.[29] It can be said that the Bishop's resignation was compelled by the action of the Governor in appointing a Wesleyan to an important teaching post in a school under the Commission.[30] The Governor was not unhappy about the Bishop's quitting the Commission, he even saw some 'compensatory advantage' from the assistance and advice of the Colonial Secretary as the Bishop's successor in the chair of the Commission.[31]

The Bishop, no doubt, saw that the interests of the Church of England were at stake so long as the dissenting clerical members remained in the School Commission. He, therefore, planned to oust them by an attempt to persuade the authorities of the existence of sectarian motives on the part of some members of the Commission. The Governor had no doubts about the impartial attitude of the Commission.[32] In view of the policy the School Commission adopted, the Bishop found that the Church was at a great disadvantage and he made an attempt to get the School Commission remodelled in a way he thought was favourable to the Church. He

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accordingly, addressed a memorial to the Secretary of State, urging on him the need to remodel the Central School Commission in such a way as to get the School Establishment handed over to a Board of lay members.[33] The Secretary of State examined the memorial, and found no reason to recommend a change in the Commission.[34]

During the ' Coffee Crisis ' the Island's revenue was severely affected and it became necessary to reduce Government expenditure on various Departments including the School Commission.[35] The Governor maintained that it did not appear possible to extend English education " with a reasonable degree of economy."[36] The Commission appointed a Committee to go into the question and submit a scheme based on the principle of self-support. The members of the Committee[37] unanimously agreed to the principle of self-support and accepted that parents should share the burden of educating their children. The Committee decided to revise the existing system of school fees by converting them into a fixed payment in proportion to the kind of instruction the pupils were given. It was, therefore, proposed to classify the existing Boys' Schools into five distinct groups and the Girls' Schools into three. The Committee saw the need to fix the course of studies in keeping with the recommended classification, so that one class of schools might not clash with another and hinder the development of the general system envisaged. The School Commission adopted the recommendations of the Committee on January 10, 1849, and the scheme came into force in March, 1849.[38]

Lord Torrington was succeeded by George Anderson in November 1850, who was in charge of the administration of the Island till January 1855. Unlike many Governors who preceded him, Anderson played no direct part in the affairs of the School Commission and in fact, made no attempt to direct its activities or guide the educational policy of the Island in general. Anderson was succeeded by Henry Ward in May 1855. Ward certainly earned a high reputation as a Colonial Governor, but it was a tragedy that he did not realize the importance of educating the people of Ceylon, especially at a time when the Government could afford to do so. C. J. MacCarthy succeeded Ward in July 1860. His decision to recommend Walter Sendall as Inspector of Schools, against the wish of the School Commission, should be regarded as a service in the cause of education in Ceylon. Sir Hercules Robinson succeeded MacCarthy in March 1866. He was largely responsible for effecting the second great revolution in the education of the Island, and for laying the foundation for a system of education which has been instrumental, to a great extent, in building up modern Ceylon.

Robinson in one of his Despatches to the Secretary of State informed him that the system of education in the Island was not satisfactory and the Colony did not derive the benefit as expected from the large sums of money spent on education.[39] At last, the gravity of the situation was realized by the Government, when the Legislative Council decided to take action by appointing a sub-Committee to inquire into the state and prospects of education in the Island and suggest ways and means of improving the existing system.

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Medium of Instruction in Schools Managed by the Central School Commission

Although the accepted medium of instruction in Government schools, after 1832, was English, the experience of the Central School Commission convincingly proved that Governor Mackenzie was right when he proposed the re-introduction of the vernacular medium into the schools. The reports of the Inspector of Schools also revealed the importance of the native languages even for the teaching of English. The Commission, however, was prevented from establishing schools exclusively for the purpose of teaching the native languages, in view of the Governor's Minute of May 26, 1841. The Commission realizing the importance and the necessity of giving instruction in the native languages as a preliminary steps to English Education passed a resolution to supply every elementary school with the means of giving instruction in the native languages.[40]

In June 1845, a Native Normal Institution was established to train teachers for appointment to Vernacular Schools. The Commission also took action to translate a few useful English works into Sinhalese.

When Vernacular teachers were trained, the Commission could not leave the question of the vernacular medium in an unsettled state any longer. Torrington attached the highest importance to the Normal Institution and its success in preparing the means of imparting education in the Vernacular medium. As the Commission did not possess any Vernacular Schools of its own, the Governor wanted the newly trained teachers to go into schools already established by the Clergy and the Missionaries. The Government did not want to break fresh ground by opening their own new schools with their own trained teachers, because the Missionaries were already successfully operating such schools. Later, the Government established their own schools when more and more teachers were made available by the Normal Institution.

The Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to report upon the Fixed Establishment of the Island recommended that " no state support should be given except to schools in which instruction is given in the English language." [41] The question of the Vernacular medium became a matter of public controversy in the local press. The School Commission had no doubt as to the advantage to be gained from the Vernacular education.[42] Another Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to report upon the Fixed Establishment of the Colony, saw the need to encourage Vernacular Education by not charging any school fees from the pupils in places where education was not imparted or could otherwise be obtained.[43]

In 1855, the Commission changed its policy by deciding to withdraw the allowance of £ 6, granted to each trainee.[44] The Normal Institution was closed down in 1857, on the plea of " want of capability on the part of the students." This action of the Commission, deprived the Vernacular Schools of the only avenue of obtaining their teachers.

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Establishment of Schools

The School Commission, set up in 1834, was held responsible for the establishment and control of Schools. Although the Commission did not work well, schools began to increase, but Governor Mackenzie did not think it advisable to establish new schools till the School Commission was remodelled on better principles. In a letter to the Secretary of State, he said : " I could not do more than keep in action the schools already in existence."[45] The new Central School Commission, was able to open up more and more schools. The majority of the schools were situated along the south-western coastal districts of the Island, but were more concentrated in the districts round Colombo. The Schools of the Commission in the North had to be abandoned in favour of the Mission Schools. The interior of the Island was very badly neglected. In the year 1841, only Kandy, Matale, Badulla, Kurunegala and Ratnapura had schools. The position was the same even at the end of 1846.

The year 1847 saw the establishment of the first group of Sinhalese Schools in the Island after they had been abolished in 1832. In 1848, the Central School Commission recommended a new plan for classifying the Elementary Boys' Schools into three groups, namely, Elementary English, Mixed (English and Vernacular) and Vernacular Schools. Elementary Girls' Schools were classified as Mixed and Vernacular (Girls' English Schools were put into the category of Superior Girls' Schools). This classification of Elementary Schools led to a class division not only in the educational system, but also in contemporary society. The Commission planned a programme of work to be followed in the English and Mixed Elementary Schools. No definite course of instruction was recommended for the Vernacular Schools. With the introduction of this classification, the Commission did not think it advisable to increase the number of Elementary English Schools, but on the other hand more Mixed Schools and Vernacular Schools were established. Towards the end of the period under review, the number of Vernacular Schools increased to 63 with 3,624 children.

Central Schools

The Central School Commission having considered that " the system of education in Ceylon was by no means sufficiently practical,"[46] decided in 1841, to open three Central Schools in Colombo, Galle and Jaffna. The aim of the Commission was to give an impetus to practical education in the Island.[47] The Central School in Ceylon where a practical type of education was imparted to the poor children who could not afford an education at the Colombo Academy,[48] was the counterpart of the Commercial School in England. Superior teachers from England were appointed to conduct the Central Schools.[49] The Central School was also expected to train teachers to conduct the future Elementary English Schools.[50]

The Colombo Central School was the only one of its kind that survived the retrenchment measures adopted by the Government, and in 1849, a programme of work lower than that contemplated originally for the Central Schools was adopted.[51] This School functioned only till the end of 1856, as it was absorbed by the Colombo Academy in 1857. The Central School system, however, did not die out, as steps

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were taken to re-establish the two schools at Galle and Kandy, which were closed down under financial stringency. It was the wish of the Commission to provide in these schools a course of instruction such as would :

" prove sufficient for those who wish to seek employment in the ordinary walks of life, and prepare others for direct admission to the Superior Educational Institutions of the Colony."[52]

The Colombo Academy

We have seen how the Colombo Academy came to be established during Governor Horton's tenure of office. The Academy had certain unique features for there were two divisions—a Lower School and a Classical or High School.[53] The Lower School taught English, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, History and First Principles of Geometry and Algebra. In the High School the same branches of learning were continued with the addition of Logic, Elements of English Law, Principles of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, Sinhalese and Latin. Greek and Hebrew were taught to those who followed Church Instruction. Religious instruction was given to those boys whose parents had no objection to it.

Horton established a tradition by attending the examination of the Academy. This practice was followed by the Governors of the Island who came after him.

Mackenzie took a keen interest in the Academy and wanted to see its development "into the magnitude of a College."[54] In 1842 the Revd. Barcroft Boake A.B. succeeded Marsh, as Principal of the Academy, and set out at once to improve the institution. The Commission was prepared to give him all assistance.[55] In 1844, two more Englishmen joined the Academy.[56] The work of the Academy was grouped into three Departments[57]

1. Theology, Mental and Natural Philosophy.
2. Mathematics.
3. English Literature and Classics.

The Model (Lower) School was given a separate Head. Boake got another Englishman appointed a teacher of Drawing, Planning and Surveying.[58]

With the appointment of Boake, as Principal, the Academy began its work on new lines, with a definite indication of its future progress. The appointment of well-qualified teachers from England also created a very favourable situation for the advancement of modern learning not only at the Academy, but also in the Island as a whole. The grouping of studies into Departments and the other measures Boake adopted to re-organize the Academy, were sufficient testimony to his ability and experience as a great educationist.

The Academy received the severest blow in the year 1849, when the Central School Commission, raised the School fees from six shillings to one pound, per pupil per month. The number of pupils was reduced from 254 in 1847, to 20 in the year 1849. The staff was reduced to two.[59] The courses of studies planned in the three Departments in the Academy could be pursued successfully only till the end of 1848. When

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the entire burden of the business of the Academy fell on the Principal and his only assistant, Caldwell, in 1849, the programme of studies was revised so that it could be carried out successfully by them.[60] The Commission was greatly disappointed and was compelled to address a communication to the Governor recommending the discontinuance of the Academy.[61] The parents and well-wishers protested against this measure and the Governor and the Executive Council wanted the Academy to continue for another year, after which period they wanted to review the situation. The wish of the parents to reduce the fees to ten shillings per head, was accepted by the Commission and the numbers increased to effect the appointment of another teacher to the Academy.[62] The Academy, thus started a new lease of life in 1852, and developed throughout the period. Several well-known teachers from England were appointed to the staff in 1860, 1862 and 1865.

Another important feature of the Academy was the organization of a Higher School, under the title " Queen's College ", affiliated to the Calcutta University to prepare students of the Academy to proceed to a degree.[63] According to the results of the Calcutta University Entrance Examination, Queen's College earned a very respectable position among the Colleges affiliated to the University of Calcutta.[64]

Girls' Superior Schools

The most important object of the Government at the beginning of the period under review, was to diffuse the English Language, throughout the Colony. This was not an easy task as the girls too had to be given an education equal to that of the boys. Only a small proportion of the female population of the Island received even an elementary education in English, let alone a superior type of education. The promoters of female education had to overcome the prejudices of the natives to allow their daughters to attend school.

The majority of the girls, who attended the Government Elementary Girls' Schools, did so, to learn Needlework and Embroidery and not out of desire to learn English. The Commission could not open Superior Girls' Schools, without obtaining school-mistresses from England. Fortunately, Miss Douglas who came to the Island, under the auspices of the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, offered her services to the Commission in August, 1843.[65] The Colombo Female Seminary was opened with Miss Douglas as its Head. In November 1843, Miss Wells who came to Ceylon under the auspices of the same Society, was placed at the head of the Dutch Consistorial Girls' School with the special purpose of giving a superior education to Burgher girls.[66] A Superior Girls' School was also established at Matara in 1846. In the same year a teacher, Miss Burton, was appointed to the Girls' Ministers' School.[67]

The two Superior Girls' Schools in Colombo did not suffer from the retrenchment measures adopted by Lord Torrington. The Matara Girls' School was closed down. A superior Girls' school was opened in Kandy in 1850, when the services of Miss Houlston, who arrived in Ceylon to conduct a School, were available to the

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Commission.[68] Many superior English Schoolmistresses served in the various Girls' Schools during the period under review, and there is no doubt, that at least the girls in the principal towns, began to realize the importance of Western learning.

Teacher Training

According to Colebrooke, the most important qualification of a teacher was a competent knowledge of the English Language. Horton believed that a teacher had only to adopt the system under which he had been educated.[69] This was the view accepted by many even in England at the time. The first School Commission did not think it advisable to establish training schools for teachers.

Mackenzie proposed a system of Normal Schools, where teachers were instructed in teaching methods.[70] The Bishop of Madras saw the establishment of Normal Schools as a welcome means of diffusing Christian knowledge among the natives.[71] In 1839, Lord John Russel proposed the establishment of training schools in England, but the proposal was assailed in Parliament. It can be said that the British Government did not want to approve a system that was not allowed in England at the time. But, however, the Commission gradually began to realize the importance of training teachers.

We have already discussed the circumstances under which the Native Normal Institution was established in 1845, and how it was possible to obtain trained Sinhalese teachers to conduct the Government Vernacular Schools, till it was abolished in 1857.

The Commission could not establish a training school for the training of English teachers on a big scale.[72] At the beginning the number of trainees was limited to ten, and a class of trainees was attached to the Colombo Academy. It is interesting to observe that one of the qualifications required from a trainee was his attendance at a Christian place of worship.[73] The students were provided with free board and lodging during the period of training.[74] When the Central School under Knighton was established in 1843, the trainees were transferred there, as a more appropriate place, since Knighton himself had received his training in the Normal Seminary at Glasgow.[75] Again, another class of four trainees was added to the Galle Central School under Millar.[76] A similar class was formed when Murdoch established his Central School in Kandy, towards the end of 1844.[77] Now, the Commission was in a position to secure the services of well-qualified teachers to open new schools, for which such facilities were not available in the past. But, unfortunately for the cause of education, the Government decided to discontinue English Normal Classes,[78] under financial stress, but did not think it advisable to re-establish them when the country could afford to do so.

Grant-in-Aid System

The Government schools in the North proved an utter failure as they were not managed so efficiently as the Missionary Schools. The Central School Commission was, therefore, forced to close down these schools and assign the Missionaries (American, Wesleyan and Church) grants to conduct a few schools on behalf of the Commission. The American Mission started seven Boys' and one Girls' School,

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the Church Mission six Boys' and two Girls' Schools, and the Wesleyan Mission, five Boys' and one Girls' School.[79] Although at the beginning the Catholics were not recognized as educators, in 1851, they were given a grant to run a few schools in the North.[80] The Jaffna National Education Society, believing that the Government would support Hindu Schools, as the Roman Catholics were assisted, appealed for support. The School Commission refused assistance on the ground that " the system of education proposed to be given by that body was of a character not consistent with the objects of their institution."[81] Thereafter, the Grant-in-Aid system became a matter of hot discussion in the local press,[82] and headache to the Government.

In the year 1857, the Bishop of Colombo appealed to the Governor to issue instructions to the Commission to apportion grants-in-aid to all schools of Christian instruction.[83] Another petition was addressed to the Governor and Legislative Council, by a Government Chaplain, six Church Missionaries and two Wesleyan Missionaries asking that a system of Grants-in-aid be introduced in Ceylon, similar to that in England or British India.[84] According to paragraph 8 of the Governor's Minute of 26 May, 1841, the Commission was prepared to receive applications for grants-in-aid only from private schools, which they considered deserving of encouragement. Grants were to be made especially to extend secular education of the people, when certain conditions were satisfied by the recipients of the grants. The Legislative Council passed a resolution[85] to enable the Missionaries to receive a grant. The Commission issued supplementary conditions[86] which created a new problem regarding the teaching of Religion. No Missionary Society other than the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was willing to accept grants under these circumstances, and the Commission considered this undesirable and decided to adhere to the original plan of limiting the grant to Private Schools only. The matter was again taken up and no satisfactory solution was reached.[87] The inclusion of the religious clause became a problem very difficult to solve so as to give satisfaction to all parties concerned. The Commission finally decided to remove the Jaffna Grant System to avoid further trouble. Therefore the Commission extended the rules relating to religious instruction to all schools receiving grants, including the ones run on behalf of the Commission by the Missionary Bodies at Jaffna.[88] Thus, the freedom the Jaffna Grant Schools enjoyed in giving religious instruction was withdrawn. The Missionaries of Jaffna protested against this decision.[89] The Missionaries were informed that unless the Departmental Rules were accepted by the recipients of Educational Grants, the grants given to them would be withdrawn.[90] The Christian Missionary Society was not prepared to accept the rules of the Commission and accordingly severed its connection with the Commission. However, subsequent negotiations resulted in the continuance of the connection between the Commission and the other two Missionary bodies.[91] To prevent the possibility of the Jaffna Grant Schools being regarded as Denominational Schools, the Commission decided to distinguish them by a local name. Thus these schools were re-named as " Jaffna Boys' Seminary," " Jaffna Female Seminary, " " Jaffna Central School " and " Wannarponne Preparatory School." [92]

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Local Examinations

For the first time in the history of education in Ceylon, the Government planned a Local Examination for Ceylon Students in 1862. The immediate purpose of this examination was to fill junior appointments in the Public Service, paying special regard to those who obtained credit passes. The management of this examination was entrusted to the Central School Commission.[93]

Teachers' Certificate Examination

It was arranged to hold the Teachers' Certificate Examination, for the first time in January 1863.[94] The Commission also brought to the notice of the Government that the majority of the teachers laboured under very serious disadvantages, and that they were not entitled to any pension, and suggested to the Governor to extend to them the privileges granted by the Minute of 26 July, 1861, to all officers in the Education Department who were paid £ 25 a year, provided they obtained a certificate according to Regulations, for a class not lower than that in which they were employed.[95] By this arrangement the Commission hoped to induce the teachers to make an attempt, at least, to meet the requirements of the Examination, and obtain a Certificate to earn a Pension.

The task became very difficult for the teachers and when at the very first examination, it was discovered that some of the teachers " were found unfit, even in point of actual knowledge of the subjects required " [96] for the posts they held, the Commission's hopes were shattered. At the first examination held in 1863, twenty-seven teachers were examined, and to the utter disappointment of the Commission only four came forward the following year.[97] The Inspector saw the scheme ' as a disintegrating force,' because it had greatly increased the desire of teachers to leave the service " at the earliest moment and at any sacrifice " and there was also no likelihood of better men taking their places.[98] The Inspector pointed out to the Commission the futility of " pressing the scheme." [99] Thereafter, we hear nothing about the experiment.

Schemes of Studies for the Schools

THE PROSPECTUS OF GENERAL RULES AND SUGGESTIONS INTENDED TO PROMOTE UNIFORMITY OF SYSTEM IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN THE ISLAND OF CEYLON,[100] prepared by the Revd. J. Marsh and adopted by the Commission in March 1897, can be regarded as the First Code intended for the Government Schools in the Island. Again in the year 1849,the Central School Commission planned a Scheme of Studies for the Elementary Schools (English and Mixed). Steps were also taken in 1862, to advise teachers in various schools—Central, Elementary, English, Mixed and Vernacular—regarding the work they had to follow in the different classes.[101] According to the course of instruction arranged in a Sinhalese School, a boy who finished his education in a Sinhalese School or at some stage there, had to enter the lowest class in a Mixed School, if ever he wanted to receive an English Education.

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Conclusion

At this stage, it will be useful to consider Colebrooke's three important recommendations, which initiated the first revolution in the Education of the Island, with a view to seeing how successfully they were carried out during the period (1832–1868).

In the first place, the first School Commission as set up according to Colebrooke's recommendation proved a failure. The second School Commission certainly did some useful work at the beginning but later, was found inefficient. The sub-Committee of the Legislative Council when it gave its verdict on the School Commission, in the first place, found that " the action of the School Commission has been characterized for years past by a want of promptitude and despatch,"[102] and secondly the Commission was unsatisfactory because of " the want of responsibility which attaches to all Boards."[103]

The experience gained by the School Commission and others in the field of education, proved that English was not alone a successful medium of instruction for the natives, and before long Colebrooke's recommendation had to be revised. The School Commission deserves some credit for taking some steps to initiate a programme of instruction in the Vernacular medium.

The establishment of the College as recommended by Colebrooke proved a success although the numbers educated in the Institution, during this period were very small.

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C. O. 55—These volumes contain the despatches from the Secretary of State to the Governor of Ceylon

C. O. 59—These volumes are called the Blue Books. They give information regarding the Island's Revenue, Exports and Imports, Establishments, Population, Education, &c.

All these volumes are available at the Public Record Office, London

ABBREVIATIONS

C.C.P.—Colebrooke—Cameron Papers. (In two Volumes, edited by Dr. G. C. Mendis)

C. M. S.—Christian Missionary Society

C.S.C.R.—Central School Commission Report

C. S. P.—Ceylon Sessional Papers

S. P. G.—Society for the Propagation of the Gospel

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CHAPTER 35

THE LAST DAYS OF THE SCHOOL COMMISSION

Charles Godage

School Commission Criticized

After the resignation of the Bishop of Colombo from the presidential Chair of the School Commission, it became the target for all manner of criticisms. Many critics stressed the need for remodelling it, while others urged its complete abolition, and the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction. The Bishop's attempt to get the Commission remodelled into a Board consisting of lay members ended in failure, as the Ceylon Government did not support the Scheme, and, moreover, the British Government thought it premature to make any change before its ineffectiveness had been proved beyond doubt.[1] It will be interesting to examine some of these criticisms that led the Government to review the matter and to consider what remedial measures should be adopted.

The Examiner and *The Times*—two of the three important local newspapers at the time, the Principal of the Colombo Academy, and several others voiced the weaknesses of the Commission. The general complaint against the School Commission was that it encouraged ' Sectarianism ' and we have seen that even the Bishop blamed the Commission for allowing the Wesleyans to have greater influence than the Church of England. The Church, naturally, expected greater patronage from the School Commission and when that was not extended to them, allegations were made against the Commission, for encouraging Sectarianism. *The Colombo Observer*[2] defended the Commissioner's action thus :

> " . . . . the great fault of the body is that it administers the funds confided to its care, to the promotion of education without religious Sectarianism, instead of tending itself to the propagation of Church of Englandism."

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Although the *Colombo Observer* felt it its duty to tell the Public that the School Commission discharged its duties without religious sectarianism, there were others who thought differently. A Select Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to report upon the Fixed Establishments of the Colony, recommended that the School Commission should be remodelled and the management vested in five lay members—three official and two unofficial.[3] There is no doubt that this Committee felt that a body consisting of Clergymen of various religious denominations was not sufficiently free from denominational bias to observe religious neutrality in accordance with the wishes of the Government. In fact, the Bishop himself recommended a lay board, when he suggested the remodelling of the Commission.

The Examiner reported :

" The evils resulting from entrusting the education of the people to the priesthood of various denominations have been conspicuous in Ceylon."[4]

A Correspondent[5] of the *Ceylon Times* in a letter to the Editor of that paper took the Commission to task for its ' Sectarian doings '.[6]

The Revd. D. J. Gogerly, Chairman of the Wesleyan Mission, South Ceylon, enjoyed an advantageous position as a Member of the School Commission, for his views carried a good deal of weight among the other members and even Lord Torrington supported him, in his dispute with the Bishop over the appointment of the first batch of school teachers trained at the Normal Institution. In fact, the Normal Institution was established as a result of the Revd. Gogerly's agitation, and its Principal was a Wesleyan Minister. There is no doubt that there was a certain amount of jealousy on the part of some Church Members because of his influence over the School Commission. The *Colombo Observer*[7] commented on the position thus :

" We are aware that it is said that Wesleyanism has undue preponderance in the operations of the body which we believe to have no further foundation in truth than the weight deservedly attached, by the members generally to the opinions of Revd Mr. Gogerly, Chairman of the Wesleyan Mission, in South Ceylon."

Apart from the complaints made against the Commission, for encouraging sectarian principles, it was also condemned for its inefficiency, as no individual member was held responsible for its activities and as the majority of the members were not qualified to direct action. The Revd. Barcroft Boake, Principal of the Colombo Academy, in a memorial to the Secretary of State[8] stated :

" . . . . duties such as those devolving upon the Central School Commission, are committed to gentlemen who, high as may be their qualifications in other respects, are not likely to possess any very intimate acquaintance with educational systems, or with the management of Educational Establishments, who have never shown any great enthusiasm in the cause of education, whose time and attention are fully occupied with official duties for which they are personally responsible, while their responsibility for the performance of duties as members of the School Commission is divided amongst many, and who, consequently, are likely to allow

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the management of the business of the Commission to fall almost entirely into the hands of a few of their numbers ,who may have their own purpose to advance, and who may not be very scrupulous as to the measures which they adopt for advancing those purposes."

The Examiner[9] also recognized the inefficiency of a Commission which placed no direct responsibility on individual members. In support of this view *The Examiner* quoted from a letter[10] of Sir John Herschell, written in connection with education elsewhere. This letter said :

" A Board of Education Commissioners in a country like this must from the very nature of things be either a constant scene of dispute, or a body in which some prominent member suggests and acts for all, while the responsibility of his measures is divided among the number. "

These remarks according to *The Examiner* were " completely and entirely applicable to Ceylon. " *The Ceylon Times* carried a letter from a correspondent who said that the members of the Commission

" are generally persons whose usual avocations do not allow them time to bestow a thought on educational matters, and who, consequently, whilst emptying treasure bags of thousands of pounds, on the one hand, from maintaining a host of utterly useless schools, are on the other hand liable, through ignorance, to be held in a variety of ways, to withhold schools from places where they are needed."[11]

The Examiner and *The Ceylon Times* did not favour the Select Committee's proposal to remodel the constitutions, so as to vest its management in five lay members. *The Ceylon Times*,[12] asked whether one single individual of integrity and ability could not be found who could devote his whole attention to the business of education because a Lay Board could not remedy the disorder created, but would perpetuate it. *The Examiner*[13] insisted on the appointment of a man who was " able, well-paid, of pronounced position, religious but not sectarian, and responsible to Government for all his acts." *The Examiner*[14] very rightly argued that :

" authority or power vested in a Board is frequently abused : a feeling of diluted responsibility influencing the individual members while the conduct of any matter entrusted to one man is generally properly performed if he be well-chosen from a feeling of sole responsibility as much as from a sense of duty. "

The Observer[15] on the other hand did not see the advisability of replacing the School Commission by one individual.

The weaknesses of the Commission's Schools were revealed year after year by the Inspector.[16] By this an enormous amount of public opinion was created on the inability of the Commission to run the Nation's schools in a satisfactory manner. In an article on ' Education in Ceylon ' *The Madras Journal of Education*[17] remarked :

" As compared with the schools of the Presidency, those of Ceylon do not occupy a higher position ; there the attainment of the great mass of pupils, judging from the reports on the Schools in the Western, Central and Southern

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Provinces which are given in an appendix, is exactly of that kind, which we shall look for from schools whose teachers never saw the inside of a Normal School."

These criticisms were too much for the Government to ignore, and Governor Robinson, in one of his Despatches to the Colonial Office stated :

" I regret to add that a very general impression appears to prevail here amongst thoughtful persons that the efforts of the Government in this direction are in a great measure misdirected, and that the Colony does not derive as much benefit as it might be from the large sums of public money which is annually expended for educational purposes. "[18]

The Government takes Action

The Government just could not remain inactive when public opinion was thus created against the work of the School Commission. Sir Muthu Coomaraswamy,[19] one of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council, moved at a Council Meeting held on 14th October 1865 :

" That a Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the state and prospects of Education in the Island, the amount of success which has attended the working of the present system of Eductation and any improvements that may be deemed advisable to take thereon. "

This motion was seconded by Mr. Maartenz. The Colonial Secretary moved that a Committee be appointed to make the inquiry, suggesting the names of the Queen's Advocate (Sir Richard Morgan), the Surveyor General, The Collector of Customs and Mr. Maartenz, with power to continue their inquiries, after the close of the session of the Council if necessary. This was seconded by the Queen's Advocate and carried by the House.[20]

The Enquiry

The Sub-Committee accepted the view that it was the duty of the Government to give the people both an elementary and superior education, unlike England where education at the time, was left in the hands of private bodies.[21] The Committee proceeding to consider the evidence before them[22] as regards the progress made by the School Commission, found that all were agreed that it had not been as satisfactory as could be desired. The entire result as either to its quality or quantity was found to be not satisfactory. Much had been attempted and little achieved. The Inspector's reports regarding the unsatisfactory nature of the instruction given in the schools had been confirmed by the evidence obtained by the Sub-Committee. Although the School Commission had recognized the importance of Vernacular Education at an early stage, Government Vernacular Schools were to be found only in the Western Province, and even there, school buildings, furniture and teachers had not been up to the required standard. The Superior Female Schools did not cater to the needs of the Sinhalese and Tamil girls. The Mixed, Elementary English, and Central Schools did not give the type of education that could be useful to the children in their future lives. The Committee did not think that the Colombo

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Academy and Queen's College gave an education as practically useful as could be desired. The Committee arrived at the following conclusions[23] by the evidence laid before them.

(1) " Due attention has not been paid to Elementary Vernacular Education as a means of enlightening the masses of the people. "

(2) " In Mixed and purely English Schools the pupils are not well-grounded in their Elementary Course before they attempt a higher class of studies. "

(3) " In the higher schools too much is attempted and very little achieved. Many useless subjects are taught whilst a great many useful and practical studies are neglected."

(4) " Female Education has not reached the classes of the people, whom it should have chiefly benefited. "

The Sub-Committee focussing their attention on the working of the School Commission, solicited information on three main points.[24] The Committee wanted to know firstly whether the School Commission worked well under the existing condition, secondly whether the School Commission could be modified if it did not work well; thirdly, whether a suitable substitute could be suggested, if it did not admit of modification or improvement.

Only a few, whose opinions had been solicited advocated the retention of the School Commission in its existing form. Many were of opinion that the School Commission needed a complete overhaul, and others wanted it abolished. In view of the increasing expenditure on education and the extension of schools in the future, the Committee did not think that additional work could be performed efficiently by a body of gentlemen whose official duties also increased proportionately. For a number of years public opinion was gaining ground that the School Commission was incapable of performing its duties in an efficient manner, and time had come to get a differently constituted Body or a single responsible officer to attend to the educational work of the Island.[25]

The Sub-Committee had no difficulty in concluding that the School Commission's action was characterized by a want of promptitude and despatch and also by a want of responsibility.[26] The School Commission was, no doubt, suffering from the evils of divided responsibility, as a result of which education in the country suffered enormously. Mr. Dickson, a past Secretary of the School Commission, said in his evidence that the weightage given to the missionaries was unsuited for directing education in a country where the mass of the population was non-Christian.[27] It is interesting to compare this evidence with what Governor Barnes had to say to the Colebrooke Commissioners.[28]

The critics of the School Commission saw this as a reason for having sectarian motives in running the school establishment.

The Commission thought it sufficient to direct their attention chiefly to the evidence of the Inspector of Schools (Walter Sendall), the Secretary of the School Commission (Brooke Bailey), and the past Secretary (J. F. Dickson) to indicate the objections

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made against the Commission.[29] Many who expressed their views on the inefficiency of the Commission had concurred in the views expressed by these officers. The remedy was to modify the School Commission or appoint a Director of Public Instruction. It had been suggested that a Board of Education be appointed, with a President and two members with the assistance of a well-paid Secretary, similar to that of the Privy Council in England. The Committee saw that such a Board would be better than the existing unwieldy Commission, but they did not consider that even such a Board would promptly and energetically function as single Director. The Commission considered the pros and cons of both propositions and it appeared to them that " on the whole advantages are in favour of the appointment of a Director. "[30]

The sub-Committee expressed the opinion that Vernacular Education should be undertaken by the Government on a more extensive scale than the School Commission. The sub-Committee had no desire to promote the cultivation of the Classics in the Vernacular. This, they thought, must be left to the efforts of the interested parties. Their sole aim was to impart Primary Education and nothing more, in the Sinhalese and Tamil languages. The Rev. Father Bonjean in his evidence stressed the need for furnishing the inhabitants with the opportunity of acquiring such elementary knowledge in their own language, as would enable them to conduct their own affairs intelligently and successfully. It can be said that the sub-Committee had been influenced by what was happening in the sub-Continent regarding the arrangement to educate the masses of the Indian population for the development of their moral, social and intellectual condition by a wide dissemination of Primary instruction in the native languages of India. The sub-Committee noted with satisfaction what Mr. Arbuthnot, a former Director of Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency, had to say on this matter :

> " It is expedient to impart all elementary instruction through the medium of the languages in which the pupils are accustomed to speak and think. "[31]

The sub-Committee considered that the subjects taught in the Vernacular Schools, " should be confined to Reading, the first rules of Arithmetic (simple and compound), the outlines of Geography, and the outlines of History ". The sub-Committee was reluctant to leave Elementary Vernacular Education in the hands of the priest, attached to the Pansalas and the Temples of the Hindus, for they thought that " There is scarcely any useful knowledge disseminated in such schools and whatever is taught in them is so intertwined with error and superstition, that the aim and end of all Primary Instruction would be defeated, if it were left to be propagated by the teaching of either Buddhist or Hindu Priests ".[32] The sub-Committee also objected to the suggestion that Vernacular Education should be left entirely in the hands of the Missionaries, and that the Government should assist them with grants. The Committee took the position that the Government should maintain a large number of Vernacular Schools, to supplement the Vernacular Schools run by various Christian Missionaries. Vernacular education (Sinhalese) up to the time was confined to the Western Province and the sub-Committee wanted it to be extended to the other Provinces as well.

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The sub-Committee having collected evidence from various personalities " devoted much time and attention to the subject " and prepared " an able and comprehensive Report ",[33] which the Queen's Advocate (Morgan), as Chairman of the sub-Committee tabled at a Meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 20th November, 1867.

The Enquiry was such a success that the Governor in his address made the following remarks :

" It is very creditable to their public spirit, that hard-worked busy, official and unofficial members, should have joined willingly to devote, for two years gratuitously, the time, attention and labour, which was necessary to enable them to grapple with and master the details of this difficult, but at the same time most important subject . . . But if their plan be approved and adopted by the Council, and be kept steadily in view, it cannot fail to exercise a powerful influence upon the well-being and happiness of future generations, and I venture to predict that the names of the honourable Members of the sub-Committee will be held in grateful remembrance by the people of Ceylon."[34]

The main recommendations of the Committee were as follows :

(1) The appointment of a Director of Public Instruction to replace the School Commission.

(2) The extension of Vernacular Schools in every village throughout the Island for imparting Primary Education in the Sinhalese and Tamil Languages.

(3) The re-opening of the Colombo Industrial School, which had been closed down for two years.

(4) The retention of existing Mixed Schools.

(5) The retention of the Central Schools with a modification of the curriculum.

(6) The continuance of the Lower School of the Colombo Academy as a Preparatory School.

(7) The discontinuance of the connection between Queen's College and the Calcutta University and the substitution of English Scholarships of the annual value of £ 180, each tenable for three years.

(8) The establishment of Normal Classes at the Colombo Academy to train English teachers, and at the Industrial School and the Central School, to train Vernacular teachers.

(9) The extension of Female Education by the establishment of Vernacular Girls' Schools corresponding to the Boys' Mixed Schools and Central Schools.

(10) The improvement of the position of both male and female teachers by a revised classification of salaries.

(11) The provision of Grants-in-aid to all Private Schools, which impart a secular education for a given number of hours each day, irrespective of religious instruction given at other times.

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The School Commission was given an opportunity to make their observations on these recommendations, and it is important to consider their views on the findings of the sub-Committee. In the first place, they expressed their dissatisfaction with the way in which the enquiry was held. They said : " We cannot but express our opinion that, had some other witnesses been examined, our own President to wit—to mention one only out of many—the Report might have assumed a different tone. "[35] The Commission was particularly unhappy about the charge of 'want of promptitude' made against them and they tried to defend their position. The Commission was in full agreement with the recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10, but opinion was divided as regards recommendations 1, 7 and 11. The Commission had no objections to the appointment of a Director, but it thought it advisable to appoint a Board to assist him.[36] The majority of the Commission was in favour of a severance of the connection between Queen's College and the University of Calcutta. The minority felt that it was unwise to sever that connection. As regards grants-in-aid, the majority of the Commission agreed to the recommendations of the sub-Committee, but the President was of the opinion that no pupil in an aided school should be denied admission to classes of secular instruction, because of his declining to attend religious classes. The Governor, although he had his own views on some of the problems, wished, in a statesmanlike manner, to act according to the wish of the Legislative Council, and not to take a decision by himself.[37] The Government had no difficulty in accepting the recommendations that were not the subject of any difference of opinion between the sub-Committee and the School Commission. A decision was arrived at, as regards the recommendations 1, 7 and 11 when the Council met on 8th January, 1868. The Council decided in favour of the sub-Committee's recommendations to sever the connection between Queen's College and the Calcutta University and to establish English scholarships. The Council voted in favour of a single Director, without the assistance of a Board and also accepted the sub-Committee's recommendation on grants-in-aid, with a slight modification in respect of the right of the Government to refuse grants to private schools, in certain cases without altering its policy regarding such grants.

The Secretary of State who studied all the papers connected with the new scheme wholeheartedly supported it and it is interesting to note the observations he made :

> " This important question of Education has clearly been considered with an anxious desire to devise a good working scheme with a due regard to the feelings of all concerned and the papers before me show that the question was examined thoroughly in all its bearings.
>
> I do not propose to advert to any matters of detail, but I may observe that I concur in the abandonment of the sytem of teaching in English, and in the encouragement which it is proposed to give to the denominational system."[38]

Thus we see that Secretary of State was particularly happy to see the abandonment of the system of teaching in English and also the introduction of the denominational system of schools. The Secretary of State also gave his authority to increase the educational vote to £ 20,027 to work out the new Scheme.[39]

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J. S. Laurie, who had served for ten years as Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in England, and who was at the time employed under the Royal Commission of Primary Education in Ireland, was selected by the Secretary of State for appointment as Director of Public Instruction with effect from January 1869,[40] and with his arrival, in February 1869, the Department of Public Instruction was established setting the stage for the second revolution in education in the Island.

We shall be able to see in the following chapters how these recommendations were implemented and the amount of success that attended them, and also how various changes had to be effected from time to time in the evolution of the educational system of Ceylon.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] *Vide* Chapter 34

[2] 4th December, 1854

[3] *The Colombo Observer*, June 1, 1854, for The Select Committee's Report

[4] *The Examiner*, 7th June, 1854

[5] Under the name ' A. H. '

[6] Godage, C., *op. cit.* pp. 295–6

[7] *The Colombo Observer*, 4th Dec. 1854

[8] Undated Memorial from Boake to the Secretary of State, C. O. 54,290

[9] 7th June, 1854

[10] This letter was found in a *Journal of a Resident* at the Cape of Good Hope, by Banbury—1847

[11] Pro Bono Publico, *The Ceylon Times*, 30th May, 1854

[12] 27th June, 1854

[13] *The Examiner*, 7th June, 1854

[14] *Ibid.* 15th

[15] *The Colombo Observer*, 4th December, 1854

[16] Reports of the Central School Commission

[17] *The Times of Ceylon*, 2nd Dec. 1864

[18] Robinson to the Secretary of State, 14th Sept., 1867, C. O. 54, 487

[19] Sir Muthu Coomaraswamy (1820–1879). He became a member for the Tamil Seat in the Legislative Council in 1861. While in England, he came into contact with Palmerston, Beaconsfield, and Tennyson. ' He was one of the Characters of Beaconsfield's novel ' Tancred '. He was the first Tamil Knight in Ceylon and ' the first non-Christian in Ceylon to be called to the English Bar '—James D'Alwis, Memoirs and Desultory Writings of the late James D' Alwis

[20] Minutes of the Legislative Council, 14th Oct., 1865

[21] C. S. P. VIII, 1867 for the views expressed in this respect by Walter Sendall, Inspector of Schools and accepted by the sub-Committee

C. S. P. VIII for the opinions expressed by Sendall, Bailey, and Dickson

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[23]C. S. P. VIII p. 9

[24]*Ibid.*

[25]*Ibid.*

[26]*Ibid.* pp. 9–10

[27]*Ib:d.* p. 9.

[28]Godage, C., *op. cit.* p. 31

[29]C. S. P. VIII, p. 9

[30]*Ibid.* p. 11

[31]*Ibid.* p. 12

[32]*Ibid.* p. 13

[33]Robinson to the Secretary of State, 14th Jan. 1868, C. O. 54, 432

[34]Governor Robinson's Speech at a Legislative Council Meeting held on 1st December 1867, C. O. 54, 432

[35]Papers laid before the Legislative Council—XIV, p. 5, C. O. 57, 44

[36]*Ibid.*

[37]Governor's Speech, *The Ceylon Observer,* 18th Dec. 1867

[38]The Secretary of State, to the Officer Administering the Government, 26th August, 1868, C. O. 55, 115

[39]*Ibid.*

[40]*Ibid.*

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V

THE LATTER PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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CHAPTER 36

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

A. Rajaindran

In the two preceding chapters the work of the School Commission, established in 1834, and the reconstituted Central School Commission, established in 1841, was reviewed. Though these two bodies existed for nearly three and a half decades they had failed to serve fully the purposes for which they were created.

The School Commission was indeed, *ab initio*, doomed to failure. It adopted a laissez-faire attitude towards the educational needs of the country, and its approach to educational problems of the day was amateurish. Mr. Arthur Van Cuylenberg succinctly put it thus :

> " Started with vague aspirations and an undefined area of possible administration and organisation, it had no central responsibility, and therefore, no central coherence. The labour was essentially voluntary and the results spasmodic. The conviction, therefore, begins to gain ground that efficient control of the education of the country could no longer be assured at the hands of such a Board.[1]

In the circumstances, the Sub-Committee referred to in the earlier chapter was convinced that the administration of education had to be centralized in a separate Department to be called the " Department of Public Instruction ", under a head designated the " Director of Public Instruction." The Director, the Sub-Committee suggested, should be a person distinguished for, in addition to the necessary information and experience in educational matters, the liberality of his views and for perfect fairness of judgement. But even if these qualifications were wanting, a Director amenable to the Central Government would be preferable to a Board lacking in promptness and responsibility. With a view to counteracting the ill effects that were likely to arise from having thus to leave too much to individual discretion it was proposed that specific instructions should be framed for the guidance of the Director.

RAJAINDRAN, A., B.A. (London) M.Sc. (Indiana), Ph.D. (London), Diploma in Secondary Education, U.S. Dr. Rajaindran has been the Principal of Nugegoda Tamil Maha Vidyalaya since 1964. From 1951–1963 he was the Principal of St. Mathew's College, Colombo. Dr. Rajaindran was a Smith Mundt Fellow in 1951 and Research Fellow at Indiana University in 1952. In 1952 he was also a member of the Staff of the Audio-Visual Department of Indiana University as Graduate Assistant.

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The duties of the Director of Public Instruction were to be analogous to those of the Director of Public Instruction in the Presidencies of India. He would be the head of the entire Education Department. All measures relating to education in the Island would be carried out through his agency. He would be directly responsible to the Governor who would provide him with specific instructions for guidance. He should also from time to time inspect the schools in the Island, and in order to perform that duty he was to be called the Director of Public Instruction and Chief Inspector.

The First Director of Public Instruction

The initial step taken in implementing the recommendations of the Report was the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction, that being a pre-requisite to the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction. John Stuart Laurie, who had served for ten years as one of ' Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools ' in England and who was at the time employed under the Royal Commission of Primary Education in Ireland, was selected by the Secretary of State for appointment as the Director with effect from January 1869. The Department of Public Instruction was started when Laurie arrived in the Island in February 1869.

Laurie's qualifications and the manner in which he set about his task bear out the fact that in him the Sub-Committee's hopes

> " of securing an officer distinguished, in addition to the necessary information and experience in educational matters, by the liberality of his views and the perfect fairness of his judgement. " [2]

were amply realized. Yet soon after his arrival when he set about establishing the Department, Laurie was faced with immense difficulties and resistance. He had to complain to the Governor that the scope and limits of the functions of his Department had yet to be defined. The nature of his powers, and the direct and indirect control he had to exercise over the administration of the funds placed at his disposal had not been set out for his guidance. He felt that he had to work in the dark and was compelled to acquire a knowledge of his duties haphazardly. His responsibilities had remained undefined and obscure and his office was a " misnomer and a farce. " [3]

To make matters worse, Laurie had certain practical difficulties created by the erstwhile Schools Commission with the express purpose of making the situation incongenial for the new Director. The day after his arrival when he presented himself at the office of the former School Commission he received a letter from them. Without courtesy the letter asked him,

> " to vacate the present rooms formerly occupied by the Schools Commission."[4]

and provide himself with other offices. Laurie was astonished at this treatment and on the advice of the Government Agent, Western Province, he occupied the premises then known as the Industrial School. These premises, he found, were thoroughly unsuitable to house a Department as they were in a state of utter decay

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and disrepair. Though the Public Works Department was requested to effect the necessary repairs, it took no notice of the matter. Such were the birth-pangs of the Department of Public Instruction.

Soon after assuming duties as Director, Laurie set about carrying out his duties zestfully. As a preliminary step for initiating a programme for the improvement of the educational service of the Island, he desired to gain a firsthand knowledge of how the schools worked. With this purpose, he made an extensive tour of the Island inspecting representative schools. The report he prepared at the end of this tour indicates Laurie's disillusionment over how the schools system worked in the Island. The recommendations he made for the improvement of the schools is quoted in full here for the light they throw on the schools of the time and Laurie's own determination to reform them :

(1) The duties of the Director and the range of his departmental powers should be exactly defined.

(2) The erection of new buildings and the repairing of schools in the country should be done through the medium of the Government Agents instead of the Public Works Department.

(3) School books should be published by open competition.

(4) The cost to the Government of inferior schools could be lessened by the abolition of the present staff of adult assistants and by the increasing of school fees.

(5) Distribution of Public funds should be made more equitable as to reduce cost

(6) The principle of payment by result should be adopted.

(7) An examination of teachers should be held for classification according to merit, exemption being made in certain cases.

(8) Pupil teachers were to take the place of dult assistants. Pupil teachers were to have four years of apprenticeship and one year of training.

(9) Vernacular to be the medium of instruction in the lower classes, English should be optional in the upper, and for the teaching of which an extra fee was to be charged.

(10) The desire for education to be created and to be encouraged.

(11) A Normal college should be started.

(12) English Sub-Inspectors of vernacular schools were to be appointed. One of those should act as financial and confidential secretary to the Director.

(13) Sample schools should be established in Colombo and its neighbourhood.

(14) The Central Schools in Kandy and Galle were to be made model schools ; a similar one to be established in Jaffna, where frequent appeals were made for them.

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(15) The old Industrial School of Colombo was to be converted to a Museum of Arts and Science.

(16) Agriculture Classes were to be started in the schools in Colombo.

(17) Aid to be offered to missions and private proprietory schools in terms of the amended resolution of the Legislative Council.[5]

These recommendations bear out the fact that the first Director of Public Instruction had to overcome many difficulties. It is significant that Laurie demanded a clear definition of his functions as Director. His pioneering enthusiasm must have been checked by a backlog of vested interest. His desire to have the responsibility for the construction of school buildings removed from the Public Works Department and entrusted to Government Agents indicates that lack of co-ordination betwen the two Departments hampered the expansion of the schools system and also how entrenched was the system of providing public buildings even a century ago. Besides such administrative problems, severe drawbacks had been prevailing in the schools themselves. The remarks Laurie made on the teachers of the day throw some light on how schools had worked then. Here is a brief extract from the relevant portion of his report :

> " (The teacher) closes the school when generally out of sorts or desirous of a holiday ; he closes the school in *anticipation* of a vacation ; he closes the school when it rains in the morning ; he takes the liberty of extending a fortnight's leave to a month ; and when on account of insufficient attendance the school fees do not reach the minimum amount on which his monthly salary is conditionally paid he makes good the paltry deficiency and therefore falsifies the register. "[6]

Good schools that could serve as guides to others seem to have been scarce indeed ; hence Laurie's desire to establish ' sample schools ' and ' model schools ' in cities. Teachers might well have been ill-equipped for their work and the textbooks must have been very unsatisfactory. School inspection too seems to have been inadequate.

Laurie, however, did not carry through the reforms he outlined. He resigned the post of Director of Public Instruction soon after submitting his report. This was unfortunate for he very well answered the Sub-Committee's expectations. The initial steps that he took as Director bear out his sincerity of purpose and determination to work for the improvement of education in the Island. Had he been a little more tenacious and the Governor more helpful to him, Laurie might have made a singular contribution to the development of the Department of Public Instruction at its inception. However, to fill the vacancy created by Laurie's resignation a man was readily available in the person of Mr. W. J. Sendall who was soon made acting Director.

W. J. Sendall—Director

Mr. Sendall (later Sir Walter Sendall) began his career in Ceylon as a Master at the Colombo Academy (now Royal College). He became a Sub-Inspector of Schools in 1862 and was appointed to the post of the Director of Public Instruction in

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an acting capacity on Laurie's resignation. He was confirmed in this post subsequently and after a period of service left the Island on being appointed the Governor of Cyprus.

As an Inspector of Schools Sendall got an opportunity of acquainting himself at first hand with the conditions prevailing in schools. He did not mince words in reviewing the administration of the School Commission and the woeful state of affairs in Schools. He attributed the general low standard prevailing in the majority of schools to the poor quality of teachers. The following is an observation of his on teachers in Government Schools :

> " to men who are unfit for any active calling, who are distinguished by nothing but want of energy and love of indolence, who are without professional training, and who have long forgotten what little precise knowledge they ever possessed— to such men, and but seldom others, the charge of a Government village school may offer attractions sufficient to compensate for the smallness of the emolument attached to it. "[7]

Sendall very closely followed the instruction of the central Government in his administrative work. In accordance with the policy of the government an attempt was made to expand the education system providing both English and Vernacular schools. English schools served the wealthier people while the vernacular schools fulfilled the obligations of the State to the masses and served to lead to the more lucrative English education. But in actual fact they had quite a different impact. A clear pattern of Vernacular schools serving the masses and English schools serving the wealthier people soon developed in the schools system of the Island under the Directorship of Sendall.

This system not only operated as an economic handicap on the poorer people but also stood against the development of the Sinhala and Tamil languages. Poorly equipped teachers using schoolbooks of very low standard had little to contribute to their development. Further, the educated class that came from the background of the English education who would eventually become influential members of the community, had very little kinship with the indigenous culture of the country. Sendall had been aware of this last failing for he sought to have vernacular languages included in the curriculum of aided English schools. In his Administration Report for 1871, for instance, he records a measure adopted to this end :

> " With the view of encouraging a systematic study of native languages, a Regulation (No. 13) was sanctioned, granting Vernacular passes to English teaching schools in which systematic instruction is given in a native language ; the design of such instruction being to introduce the pupils to an acquaintance with the best classical literature of the language. "[8]

As discussed elsewhere in this volume steps taken under the revised grant-in-aid scheme resulted in some major changes in the school system of the Island. Mission schools thus came under the surveillance of the Government and were made to follow a secular curriculum. No sooner had the revised system of giving financial assistance come into operation than the Director of Public Instruction saw the need to perfect

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this instrument if there was to be any progress at all. With this in view he proposed to introduce two measures—one was to hold examinations for issuing certificates of competence to grade the teachers already in service. The other was a scheme,

> " to effect the systematic organization and development of a monitorial staff to replace the adult assistants. "[9]

The first of these proposals was an attempt to assess the quality of the existing staff in schools and the second was an attempt to create a nucleus for a future teacher-training scheme.

However, the first proposal had to be abandoned as the Governor felt that compulsory examination of teachers was objectionable,

> " as being likely to provoke irritation on the part of managers of mission schools. "[10]

Such an examination was not wanted, the Governor suggested, as

> " the government inspection of schools would sufficiently protect the public from paying for valueless results. "[11]

Even the second proposal was adopted only in relation to Government Schools by Sendall's successor. Sendall in his report for 1871 stated that,

> " the old inefficient teachers had been got rid of. "

In the report for 1872 he commented on

> " best results of the plan of organization based in a regulated adoption of the monitorial system. As the monitorial system was working well in Government Schools, the department felt that it might be extended with advantage to aided schools. "[12]

The ground having thus been prepared for initiating a scheme for the training of teachers, the Department persisted in bringing pressure to bear on the Government for introducing a system of granting certificates of competence.

Gradual Assumption of Centralized Control

The managers of schools that received grants-in-aid were expected to render honorary services. They were to use all fees raised from the pupils and the grants-in-aid given by the Government to maintain the schools and pay the teachers' salaries. In the early years of the scheme it was observed that persons who conducted private schools for profit exploited the grants-in-aid given to schools. Such teachers would get the names of unscrupulous managers attached to their schools and make demands on the Department for grants. To check such abuses the Director made it obligatory on the manager of each school to submit half-yearly statements of income and expenditure of the school. This condition it was expected would keep the manager in close contact with the school receiving aid.

Far-reaching changes were needed in the control of education. The Government had no doubts about the need for having effective control. The issue was how best to enforce effective control without being obtrusive on other agencies engaged

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in educational work. However, the Department of Public Instruction was at times tempted to be hasty and too ambitious in enforcing control. But the executive government being much more circumspect, studied the pace of administration by making the Department introduce every single item of control by stages within a graduated scheme. As discussed elsewhere in this volume, the government preferred to adopt the indirect approach to controlling the education system through the grant-in-aid. Hence the enforcement of regulations had always been preceded by efforts at obtaining the co-operation of managers through the agency of visiting Inspectors of Schools and by suggestions for improvement made in Annual Reports by the Director. In 1896 a Board of Education was set up to advise the Director. During this period the Department was able to make considerable progress in the extension of education as well as in raising the standard of education.

Policy Shaped by Paucity of Funds

It was more for want of financial provision on the part of the government than lack of interest in learning on the part of the people in general that the Department of Public Instruction could not rapidly expand the schools system in its earliest phase. Several Directors have put on record in Administrative Reports their sincere apprecia-tion of the people's response to the Department's efforts at the spread of education. The following is typical of such remarks :

> " One of the conditions of the establishment of vernacular schools is that the inhabitants of the village applying for a school shall build a suitable school-house. In some parts of the Island, and I may instance the Western Province more parti-cularly, elementary vernacular education is spreading so rapidly that the people have learnt to appreciate the advantages that are offered to them ; and as soon as the villagers are informed that the establishment of a school has been sanctioned, and the site has been chosen by an officer of this department, they join readily in collecting materials and in putting up the necessary buildings. In some instances when they know that the report on the application has been favourable, they collect timber etc., in anticipation of the sanction for which they hope, and have the building ready as soon as a teacher can be appointed. The rich sometimes give money, the poor labour, and all join heartily in the work. "[13]

Disputes between the Director and the Managers

This period however was not free from tensions in the relationship between managers and the Director of Public Instruction, in their pursuit of a common object. The policy of the Department was to expand general education as much as it could. To make the fullest use of the finances available the Department encouraged missionary enterprise by retreating from areas that already had aided schools. A further economy measure was to leave English education to other agencies and concentrate on vernacular education in remote areas. Director H. W. Green summed up the position in 1885 :

> " Ever since the necessities of the revenue of the Colony forced retrenchment prominently upon this Department, the lines followed have been to retire as far as possible, and where possible from English education, leaving it to private efforts

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and private resources and the Department has persistently expressed a desire to utilise as much as possible savings effected upon English education towards a large extension of vernacular education until there should be no village community able and willing to provide a school bungalow and a reasonable attendance of children which should not have its vernacular school. "[14]

Again in 1889 Green stated the policy of the Department quite clearly thus :

". . . . the principle was formally adopted by the Government that henceforth the state would direct its chief support to primary and vernacular education and to the extension thereof, leaving higher education of the Colony to private effort whenever possible. And a number of Government English Schools were closed outright, that is to say all which did not seem absolutely needed, some disappearing altogether and some being taken over by Managers as grant-in-aid schools."[15]

The standard of English schools in general had needed as much improvement as the standard of vernacular languages in vernacular schools. As a higher grant was payable for results in English, Managers hurried to open English schools. But qualified English teachers were hard to find and had to be paid high salaries. So Managers often employed persons with a scanty knowledge of English as English Masters. In course of time bad English in schools became a big problem for the Department. Director H. W. Green showed much concern over this as the following extract from a report of his indicates :

" Under the scale of grants paid when I assumed office, English, was paid for twice as highly, nearly, as vernacular education. The natural result was that every Manager wished to have his school registered as English, though apart from the high grant, many of them would never have thought of such a thing. There was only a limited number of good teachers of English available ; hence in many schools the English taught was a cruelty and a wrong to boys, who, having reached the top of their school, went forth into life thinking that they were fully equipped for a clerkship or other English employment, and found to their consternation that (through no fault of their own, but solely through the fault of the teaching) the English equipment for life was a broken reed, pitied by some, laughed at by others , but accepted by none. . . . "

" The first step, therefore, was to amputate the excess of grant paid to English schools, and to make it the same as that paid to vernacular schools. There was no temptation to keep an English school as an investment. The temptation indeed came the other way because the staff of an English school costs more than that of a vernacular school. "[16]

A dispute arose when the Director of Public Instruction proposed to revise the Code in 1880. The Missionary bodies stood up against it. But the Director pointed out that within the framework of the policy of the State a revision of the Code was necessary to centralize the administration and to check waste of finance by closing

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down inefficient schools. Also, he emphasized the need to meet the demands of the people in respect of their faiths for which the Code as it was did not provide. The Code was eventually revised.

Another dispute was over the question of reduction of grants following the financial depression during the coffee crisis which lasted from 1875 to 1887. The Government owing to loss in revenue, was forced to reduce the educational vote. The Director received—

> " most pressing instructions from Government to keep the expenditure within the limits of the estimates. "

Measures of economy adopted by the Director in adjusting to the situation provoked much opposition. Many Government schools, for instance, had to be handed over to other agencies. Much tension resulted from such measures but the Director was successful in keeping schools active during the crisis.

It was during this period that the Buddhists and the Hindus, becoming alive to their responsibilities, began to establish denominational schools to serve the needs of their respective communities. The Director, however, considered it " factious opposition " to start new schools within a few yards of schools already established. This led to a conflict between the Director and the leaders that headed the Buddhist and Hindu revivalist movements. The conscience clause received much emphasis during this period and this too met with opposition from the Christian missionary groups. Conflicts such as these naturally produced heated debates and controversies. Yet the very enthusiasm they stimulated helped to quicken educational progress.

Conclusion

The change from the School Commission to the Department of Public Instruction was a significant one. It introduced the secular ideal into education. It widened the field of education so as to include, in principle, the whole community without sectarian barriers of any kind. These marked the beginnings of a unitary system of education originating from the State. The achievement of the Department of Public Instruction in educational expansion was modest indeed in the absence of legal provision for universal compulsory education. The significance of its work, however, is that it prepared the ground for the rapid educational expansion of the next century.

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CHAPTER 37

DUAL CONTROL IN EDUCATION

A. RAJAINDRAN

A Change of Pattern in Education

With the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction in 1869 a new pattern, fairly well marked, emerged in the system of administration of denominational schools in the Island. The extension of State intervention in education not only brought Mission Schools under Departmental surveillance but imposed on them a secular curriculum. These changes which implied the assumption of direct responsibility for education by the State, the transition from the religions to the secular ideal and the expansion of the sphere of education to include the masses may be regarded as the beginnings of a national system in which the missionary agencies were invited to participate. But the changes in the content and control of education signified that the State and missionary agencies would not be *equal* partners. In fact, the State was only seeking the assistance of the Missions in discharging the new responsibilities it assumed with the offer of no interference in their religious work. On this basis, missionary assistance was channelled through a system of liberal grants-in-aid.

State legislation for the provision of grants-in-aid came at a time when it was most welcome to the Missions, being in great need of funds. As no restrictions were placed on the teaching of religion it was possible for the missionary bodies to accept grants without compunction and conduct their schools. However, the long-term effects of the scheme of giving State assistance were most far-reaching. This scheme, in a sense, revolutionized the missionary concept of education initiating a process of secularization which eventually shaped the character of their schools system. Hitherto, to the missionaries education meant education for conversion or education of the ' faithful ' in the religious tenets and was therefore confined, in the main, to religious instruction. The shift of focus from religious

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knowledge to secular instruction brought about a basic change. Both teachers and pupils soon became so much absorbed in secular instruction that interest in religion faded into the background. Religious instruction came to be " pursued with indifference if not disgust. "

The New Pattern of Schools

Under the new scheme, education underwent a change of purpose too. Hitherto the Missionary system of education was guided by the religious interest of the Home Missions, and whether people wanted it or not, instruction in Christianity was given in schools. But in the changed situation the interest of the people became the guiding factor and the Missions found that extension of education was impossible unless schools were geared to the needs of society. Thus, demands of society came to define the purpose of schools.

In principle, schools were classified by the medium of instruction and the curriculum. But in actual fact this classification reflected the class structure of the society. English medium schools with higher level curricula served the upper classes while the elementary and primary vernacular schools served the poor people. The existing class structure was accepted both by the Government and the Missions. However, they ignored its local character and understood it in terms of the class system of England which was believed to be the natural pattern of society. In the Missionary system English was imparted in the elementary schools only as a concession to lower-class aspirations. Also, admission of those of the lower classes to English medium High Schools became possible only through upper class philanthropy.

Improvements in Schools

The State had little to do for the improvement of High Schools, for they had in them the necessary impetus for development. As was mentioned earlier, the High School had come to serve the Missionaries as a means of influence with the upper classes. Every Mission was very keen to entrench itself at the upper levels of society and so was eager to make its High Schools attractive to the wealthy and the powerful sections of the community. Thus there arose a natural competition among missionary agencies in the maintenance of High Schools. Each Mission attempted to make its High Schools attractive by maintaining a high standard of education and providing popular features. Elementary schools in which a little English was taught developed less rapidly and the vernacular schools were very slow to develop indeed. The Department of Public Instruction had to provide the impetus for the improvement of schools of the latter types. Accordingly, regulations governing grants-in-aid were revised with a view to inducing the managers to maintain satisfactory standards in such schools.

Firstly, improvements were effected in school buildings. Participation in the grant system required conformity on the part of the Mission to certain basic

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requirements in the matter of building and equipment. In regard to school buildings the Code obliged the management to see that,

(*a*) they were expressly adapted for school progress ; that they afforded sufficient accommodation and were in good repair at the time of the examination,

(*b*) they were not surrounded by other buildings to such an extent as to exclude light and air and particular regard was paid to health, cleanliness both in the persons of the pupils and the arrangements of conditions of the school premises.

In regard to equipment it was required of the Management—

that the supply of school materials—maps and other appliances for teaching, desks, black-boards and other furniture, books, writing materials, etc., were in sufficient quantity, in good order, and of the best approved kind, regard being had to the class and circumstances of the school.

Following these stipulations in the Code the Missions were compelled to raise standards in the matter of buildings and equipment. The Wesleyan Mission, Jaffna, found that to obtain the government grant all (their) old Vernacular school bungalows had to be rebuilt. This was also the case with the Church Missionary Society and probably with some of the other Missions as well. However, as the Missions addressed themselves to this task "improvement was visible in the material conditions of aided schools." The Director was able to report in 1872 :

"There has been a great improvement in school buildings all over the Island· The R. C. School in Negombo built an excellent school house for the English School and all buildings put up by Mr. Brown of the Wesleyan Mission in Batticaloa are very good with respect to plan, accommodation and solidarity in character—Vernacular Schools are being gradually better housed everywhere save in the Jaffna District."[1]

But even in Jaffna there was improvement by 1875, as the Director noted :

"A few years back in the Northern Province more particularly any shed was supposed to be good enough for a school house. Now there are being built a much better class many of them being permanent buildings of stone and lime. New and original models in school building are now being attempted there."[2]

Slow Enforcement of Code Regulations

These improvements were gradual as the Code requirements were not enforced all at once. In the early stages even those schools that did not satisfy all the Code requirements were allowed to participate in the grants system if the management undertook to effect the necessary improvements in due course. By 1875 the Department realised that even by then "many Managers had not carried out their promises," and felt that "action in reduction of grant should be taken." This 'action' appeared to have been taken as stated in the report for 1875 of the Educational Committee (Jaffna) of the Church Missionary Society.

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Under the new scheme the quality of teachers had to be improved. This was obviously necessary with the change in the basis of instruction. Teachers in most Mission schools had been " often selected more regard being paid to their qualifications as catechists than as teachers. " And even of such men there had been an acute shortage and Missions were compelled as a matter of necessity to employ " adult assistants "—who were generally ignorant—perhaps to assist in maintaining school routine. So the Department persisted in its endeavour to induce managers to employ teachers of satisfactory quality.

Decline of Denominational Independence

The question of control had an important bearing on the relationship between the Department and the Missions. Hitherto the Missions not only carried on their educational operations in their schools untrammelled by departmental regulations but had a hand in shaping policy and directing administration in respect of government schools too. But as the Schools Commission in which they held considerable power was replaced by the Department of Public Instruction they ceased to have a voice in the educational policy of the country.

Later on, as the Missions elected to participate in the State organised system they virtually became agents of the State and thereby lost their independence in the management of their schools. The acceptance of grants from the State on the basis of secular instruction signified the willingness of the Missions to modify their own purpose to such an extent as was necessary to further the purpose of the State in education. The Missions accepted aid in return for State surveillance and State surveillance necessarily carried with it the element of State control.

There was no doubt that the system imposed control but it was introduced unobtrusively and in a manner not so much to cause irritation to the managers as to deter them from availing themselves of grants-in-aid. This was evident from the fact that promises for making improvements in buildings made by Managers were reckoned to be sufficient where the required standards in building and equipment were not maintained. Again, any measure considered likely to awaken suspicions of control were no sooner introduced than withdrawn.

The enforcement of regulations had always been preceded by efforts at obtaining the co-operation of the Managers by the visiting Inspectors of Schools and by making suggestions for improvements in Annual Reports by the Director of Public Instruction. Even when the enforcement was carried out it was done provisionally at first and even then by suspension or reduction of grant.

In the case of the improvement of the quality of teachers, the Department resorted to inducement rather than compulsion. For instance, at the earliest stage a special grant was made for replacing " Adult Assistants " by Monitors-in-training. In the matter of the introduction of a secular curriculum the same principle of making inducement grants was observed through the scheme of payment by results. These measures were seen to operate well in the beginning without arousing any suspicions of control.

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The question of control affected the relationship between the Department of Public Instruction and the management of Mission Schools in due course. Feelings frequently ran high especially at the time of inspections, when the inspectors held the stage while the managers realised that their importance had been reduced. There were also issues over which they did not agree but such conflicts were inevitable in a system of dual control. But whatever might have been the tensions in the relationship between the Department and the Missions, the partnership was productive of good results. If it were not for this scheme there would have been very little progress in education during this period. The extension of education would have been certainly not on such a large scale and not of so progressive a character.

Period of Experiment

The years 1870–1878 was a period of transition in the schools from the religious to the secular ideal in education. In spite of the fact that Mission Schools had come under State surveillance and secular instruction had assumed priority yet the principles and practices of missionary education continued to be dominant. For the government it was a period of experiment. This was implied when the Governor speaking in the Legislative Council on the Revised Code stated :

> " In creating a system we had ten years to mature the system but were bound to by small beginnings so as to encourage every fish that would go into the net. But it is time that such a system were regulated in order to systematise what we have got. "[3]

During this period the system operated under provisional regulations and it was intended to introduce a permanent Code. This was clearly stated by the Director of Public Instruction at the very beginning while submitting rules for the instruction of teachers :

> " My object being to establish a set of fixed and definite rules to serve as ' *Modus Vivendi* ' until I had the larger experience to suggest what reforms should be necessary. "[4]

As long as the scheme operated without interruption the Missions experienced no restriction either in the setting up of schools in pursuance of their religious objectives or in the imparting of religious instruction and the State was able to undertake increasingly the secular instruction of the people through these schools. Fresh conditions were introduced into the rules governing grants-in-aid year after year by the Department, but these demands raised no issues as they related to secular instruction and to school organisation. Even here the government was prepared to give due consideration to the representations of the Missions where a new rule introduced was particularly irksome.

The significance of the changes was unperceived at the time but the cumulative effect of the piecemeal changes was evident in the altered character of their schools. Secular education claimed the first place but the set-up, however, did not guarantee efficiency.

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Poor Standard of Education

Under the grant-in-aid scheme there was yearly increase in the number of schools and of pupils, but the standard of education remained poor.

The Administration Report for the year 1875 stated :

" It is easy enough to exaggerate the merits of the grant-in-aid system as an 'instrument of the people' . . . . it is however obvious that the teaching which is exclusively directed, as is too often the case, to meet the requirements of the government schools cannot have much permanent educative value. The grant is quite powerless to stimulate or to punish teaching that is bad indeed, but not bad enough to secure failure when its results are tendered for yearly inspection. "[5]

Year after year the reports of the Department of Public Instruction commented on the poor quality of teaching and of the need for better staffing. In 1876 the Director recommended that " the grant may be reduced for any defect in the schools premises . . . . that seriously interfered with the efficiency of the schools," and of " the absolute necessity of the employment of certificated teachers in grant schools. "

In 1877 the Director felt that the time was ripe to take steps, as he pointed out in his report :

" With regard to aided schools, I think the time is come for government to take measures partially and tentatively at first but gradually increasing in stringency . . . . to see that school masters are not picked up, as is sometimes the case, haphazardly with reference to their usefulness for missionary purposes. "[6]

Revision of the Code

The Director was convinced that the first aim should not be so much to extend education as to systematise it by carrying out many sound recommendations which had been made from time to time, and repeatedly, without ever being put into practice. He was able to undertake this in 1879 when he received instruction from the government to prepare a revision of the Code. The Director stated in 1879 :

" In accordance with the instruction of the government received upon my arrival in the Colony I lost no time in drawing up a Code of regulations for grant-in-aid schools to take the place of provisional regulations. "[7]

In the Circular to the Managers the Director explained the need for the revision of the Code. Firstly, it was necessary from the point of efficiency in education :

" A large number of applications for grant-in-aid of new schools within the last nine years has led to the multiplication of small and feeble schools in districts where the interests of the inhabitants would be much better served by a few good schools."[8]

Secondly, it had become necessary to meet the demands of the people in respect of their religous rights :

" I am also ready to make every possible concession to the spirit of those who feel that an encroachment on civil and religious liberty is involved in compelling children to attend schools in the relgious influence of which the parents have no confidence "[9]

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The transition from the religious to the secular ideal in education which began in 1869 was more or less completed in 1880. At this time the character of the change became evident as the legislation indicated the intentions of the government in respect of the purpose and control of schools. By the legislation of 1880 the government sought to withdraw aid from schools which failed to satisfactorily carry out their secular function.

Change of Character in Denominational Schools

With State aid had come State control : control in content of education by the imposition in 1870 of a secular curriculum defined by the purpose of the State and which was followed by control over teachers. How important the possession of these controls was to the Missions had been pointed out by J. W. Wood in a letter to the secretaries of the Church Missionary Society dated December 10, 1872—

> " The controls over teachers and schools preserves the Christian character of both, checks the secularising of government . . . . "

As a result of these controls the character of the Church Schools changed and the Missions began to feel that their schools were beginning to fall off in fulfilling the religious purpose for which they were established.

The government gave emphasis to another aspect of its educational policy in the Revised Code. The Revised Code preserved English teaching for the upper classes directly by giving impetus to higher English instruction in Vernacular and elementary schools. The lure of employment through knowledge of English made the masses aspire to the acquisition of English. The Missions were anxious to use this interest to Missionary ends. This cut across the policy of the State. But the major difficulty that stood in the way of the aspirations of the masses and the projects of the Missions was the question of funds. The government became convinced that it was on the financial question that control could be exercised and thereby State policy could be enforced. This opportunity was conveniently provided by the financial exigencies of 1881.

Shaping Schools Through Financial Control

The coffee crisis of 1879 resulted in a financial depression which lasted till 1887. This brought down the living conditions of the people. The resources of the Missions and the revenue of the government were reduced. The government was forced to reduce the educational vote " to meet the falling off of the general revenue," and the Director received " most pressing instructions from the government to keep the expenditure of grant-in-aid schools within the limits of estimates". Accordingly, the Director prepared the estimates " with a view to the greatest possible economy. " He met the excess on expenditure on certain items by savings effected by him on others.

Savings were effected by the infliction of penalties and by the reduction of grants through the imposition of several restrictions. Another way by which the Director effected saving was " gradually withdrawing from the Management of English Schools " and by registering " none but the schools absolutely required. " But in spite of careful economy in administration the expenditure of grant-in-aid schools

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continued to be in excess of the votes so much so that Blair, the Acting Director of Public Instruction declared, " if the object of the promoters (of the Code) was to reduce the expenditure of government on education it must be admitted that it had signally failed. "

In the meantime, the Legislative Council appointed a Retrenchment Commission to review the financial situation and to make practical proposals. The Director of Public Instruction in his evidence before the Commission submitted a scheme for relieving the Treasury of a portion of the expenditure on Government schools. The Director's scheme was to hand over Government schools (with a few exceptions) in towns under Municipalities and Local Boards to such Municipalities and Boards on condition that Government paid the same grant-in-aid to their schools as it would to ordinary aided schools.

The Retrenchment Commission acting on grounds of economy made three recommendations. Firstly, that educational expenditure be reduced to Rs. 300,000. Secondly, that vernacular schools be handed over to Municipalities or Local Boards. Thirdly, that English schools be similarly handed over. The first two of these were accepted by the Secretary of State and the third was sanctioned " on the strength of its recommendation by the Governor. "

But there was difficulty in implementing this decision as the Municipalities and Local Bodies were unwilling to take over the schools. In other words, as far as the Government was concerned the connection with English schools had been terminated. The Municipalities and the Local Boards offered them to anyone willing to take them over. This resulted in the Missions taking over some of them and the closing of several others for want of some such body to take them over.

While the government was handing over English schools as a retrenchment measure and the Missions were continuing them for Missionary reasons, the Department of Public Instruction looked at it purely from the angle of educational progress. It wished by no means to wash hands of English education or even to pass the responsibility to others. They withdrew from English education more on a question of priorities on the face of financial exigencies. This was evident when the Director stated,

> " I therefore not unnaturally hesitate to have recourse to cutting down our English work again unless this department is guaranteed the use of money saved."[10]

The Director was convinced of the need for direction and control by the Department and shrank from the prospect of leaving English education in the hands of those managing unaided schools. The Department's desire was influenced by its wish to have control. Even while planning the transfer of English schools to local bodies the Department provided " safeguards in respect of grant-in-aid schools but refrained from taking any positive steps as the Director felt it was necessary not to be hasty in such an important matter. "

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Controversial Issues in School Administration

The last few years of the period 1870—1896 were positively stormy. The conflicts centered around denominational issues; over the questions relating to the Quarter Mile Clause, the Conscience Clause, and the setting up of machinery for denominational representation. The position of the Director on these issues was unenviable. He was frequently on insecure grounds though his actions were well-intentioned and could be depended upon, on the basis that he was acting according to the best traditions of a bureaucratic system where the sole consideration was the efficient carrying out of governmental policy.

In the conflict over the Quarter Mile Clause, while the Buddhists and Hindus were fighting quite justly for their legitimate denominational rights for undertaking their responsibilities in the education of their co-religionists, the Director was opposing them on the ground of non-conformity with existing regulations. Perhaps he considered that the responsibility for making changes promoted by sociological and religious considerations rested with the Governor and the Legislature and that his duty was to enforce regulations so long as they remained in the Code.

In the matter of the Conscience Clause, the Department of Public Instruction was not unaware of the need for providing some safeguard for non-Christians but at the same time it was confronted with the possible danger of losing the services of the missionary bodies. In the circumstances the Department took care not to retard the progress of education by making a wrong move, and handled the question with much circumspection and took time to evolve a formula for its solution. The opportunity as well as the solution was presented over the question of the transfer of schools where the Director was able to make the subtle mode of introducing the Conscience Clause through administrative means into an area where its introduction would be least disputed. He was confident that the ground having been broken, its application on a universal basis would be only a matter of time. As such he refrained from defeating its purpose by forcing the pace.

An Attempt to Circumscribe the Director's Powers

On the question of absolute rule of the Director, it was evident that he was fighting a losing battle. Originally absolute power was ncecessary for the work of organising and the exercise of it was made possible by the existence of sectarian antagonism. The denominational bodies had in a sense willingly surrendered their powers to secure protection against each other. By 1896 the circumstances that justified the existence of a " single minded directorate " ceased to exist. The work of organising had been in the main completed. At this stage denominational agencies desired collectively to gain a position to render advice to the Director on the formulation of their schools. Thus managers of schools made representations on this issue to the Governor. How that issue was settled is narrated by the Director of Public Instruction as follows :

> " Towards the end of 1895 a memorial was forwarded to Government against certain amendments to the Code for 1896 . . . . The memorial was fully considered by the Government. A deputation of Managers was received by the

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Governor. The position of both the Government and the Managers was fully discussed. H. E. the Governor was of opinion that some of the contentions urged by the Managers were tenable. They have accordingly been incorporated in the Code. Collateral to this was the suggestion that an Advisory Board on matters educational referred to them by the Governor shall be constituted. This was also accepted within the limits prescribed. The appointment of such a Board of Advice, within the limits prescribed, I welcome. Neither the Managers nor the Department have been or can be infallible in their decisions and opinions. The responsibility of decision must obviously remain with the Department. The co-operation of the Board in matters referred to them will be acceptable. "[11]

The Director perhaps tried to hold on to power as long as he could but the Governor saw that it was unwise " to hamper and harass " managers of schools. He saw the need to appease denominational resentment, especially as denominational unity had become an assured fact, and therefore he acted promptly by securing their co-operation through the granting of a concession by appointing a Board of Education in 1896.

The years that followed, 1896—1900, were a period of calm. The Administration Report of the Director for the year 1900 reflected the even temper in which denominational operations had been carried out during that period. The tensions that prevailed during the preceding years appeared to have ceased. The relations between the Director and the denominational bodies were harmonious and in the Board of Education " there was absence of friction. " The stage appeared to have been set for progress with the establishment of such machinery as the Board of Education which the Director found to be " a strenuous supporter of good progress in education. "

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CHAPTER 38

GOVERNMENT EFFORT AND MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN EDUCATION

Wijetunga Somapala

Introduction

The schools system of the Island under the administrative machinery discussed in Chapters 36 and 37 rapidly expanded during the period 1869–1900. It comprised two distinctive, though complementary, chains of schools called government schools and denominational schools, respectively. The State, it will be remembered, had by this time assumed central authority in education. Likewise, financial responsibility for education too devolved on the State. All Government schools were entirely financed and controlled by the State and under the revised grant-in-aid scheme of 1870, denominational schools received liberal financial assistance from the State. It was clear by the end of the century that missionary agencies had outpaced the Department of Public Instruction in the work of educational expansion. In this chapter we would attempt to describe its extent, examine the nature of each agency's distinctive contribution to it and make a comparative assessment of their respective achievements.

Schools Policy of Missions Revised

There were at this time three categories of schools, namely English, Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Schools. English schools, in the main, served the wealthy and the influential sections of the community. Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular Schools were expected to serve the rest. A significant social trend of this period was the increasing desire of the upper-classes for more and more English schools for their children. English education assured one of employment in the service of the colonial government, which was of high social prestige and economic advantage. Anglo-Vernacular Schools shared a little of this characteristic. Vernacular Schools were meant to provide the masses with an elementary education and raise the general evel of literacy of the community.

WIJETUNGA SOMAPALA, B. A. (London), Dip., Ed., (Cey), Diploma in Teaching English (Sydney). Senior Master, Bandaranayake Madhya Maha Vidyalaya, Veyangoda. Co-Author of " Kiyaweema Ha Vicakshanaya".

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Hitherto Missionary bodies had laid greater emphasis on vernacular education as it had become an effective means of converting the indigenous population to Christianity. English education which qualified pupils for employment under the government naturally had little use for the evangelists. But Missionaries working in the Island soon realized that English schools were fast superseding vernacular schools in popularity. If they were to keep their hold on the upper-classes through education, they had to exploit their increasing desire for English education. But the Home Missions continued to remain loyal to their ideal of not serving worldly ends and consistently advised local committees not to start English schools. The following extract from the report of the Anderson Committee of 1865 of the American Mission typifies the attitude of all Home Missions towards teaching English :

> " Our object in sustaining a seminary is not to educate the community at large. That we do not regard is the appropriate work of the Missionaries. . . . our object is to prepare a class of young men to be Christian teachers, catechists and pastors—this being our object we think the study of English may be a hindrance rather than a benefit. "[1]

However, Missions eventually revised their policy. They introduced English into their curriculum, to begin with, as an attraction only. The following quotation from a letter sent to local Missionaries by the Secretary to the Church Missionary Society bears out this change of policy :

> " I enter fully into your perplexity respecting the teaching of English . . . . the same question had arisen in many other Missions. After standing for many years for the exclusion of English we have been obliged eventually to give way and take our stand upon an intermediate course of teaching English for an hour or so daily as a classical language but not to profess to give such a complete English education or to qualify a student for government employment and so to induce students to come forward for the sake of learning English. "[2]

It is clear that local committees of various Missions had to make a strenuous effort to win the approval of their respective Home Missions for establishing English Schools. But after such approval was granted, they embarked on educational work at all levels of society with vigour and zeal. They received liberal financial aid from the State and their missionary work in schools was not restricted in any way. Before long Missionary education agencies firmly entrenched themselves in the service of the wealthy and influential upper-classes through their English Schools whilst keeping their hold on the populace at large through Vernacular Schools. The scene was thus ready for a great educational expansion.

Rivalry among Christian Denominations

For several decades certain Missions had been engaged in educational work in the Island with the avowed aim of propagating Christianity. They were the Baptist Mission, the Wesleyan Mission, the American Mission and the Church Mission. To these must be added the Roman Catholic Church which had, by then, operated in the Island well over three centuries. Each Mission, keen on the conversion of as large a section of the indigenous population as it could, embarked on a separate

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schools programme. This certainly resulted in such a rapid increase in the number of schools in the Island as would not have been achieved if the State alone were to provide schools. But the schools, however, were not distributed over the Island with any realistic relation to the specific educational needs of any given area. Each Mission was motivated by an equally strong missionary zeal and was, therefore, not ready to leave any area to be served by other denominations. Such denominational zeal naturally resulted in some select localities having more schools than would be allowed on an equitable distributional basis while certain other areas with a like claim to schools had much less than they needed. The Western sea-board of the Island, for instance, which had been ruled by three Western powers for nearly three and a half centuries was comparatively much bettter provided with schools. But the remote districts in the interior of Ceylon had very few schools. These areas were served by schools conducted in Buddhist temples by Buddhist monks who received no assistance from the State. As Missionary schools of a multiplicity of Christian denominations sprung up in the same locality there was naturally a rush and scramble for pupils. All Missions were equally eager to wean away the children from their traditional faiths and convert them to Christianity and among the Missions each was competing for the largest gains for itself.

Thus the problems the Missions faced had two aspects: one was the need to prevent loss of students to other competitors and the other was to provide means to attract pupils in general. As the object of the Missions was to gain social influence as means to Missionary ends it was important to attract children of the most influential families.

The Slow Progress of Government Schools

It would be remembered that as a condition of the State—Missionary partnership in education, the denominational school agencies had already been assured that the State would not open schools in areas which were served by whatever aided schools that had already come up. Indeed, the State could ill-afford to spend more funds on any area which already had aided schools, whatever denomination conducted them, for it was the State itself that largely financed those schools. So the State necessarily had to move into neglected localities. But there too, certain factors militated against the Department of Public Instruction achieving any large success. One of the chief obstacles it had to contend with was the suspicion with which the indigenous population regarded the new educational enterprise of the time. They had seen how the influence of their own religions—Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam—was being gradually eroded under the surge of Christian enterprise in educating the country's young. It was very natural for communities that had not severed their connections with traditional religions and way of life to extend their dislike of such Missionary activities to the work of the Department of Public Instruction. Though the State was adhering to a declared policy of religious neutrality, the officers of the Department were all Christians. And the Central School Commission which was the State organ of education until 1869 did not have a single non-Christian member.

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So in the interior of the Island, State Schools at the beginning did not have the same appeal that Missionary schools in the Western sea-board and chief cities had.

Besides this understandable defence of the conscience, the traditional communities in the interior were still content to live as peasants. The lure of service in the colonial government had yet to attract them. It was the upper classes that came in contact with the rulers that had developed such social aspirations. And it was clever strategy on the part of Missionaries that they accepted the reality of this social change and channelled it in their task of propagating Christianity, with great industry. The State, on the other hand, did not bring to bear any extra-educational motive on its schools programme. Its sole aim was that of raising the level of literacy of the community it ruled, in the British tradition of Colonial Government. Nor did the State seek to widen, in any substantial way, its influence with the upper classes through education as the Missionary bodies did. Thus, while the Missionary bodies vied with each other to establish High Schools which were focal points of their power in the upper classes, the Department of Public Instruction was content to work with a broader concept of education set in the whole community.

The success of outstanding denominational school would have given that whole system considerable momentum for rapid expansion. It must be remembered that each Mission had its Central School agency. And each school was under a local manager—invariably a priest—who resided in the premises and directed and supervised its working. It was he who was responsible for the progress of the school. He chose his Head Teacher and the staff of assistant teachers and personally supervised the day to day work of the school to ensure that honest service was rendered both in the cause of the spread of Christianity in the service of God and the spread of education in the service of man. And it must be remembered, too that he faced keen competition from other Missionary agencies. Any relaxation on his part wou'd have resulted in the ruin of his school and the failure of the dedicated task of his Mission. It was natural, therefore, that the manager of each school should work with great enterprise and ceaseless energy. Schools established by the Department of Public Instruction would not have received such immediate personal attention. They were centrally controlled from the Head Quarters in Colombo. Their supervision and direction were entrusted to School Inspectors who themselves could not be in close contact with the schools. In the early years following the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction there were not more than three School Inspectors for the whole Island. An Inspector of Schools, being the sole administrative link between the Department and the schools, had a variety of functions involving a heavy volume of work. So indeed it is doubtful whether a School Inspector could visit each school in his division more than once a year, which visit, of course, had to be made for the purpose of annual inspection. Government Schools, therefore, for the greater part must have been left in the hands of teachers. And the progress of each school, thus, almost entirely depended on the personal enthusiasm of the Head Master. And however enthusiastic and hardworking the Head Masterand the assistant masters of a Government School might have been,

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the very remoteness of the source of authority and direction would have militated against its making rapid progress. The Head Teacher of a Government School had to address a letter to a remote authority and wait patiently for instructions when he was faced with any local problem. But the manager of a Mission School would resolve any such problem forthwith. The officials of the Department of Public Instruction and the teachers in Government Schools could not work with such personal authority and responsibility. Their scope of work was restricted by sundry regulations governing every detail of the work of a school.

English Schools and their Rapid Progress

Besides the cleavage between the Government and the Denominational schools, there was a more significant cleavage between English Schools and Vernacular Schools. In general all English Schools were regarded as institutions providing a superior education while Vernacular Schools remained at the elementary level. The basis of this distinction was not so much a matter of the curriculum being related to the maturity of the pupils, as a question of the social prestige of their parents. English schools that prepared the pupils for positions in the Colonial administration very naturally appeared much more important than Vernacular schools which had no such rewards to offer their pupils. Parents were quite willing to pay for the education given in English schools, which had begun to prove good investment. Funds thus collected as fees and the liberal grants given by the State together made it possible for English schools to out-distance Vernacular schools in the character and quality of the education imparted as well as in ancillary activities. Vernacular Schools remained at a very elementary level in the content of the curriculum, in ancillary activities and in social prestige indeed. The momentum which the English schools generated greatly assisted the Missionaries in the expansion of their distinctive chains of English Schools. The State soon found it hard to finance the few English Schools it had established. Faced with the fall in revenue as a result of the coffee crisis of 1879 the Central Government advised the Department of Public Instruction to entrust all its English schools to local bodies. In the following extract from the Administration Report of 1885 the Director of Public Instruction remarked on this predicament, frankly admitting that the economy measure of retrenchment in English education did not in any way enhance the prospects of Vernacular Schools, much as he desired that it should :

> " Ever since the necessities of the Revenue of the Colony forced retrenchment prominently upon this Department, the lines followed have been to retire as far as possible, and where possible from English education, leaving it to private effort and private resources, and the Department has persistently expressed a desire to utilise as much as possible the savings effected upon English education towards a large extension of vernacular education, until there should be no village community able and willing to provide a school bungalow and a reasonable attendance of children which should not have its vernacular school.

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I have been able to do a little only in this direction in the matter of Government schools, and want of funds has compelled me to refuse many applications which I should like to have granted. Still something has been done, and I am now confining my efforts mainly to the inland districts, which are, some of them deplorably backward."

In the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Department of Public Instruction failed to keep pace with Missionary enterprise even in the field of vernacular education. In fact the retrenchment measure adopted by the State gave a new lead to denominational agencies for local bodies soon passed on the English schools to them. Working on the edge of competition among themselves Missionary bodies readily welcomed the move.

High Schools

As the denominational schools system expanded, there arose a new category of schools within their chain of English schools. It was the High School. The more successful Denominational English Schools came to be much sought after by the more influential sections of the upper classes. The education given in such schools carried greater recognition and considerably enhanced a pupil's chances of finding employment in the higher rungs of the Colonial administration. These schools in course of time became exclusive schools. The competing Missionary agencies became alive to the great value of such exclusive schools in their Missionary activities. Such schools were the training grounds of the native members of the colonial administration and they attracted pupils from the highest rungs of society. Understandably, such a liaison could greatly facilitate missionary work. Thus competition broke out among denominational agencies to establish such exclusive schools which came to be known as " High Schools ". The High School soon became the symbol of prestige and the means of establishing superiority. Consequently, the Missions that did not maintain High Schools lost much social influence. This is borne out by evidence from Missionary sources. The Wesleyans, for example, having had no superior school in Galle till 1875 believed themselves to be " reduced to the ignoble position of being teachers of infants only. " In a letter to the Home Mission they complained :

> " We are lowered and humiliated in the public esteem. Either to give up schools entirely or to have a superior English school are the only alternatives for avoiding the suicidal state. "[3]

A keen competition developed among the Missions in establishing High Schools. More and more special advantages were provided in these institutions on the Western pattern. A premium was placed on having European principals. The extent to which this weighed with the people is seen from the fact that J. I. Jones in detailing the chances of success of the Kandy Collegiate School (the present Trinity College) mentioned that there could be no further danger of monopoly from the Government school there as its new principal though a man " of ability and experience . . . . failed to get the confidence of the people " as he was not a European. The following

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remarks Sir C. P. Langford K.C.M.G. made in 1876 also indicate the presence of this attitude :

" The advantage of European superintendence which the grant-in-aid schools enjoy continues to secure to them an easy pre-eminence as channels of civilising and advancing sound knowledge among the youth of the country. "[4]

Another point of advantage was to have a fair proportion of European teachers· A High School was esteemed in proportion to the number of European teachers on its staff. St. Thomas' College and the Academy which were acknowledged to be the leading educational institutions of the Island had a large number of European teachers and the letters of the C. M. S. and Wesleyan Missionaries to their Home Missions give the impression that this was almost the sole factor that contributed to pre-eminence. Samuel Collins of the Wesleyan Mission wrote home thus in respect of the staffing of Wesley College :

" Unless a man is sent at once, I am afraid we shall not be able to retain the position we have taken. In the government Institutions there are three Englishmen. In the S. P. G. College three besides one of the Government Chaplains. "[5]

Collins writing in a similar strain in regard to Trinity College observed :

" If we are to hold our own in the presence of St. Thomas' College which . . . has a staff of four English Clergymen, we must have a staff of Europeans ; otherwise it is scarcely too much to say that the place had better be given up. "[6]

Advanced Courses in High Schools

Another essential feature in these High Schools was the College Department. The American Ceylon Mission in Jaffna gave the lead not only in the matter of establishing College Departments but in the wide range in the curriculum they provided. Their course of studies even as early as in 1872 was as follows :

" Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying, Conic sections and Calculus, History of India and English General History, Physical Geography, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Rhetoric, Logic, English Literature, the Bible, Christian Evidences, Butler's Analogy, Astronomy, Physiology, Moral Science, Intellectual Philosophy, lectures on Botany, Geology, Chemistry and Methods of Teaching ; Exercises in Composition, Declamation, and Extemporaneous speaking, Latin and Sanskrit. "[7]

The Church Missionary Society that followed suit in Jaffna were able to establish their departments only on a modest scale. The Wesleyans " compelled " by these " appeasing forces " had to initiate a College Section by adding to " the sixth standard and Upper Class called College Department " where they taught " as extra studies . . . . Trigonometry, Natural Philosophy and Whateloe's Logic."

In Kandy, Trinity College maintained a College Department of a higher order. It appears to have consisted of two sections : a secondary school section and a college section, as seen from the letter of Collins in August 1877. He wrote :

" I have now two B. A. students and one F. A. and two Matriculation Classes, one for this year and one for the next."[8]

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Of the standard maintained he wrote :

" The last two years we have passed all our candidates in the Calcutta examinations. This has given confidence in our system. "[9]

Some idea of the curriculum also may be gleaned from his references in the same letter to qualifications of teachers they needed :

" He should be either a Mathematician or a Classic . . . . as a Mathematician he would have to read Statics, Dynamics, Hydrostatics, Astronomy etc., and should be capable of solving any problem that should be brought to him. As a Classic he would have to read Livy, Cicero, Horace and Juvenal. The Mathematician will probably have to be an Honours man."[10]

Character of High Schools

Thus it can be seen that the superior High Schools were modelled on the pattern of public schools of England with a comprehensive curriculum of classical and scientific studies. These diffused the traditional and modern scientific thoughts of the West through the graduates of the English Universities who were on the staffs of the High Schools. Most of these schools had a College Department and were affiliated to the University of Calcutta. These schools formed only a small fraction of the educational institutions of the country serving an exclusive section of the community. There were ten of them in the whole Island distributed among five of the Districts, viz., Colombo, Jaffna, Galle, Kandy, and Batticaloa.

It must, however, be underscored that the establishment of High Schools was undertaken by the Missions mainly to gain ascendency in the community and have a position of vantage for their missionary work. Hence in their work in connection with the High Schools on which they concentrated between 1870 and 1878, they were actually gathering social momentum for the spread of Christianity.

The Condition of State Vernacular Education

High Schools needed no State supervision or direction for their development. The desire of each Mission to entrench itself in the upper classes gave the necessary impetus for maintaining high standards. In this respect even the English schools of the more general type were well attended to. But Vernacular schools were very slow to develop indeed. In fact, as described in Chapter 39, it was through regulations governing the grants-in-aid that the Department of Public Instruction activated the denominational agencies to raise the level of their Vernacular schools.

Rapid Progress in Educational Expansion

The figures given in the Administration Reports of this period indicate a very rapid progress in the expansion of the schools system of the Island. Closer analysis of them, however, will soon reveal that the greater portion of the educational system of the Island had come under the control of denominational agencies. It is quite possible that the figures given in the Administration Reports do not indicate the full extent of the prevailing schools system. It was a fact of school administration

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of the day that backward pupils were not presented for the annual examination on the results of which the rate of grants was calculated. To have more failures was to get a lower rate of grants.

Consequently, the total roll of some schools would have been much larger than what was actually declared to the Department. Besides there were private schools that were not registered and the extent of their contribution to educational expansion is nowhere recorded in the Administration Reports.

However, the incontrovertible fact of the educational expansion of this period is the enterprise of Missionary agencies and the slow rate of progress achieved by the Department of Public Instruction. The reader is referred to Table I of Chapter 44 for statistical information on this. It may be observed that the State which had three times as many schools as denominational agencies in 1869 had only one-third the number of denominational schools in 1899. The respective proportions had become completely inverted.

Official Support for the Missions

We must now turn to an important issue of this period in denominational enterprise in education. Evidence from history goes to establish the fact that the colonial administration of the period in general was in sympathy with the Christian Missionary cause. Indeed, it is true that the State followed a policy of neutrality in religion in the tradition of British Colonial rule. But under this general policy each Governor had his own predilections. Depending on how the Governor was disposed towards Missionary work, denominational school agencies would have received support from the administrative hierarchy headed by the Colonial Civil Service. It is also true that the Colonial administration in general, being of the Christian faith, would have liked to see denominational enterprise in education thrive as it was a means of propagating the Gospel. Governor Brownrigg frankly declared his sympathy with the cause the Missions had undertaken :

> " It is not necessary to dwell upon my sincere zeal for a wide extension of the Christian faith, as it were independent of other motives ; because it is in fact inseparably connected with my political life. "[11]

Other Governors and officials in the administration would have extended a like sympathy to the Missions. Christian denominational enterprise in education should have derived much benefit from this source of sympathy.

The Beginnings of the Buddhist Revival

The Buddhist revival of the last decades of the nineteenth century, was of historic significance in the expansion of education in the Island. Christian Missionary Schools scattered over the Island, had by then become an effective means of conversion and the traditional religious communities of the Island were in grave danger. Education linked with social and economic benefits had become a virtual monopoly of Christian Missionaries and Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim parents were obliged to send their children to Missionary schools if they were to enable them to enjoy their due share of the opportunities for progress which the rapidly changing society

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offered. And children thus exposed to the influence of Christian Missionaries at school eventually grew up with little understanding and less regard for their ancestral faiths. Enduring severe social disabilities and harsh repression under the colonial administration such patriotic Buddhist monks as the renowned orator Ven. Migettuwatte Gunananda and the scholar monk Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala assisted by a few patriots who yet dared to support the Buddhist cause struggled hard to bring about the urgently needed Buddhist revival. But the odds were against them. The social influence and the financial strength of the enterprising Missionaries, the hostility of the colonial administration and, worst of all, the lethargy into which the Buddhist community had fallen militated against their achieving any impressive success.

Col. Olcott and the Buddhist Theosophical Society

The American Theosophist, Colonel Henry Steele Olcott's visit to the Island in 1880 in the company of Madam H. P. Blavatsky, roused the dwindling spirit of the Buddhist community and inaugurated an era of resurgence. Colonel Olcott clearly saw that the Sinhala Buddhist community of Ceylon had to be revitalized through Buddhist education if it were to survive the challenge of the Christian Missionary enterprise. What the Buddhists lacked was an inspiring and unifying organization to channel their diffused energy in the service of national resurgence. To supply this need, Colonel Olcott launched the Buddhist Theosophical movement in the Island. In this he was ably assisted by a host of such patriots as the Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala, Venerable Ratmalane Sri Dhammaloka, Venerable Waskaduwe Sri Subhuti and Venerable Migettuwatte Gunananda. The philanthropy and active corporation of such laymen like Don Carolis Hewavitarane, Don Amaris de Silva Batuwantudawe, Don Spater Senanayake, Jeremias Dias, Anagarika Dharmapala and many other prominent Buddhists were readily extended to the Buddhist Theosophical movement which soon established branch societies in all the principal cities of the Island.

The aim of the Buddhist Theosophical Society was the preservation and propagation of the Buddha Dhamma and the promotion of the welfare of the Buddhist community of the Island. Colonel Olcott rightly saw, and was able to convince the leading Buddhist monks of the time and the lay benefactors of the Buddhist Theosophical movement, that the spiritual rejuvenation of the Buddhist community had to be achieved through Buddhist education. Thus the Buddhist community was made to accept the responsibility of conducting schools for Buddhist children. But lack of funds was the crucial problem the Buddhist schools movement faced. To meet the situation Colonel Olcott launched an Education Fund in 1881 under the aegis of the Buddhist Theosophical Society. The event is recorded thus in Colonel Olcott's " Old Diary Leaves " :

> " The main object of my present visit (i.e. the visit of 1881) was, as above stated, the raising of an education fund and the rousing of popular interest in the subject of education generally. To this effect I needed the co-operation of all the Principal priests of the Island ; if I could get about eight or nine men on my side, the rest

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would be a mere matter-of detail. These men were H. Sumangala, Dhammālankāra, Wimalasara, Piyaratne, Subhuti, Potuwila and Weligama. Then there was Migettuwatte, " the Silver-tongued orator " incomparably the finest speaker in the Island to be dealt with, but not like the others . . . . "

First Buddhist Schools

Those luminaries of the Order whose assistance Colonel Olcott so earnestly sought rose to the occasion and gave that vital social momentum which the Education Fund needed for its success. Strengthening the Education Fund adequately was no easy task. Colonel Olcott's " Old Diary Leaves " amply illustrates the hard struggle the Buddhist Theosophical Society had to make to build adequate financial resources for its schools programme. Island-wide tours by Olcott, meetings of the Society in city and village and house to house canvassing produced sufficient financial resources for the society to establish several schools in the principal cities of the Island. Of them we may mention here Ananda College of Colombo, Dharmaraja College of Kandy, Mahinda College of Galle, Vijaya College of Matale, Jinaraja College of Gampola and Anurudha College of Nawalapitiya. These were Secondary English Schools. A parallel chain of Sinhalese schools was established in towns and villages. These schools soon began to check the efflux of Buddhist children to Christianity via proselytisation.

Anagarika Dharmapala and the Maha Bodhi Society

Anagarika Dharmapala who eventually emerged as the revered leader of the Buddhist revival gave a new impetus to the Buddhist schools movement. Moved by righteous indignation at the complacence of his co-religionists while several Christian Missionary Societies were fast converting the unenlightened Buddhists to Christianity, Anagarika Dharmapala lashed the Buddhists of his day with his inspiring tongue and awakened the Buddhist leaders to their social duties. He established the well-known Maha Bodhi Society for the twin purpose of fortifying the Sinhala Buddhist community through education and spreading the Buddha Dhamma in the world at large. In pursuance of the first of these aims the Maha Bodhi Society established many Buddhist Schools. Following the lead given by Anagarika Dharmapala several other Buddhist Societies such as the Galle Buddhist Education Society were soon formed for the purpose of conducting Buddhist schools. The achievements of these Buddhist Schools agencies not only revitalized the Buddhist community but quickened the pace of educational expansion in the Island. It must be specially noted that the interior Buddhist localities of the Island that had hitherto been neglected came to be better provided with schools as a result of the work of Buddhist Societies. They helped in educational expansion in yet another way. As was mentioned earlier, the traditional Buddhist peasantry of the Island were reluctant to send their children to either Missionary or Government schools for fear that they would be converted to Christianity. These Buddhist parents now got the opportunity of enabling their children to get an education in Buddhist schools.

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It would be seen in retrospect that the momentum which the Buddhist resurgence released greatly helped in the rapid expansion of education. Firstly, it resulted in a triangular competition in the field of education. The Department of Public Instruction on the one hand as the organ of the State, and the Christian Missionary Schools agencies that were already well established had to contend with energetic rivalry from the Buddhist schools movement. Secondly, the Buddhist revival inspired similar movements of resurgence in the Hindu and Muslim communities. The fresh energy released by the revival led by Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar supported by the philanthrophic service of such men as Arunachalam and P. Ramanathan inspired the Hindu Community to launch their own schools programmes (*Vide* Chapter 94). The Muslim community soon followed suit (*Vide* Chapter 95). With the different communities thus becoming alive to the respective educational needs and responsibilities, a great educational expansion was clearly in operation.

Opposition to Buddhist Education

Naturally Christian Missionary activities suffered a set-back as a result of these resurgent movements. And, as is to be expected, the newcomers had to contend with much opposition and hostility. The coming of Colonel Olcott was bitterly disliked by the Christian Missionaries and the Buddhist Theosophical Movement which he inaugurated had to face much official repression in the early years of its existence. Colonel Olcott's " Old Diary Leaves " provides ample evidence of the Missionary hostility and official opposition in the teeth of which the Buddhist schools programme had to be conducted. Suffice it to reproduce here Colonel Olcott's own account of the reception be received at the hands of the Government Agent of Kalutara on his first visit to that town :

> " The same afternoon we had a taste of the other style of official, the Government Agent—a most satrapy grade of public servant—having forbidden the use of any public building, even the verandah or steps of the school-house for my lecture. The poor creature acted as though he supposed the Buddhists could be overawed into detesting their religion, or into believing Christianity a more lovable one by excluding them from the buildings that had been erected with their tax-money and that would be lent to any preacher against Buddhism. But the fields and the sky were left to us, the one for lecture-hall, the other for roof, and the meeting was held in a coconut grove . . . . ".

With a wealth of evidence from a diversity of sources " The Buddhist Commission Report " has clearly shown how much of official opposition the schools movement of the Buddhist faced. The Quarter mile clause, for instance, which disallowed the establishment of a school within a quarter-mile radius of a school already established obviously militated against the newcomers. Though economy prompted such legislation social justice clearly necessitated their abrogation as later history proved. Overcoming such initial obstacles the Buddhist Schools movement eventually matured to make a great contribution to the Island's educational expansion.

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An Important Feature of Buddhist Education

It was the policy of the Buddhist Theosophical Society to relate the work of a school to the life of the people of the locality. We may regard this as an early attempt at giving a practical bias to education. The Society's policy in this respect is clearly set out in a manual published in 1940 to commemorate the completion of sixty years of service in the Island's education :

> " A good many of the Society's Schools have curricula related to the life of the people in the areas in which they are located. Rural Science, practical farm work, mat and cloth weaving, basket making, carpentry and several forms of cottage industries and hand and home crafts give thousands of pupils a training supplementing their literary education which is intended to develop them in the fullness of time into useful members of society. It is hoped, as soon as practicable, to enlarge the scope of work in this direction and to establish industrial and vocational training centres to prepare young men and women for purposeful citizenship, and to assist in the economic regeneration of the Island which hitherto seems to have been subordinated to its political development. "[12]

In the educational circumstances of the present day we are able to fully regard the wisdom of this educational policy which attempted not to alienate the pupil from the life of his community.

Missionary Contribution to Educational Expansion

The Missions made a substantial contribution to educational expansion during this period. Firstly, the Missions proved indispensable in the early stages as the only educational agencies capable of helping the Government in its programme of extension. They were also able to utilise in this task their experience in establishing and conducting schools as well as the machinery of their organizations in the centres of population. Secondly, they had a ready system of superintendence which was invaluable in education especially at a time when teachers were too few and t oo ill-equipped for maintaining high standards. Thirdly, they were able to draw teachers from Europe who helped to raise the standard of instruction given in Europe. And fourthly, the Missionaries helped the Department to make maximum use of the education vote in enabling the largest possible number profit from education.

Lastly, it paved the way consequent on the Panadura controversy for Col. Olcott and other Buddhist leaders to rally round the common cause of bringing about a resurgence among the Buddhists whose example was soon followed by the Hindus and the Muslims.

The State and denominational partnership assumed a regular character as education was attempted on an Islandwide scale. The Department of Public Instruction undertook the responsibility for the education of the whole community. It broadened the field of activity by adhering to a secular bias. Thus education become not only acceptable to all but also meaningful to all, being related to the purpose of society. In enlisting the services of all denominational agencies and

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making use of their institutions without their having to barter the conscience for the purpose. The responsibility for educational policy rested with the legislature and so the schools now began to assume a unitary character.

In the matter of even spread it may be said that a fair proportion of schools was opened in remote districts in the wake of Buddhist resurgence. The Government was able to leave English education more and more to denominational agencies and pay attention to Vernacular education in remote areas. Another important matter in which the religious agencies were a great asset to the Government was in respect of female education. Of this the Director's report for 1875 state :

> " It is one of the most pleasing results of the grant-in-aid scheme that it has called into existence a number of schools for girls which but for it would never have seen light ".

Yet it was only the beginnings of a unified system. The progressive features were still limited to High Schools that served the wealthier and influential sections of the community. The grant-in-aid scheme of the Government was open to all denominations but in acutal practice Christian Missions were able to enjoy the greater share of the partnership offered by State.

Educational Trends of the Period

Finally, we must briefly review the general educational trends of the time. English education which began with the upper classes and in the towns had, towards the end of the period, spread to the rural middle classes. Vernacular education which began in the centres of the population had spread to outlying areas, too.

But the work of extension was by no means adequately complete. The Census for 1901 revealed that three-fourths of the children of school-going age were still not attending schools. There were several sections of the population whose education was entirely neglected. It was also pointed out that education was purely academic and practical work was totally left out. Reference to these and several other short-comings in education in the forthright criticisms of Ponnambalam Arunachalam in the census report paved the way for reforms which led to rapid progress at the turn of the century and those are dealt with in the chapters that follow.

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(*Note.*—The author wishes to thank Dr. A. Rajaindran for making available to him his unpublished Ph. D. thesis (London University) for reference from which source much factual material for this article was collected)

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CHAPTER 39

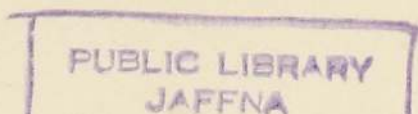
EXPANSION OF THE GRANT-IN-AID SYSTEM

E. R. de SILVA

A Glance at Past Policy

A consideration of any Grant-in-Aid system suggests a picture of a corporate enterprise between a Government and some unofficial agency or other towards a common goal. Till the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction in 1869, organised educational effort in this country seems to have had as its main objective the equipment of personnel for the public service and the provision of every opportunity to Christian Missions to spread the Christian faith. This had to be so, for the schools belonged to the Government whose was the responsibility to maintain and equip them ; their control however was under Christian Missions. As far back as 1827, i.e. after the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom, there were 96 Government schools controlled by Christian Missions who were also responsible for 310 schools of their own. In the 1,000 or more temple schools the Government's interest was nominal. The country's religion and culture could be found, if at all, but a very insignificant place in the education of her children. Discontent had inevitably to result. The Colebrooke reforms discussed elsewhere in this volume do not appear to have had an outlook broader than utilitarian. The Commission's emphasis on English was partly due to its belief that Oriental learning was unequal to the demands of a changing country and partly to the conviction that it was necessary to train Ceylonese for posts in the public service. As a result of the Colebrooke recommendations education had begun to move from the villages to the towns. The Buddhist rural people however were not interested in State administered English schools, so much so that, in 1868, 65 per cent of the children attending Government schools were Christians and only 27 per cent Buddhists. The need to aid Buddhist and Hindu agencies began to appear in its true perspective as the right of every Buddhist and Hindu child.

de SILVA, E. R., B.A. (LONDON). After serving as an assistant teacher at Trinity College, Kandy and Richmond College, Galle respectively, Mr. de Silva became the Principal of Richmond College in 1940 and he held office till his retirement in 1957. He was Hon. Secretary and President of the Ceylon Headmasters' Conference. President, All Ceylon Union of Teachers ; and during the 9 years of its existence a member of the last Board of Education. Member of the Ministers' Advisory Council.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The Central Schools Commission

From 1841 onwards Government educational institutions were under the control of the Central Schools Commission which consisted of Government officials and the clergy of the various missions with the Colonial Secretary as its president. Speaking of the administration of schools C. A. Lorensz was able to say that there was perfect neutrality and pupils of every religion and every sect attended Government schools without demur. Bishop Bravi wrote that " everyone was satisfied. " It must not, however, be forgotten that the Commission was totally unrepresentative and within it were frequent denominational conflicts. Yet it was in 1857 that these came to a head. Three years earlier the famous despatch on Education had recommended grants to Christian schools in India. This was at a time when the Established Church had begun to think that its claims for special treatment were not sufficiently recognised. Following the recommendations for India the Bishop asked for similar grants to Christian schools in Ceylon. In this request Bishop Bravi saw, " a mine cleverly prepared to blow up entirely our present educational system." The Legislative Council approved the request subject to the proviso that religious instruction would remain optional and entrusted the duty of regulating the grants to the Central Commission. Its main objectives, however, seem to have been to appease the various missions and to prevent a scramble amongst them for grants-in-aid.

Commission in Conflict

The regulations drafted by the Commission therefore sought to restrict grants to schools supported entirely by private contributions of fees. The Legislative Council, however, thought otherwise and insisted that grants should be given to Mission Schools as well as to private schools, provided the Commission's rules regarding religious instruction were adhered to.

The Commission accepted the resolution of Council but changed the rules regarding religious instruction. The Commission thus came into conflict with the Government in a way totally unacceptable to the majority of the people and made its final abolition inevitable. No mission except the Society for the Promotion of the Gospel would accept grants with a conscience clause, the older missions wanted grants without conditions. Both parties petitioned the Government, the Bishop asking that the rules be not changed and the Missionaries asking for the Madras system where grants were paid without restriction. In a paper read by him in 1933, the last decade of the Commission's life is vividly portrayed thus by L. J. Gratiaen :

> " Though the quality of the work was not improving and though there was no great increase in numbers except in the vernacular schools, which were the cheapest, the cost of running the Government schools was again steadily rising. In 1858 the net cost of education was £ 8,940, in 1868 it was £ 13,437. In the Fifties at least inefficiency could be explained as a result of economy. Now the economy was vanishing and there was no improvement to show for it. The

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stage was now set for the second of our educational revolutions. The Commission and the schools were neither efficient nor popular. The mishandling of the question of grants had left much soreness behind." [1]

Perhaps the redeeming feature of the last years of the unwanted Commission's life was the firm decision of the Government to control the funds voted for education without appearing to be biased or partial. The first vote for the grant-in-aid system was passed by the Legislative Council and £ 600 was made available to schools which accepted the rules.

A New Order

The dying gasps of the old order and the birth pangs of the new have become clearly discernible and they find expression in the appointment in 1865 of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council to examine the educational provisions in the country in all aspects and to report back to the Council. A wider outlook, and a true awareness of the need to cater to the growth of the Buddhist and Hindu child must have weighed with the Committee. On its recommendations the Government undertook (*a*) the responsibility for Sinhalese and Tamil education (*b*) the provision of grants to schools giving sound secular education (*c*) the removal of the Government's responsibility hitherto accepted in terms of Colebrooke's recommendations for English Education (*d*) the removal of the control of Education from Missionary bodies and (*e*) the establishment of the department of Public Instruction. The 26th report by the Department of Public Instruction is in reality the report of the first Director, J. S. Laurie. Therein we find the following distribution of the grants for the year 1869 :

	£	*s*	*d*
Private Schools	172	0	0
Missionary Schools	354	15	0
Northern Province Schools	400	0	0
	926	15	0

The extension of the grant-in-aid system prepared the way for Buddhist and Hindus to open schools. In the seventies and eighties schools continued to increase rapidly, Government concentrating on Sinhalese and Tamil Schools and handing over the English schools to Missionary bodies who had the personnel to man the staffs. The products of the English schools were also the inheritors of the power and position which an English Government bestowed on the citizens. When Colonel Olcott arrived in Ceylon in 1880 as a result of the Panadura Controversy of 1873 the English school had begun to be a vital factor in the life of the nation.

" As the main point of Christian Missionary activity was confined to the secondary school it was in this particular field that the campaign of the Buddhist Theosophical Society was waged." (*Ludowyke*)

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Grants Regulated

The grant-in-aid system was now an established fact, its correct administration was the responsibility of the State. In 1872 the following conditions had to be satisfied by a manager before he received a grant :

(*a*) A school had to have a manager or managers receiving no salary or emolument from the State.

(*b*) A school was to be open for inspection by the officers of the Department of Public Instruction.

(*c*) Fixed payments were allowed on results ascertained and a money value calculated at the annual inspection subject to :

(1) The school preparing students in at least two standards.

(2) The average attendance being not less than 20 in boys' and 15 in girls' schools.

(3) The general organisation being approved by the Department of Public Instruction and,

(4) Subject to the availability of funds at the disposal of the Department.

Schools were classified into three categories, Vernacular, Anglo-Vernacular and English and each category was sub-divided into scales of grant A and B, the scale B receiving one-sixth less than scale A. To be registered under A the Inspector should report :

(*a*) The buildings are suitable and in good repair.

(*b*) Light is sufficient and air is not excluded, health of the students and the cleanliness of the premises are adequately looked after.

(*c*) Equipment consisting of desks and maps is sufficient and good.

(*d*) The conduct of the school is orderly and disciplined and some attention is paid to Physical Drill. Six standards of examination are prescribed for each category of schools and the money value was computed for each pass based upon a unit of instruction. The mechanical ability to form letters and figures on a slate, or black-board is taken as the unit of instruction and the 'passes' in every head of each Standard are expressed in multiples of this unit which is the writing of the first standard.

The Vernacular and the Anglo-Vernacular basic unit was worth 55 cents under scale A and 45 cents under scale B, for the English school it was 85 cents and 75 cents respectively. Only students six years old and not more than 20 could be presented in any class for the first examination. A student could be presented not more than once in standards one and two and not more than twice in standards 3, 4 and 5 and not more than three times in the sixth. A special grant for needlework and a capitation grant for those not presented were also provided.

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Resultant Growth

This system of payment started in 1870 was an incentive to the private agencies to expand their educational activities. Their rate of progress was faster than that of the Government. In 1875 the Government was looking after 276 schools with 12,776 scholars as against 156 schools in 1870 with 8,726 scholars. In other words the Government had added 120 schools and 4,050 scholars to its responsibility within the first five years of the grant-in-aid system. On the other hand looking after 657 schools with 41,343 scholars in 1,875, the private bodies had increased their numbers by 425 schools and 33,142 scholars. Five years is a sufficient period for an assessment of a system. How rigid or how elastic are the rules and regulations which govern it ? What can be said to its credit at the very start is as was reported by Mr. W. H. de Alwis, Inspector of Schools, in his report in 1875 :

> " There can be no doubt that the promulgation of the scheme (payment by results) in 1870 has given rise to an immense amount of educational activity, the effect of which has been to crowd with schools certain parts of the Western Province and to lead to educational incursions to districts where before the schoolmaster was unheard of. The grant examination has at least 2 plain advantages. It ensures a certain amount of definite progress from year to year and it provides a ready test of the worth of such progress in actual money value. "

It is easy to see from the following figures for the first ten years of the grant-in-aid system how well founded were Mr. de Alwis' observations five years before.

From 1870 to 1879—

(*a*) the number of grant-in-aid schools rose from 229 to 814,

(*b*) the number of scholars from 8201 to 55,944, and

(*c*) the grant from Rs. 34,355 to Rs. 173,734.

Having stated the benefits of the grant-in-aid system, Mr. de Alwis probes deeper for true educational values and observes :

> " It is however obvious that teaching which is exclusively directed as is often the case to meet the requirements of the Government standards cannot have much permanent educative value. The examiner is unable to take into account in his estimate those fine characteristics that make the difference between a well-taught school and its opposite. A grant system can in no case ensure anything higher than a merely mechanical mediocrity."

It must be presumed that the quoted observation is of a situation which perhaps existed then and is not a pointer to how future policy should grow. Those of subsequent eras have seen how a grant-in-aid system grew up to co-exist with sacrifice and devotion of a high order. In the same year Mr. J. H. Marsh, additional Inspector of Schools, drew attention to :

(*a*) the danger to which the grant-in-aid system is exposed from a mechanical compliance on the part of managers and teachers with the requirements of the Government Code,

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(*b*) the uselessness and injuriousness of the capitation grants and second presentations as at present carried out,

(*c*) the necessity for a better classification of schools.

The Government and the managers did not often interpret rules and regulations in the same way nor did they have a common understanding of their duties and responsibilities. The difficulties of a dual control of what ought to be a unified system had begun to show themselves.

Schools and their Distribution

The rapid rise both in the number of grant-in-aid schools and of the student population within the first 10 years of the Department of Public Instruction has already been noted. In 1879, in addition to the 814 grant-in-aid schools, there were 372 Government schools catering to the needs of 75,064 children. These 1,186 schools were spread out thus :

543 in the Western Province	educating	1 in 21	of the population
108 in the Southern Province	,,	1 in 68	,,
88 in the Central Province	,,	1 in 116	,,
58 in the North-Western Province	,,	1 in 72	,,
8 in the North-Central ,,	,,	1 in 281	,,
288 in the Northern Province	,,	1 in 14	,,
93 in the Eastern Province	,,	1 in 20	,,

Ten years of progress seen externally coincided with (*a*) a complete re-organisation of the department, (*b*) a closer observance of regulations by grant-in-aid schools and (*c*) by Government efforts to restrict small and feeble schools. Yet in 1880 the Director, Charles Bruce, said soon after his arrival :

> " A very slight experience of the working of the Department was sufficient to convince me that my first aim should be not so much to extend education as to systematize it. I soon found that I had to work in the dark or in the perplexing light of arbitrary and conflicting decisions."

Steps were taken to introduce a departmental code for the instruction of teachers and a new code of rules and regulations for grant-in-aid schools. Two new provisions in the departmental code for teachers are of cardinal importance in that salaries of teachers in Government schools were made to depend on :

(*a*) Classification according to certificates of competency.

(*b*) Security according to this classification in addition to result payments.

The Code for Assisted Schools and Schedules of Payment

The same year the draft code was approved by the Legislative Council and after a Select Committee had reviewed the observations of the managing bodies it became Law in 1894. The following provisions of the code are both important and instructive :

(1) The object of the grant is to aid local exertion.

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(2) No grant is made in respect of any instruction in religious subjects.

(3) For every child receiving instruction in a Vernacular or Anglo-Vernacular school under ten years of age on the day of the examination, having entered the school within 12 months of the date of examination and having made not less than 100 attendances is not in the opinion of the manager qualified to be examined in Standard One a capitation grant of Re. 1 in ' A ' Schools and cts. 50 in ' B ' Schools.

(4) In Standards 1–8 a sum calculated according to Schedules F and G below on passes achieved.

The Department had for sometime been unhappy with the operation of the capitation grant highly susceptible to abuse. It was not functioning as it was intended to and thus it gets both defined and confined by regulations.

Schedule F—English Schools

Standard	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Arithmetic*	*Geography*	*History*
1	2·00	2·00	2·00	—	—
2	2·00	2·00	2·00	—	—
3	2·50	2·50	2·50	—	—
4	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	—
5	3·00	3·00	3·00	3·00	3·00
6	3·00	3·00	3·00	3·00	3·00
7	3·50	3·50	3·50	3·50	3·50
8	4·00	4·00	4·00	4·00	4·00

Schedule G—Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular Schools

Standard	*Reading*	*Writing*	*Arithmetic*	*Geography*	*Grammar*	*History*
1	1·50	1·50	1·50	—	—	—
2	1·50	1·50	1·50	—	—	—
3	2·00	2·00	2·00	—	—	—
4	2·00	2·00	2·00	2·00	—	—
5	2·00	2·00	2·00	2·00	—	—
6	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	—
7	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50
8	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	2·50	2 50

The amendments in subsequent codes are not many as far as grant is concerned. In 1885 the Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular Schedule of payments was made applicable to English Schools as well, displacing Schedule F with a few modifications. In the 1888 code notice is taken of Mathematics, Latin, Mechanics, Physics and Chemistry by allowing the respective grants of Rs. 2, 4, 6 in Standards 6, 7 and 8 for each of two subjects passed besides Drawing. In 1889 the schools were reclassified as English High Schools, Primary English Schools, Middle English Schools and Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular Schools.

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Need for a Broader Base

Planned and purposeful education will relate itself to student capabilities, a nation's needs and the national medium of instruction. The first reference in administrative records to these considerations is found in the Director's observations on the English schools :

> " I have given much of my time and attention to the question of English education and I have come to the very strong conclusion that while we should encourage by all means really good English education as may be typified by the Royal College on the Government side and by St. Thomas' College on the grant-in-aid side, yet we are doing positive harm to the country by a number of weak and badly taught English schools in the outlying stations and villages. The worst of this teaching is the result on the future lives of scholars. "

Speaking of them the Director adds :

> " He feels ambitious and thinks that with his high education he is fitted for greater things than tilling his fields or earning his bread by fishing as his parents have done before him ."

We of to-day cannot miss the prophetic undertone of these words written 84 years ago. Four years later in 1888 the Director reveals the mind of the Department thus :

> " The number of Government schools is not now being increased. Government schools are expensive and are opened when absolutely necessary. Wherever possible grant-in-aid schools are preferred ."

Thus in 1888 there were 438 Government schools as against 919 grant-in-aid schools catering to 102,348 scholars. In 10 years the number of Government schools had risen by 66 and grant-in-aid by 105. The 1357 schools were spread out over the Island thus :

580 in the Western Province	educating	1 in 15	of the population
112 in the Central Province	,,	1 in 42	,,
316 in the Northern Province	,,	1 in 12	,,
142 in the Southern Province	,,	1 in 26	,,
102 in the Eastern Province	,,	1 in 14	,,
65 in the North-West Province	,,	1 in 37	,,
14 in the North Central Province	,,	1 in 45	,,
26 in the Uva Province	,,	1 in 76	,,

The Completed Task

During the 30 years of its existence the Department had attempted to fulfil its task. One serious flaw in the grant-in-aid system had begun to reveal itself. The result payment system depending as it did on the percentage of passes calculated on the number presented began to be exploited to the disadvantage of the honest manager who presented the year's class in full for examination as he was expected to do. Without interfering with the anomaly of Charles Bruce's work the Director introduced

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a sliding scale of percentage of passes plus the number of scholars into the Government schools and was contemplating a similar change for aided schools when the amendments to the English Code reached this country giving the Board of Education which had now been set up much to think of and execute through a revised code. As the new century dawned the department had under its control and supervision 1699 schools. The table appended below, showing the spread of these schools, is significant in that they have penetrated to all the nine provinces of the Island thus :

596	Schools in the	Western Province	educating	1 in 10	of the population
168	,,	Central Province	,,	1 in 27	,,
348	,,	Northern Province	,,	1 in 10	,,
229	,,	Southern Province	,,	1 in 12	,,
114	,,	Eastern Province	,,	1 in 15	,,
91	,,	North-West ,,	,,	1 in 26	,,
24	,,	North Central ,,	,,	1 in 32	,,
36	,,	Uva Province ,,	,,	1 in 53	,,
93	,,	Sabaragamuwa ,,	,,	1 in 33	,,

The Department has been reaching out both extensively and intensively. Schools have been established in all the nine provinces of the Island. The number of grant-in-aid schools has risen from 299 in 1870 to 1220 in 1898, the number of students from 8201 to 103,951 and the amount paid as grant from Rs. 34,355 to Rs. 338,567.

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CHAPTER 40

ENGLISH VERSUS THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES

E. A. PERUSINGHE

Even before the occupation of the Maritime Provinces by the English East India Company, a system of schools had come into existence in Ceylon. These schools were established with one major aim in view, i.e., to impart Christian religious instruction to the natives. They found that it would be very much more convenient to administer the country if the natives could be converted to their faith. Hence, Reading, Writing and Religion became the main pillars on which education rested in the pre-British era.

Thus, Missionary activity in the field of education became the heritage of the British rulers in Ceylon during the nineteenth century. There was no serious attempt to orientate education on the basis of an accepted policy till about the third decade of the century when the Colebrooke Commission was appointed for reasons which had very little to do with education, but which, in the last analysis, was responsible for ushering in a period when the rulers began to be conscious of certain educational aims, which became positively necessary for the administration of the country. Colebrooke was profoundly influenced by the liberal intellectual atmosphere prevailing in England at the time. He was aware that for the better administration of the country, the wide gulf that existed between the rulers and the natives had to be narrowed. He was also in search of methods of cutting down the cost of administration. He felt the need to establish a system of education which could smoothly absorb certain elements of the population into the machinery of administration. He therefore laid down certain principles that could, in his view, ensure a solution for these problems. The policy he advocated laid the foundation of the system of education that prevailed in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

" A competent knowledge of the English Language, " observed Colebrooke, " should, however, be required in the principal native functionaries throughout the Island. The

PERUSINGHE, Lt. Colonel E. A., B.A. (LONDON). Principal, Ananda College, Colombo. Before taking up his present appointment, Mr. Perusinghe served as the Principal, Maliyadeva College, Kurunegala and Dharmaraja College, Kandy.

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prospects of future advancement to situations now exclusively held by the Europeans will constitute a most powerful inducement with the natives of high caste, to relinquish many absurd prejudices, and to qualify themselves for higher employment. "[1] He saw in the future education system of the country an opening for the natives—at least for those of the higher stratum—to serve as cog-wheels in the machinery of administration. That would not only reduce the expense involved in getting down personnel from England, but would also breed a set of natives loyal to the administration. To perpetuate this system of education, Colebrooke rightly emphasised the need for school masters who " should in all instances be required to possess a competent knowledge of English to enable them to give instruction in that language. "[2] Thus alone could such a system go on. He also noted with undisguised delight how the—

> " American Missionaries are fully impressed with the importance of rendering the English Language the general medium of instruction, and of the inestimable value of this requirement in itself to the people. "[3]

Types of Schools and Their Activities

Thus, the stage was set for the adoption of a policy that called for a strict adherence to the teaching of English. " The first schools established by the British Government in Ceylon were of course, English Schools at central stations. English-speaking communities at these stations were principally composed of the civil and military officers of the Crown, and these schools were established for the education of their children. It was this class of society that could easily fit into the existing set-up without the semblance of any real maladjustment. They needed English for their advancement just as much as the rulers needed them to fill the responsible grades of the government service with local servants who were not only proficient in English but were also conversant with English life and thought, English History and English forms of Government. That would have facilitated the emergence of a rock-like foundation for the British administration. But the demand for English Education, with its consequent benefits began to be clearly appreciated by the natives as well. They felt and, quite rightly too, that if they were to find a 'respectable' place in society English education was a *sine qua non* for such a status. Hence the growing demand by the natives for educational facilities. The emergence of the Anglo-Vernacular Schools was the result of this demand. To quote Young Adams, " In course of time the claims of the Sinhalese and Tamil subordinate officers for their children gave rise to the establishment of Anglo-Vernacular schools. "[4] Apart from this there was a large body of Sinhalese and Tamils who had hardly any educational facilities at all. They were the class who found it most difficult to fit into the administrative set-up. They, too, gradually realised the importance of education, and particularly of an English education. Probably the Government was not in a position, financially, to meet this demand. However, a few vernacular schools were established for the children of the Sinhalese and the Tamils. And these few schools were admittedly inefficient and failed to impart the education that the people desired.

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There was a total of 141 Government and Grant-in-Aid Schools in 1869 imparting education to 8,750 children. In 1870 this number had gone up to 385 schools with 18,000 students, and in 1871 there were 494 schools with 26,000 students on roll. Thereafter there was a progressive increase in the number of schools and in the number of pupils who received instruction in these schools.

Although at the beginning the biggest demand was for Government Anglo-Vernacular Schools, the number of these schools increased but slightly as a result of this demand being met by the Missionary Schools. There were many Missions which were actively engaged in educational enterprises. Many schools giving instructions in English were established, and, although the motives of the Missionary Societies included, inter alia, the motive of converting the natives to Christianity, their activities were a source of great financial relief to the Government who would otherwise have been forced to devote very substantial amounts of money for education. In many towns Missionary schools began to be established, and in the Jaffna Peninsula in particular, they dominated the entire field.

The Missionary Societies began to be active mainly after 1812. In 1827 Sir Edward Barnes laid the foundation stone of the Kotte Christian College for the Church Missionary Society. It was the intention of the founders of this College to impart a broad education based on a curriculum which included English, Science, Mathematics, Philology, Latin, Greek and Pali. On the initiative of Rev. Joseph Marsh another school for the sons of the upper classes was established. This school was taken over by the Government and later became the Colombo Academy in 1836. This was the school which later became Royal College. Many other institutions were established under the auspices of the Christian Missionaries. St. Benedict's College, St. Joseph's College, Good Shepherd Convent, and St. Bridget's Convent were some of the leading Catholic Schools established during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

St. Thomas' College was started by Bishop Chapman of the Church of England in 1851. The Anglican Church of Ceylon was responsible for starting Bishop's College and Ladies' College. These Colleges and a large number of other less known Church Schools were started. In 1874 Wesley College was started by the Methodists. The Baptists started Carey College and the Presbyterians too had started schools of their own. In every one of these newly established schools instruction was given in English, and the Government actively encouraged their establishment as it was in agreement with the accepted Government policy. These schools amply served the educational needs of the upper crust of the native population who were agitating for more and better English education, primarily because it was the only way in which their sons could get employment under the Government. The upper layers of society were not concerned too much about the Christian religious bias involved in this education. The people too did not mind that, since those who received this type of instruction were definitely at an advantage when it became a question of securing employment.

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How good was the English taught in these Anglo-Vernacular schools ? In many schools English was taught but the proficiency gained by the pupils does not appear to have been of a very high standard. A little English was admittedly learned for the purpose of securing employment. In 1872, E. A. Helps, Inspector, made some pithy comments on this subject.

" But to return to those who have learned a little English and are unable to procure employment. These abundantly illustrate the adage as to a little learning being a dangerous thing. From the slight and superficial knowledge they have gained, they were really no better as human beings than their fellows who have not learnt their English for the reasons I have given, but, with that conceit which is rarely wanting, and which is developed to the *nth* degree in an English teaching school, they consider themselves very much so, and refuse. . . . I am told, to pursue the trade of their fathers if they think it derogatory to their dignity. " He further observed that " as a rule, here, as everywhere, the lower the caste and the more ignorant the parent, the greater the desire that the children should learn English. "[5]

The observations quoted above make it abundantly clear that it was not the intention of the Colonial government to give a liberal English education indiscriminately to all who sought it. They rather preferred that a ploughman's son should get an education just adequate to make him a better ploughman.

It was not easy, even in those far off days, for the children of the lower stratum of society to secure employment under the Government. But the ordinary people felt, all the same, that an English education was the only opening they had for a better life in society. In England during the same period, the ordinary man did not benefit by a comprehensive system of education. It was only after Forster's Elementary Education Bill of 1871 that education was thrown open to the poor. With the extension of the franchise, Robert Lowe felt that it was only logical to " educate their masters," the ordinary men who were now getting the right to vote. In Ceylon, however, the situation was different.

" In England, ten or twelve years are not devoted to the instruction of a ploughman's son, neither does he learn the subjects which can never be of use to him in later life, such as Latin . . . . But here, however humble the father's position, however dull the boy, whose schooling the father pays for with difficulty, he reckons in a fatuous manner upon his son's advancement in life as certain from the time of his entering an English School. "[6]

Herein lay the germs of a system of education not geared to the economic needs of the country. Education with some learning in English becomes a magic wand that opens the door to advancement in life, or so the ordinary man felt. Once he had learned this little bit of English, however, a boy was often left high and dry when it came to employment. In 1883, H. W. Green, Director of Public Instruction, observed:

" At present a boy when he has left school . . . believes that he knows English. It is not his fault that he does not. He feels ambitious and thinks that with his ' high ' education, he is fitted for greater things than tilling his fields

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or earning his bread by fishing, as his parents have done before him, as his vernacularly educated compeers do and will do. So, determined to raise himself by his English, the unfortunate youth generally commences by entering his name foı the Church Examination, by the results of which our clerkships are decided. He fails signally in the examination but he accounts for this by the fact that the Examiners are monsters of injustice. . . . But often, too often, he degenerates ' into a petition drawer at 9 pence a petition ' and incites further litigation."

This is a sad commentary on the state of the English Education imparted in the Anglo-Vernacular Schools at the time. But the ordinary man cannot be blamed for the attitude taken by him. He considered, and with good reason, too, that the only way in which he could better the prospects of his sons in life was to educate his son, and with this end in view he made any sacrifice he possibly could. But those who decided educational policy foresaw, even at that time, that this system would ultimately produce an army of disgruntled youths who were ill-fitted to pursue a vocation dictated by the economic needs of the country, but depended on getting minor clerical posts which would not only give them a small income, but would also immensely enhance their prestige among their fellow countrymen. That was the tragedy of the educational policy followed in the latter part of the century.

For the upper crust of society, however, the position was far better. They were mostly occupying positions under the Government, and the Missionary Schools and the leading Government Institutions provided them with opportunities of getting a better education. Their sons could study not only English, but also Mathematics and the Sciences as well. They could also study the Humanities, and those privileged few who had the money could also send their children to Universities in England. It is this class of people who formed the intelligentsia of the country. It is on them that the rulers depended for loyal and efficient service under the Government. It was from them, too, that the agitation for constitutional reforms first originated. In the first few decades of the next century it was they who dominated the political life of the country.

Teaching of the National Language

The backbone of the educational system during the time of the Sinhalese kings was the *temple school.* The education imparted during these times was entirely through this institution. After nearly three centuries of foreign rule, the temple school diminished in importance. Yet the significant fact was that these schools survived the foreign onslaught, and remained until British times. Colebrooke himself was induced to make at least a passing reference to these institutions, although what he had to say was not exactly complimentary :

" The education afforded by the native priesthood in their temples and Colleges scarcely merits any notice. In the interior, the Bhoodhist priests have evinced some jealousy of the Christian Missionaries. But the people in general are desirous of instruction, in whatever way afforded to them, and are specially anxious to acquire the English language. "[7]

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Colebrooke quite unintentionally exposes the main reasons for the decline of the *temple schools.* The temple school provided no teaching of English, and the education it imparted was robbed of its social value without such teaching. In English Schools and even in the Anglo-Vernacular Schools, the teaching of the national languages was in a state of neglect. Rev. M. Dias says of the vernacular class that:

> " Of the principles of orthography, they appear to have no notion at all. They merely follow the sound of words, and express those sounds by letters which each fancies to be their representative and the consequence is that the same word is written in various ways by various persons ."[8]

He observes further that:

> " of Sinhalese grammar and composition they scarcely know anything, but from the general intelligence and shrewdness displayed in other subjects which they have been taught, it is evident that, if provision were made for carrying through a course of study calculated to give them a correct insight into the grammatical structure of their language, they would soon learn to appreciate the beauties of correct Sinhalese in contrast with the jargon in common use among the illiterate. "[9]

What was lacking, therefore, was certainly not the ability on the part of the students to learn, but the proper teaching of the subject. Inspectors of that time repeatedly emphasised the need for better teaching facilities. The text book in Sinhalese left much to be desired. The situation was so bad that an Inspector was provoked to comment:

> " Instructed in these books the future teachers will necessarily go out with imperfect ideas of what these books are supposed to teach, and with scarcely any ability either to express themselves in correct language or to write with orthographical accuracy. "

This sad state of affairs was no doubt due to the decline of the *temple school.* These temple schools were:

> " in some cases closed for years . . . . The majority of them were schools attached to ' Pansalas ', and these for the most part consisted of a very small knot of children collected for a few months of the year to perform various services about the temple . . . . ".[10]

The Buddhist monks had to organise their education mostly in these schools with very little help from the state. As they existed, however, " these vague and desultory gatherings of childern hardly deserve the name of schools. "[11]

Hence the decline of the temple school was undoubtedly the major cause for the decline of the Sinhala Language. The National Languages were fighting a losing battle against English which was growing in importance and prestige. There were many who fought for the cause of English, hardly any who championed the cause of the National Languages.

Among the foremost reasons for the decline of Sinhala was the lack of standard Text books. In the Administration Report of the Director of Public Instruction

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in 1885, W. H. de Alwis, Sub-Inspector of Schools, lamented the dearth of Sinhala text books. " Even those who are most in favour of the books now in use concede that their language is not classical, and they abound in inaccuracies both of spelling and diction. " Yet there was no immediate way out of this difficulty. The only measure of relief was the publication of a set of books by the Vernacular Society. Yet that was hardly adequate to meet the demands of the Sinhala scholar.

The Resurgence of Sinhala

When the study of the National Languages was in this pathetic state a very significant event took place in the 1880's. Up to this time the instruction of the young was entirely in the hands of the Government and the Christian Missionaries. But a revivalist movement among the Buddhists was soon under way with inauguration of the Buddhist Theosophical Society. It was Col. Henry Steele Olcott and Madam Blavatsky who were the pioneers of this Buddhist revival. Col. Olcott arrived in Ceylon in 1880, and he was deeply perturbed by the existing state of affairs, where a Buddhist child had to study under Christian influences. Thanks to his determined efforts, a large number of Buddhist schools were established in many parts of the Island. Among those schools, Ananda College, which was first started at Prince Street in 1886 and later changed its location to Maradana, became the symbol of the Buddhist educational revival of the last two decades of the century. Among its early Principals was D. B. (later Sir Baron) Jayatilake, a leading Sinhala scholar whose contribution to the revival of Sinhalese scholarship cannot be over-emphasised. Sinhalese teaching, which had been relegated to a position of stark inferiority now began to receive a place of honour in the curriculum of the Buddhist Schools. The establishment of the Buddhist Schools, led by Ananda College, was of the utmost significance in the history of this country not only because it gave the Buddhist child an opportunity of pursuing his studies in a Buddhist environment, but even more than that, because it revived the cultural traditions of the Sinhala people and, as an essential part of that tradition, the study of Sinhala occupied pride of place. Olcott's good work was continued by the people who actively promoted this movement. Principal P. de S. Kularatne staged a memorable fight to win recognition of Pali as a subject for the Cambridge Junior and Senior Examinations. And, happily for this nation, his efforts were crowned with success. Principal Woodward of Mahinda too, actively encouraged the teaching of the oriental classics, including Pali, and all other Buddhist schools followed suit.

This movement was destined to succeed, because among the schools established as a result of this Buddhist revival were Musaeus College (1894), started by Mrs. Musaeus Higgins, Mahinda College and Dharmaraja College, which were able to promote the aims of this movement in the provinces. The final triumph of the National languages over English was due mainly to the relentless fight carried on among others by two principals of Ananda College—first by Mr. P. de S. Kularatne who controlled the destinies of Buddhist education at Ananda for 25 years after 1918, and by the late Mr. L. H. Mettananda whose struggle for the crowning of

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Sinhala as the Official Language of the country at last restored Sinhala to its rightful place in the country. Our thanks are due to those men who refused to turn back till the final victory was won.

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[5] *Ibid.* p. 329

[6] *Ibid.* p. 329

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[8] Rev. M. Dias, Administration Report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1872, p. 390

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VI

THE EARLY DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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CHAPTER 41

THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON EDUCATION

H. A. J. HULUGALLA

The national movement in Ceylon may be said to have begun at the moment when the Kandyan kingdom fell to the British. Thereafter the whole Island was subject to British rule. For three hundred years the maritime districts of Ceylon had been dominated by the Portuguese and the Dutch, and there was a continuous struggle by the Sinhalese in the interior to eject the foreigner. Within the King's territory there was an independent nation which, despite invasions and fratricidal warfare, had lasted twenty-three centuries. After the Convention of 1815 with the British, there was no longer a Sinhalese nation, and the national culture and way of life was under constant pressure as in all Colonial territories.

It was natural for a recently-subjugated people, with a long history and proud culture, to want to regain their independence and to try to safeguard their culture from erosion. The first symptoms of nationalism manifested themselves in a dramatic way in the rebellion of 1817–1818. Despite the personal courage of some of the leaders like Keppitipola Dissawe, the effort to overthrow a great maritime power by a land-locked people armed with primitive weapons had no chance of success whatever. Britain had already gained command of a large part of India, and valued the strategic importance of Ceylon too much to relax its grip on the Island.

HULUGALLA, H. A.J., Editor, Ceylon Daily News 1931—1948. Director of Information 1948—1954. Ceylon Ambassador in Rome 1954—1959. Chairman of the Commission on Broadcasting and Information 1966. Mr. Hulugalla has many publications to his credit. Among them are "British Governors of Ceylon", "Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardena", "Ceylon of the Early Travellers," "Colombo Centenary Volume of the Municipal Council" and "Introducing Ceylon."

Classical Pattern

What followed this early collision between the Sinhalese and their new rulers, involving as it did much bloodshed and suffering, was a long period of Colonial rule on the classical pattern which has been described thus by Dr. M. J. Bonn, in his book, *The Crumbling of Empire* :

" The nationalism of subject races is apt to run through various stages. It may at first be fiercely recalcitrant,

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it may with a better knowledge of the invading civilisation, become accommodating. And it may turn passionately imitative when equalitarian desires have been awakened. But there is a final stage ; when the claim for complete equality of a former subject race has been recognized, when assimilation is accepted, a revulsion of feeling takes place. The natives are no longer satisfied with equality. They claim ascendancy. "

Educated Sinhalese in the first half of the nineteenth century pursued a policy of " accommodation. " The Burghers, descendants of Europeans who had served the Dutch administration, found no difficulty in adapting themselves to the ways, and system of government, of the new rulers. They picked up their language easily, entered the learned professions like law and medicine, and held many offices in the Government service below those of the highest grade. A small group of Sinhalese and Tamils, proficient in English, were able to join their ranks to form an articulate middle class.

At the middle of the nineteenth century leaders in the public life of Ceylon came from this class. Prominent among them were Sir Richard Morgan, C. A. Lorenz, James D'Alwis, Sir Harry Dias and Sir Muttu Coomarasamy. It can be said that they belonged to the " imitative " stage of nationalism mentioned by Dr. Bonn though they sometimes kicked against the barriers. They had to make their way in an Anglo-Saxon milieu by being as well-equipped for their avocations as their British prototypes. But a few, as we shall note later in this chapter, were disturbed by the gradual disappearance of a national spirit and a steady deterioration of an indigenous culture among those who received an English education. They asked themselves whether they were paying too high a price for material success.

The Ceylon League

But nothing could be done to arrest the trend so long as the Ceylonese had no share in the government. Education was in the hands of Christian missionaries when it was not directed and controlled by British officials. Writing in 1907 in *The Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, Mr. E. W. Perera, who himself figured prominently in politics two decades later, said that the first articulate clamour for free institutions commenced in the days of the Ceylon League. Its formation was one of the landmarks in the fight for self-government. In 1864 the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council (they were all nominated by the Governor) resigned in a body because the Government treated their views on military expenditure with contempt. They were led by Mr. George Wall, an Englishman with liberal views, and included James D'Alwis, C. A. Lorenz, J. H. Eaton, John Capper and William Thompson. The League's protest concluded :

" Henceforth, we must trust to ourselves. Our hope is in agitation, a never failing agency which has prevailed wherever it has been consistently applied. We have tried every available means of obtaining justice and, though we have asked for nothing but what it is admitted we ought to have, and what has been actually promised our representations to Her Majesty's Ministers, our appeals to the Mother Country, and our addresses to the Throne, have been in vain and we have

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been not only disappointed but wronged . . . . The time has thus arrived when the Colony must either defend its rights or become unworthy to enjoy them. If we endure in silence and supineness the treatment we have lately experienced from the authorities, both here and at home, we shall deserve the degradation to which we have been subjected, and such further humiliations as may be imposed upon us. Everyone who is alive to the importance of the present crisis, and who has energy and independence to act for himself, however deeply he may be engaged in his own avocations, should unite to agitate for a Council such as could not be compelled to reverse its own acts and pass measures repugnant to the opinions and principles of its members. "

National Language

This was the first and last occasion in the history of the Legislative Council when the European members joined in a united front with their Ceylonese colleagues in resisting the Government. At this time an increasing number of influential Ceylonese were beginning to feel that the mere imitation of the English ruling class was not in keeping with their own self-respect. James D'Alwis, who rose to eminence as a lawyer and a Legislative Councillor by dint of his own efforts, was one of them. His greatest claim to fame today is his outstanding contribution to Sinhalese studies. He wrote in his autobiography :

" Everyone knows the preference that was given by the Sinhalese to the study of English. Parents and those who took an interest in the cause of education did not pause to reflect on a change as circumstances changed, *vires acquirit eundo*. They were led away by the force of practice. They confined all studies to English. They stuck exclusively to English even after Ceylon had been one-third of a century under British rule. They continued the practice even when a change was profitable to the people, and highly desired by the Governor and the Missionary. The ill effects of the system were soon felt ; and yet no one noticed them until the Honourable George Turnour exposed the baneful system in his introduction to the Mahawamsa. "

Mr. T. B. Panabokke, who followed James D'Alwis into the Legislative Council, had similar feelings. In a few brief chapters of autobiography he left, he says :

" It was my great good fortune to have boarded with Pandit Batuvantudawe. Whilst there I did a great deal of useful work. I regularly translated English into Sinhalese and had these translations corrected, touched up by the Pandit, and published in the Sinhalese paper. Through exercises of this nature my Sinhalese improved by leaps and bounds. "

The Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala, Pandit Batuvantudawe and later, D. B. Jayatillaka, who married the Pandit's daughter, were the precursors of modern Sinhalese writing which developed with the establishment of Sinhalese newspapers. But men of this generation did not undervalue the importance of English. James D'Alwis says that James Dunuwille and himself attended public meetings to listen to practised speakers, the law courts to witness leading advocates conducting cases, and churches

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to hear learned divines, in order to improve their own accent. " We committed to memory " he writes, " some of the best specimens of oratory by Brougham, Erskine, Curran, Philips, Emmet, Chatham and others. "

Religious Impetus

In the best Government and missionary schools students learned the Western Classics, English History and Literature as well as English boys of their age, but they know little about the history or literature of their own country. For the greater part the pupils were Christians. Non-Christian children found it more difficult to enter these schools, and when they did they came under strong Christian influence. The village child had little prospect of receiving a good education unless his parents were able to get him into a boarding school in town. The Royal College and the missionary colleges had the benefit of trained educationists from Europe and America, and there were no Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim colleges of the same standard.

In 1880 Colonel Henry Steele Olcott, an American, arrived in Ceylon to study Buddhism and, after instruction from the Ven. Akmeemana Śrī Dhammaratana, a learned and pious monk, accepted the Buddhist religion. He was surprised by the lack of educational facilities for Buddhist children in Ceylon in an atmosphere conducive to the practice of their religion and set about immediately to remedy what he thought was a deplorable situation. In 1880 itself he helped to set up the Buddhist Theosophical Society under the guidance of Buddhist monks and Buddhist leaders among whom were Don Carolis Hewavitarne, father of the Anagarika Dharmapala, Don Spater Senanayake, Jeremias Dias and D. D. Pedris. The Society opened a number of schools such as Ananda College, Colombo, Dharmaraja College, Kandy, and Mahinda College, Galle. At the beginning many foreigners helped in running the schools, notably, C. W. Leadbeater, J. T. Davis, M. U. Moore and Fritz Kunsz. But before long their place was taken by Ceylonese of the ability of A. E. Buultjens, D. B. Jayatillaka, P. de S. Kularatna, L. H. Mettananda and S. A. Wijayatillaka.

The Hindus of Jaffna experienced a similar revival of Tamil culture under the influence of Arumuga Navalar who started a Hindu school at Vannarponai in 1872. The Jaffna Hindu College was found in 1887 which was placed under the Jaffna Saiva Paripalana Sabha in 1890. By establishing Zahira College in Colombo the Muslims enabled large numbers of their religious persuasion to receive a good secondary education and qualify for the professions and Government employment.

The national movement manifested itself in various ways. For example, the Anagarika Dharmapala denounced the tendency common among a class of Ceylonese to regard everything that came from the West, in food, clothes, furniture and sports, as well as language and religion as necessarily superior to the indigenous ways of life. The Buddhist leaders were joined by certain leading Methodists in a temperance campaign which was frowned upon by the bureaucracy both on the grounds of loss of revenue to the Government and of its political overtones.

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Dharmapala also interested himself in the propagation of Buddhism overseas, particularly in India where he agitated for a return of their sacred sites to Buddhists. His activities in this connection helped to bring the Ceylon national movement closer to the larger Indian movement and the names of Gokhale, Tilak, Surendranath Banerjee, Arabinda Ghose and Bepin Chandra Pal were as well known in Ceylon as they were in most parts of India.

Artistic Heritage

Early in the twentieth century, the Ceylon Social Reform Society was started by Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, the son of Sir Muttu Coomaraswamy, a well-known politician who spent much time, and made many friends, in England. He was a geologist but took a keen interest in oriental art in which, in later life, he was regarded as one of the world's leading experts. He published the Ceylon National Review with W. A. de Silva who was himself a scholar, Buddhist leader and philanthropist and lived to become Minister of Health in 1935. Ananda Coomaraswamy wrote in 1906 :

> " Sinhalese art and culture have an especial interest and value, for in them may be found a survival of the Aryan past and of the ' Early Indian ' or ' Indo-Persian ' artistic traditions more free from later Puranic and Mohammedan influence than anywhere in India itself. Ceylon is one of those islands (other such are Iceland and Ireland) which have preserved in considerable purity an earlier stratum of thought and an earlier artistic tradition than any surviving on the neighbouring continents. For this preservation of what is elsewhere lost we owe these peoples much, for otherwise the world would be vastly poorer in interest and ideals. "

In the Sinhalese press and from popular platforms, Dharmapala, Walisingha Harischandra, Piyadasa Sirisena and members of the Buddhist priesthood were exhorting the Sinhalese to cherish their national heritage.

But they were powerless to change the attitudes of more than a relatively small minority, or start a countrywide national movement, within the strait-jacket of Colonial rule. Many high Government officials suspected them of subversive activity. A country takes its values from its rulers and those who challenge them are regarded as trouble-makers. This was particularly the case in the political field. Any reforms had to be constitutional and in the British tradition. Empire Day was celebrated in Ceylon as in other British possessions. Self-government was dismissed as chimerical.

Political Reforms

The ice was broken by James Peiris in 1908. He had a brilliant career at Cambridge University where he took first classes in the Law and Moral Science Tripos and was President of the Union and had influential friends in England. He had an interview

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with Colonel Seely, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the subject of a reform of the Ceylon Constitution, and submitted a memorandum in the course of which he said :

> " During the seventy-five years during which the Council has been in existence, the only change that has been made in its constitution has been the addition of two Unofficial Members to represent the Kandyan Sinhalese and Mohammaden communities. Since the Constitution was granted, the condition of the Colony has undergone a complete change. Its material, moral and intellectual progress has been phenomenal. In 1833 the population was a little over a million ; it is now four million. In 1834 the number of pupils attending schools was estimated at 13,391 ; in 1906 it was 267,691 . . . . In 1834 the revenue from all sources was Rs. 4,375,550. In 1907 it was Rs. 36,573,824. . . . While the Colony has been taking such vast strides in the path of progress, and almost every Government department has undergone radical changes, the Legislative Council has alone remained stationary, with the result that there is a general feeling among the educated and thoughtful classes that the time has arrived for a liberal reform of the Constitution."

The Governor, Sir Henry McCallum, sought to discredit Mr. Peiris's case for reforms by asserting that the British Civil Servants, " the best part of whose lives had been spent in Ceylon" were, and for a long time would be, the real representatives of the people. In the result only a minor change was made in the Constitution, namely, the addition of a seat in the Legislative Council to represent " the educated Ceylonese " to be filled by election by a restricted electorate.

Unexpected Catalyst

The stalemate would probably have continued but for the communal riots of 1915. There was no political motive behind them but they had far-reaching political consequences. They arose out of a petty clash between Buddhist processionists and Muslim traders in Kandy but spread to other parts of the Island as a result of rumours about what one side or the other were preparing to do. As the world war of 1914–18 was on at the time, the Government called in the military, declared martial law and crushed the disturbances with savage brutality. A levy was made on the Buddhist community many of whose leading members were incarcerated without trial. These actions of the British rulers kindled the dormant fires of nationalism. James Peiris presided over a great public meeting of Sinhalese Christians on September 25th 1915, when a demand was made for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the riots and martial law in Ceylon. It was at this meeting that Dr. Solomon Fernando, a leading Methodist and patriot, collapsed and died after he had made a stirring speech.

The riots and their aftermath were a turning point in the national movement. The country then decided that, without political freedom, bureaucratic excesses as were seen in 1915 could be repeated and that mutual understanding and respect between the rulers and the ruled would not be possible. Public opinion in England was made aware of what was happening in Ceylon by questions in Parliament and articles and letters in the Press through the efforts of Mr. E. W. Perera and

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Mr. D. B. Jayatillaka who were sent to England for the purpose by Buddhists in Ceylon. Ponnambalam Ramanathan, who was the elected representative of the " educated Ceylonese " in the Legislative Council, kept up the fight in the Council. His efforts were rewarded in a small measure by the recall of the Governor and a more liberal-minded successor.

Meanwhile Ramanathan's brother, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, who had retired from the Ceylon Civil Service, was invited by the Ceylon National Association to address its members on the current situation. He delivered a memorable speech entitled " Our Political Needs " on April 2nd, 1917, which was followed by the formation of the Ceylon Reform League. In the course of his address Arunachalam said :

> " We ask to be in our own country what other self-respecting people are in theirs—self-governing, strong, respected at home and abroad ; and we ask for the grant at once of a definite measure of progressive advance towards that goal. Ceylon is no pauper begging for alms. She is claiming her heritage. "

A New Elite

For the next thirty years continuous pressure was maintained on the Colonial Office and political concessions were won in rapid stages. The Ceylon National Congress was established in December, 1919, with Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam as President, and its efforts for gaining reforms were supported by a wide cross-section of national leaders, among whom may be mentioned, James Peiris, H. J. C. Pereira, D. B. Jayatilaka, W. Duraiswamy, Arthur Alvis, E. J. Samarawickrame, W. A. de Silva, H. A. P. Sandarasagara, F. R. Senanayake, D. S. Senanayake, E. W. Perera, Francis de Zoysa, H. L. de Mel, George E. de Silva, George A. Wille, M. A. Arulanandam, C. W. W. Kannangara, C. E. Corea, Victor Corea, A. F. Molamure, Forrester A. Obeyesekera, E. T. de Silva, A. C. G. Wijeyekoon and T. B. Jayah.

The 1924 Legislative Council was a landmark in the history of the reform movement. For the first time the Council had an unofficial majority, after which the Government, still controlled by the Governor and the Colonial Office, had to be on its toes. The new Council brought in a number of new men who later became Ministers, including Mr. D. S. Senanayake and Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara. It soon became clear that power without responsibility did not make for good government and that the time had come to give the Ceylonese a share of the administration. At the request of the Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford, a Commission, under the Chairmanship of the Earl of Donoughmore, was sent to Ceylon by the British Government to devise a new Constitution. The Donoughmore Constitution for the first time gave adult franchise and created a Board of Ministers.

While it lasted (1931 to 1947) members of the State Council gained a good deal of administrative experience, for every member belonged to an Executive Committee. The Chairman of these Committees, who with three officials formed the Board of Ministers, kept up the agitation for complete self-government. The record of work of the State Council was impressive even though the glamour of a parliamentary system gave the Donoughmore Constitution, which did not conform to such a system, a precarious existence. Mr. D. S. Senanayake emerged as a far-seeing

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statesman with his agricultural and irrigation schemes. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, as Minister of Education, presided over a representative Commission which recommended the scheme of free education adopted by the State Council in 1945.

Education and Self-Government

The University College which was started in 1923 was converted into a full-fledged university in 1942. The ideal of a university which gave its due place to the culture of the indigenous population had been one that was dear to several generations of Ceylonese nationalists. The importance they attached to education facilitated progress towards self-government. In 1928 the Donoughmore Commission decided to give adult franchise because they felt that the population in general understood what they were doing when they voted and that the standard of literacy was high. When it came to their turn to recommend a further stage of reforms, the Soulbury Commissioners in 1945 decided that Ceylon could be given full self-government. It was the very year in which the State Council had introduced legislation for giving free education, a measure which is unique in a developing country. The cost to the exchequer has been great but it has given every child, rich or poor, the opportunity to receive as good an education as his or her talents justify.

In 1947 Ceylon received full self-government with Dominion status, and the next year political independence which qualified her for membership in the United Nations. The last twenty years have seen progress in many directions, not least in a growth of national consciousness. The far-seeing statesmanship of D. S. Senanayake brought a united country to this consummation. National unity is the bed-rock of economic development and political stability, a unity based on social justice, indigenous culture and spiritual values which have never been lost in the Island's history of twenty five centuries.

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CHAPTER 42

DEMAND FOR UNIVERSAL COMPULSORY EDUCATION

U. D. I. Sirisena

An attempt is made in this Chapter to examine the various factors that influenced the movement for the introduction of universal compulsory education in Ceylon. The machinery employed for the enforcement of compulsory education and the extent to which the measures for compulsory education effectively encouraged educational provision and progress, particularly at the elementary level, will be examined in the two subsequent Chapters.

The story of the adoption of compulsory education in Ceylon seems to have a fairly long history. Some writers claim that compulsory education was introduced by the Dutch who carefully mapped out their dominions into school circles and set up schools at which free vernacular education was provided under a scheme of compulsory attendance.[1] Certain others argue that it really began under the British in 1871, with the enactment of the Village Committees Ordinance of that year permitting groups of villagers to construct and maintain school-rooms for the education of boys and girls and frame rules to secure their attendance at school.[2] Since the provision for the enforcement of these rules was left entirely to the discretion of the Village Committees, the Ordinance proved to be only partially successful in spite of the fact that the powers of the Village Committees were further defined by a subsequent Ordinance.[3] The Village Committees, however, took a very leisurely and almost indifferent attitude towards compulsory education. The position, therefore, was that even at the beginning of the present century:

> " something like compulsory education existed. "[4]

Nevertheless, when after the coffee crisis, the Government decided, mainly for financial reasons, to relieve itself of the management of English Schools, it preferred to follow very

SIRISENA, U. D. I., B.A. (London), M.A. (Education) with distinction from the University of London. Academic Diploma in Education (London), Diploma in Education (Ceylon). Presently Director of Education (Secondary Education Branch). Before taking up his present appointment Mr. Sirisena has served the Department of Education in various capacities. He has contributed various articles on education to journals published in Ceylon and abroad.

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vigorously the policy of promoting vernacular education for the benefit of the masses as stated by Mr. H. W. Green, Director of Public Instruction, in his Administration Report of 1889.

> " . . . . henceforth, the State directs its chief support to primary and vernacular education and to the extension thereof. "[5]

This policy, enunciated twenty years after the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction, was pursued during the subsequent decades, although no special enactment enforcing compulsory education was passed, apparently because even at the beginning of the century the official view was that it was yet too early for compulsory education. Although the need to place elementary education within the reach of everyone was duly recognised, yet in actual practice the government policy in the field of education was " to retire invariably before private effort. "[6] Perhaps the attempts made by the Government to improve vernacular education during the latter half of the nineteenth century undoubtedly reflect the benevolent intentions of the authors, although the results achieved were neither phenomenal nor encouraging. The total effect of the education policies followed until the end of the nineteenth century may therefore be summarised by stating that the twentieth century opened with the promise of a better future for mass education.

The first few years of the opening decade of this century, therefore, saw unmistakable signs of agitation for the introduction of universal compulsory education. These came from a number of quarters and for a variety of reasons.

The Rising Cost of Education

The rising cost of education in Ceylon had undoubtedly perturbed the Secretary of State for Colonies, because the Governor in his opening speech to the Legislative Council on October 18th, 1860, observed :

> " The Secretary of State during the last year more than once has drawn my attention to the increasing expenditure, and the question is one which must sooner or later be taken up in earnest. To check or even not to encourage the growth of education would indeed be a short-sighted policy unworthy of a civilised Government. "[7]

in the following year, the Governor, with obvious feelings of concern, returned to the question :

> " The Secretary of State has more than once warned me that there must be a limit to our expenditure, but education on which the welfare and proclivities of future generations so much depend, cannot be even allowed to stand still. It must advance but how is the money to be found ? "[8]

The Governor was apparently faced with a dilemma. He was unable to find the necessary funds for educational expansion which he was convinced was needed, and thought it expedient to devise some method to pass a part of the responsibility for education on to local bodies. With this object in view he appointed in 1901 a

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Committee of three experienced Civil Servants to report on the proposal. Also, Mr. Arthur Van Cuylenburg, Inspector of Schools, was commissioned to visit the Madras Presidency and report how education in that State was financed.[9]

The Census Report of 1901

Meanwhile, the Census Report of 1901 was published and proved to be one of the most significant documents influencing social reforms in Ceylon for many years to come. The Superintendent of Census, Mr. P. Arunachalam, pointed out that there were 465,513 males and 401,590 females or a total of 867,103 persons of the school age. Referring to the last administration Report of the Director of Public Instruction he stated there were 218,479 children under instruction. Thus about a three-quarter of the children of school age numbering about 650,000 failed to attend school either because no schools were provided for them or because there were no means of enforcing attendance. He commented that in the city of Colombo alone the census enumerators had found 20,906 boys and 14,499 girls of school age of whom only 6,802 boys and 2,945 girls were at school. " These are facts of grave significance and need no comment " wrote Mr. Arunachalam. He made a scathing criticism of the statement of the Director or Public Instruction in the Administration Report of 1900 that—

> " During the last 10 years we have been able to open new schools at the rate of 5 a year. "[10]

> " This can hardly be said to be a satisfactory account of the education conditions of the first of the Crown Colonies. There is undoubtedly much headway to be made in elementary education and this demands urgent attention. "[11]

To drive his point home he referred to a speech delivered by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in the previous year to the University of Birmingham. Mr. Chamberlain had said in the course of his speech :

> " For my own part, I do not grudge one penny of the money which has been spent upon primary education. I have always regarded it as a national duty to bring to every child in the country tools wherewith he may carve his way in life. It is necessary to the welfare and happiness of the nation that every child should have the simple means of recreation which even elementary education affords, and the means of further self-improvement . . . . ".[12]

Mr. Arunachalam, therefore, urged that much attention be paid to the question of providing elementary education which had so much headway to make in Ceylon. He also deplored the backwardness of female education, particularly among the Kandyan Sinhalese among whom literacy was almost non-existent.

Influence of the Changes in England

The Reform Act of 1867 of Disraeli placing the balance of political power within the hands of the working classes had a tremendous impact on educational policy in that country. This coming of democracy into the ranks of the working classes was indicated in W. E. Foster's Education Act of 1870 which was intended " to educate

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the masters." It provided for the election of School Boards having power to build and maintain schools out of a local rate and make compulsory attendance of all children between 5 years and 13 years of age. In 1875 and 1880 the permissive clauses were amended and direct compulsion was applied.

These reforms during the last quarter of the nineteenth century reflected the changes in the character of the political philosophy in England as well as in Europe. They had their repercussions throughout the British Empire. There was a growing demand as a result of these new political ideals for social change and persistent agitation for large measures of social reconstruction. It was felt that if democracy were to function efficiently, access to keys of knowledge should be made available to the masses of the country. There was no doubt that the Colonial rulers who were aware of these changes in their own country were gradually getting prepared to have their own views changed in regard to the question of educational provision in Ceylon.

The Indian Scene

It was during the first few years of this century that education in India was reviewed critically under the Vice-Royalty of Lord Curzon and steps were taken to improve the various branches of learning. Lord Curzon himself presided over an educational conference in Simla in September, 1901. This conference was followed by the appointment of the Indian University Commission of 1902, the publication of the Government of India's Educational Policy in 1904, and the passing of Lord Curzon's famous resolution on education policy, wherein it was stated that four out of five villages were without a school, three boys out of four grew up without any education and only one girl out of forty attended any kind of school. He observed that although the need for primary education had grown with the growth of population, yet its progress had not kept pace with the needs of the community. It was pointed out that primary education was receiving insufficient attention and an inadequate share of public funds. He emphasised that the active expansion of primary education was one of the most urgent duties of the state.[13] These ideas had a direct impact on the movement for compulsory education in Ceylon.

Agitation in the House of Commons

Against this background, it was no wonder that the Census Report of Mr. Arunachalam triggered off one of the most important discussions in the House of Commons in England so far as compulsory education in Ceylon was concerned. On April 5, 1903, Mr. C. E. Schwann (M.P. for Manchester N.) asked the Secretary of State for Colonies whether his attention had been drawn to the Census Report of Ceylon which indicated that :

> " out of a population of 3,565,964 souls, 2,790,255 were unable to read and write. "[14]

He then asked directly whether the Secretary would consider the advisability of establishing elementary education in the vernacular. The Secretary of State replied that the matter was under consideration. The reply, however, did not satisfy

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Mr. Schwann, who with unfailing regularity and tenacity of purpose continued to bring the matter up until 1906.[15] Mr. Schwann was supported in this campaign by a number of other Members of Parliament.[16]

The facts revealed by the Census Report of 1901 disturbed the Government of Ceylon as well as the intelligent general public. It obviously opened the eyes of the Director of Public Instruction who, while commenting that

> " as a rough estimate we may say that three-fifths of the children are getting none, "

confessed that

> " The present position regarding education is a disgrace to the Colony and the longer it is delayed, the greater will be the expense. "[17]

The Director said that there were more children running wild in the streets at the beginning of the century than there had been ten years ago which led to another problem of a very serious nature, namely, that of crime.

Increase of Crime

Commenting on this situation in his opening speech to the Legislative Council in 1901, the Governor said :

> " This unfortunate prevalance among the Sinhala people of serious personal assaults remains the great problem of Criminal Administration. Rigorous prosecution and severity of punishment may bring about a temporary diminution but there can be no radical improvement until, under the ameliorating influence of education and discipline, a new generation arises in which the savage instincts of revenge and retaliation have not the complete mastery of reason and humanity."[18]

The forthright comments of the Governor apparently prompted the Director of Public Instruction to examine the relationship between crime and education. He observed that if education was really doing one very important part of its work, improving the moral outlook of the people, it should be reflected in the criminal record of the country. He visited the Welikade Jail, the " largest criminal depot " in the country, and on inquiry found that out of 1,757 offenders there, 1,000 were illiterate. Of the balance, 617 had passed the very lowest standards in schools, none of them had gone beyond Standard V ; and only 50 had had anything like a real education. This was a very significant fact about which the authorities could not be happy at all.

The Governor felt that it was

> " a great disappointment that persistent efforts made to suppress violent crime had met with little success. " [19]

Besides, he was worried that information regarding the rising rate of crime had reached England, which he considered was

> " a great detriment to the reputation and material interest of the Colony "[20]

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and, perhaps, to his own reputation as head of administration. He had come to realise that even flogging, introduced as a punishment for grave crime had

" not proved an efficacious deterrent. "[21]

Where punitive measures had failed he felt education would succeed. The national leaders too declared publicly that ignorance was the main cause of crime and that it was not surprising that the two lakhs of boys who received no education of any kind, grew up to be criminals.[22] The obvious remedy was compulsory education, the demand for which came at this time from an articulate middle class.

Pressure from the Middle Class

The most noteworthy social change of the period was the quick rise of the middle class. The growth of the legal profession after 1833, of the medical profession after 1870 was accompanied by the steady increase in the number of English schools. At the same time the expansion of Government Departments, the growth of commercial houses and the rapid development of agricultural industries all brought about a rise in the number of planters, contractors, merchants and traders influenced by British liberal ideas. As a result, the demand for social and administrative reform became more and more clamorous. The leading English educated public-spirited men of the time, led by Dr. Ananda Cumaraswamy formed the Ceylon Reform League in 1905, one of the objects of which was to,

" influence public opinion regarding language and education. "[23]

The League published in its Journal numerous articles and reproduced speeches delivered in Ceylon and in India by national leaders pertaining to education. It continually pressed for the promotion of the study of the vernaculars. The same journal reported a speech delivered by the Governor of Ceylon at the Government Training College on March 28, 1905, advocating the need to study the vernacular languages. In the following year, at the Annual General Meeting, Mr. Donald Obeysekera said that the Director of Public Instruction should take these ideas of his own countrymen to heart if he was not prepared to accept those of the Ceylonese, and formulate a policy to promote education in the country.

The Russo–Japanese War

The outcome of the titanic struggle between Russia and Japan in 1904 startled the world. All over Asia, the victory of Japan over an European power had profound reactions. The persistent demand of the middle class for popular education was enouraged by the feeling that,

" Easterners, if properly educated, trained and equipped could hold their own against Westerners. "[24]

If " Japan, fanning to a bright blaze the smouldering embers of a dying past has struck out a new line of development on her own account and proved the fallacy of the saying that nothing great ever came out of the East,"[25]

then surely, Ceylon with its glorious past could also improve her position in the modern world if only adequate educational opportunities were provided in the country.

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These various factors jointly contributed to prepare the ground for the introduction of universal compulsory education. It was felt that every effort should be made to introduce it as rapidly as possible.

Consideration of the Problem

Reference was made earlier to the appointment in 1901 by the Governor, Sir West Ridgeway, of a Committee of three civil servants to report on the education question mainly with reference to finance. This Committee having examined the question whether education should be made compulsory, and if so, in what language it should be imparted, and having agreed that,

> " the Government should take steps to give the children a good vernacular education "[26]

concluded that

> " when parents have had their children instructed in the native language and such other branches of knowledge as can be readily communicated in that language, they have done all that can be reasonably expected of them. "[27]

In order to implement their recommendations, it was proposed that the country should be divided into areas, each of which as a rule should correspond to the area under a Village Committee. Each area was to be compelled to provide for its own education, half the expenditure involved being met from general revenue and the balance from a local fund. The latter was to consist of fixed amounts of money paid by individuals, the population being divided into three segments—viz., the rich, the moderately well off and the poor. In any particular area where adequate educational provision could be made without this system being adopted, the parents were to be asked to pay fees for the education of their children.

The method suggested for the implementation of the scheme for compulsory education was not acceptable. Calling upon parents to pay fees was not only incompatible with the idea of compulsory education, but repugnant because vernacular education had been free for years. It is, indeed, strange that it did not occur to this Committee that people were not likely to avail themselves of vernacular education by payment of fees when they had not shown keenness when it was already free.

The question, therefore, obviously required further investigation, and in 1903, a Sub-Committee of the Incidence of Taxation Commission was appointed to report on the subject and on the question of ways and means of finding funds for the purpose. The substance of their report was that the scheme suggested by the original Committee should be given a trial in a limited area.

In the meantime, as mentioned earlier, the Secretary of State for Colonies was being pressed incessantly in the House of Commons about the educational provision in Ceylon. Publicity was given to the question in the Press in England. Telegrams were despatched to the Governor of Ceylon calling for proposals for educational reform. But the proposals that the Governor had in hand as submitted by the two Committees were inadequate for a satisfactory settlement of the question.

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Therefore, a Committee was appointed in 1905 on which both the Department of Public Instruction and the Managers of Schools were strongly represented. This Committee was

> " to inquire into and report on the Education Question with a view to proposing practical steps to give effect to the suggestions contained in the report of the Commission appointed in 1901 to advise on the general question of imposing access for Education, Medical and Local requirements. "[28]

The campaigners in the House of Commons for the promotion of education in Ceylon were becoming impatient over the delay involved in getting the question examined by another Commission. Mr. Schwann accused the Governor of adopting delaying tactics on a matter of urgent importance to which the Secretary of State, Mr., later Sir, Winston Churchill replied

> " the introduction of Educational changes in a colony like Ceylon must necessarily take some time."[29]

The problem of compulsory education appeared to have evoked such unprecedented interest in England as much as in Ceylon that the Governor was compelled to regard the question as one requiring his immediate attention.

Meanwhile, giving its terms of reference a wide interpretation, the Elementary Education Commission of 1905 considered the two main questions discussed by the Committee of 1901—namely, compulsory education and the provision of a part of the cost of education by local authorities. The Elementary Education Commission while agreeing in principle with the Committee of 1901 that education should be made compulsory, recommended that in all parts of Ceylon where population density was sufficiently great, the provision of schools for boys should be made compulsory and improved local organisations should be introduced for the purpose. However, the Commission agreed that there were many parts in the low country Sinhalese districts in which the attendance of girls at school might be made compulsory only when separate girls schools were made available and that, too, should be done gradually under careful supervision. In the rest of the Island the Commission suggested that the establishment of girls schools should be encouraged but stressed that it would be better to defer any compulsion as there was a fear among the people that education of females would :

> " upset the traditional customs of home life and render women unable and unwilling to perform these duties which were usually assigned to them."[30]

However, the recommendations of the Elementary Education Commission helped the authorities to view the problem from a more sympathetic and practical angle and take positive steps for the adoption of universal compulsory education in Ceylon.

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1903	Vols.	CXXXIII,	Col.	1055
		CXXVI,	„	538
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		CXXXVIII,	„	412
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CHAPTER 43

LEGISLATION FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION

U. D. I. Sirisena

(a) The Legal Basis

Influenced by the various factors discussed in the previous chapter, the Government accepted the recommendations of the Elementary Education Commission of 1905. For the proper implementation of these recommendations important changes in the existing legislation were found necessary. Accordingly, based on the recommendations of the Elementary Education Commission, two Ordinances were passed after some measure of opposition in the Legislative Council. One of them—known as the Town Schools Ordinance (The Ordinance No. 5 of 1906) provided for compulsory vernacular education in Municipal and Local Board Towns and in the towns which came under the operation of the Small Towns Sanitary Ordinance of 1892. This Ordinance repealed Ordinance No. 33 of 1884 which had empowered the Municipal Councils and Local Boards to maintain schools in which English was taught.

The second Ordinance called the Rural Schools Ordinance (Ordinance No. 8 of 1907) was intended to make provision in rural and planting districts for education in the vernacular languages for children for whom such facilities did not exist.

These two Ordinances provided for the compulsory education of children between the ages of six and twelve years except in the case of girls of Muslim and Tamil parentage, where the age limit for compulsory education was set at between six and ten years. These laws, enforcing compulsory education were, however, to apply, subject to certain provisos that will be discussed later.

It is noteworthy that these two Ordinances constituted the legal basis for compulsory education right up to the passing of the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920.

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MACHINERY EMPLOYED FOR THE PROVISION OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND VARIOUS STAGES OF THE LAW

The Town Schools Ordinance provided for local authorities in various categories of towns and functioning under the names of Municipalities, Local Boards, and Sanitary Boards, to establish schools within their limits for the education of children in vernacular languages and empowered them to pass by-laws for working the Ordinance. So far as the rural areas, other than those coming under the jurisdiction of the provisions of the Town Schools Ordinance, were concerned, special authorities called District School Committees were created for the purpose. The District School Committees were nominated bodies consisting of :

(*a*) The Government Agent (or, in his absence, the Assistant Government Agent) who functioned as Chairman

(*b*) The Director of Public Instruction or in his absence an officer of his Department appointed by the Director

(*c*) One of the Chief Headmen of the District nominated by the Government Agent

(*d*) One or more school managers or other persons, interested in the education in the District, nominated by the Governor.[1]

As a preliminary step, these statutory bodies were required to conduct a survey of schools coming within their districts, and prepare a scheme for the establishment of vernacular schools for the education of all male children and of the female children as well, if the Committee considered this desirable. Thereafter, the school district had to be sub-divided into school circles comprising a single village or a group of villages such as could conveniently be served by a single school, the demarcation being effected in such a manner that children could be compelled to attend a school if they lived within a radius of three miles from it. Where new schools had to be established or extensions made to existing schools for the implementation of this scheme, a list of such constructions had to be prepared and submitted to the Director of Public Instruction for approval.

The Director was required to publish these proposals in the *Government Gazette*, allow a minimum of twenty-eight days to elapse for objections, and sanction them if no objections were raised. On the face of it, this was a rather long drawn out procedure, but was a necessary precautionary measure to avoid disagreement with denominational bodies already having schools in the area. The Government, while accepting the principle of compulsory education and providing legislation for the purpose, apparently favoured a gradual approach.

In addition to these duties, the District School Committees were empowered to pass by-laws, *inter alia*,

" to determine the days on which schools should be held, and prescribe courses of study on the recommendtion of the Director of Education. "[2]

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WEAKNESSES IN THE PROVISIONS OF THE TWO ORDINANCES

The original intention of transferring the responsibility for compulsory vernacular education to local bodies had been the procurement of financial relief for the Central Government rather than the creation of local interest by associating the people of the area with education. Within the first three years of the passing of the Town Schools Ordinance it was found that the local authorities were unwilling to undertake this responsibility which meant an increase of taxation. By 1909, only one small town had enforced the laws of compulsory education. Under these circumstances, it was obvious that no further progress could be expected. Hence, an amendment to the Small Towns Ordinance was introduced in 1909 empowering the Government to bring the small towns under the Rural Schools Ordinance. This action enabled the Government to bring more than twenty towns under the Rural Schools Ordinance.

The fact that, except in the Municipalities or Local Board Towns, no elected representatives found a place in the constitution of the local authorities was a great disadvantage. In the District School Committees, the majority were ex-officio members. The response from the public was, therefore, naturally very limited.

Moreover, the District School Committees did not have the privilege of electing their own Chairman. Perhaps, in accordance with the practice and custom followed by the Government at the time of associating the Government Agent with all Governmental activities in his Province for the sake of efficiency, just as in India the Collector was associated with all activities in his district, this principle had apparently been adopted without sufficient consideration of its other implications.

Under these two Ordinances, the actual provision for any enforcement of compulsory education was left in the hands of the local authorities on whose initiative, enthusiasm and drive depended its success. There was no central directing agency to ginger up a slackening local authority or force an unwilling hand. In most areas, it was soon found, the practice had been for local authorities

> " to content themselves with providing school buildings, but they did not show sufficient interest in the education itself in their areas. "[3]

That no provision was made in the Ordinance to harness the existing indigenous and temple schools which had functioned in rural areas for centuries appears to have been a serious omission. These indigenous schools could have been reorganised and made to serve the more useful purpose of providing elementary education under the new scheme in rural areas.

Certain provisions of the Rural Schools Ordinance were obviously inapt and difficult to enforce. For instance, the ' three-mile rule ' according to which children within a radius of three miles of a school were to be compelled to attend school to receive instruction, seemed to have been fixed without sufficient consideration having being paid to the geographical and social conditions of Ceylon at the beginning of the century, when transport facilities in the rural areas were exceedingly meagre or non-existent. It would have been hard, indeed, for a child at the tender age of six to come to a school three miles away in the best of rural areas, let alone in the arid

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North-Central Province or the remote Uva and Eastern Provinces. It would appear that merely because the English Elementary Education Act of 1870 had prescribed a three-mile rule, the same provision had been unthinkingly introduced into the Ceylon Ordinance. But even the English Act provided a mitigating clause which made its effect significantly different by the stipulation,

> " not exceeding three miles measured according to the nearest road from the residence of such child. "[4]

No such qualification appeared in the Rural Education Ordinance of 1907. These weaknesses and deficiencies, coupled with other factors made the progress of compulsory education inevitably

> " poor, tardy and unsatisfactory. "[5]

CHANGE OF ATTITUDE AND USHERING OF A NEW POLICY

It was soon discovered that the system of compulsory education was not working as anticipated, and the Governor sought to console himself in 1913 by saying that some time must elapse before the laws pertaining to compulsory education got into proper working order. He, however, conceded that the operation of the Ordinance in the towns was far from satisfactory.

Meanwhile, agitation for the effective enforcement of the laws for compulsory education was continued with renewed enthusiasm, especially after the recognition of an educational qualification for voters by the Franchise Ordinance of 1910, and the establishment of the Reformed Legislative Council in 1912. In fact, the cry for political reform brought together the English-educated classes who organised themselves to demand further constitutional advances for which purpose it was felt that extension of educational facilities among the masses was essential.

> " Education is a great lever that would raise a nation . . . work for the organisation in lifting our poor ignorant countrymen from the dark state in which they are, "[6]

said Mr. Nevins Selladurai in his presidential address at the first Congress of Literary Associations where most of the elite of the day were present. He demanded,

> " give the people of the country an education which they have not the good fortune to secure by themselves. "[7]

Memorials presented to the Secretary of State for Colonies, while appealing for constitutional reform requested the expansion of educational provision in the country.[8] As a result of the agitation, the idea of equal educational opportunities for all had captured the popular imagination and action was taken in 1917 to raise the age of compulsory education to 14.[9] However, in view of the obvious inadequacies of the law relating to compulsory education, the Government had to concede that a more comprehensive educational policy should be adopted and an intensive campaign should be undertaken without delay.

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Education was, therefore, deleted from the new Local Government Ordinance of 1917, because as the Attorney-General stated in the Legislative Council,

> " It was felt that education was a special subject to be dealt with by people who would not necessarily be the technically equipped but the people who are in great sympathy with the subject they have to deal with. It is also a question which requires careful and personal supervision on the part of those who desire to direct educational policy of a place. Hitherto, it had been the policy of following the examples of U.K. and India to relegate to local authorities the work of elementary education. There was no compulsion on these authorities except perhaps growing fear of public opinion."[10]

The indications were that the Government was going to play a more prominent role in future in the field of education. The new Governor, Sir William Manning, publicly announced on more than one occasion that his principal interests in the Government of Ceylon were agriculture and education. As evidence of this, a memorandum enunciating the future educational policy of Ceylon was tabled in the Legislative Council on November 19, 1919. (Vide Appendix V) This was a historic document. Based upon the policy outlined in this memorandum, a new Education Bill was introduced in Council

> " to make better provision for education and to revise and consolidate the law relating thereto."[11]

In view of the implications relating to matters, other than those directly concerning compulsory education, the Bill was passed after a long debate in the Legislative Council, as the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 and ushered in a new era in education in Ceylon.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE OF 1920

From an administrative point of view, the multiplicity of ordinances relating to education which had been passed since the introduction of compulsory education was very confusing, and the law, therefore, required consolidation as much as it required greater verve, definition and drive in order to carry out effectively the promotion of education in the country.[12] As the Attorney-General observed in introducing the Bill in Council, the new Ordinance was designed in view of the fact that

> " the education system of the Colony had to be given a definite form."[13]

Until the enactment of the new Ordinance, there did not exist any formal legal provision which established the office of the Director of Education. The Director and his staff were given a passing mention in some of the old Ordinances and certain powers were incidentally assigned to him. The very fact, therefore, that under the new Ordinance the Department, for the first time, received full legal status after 51 years of its existence was in itself not only a notable event, but a recognition of the fact that education in the country was going to receive greater attention from the Government.

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While the Town Schools and Rural Schools Ordinances had dealt only with vernacular education, the new Ordinance brought all schools under its control without distinction in the language medium.

To provide education in different areas, the Ordinance replaced the Old District Committees with their official Chairmen by Education District Committees. The main function of these Committees was to enforce the law relating to compulsory education and to make provision for schools in areas which were in need of them.

The Education District Committees were empowered to make by-laws, *inter alia*, requiring parents of children between the ages of six and fourteen years or in the case of Mohammedan and Tamil girls, between the age of six and ten residing within a particular area to attend elementary schools.[14]

It would, therefore, appear that the lower and upper age limits for compulsory education continued to be between the ages of 6 and 14 respectively save in the case of Muslim and Tamil girls.

One significant weakness of the Ordinance was the lack of statutory requirement to compel Education District Committees to provide educational facilities in their areas ; but once again it was left to these Committees to enforce the compulsion by means of by-laws.

However, it was reported that the Committees were getting interested in their work and had prepared surveys in their areas in order to ascertain the localities most suitable for the setting up of schools. But before the full impact of the provisions for compulsory education in the new Ordinance could be felt, economic and social problems led to further changes in the educational policy in the country.

DEMAND FOR EXTENSION OF SCOPE FOR COMPULSORY VERNACULAR EDUCATION

As a result of the growing unemployment in the country in the nineteen-twenties, Mr. A. Canagaratnam gave notice of a motion in the Legislative Council in 1925 for appointment of a Commission to investigate and suggest remedial measures to tackle this problem. In the debate on this motion, various views were expressed as to the cause of unemployment and the consensus of opinion was that large-scale unemployment was due to the faulty system of education.[15]

As a sequel to this debate, the same member introduced a motion in the Legislative Council in the following year urging the adoption of a uniform system of schools where the national languages would be taught to the children. After a dull debate, it was decided to recommend to the Governor the appointment of a Commission to consider some of the issues raised in the course of the debate. A Committee was accordingly appointed and issued its report in 1929,[16] making sixteen recommendations among which were the following :

" With a view to securing compulsory education throughout the Island, the Government should establish schools

(1) where there are no schools ;

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(2) where there are children for whose education no provision exists as a consequence of the resolution already arrived at (viz., that parents should not be prosecuted for failure to send their children to a school of a different denomination from that to which they belong)."[17]

Although the principle underlying this recommendation was approved by the Government, before any action could be taken on it as well as on certain other recommendations of the Commission which had been similarly approved, constitutional change intervened and education passed into the hands of the elected representatives of the people in 1931, under a Minister and an Executive Committee for Education.

NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND THE REVISION OF THE EDUCATIONAL LAW

With the change in the political situation education became a universal target of public criticism. All manner of social evils were attributed to the prevailing system of education which according to the critics

" appeared to be so little national in character and so vastly foreign in its outlook."[18]

Although the need to revise the educational law according to the altered constitutional position so that the functions pertaining to policy-making and administration could properly be adjusted was felt as early as 1931, not until 1939 was the Minister able to present a new Bill in the State Council for the purpose. This Bill, which under the title of the Educational Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939 was passed after a stormy debate, re-enacted many of the provisions of the Ordinance of 1920.

The principal changes effected by this Ordinance in so far as they related to compulsory education were the replacement of the Education District Committees by Local Advisory Committees and the transfer to the Executive Committee for Education of the power to make regulations for compulsory education of children between the ages of six and fourteen excepting in the case of the Muslim girls for whom the prescribed ages were six to ten years.

The Ordinance defined the school age as

" between the prescribed maximum and minimum age at which a child is liable to attend school, "[19]

and empowered the Executive Committee for Education to prescribe the statutory school going age.[20] However, the Education Committee had not taken this very important point into consideration and no action had been taken in the matter. In fact, the special Committee of 1943 while commenting that one of the major defects in the educational system was that compulsory education was not compulsory in a substantial measure due to a variety of causes, urged introduction of a substantial amendment to the Ordinance lowering the age to five years at which compulsory education should begin.

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EDUCATION (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, NO. 26 OF 1947

To give effect to some of the significant recommendations of the special Committee of 1943, the age for compulsory education was varied to five at the lower level and sixteen at the upper without providing for any exceptions in the case of Muslim and Tamil girls. The Executive Committee for Education was required to frame the necessary regulations for the enforcement of these provisions, but no regulations for the purpose have been made. However, the following section in the Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 provided for the continuance in force of the earlier regulation.

" Notwithstanding the repeal of such of the provisions of the Rural Schools Ordinance 1907 as are still in force and of the Education Ordinance, 1920—

(*a*) nothing in such repeal shall affect any regulation or by-law made under the repealed Ordinances, but any such regulation or by-law shall continue in force and shall have effect as if it were a regulation made by the Minister under this Ordinance and shall cease to be operative as and from the date on which regulation made by the Minister under this Ordinance in substitution for such regulation or by-law shall come into force . . . . ".[21]

It will be interesting at this point to study the operation of the statutory provision for compulsory education by a brief examination of the laws of school attendance, so that the actual effect of compulsion in law as applied in practice can be properly understood.

(b) The Laws of Attendance

THE PROVISOS IN THE LAWS OF ATTENDANCE

The laws of school attendance always had certain provisos. According to the Town Schools Ordinance, as well as the Rural Schools Ordinance, laws of compulsory attendance were not applicable to a child whose parents had made adequate and suitable provision for his education. The parent had to prove that his child was in regular attendance at a school registered by the Director of Public Instruction for the payment of grant-in-aid or under consideration for registration for payment of grant-in-aid or else attending a school certified by the Director of Public Instruction as providing adequate and suitable instruction. In the alternative, the parent had to prove that he had made other provision for his child's education which the Director of Public Instruction could certify as adequate and suitable. Under these laws, no child was to be compelled to attend school from a distance exceeding three miles.

These provisos were slightly modified in the subsequent ordinances[22] and read :

" A parent shall be deemed to have made such adequate and suitable provision for the education of his child

(*a*) if he proves that his child is in regular attendance at an Elementary School, at a school certified by the Director to provide adequate and suitable education, or

(*b*) if he proves that he has made such other provision for his child's education as the Director or some other officer of the Department authorized by him shall certify to be adequate and suitable."

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These provisos originally based on similar provisos found in the English Elementary Education Act of 1870[23] still continue to be valid.

PENALTIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN

Penalties under the laws of school attendance were prescribed not only for parents who failed to send their children to school but also for the occupiers of premises who refused to give information or gave false information to the Attendance Officers regarding any child who lived in such premises or wilfully obstructed the Attendance Officer in the discharge of his duties. Such offences were liable to be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding twenty rupees or both.

Under the provisions of the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907, the District School Committees were empowered to make by-laws to determine a penalty not exceeding a fine of twenty rupees and in the case of continuing offences an additional fine not exceeding ten rupees for breach of any by-laws pertaining to attendance. This penalty was subsequently altered to " a fine not exceeding twenty rupees or in default of payment imprisonment for a period not exceeding fourteen days. "[24]

The amount of a fine of twenty rupees seemed to have been fixed not in relation to the economy of the community or the social and economic conditions of the average individual parent in the rural areas, but perhaps for the reason the English Elementary Education Act of 1870 stipulated that " any parent, employer of a child or young person was liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty shillings."[25]

The penalties prescribed in the Town Schools Ordinance of 1906 for children were more harsh. A child of school-going age who habitually and without any reasonable cause neglected to attend school and was found wandering about the streets without proper control or " in the company of disorderly or immoral persons or reputed criminals " was liable to be brought before a Magistrate and after conviction could have been whipped, if it were a male child, or could have been sent to a certified industrial school for a period ranging from three to six months. The Magistrate also had the power to order the parents of a child, sent to a certified industrial school, to defray the entire cost or a part of it in maintaining the child at such a school.

Of course, the laws seemed to have been hard on young and tender children of school-going age but it was probable that the prescription of the punishment was meant to act more as a deterrent than to be inflicted on, because a Magistrate trying cases of this nature had the discretion of making an order directing the child to be sent to a school and if such an order was not carried out, it was the parent who was to be dealt with but not the child.

Another point to be noted was the provisions for whipping and sending children to certified industrial schools applied only to those residing in towns and not those living in rural areas, obviously because of the different social conditions in urban and rural areas.

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The number of prosecutions against parents under these provisions was exceptionally large in certain areas—for instance in Jaffna. In Jaffna in one year as many as 14,286 cases were filed, 12,481 were disposed of during the year and the balance of 1,805 were left pending,[26] and the law courts in these areas would have had a good deal of work in this connection. Even in these areas, resort to prosecutions later on was regarded as a last resort, because the Department of Education felt that regular attendance was a matter of habit which had to be gradually cultivated and emphasised that there was no form of moral training in schools which was more important than the formation of this habit[27] and prosecution was not considered as an effective remedy for non-attendance.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS TO SECURE ATTENDANCE—THEIR FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

For the purpose of effective enforcement of the laws of attendance, provisions were made in the Ordinances to appoint Attendance Officers or employ other officers or engage the services of Village Headmen who were vested with authority to enter any premises and question an occupant regarding children residing there and if necessary to call upon production of children before him for inspection. If found necessary, these officers were authorised to exercise their power to search any premises to verify the information furnished with regard to children.

There was no uniform procedure followed by the Attendance Officers. The method adopted in Kegalle, which the Director of Public Instruction said was excellent was for the Attendance Officer as a preliminary step to deliver personally at every house a form in which particulars were to be inserted of all children residing on the premises, together with the name of the school which each child was attending or was due to attend.

When the Attendance Officer had collected all these forms, a schedule was prepared, arranged according to streets. Having completed the schedule he visited every school and prepared a defaulters' list. Personal visits were made to the defaulters' homes and parents contacted. Many cases were disposed of by the visit of the Attendance Officer. If the child was not sent back to school on the advice of the Attendance Officer, the matter was reported to the Chairman of the Local Authority who issued a notice to the parent or guardian. Prosecution was resorted to if the parent or guardian failed to respond to the summons or persisted in allowing the child to be irregular.

In all areas Attendance Officers were advised to employ methods of persuasion and prosecutions were generally launched as the last resort. To induce regular attendance, devices such as ' Parents Days ' and ' Attendance Days ' were organised by some of the officers with the co-operation of the teachers and the prominent people in the area and children were given prizes for good attendance.

Almost every year, the Director of Education reported that the Attendance Officers had been active in seeing that children of school-going age attended school,

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that there was definite improvement in attendance, satisfactory work was being done by these officers who used persuasion with good results, attendance increased, defaulters decreased and prosecutions were fewer.

EXEMPTIONS FROM COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Although the laws of attendance were strict and penalties were fairly severe, parents were able to claim exemptions from sending their children to school on a number of grounds. A parent was entitled to claim exemption if he was able to prove that he had made arrangements for efficient and suitable instructions to be given to his child as approved by the Director of Public Instruction or " some officers authorised by him recommending that the child be exempted from compulsory attendance. " On the other hand, no parent was liable to prosecution if the child was prevented from attending school " by sickness or unavoidable cause " or if there was no school within three miles of the house of the child. All these regulations seem to have been bodily taken from the English Elementary Education Act of 1870.

Further exemptions were allowed by the 1939 Education Ordinance. A parent was allowed to claim exemption on a certificate from the Director of Education on the grounds that no school was available in the area—

" (i) managed by the Government or by a denomination acceptable to him,

(ii) where the medium of instruction is given in his mother tongue. "[28]

It would, therefore, appear that each succeeding Education Ordinance had increased the number of exemptions, so much so that the Special Committee on Education commented,

" unfortunately the exemptions now granted defeat the very object of the law."[29]

The Special Committee, therefore, recommended that no exemption should be allowed until a child was at least 12 years of age and then only if he had completed the primary course and was beneficially employed. This was a laudable recommendation, which was, however, accepted in the following modified form :

" Provision shall be made to compel attendance at school from the age of 5 to 16, subject to exemptions in suitable cases after the age of 14, provided free books and necessary clothes are supplied by the State. "[30]

However, this decision has not been implemented so far. Nevertheless the legislation for compulsory education in Ceylon in spite of certain inherent weaknesses has contributed in a large measure to the promotion of elementary education. As one of the methods of measuring the success of educational policy pertaining to compulsory education during this period is to examine the extent of educational provision and enrolment in schools an attempt will be made to discuss these two aspects in the subsequent chapter.

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REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] The Ordinance No. 8 of 1907, S. 6

[2] *Ibid.*, S. 20 (*c*) and (*d*)

[3] Sessional Paper VII of 1917, p. 7

[4] Elementary Education Act of England, 1870, H. M. S. O., London (1897), S. 74 (5), (3), (33 and 34—Victoria, Chap. 75)

[5] Debates in the Legislative Council, 1919, p. 482

[6] First Congress of the Literary Association, W. E, Bastian & Co. Ltd., Colombo (1914), p. 5

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 58

[8] *Year Book of the Ceylon Reform League*, Ceylon Daily News Press, Colombo (1918), p. 41

[9] Ordinance No. 8 of 1917, S. 2

[10] Debates in the Legislative Council of Ceylon, 1919, p. 482

[11] Ordinance No. 1 of 1920—Preamble

[12] The following Ordinances were repealed by the Education Ordinance of 1920 ; The Town Schools Ordinance, 1906 ; The Rural Schools Ordinance, 1907 ; The Rural Schools (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 14 of 1913 ; The Town Schools (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 34 of 1916 ; The Rural Schools (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 8 of 1917 and The Rural Schools (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 34 of 1917

[13] Debates in the Legislative Council, 1919, p. 429

[14] Ordinance No. 1 of 1920, S. 25

[15] Debates in the Legislative Council, 1925, p. 215

[16] Sessional Paper XXVIII of 1929

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Muelder, W. R., *Schools for a New Nation*, K. V. G. de Silva Sons, Colombo (1962), p. 61

[19] Ordinance No. 31 of 1939, S. 62

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*, S. 63

[22] Education Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920 and Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939

[23] Elementary Education Act of England of 1870, S. 74

[24] The Rural Schools Ordinance, No. 14 of 1913, S. 4

[25] Elementary Education Act of England of 1870, S. 24

[26] Administration Report of the Director of Education, 1932, p. 51

[27] *Ibid.*, 1929, p. 12

[28] Ordinance No. 31 of 1939, S. 38

[29] Sessional Paper No. VII of 1946, p. 7

[30] *Vide* Sessional Paper No. III of 1960, p. 1 and Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1962, p. 4

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CHAPTER 44

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION AND PROGRESS UNDER THE LAWS FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION

U. D. I. SIRISENA

There are many ways of measuring the success of legislation for compulsory education. An examination of the extent of educational provision and a review of the enrolment of children and their regular attendance are two of the most important ways in which this could be done. It might, therefore, be helpful to open this chapter with a brief account of the provision and availability of schools prior to the passing of legislation for compulsory education so that the situation that followed can be better appreciated.

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Educational Provision Before the Introduction of Compulsory Education

In examining the extent of educational provision, it has to be noted that the Committee appointed by the Legislative Council on whose recommendations the Department of Public Instruction was established in 1869, having recognised the claims for mass education urged that :

> " . . . . the Government should undertake primary education on a larger scale and should aim at having a Government School at every village. "[1]

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the present survey deals with the period subsequent to 1900, it will be interesting to record briefly the provision of schools by the State and denominational bodies during the period 1869 to 1899 so that the amount of attention paid to education in terms of schools provided can be gauged.

TABLE I[2]

	1869	*1874*	*1879*	*1884*	*1889*	*1894*	*1899*
Government Schools ..	64	243	372	431	440	468	489
Aided Schools..	21	594	814	814	938	1,042	1,263
TOTAL ..	85	837	1,186	1,245	1,378	1,510	1,752

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It will be noticed that there had been a significant increase in the number of schools during period 1869–1884, but the growth of Government Schools had slowed down after this period, although the Aided schools had continued to multiply. The fall in revenue owing to the " Coffee Crisis " was responsible for the slowing down of Government activity in education.

In spite of the declared policy of the Government that it would devote all its energies to the promotion of Vernacular and Primary education, to which reference was made in Chapter 45 ; in practice what actually happened was quite different as aptly described in the following passage :

> " The number of Departmental Schools established annually never fell below 100 before 1879, while the average for the years that followed it never exceeded 30. As evidence of the stability of private enterprise, and of the firm root it had taken under the new system which fostered it, these figures are in the highest degree instructive. The maritime parts in the country in particular were the most affected by the Mission Societies. The Department was thus enabled to leave these districts exclusively in their hands and practically retire from the seaboard for exploiting the more inland divisions where much pioneering work had to be done. "[3]

Under the policy described above, the Department first went on opening schools where the villagers were ready to supply the buildings. The result was that " those who wanted schools most got them before those who needed them most. "[4] While the wealthier and more developed areas readily got their schools, the remote and backward areas had little or no provision of schools. In fact, some of the established Government Vernacular schools were handed over to missionaries by the Director of Public Instruction at this time either in an attempt to relieve the Government of spending money on schools, or for reasons of religious sympathy with the missions.[5] Because of this lack of a fixed policy in regard to the establishment of schools, by the end of the nineteenth century the direct responsibility of the Government was limited to 489 Vernacular and Anglo-Vernacular schools, whereas there were 1,263 Aided schools run by missions and other agencies.

In addition to these Government and Aided schools, there was in existence a large number of Unaided Vernacular schools, as revealed by the returns furnished by Government Agents of the Provinces, and these totalled some 2,280. They included a large number of indigenous Sinhalese schools attached to Buddhist temples and Koran schools catering for Muslim children, numbering some 1,516 and 264 respectively. Of the balance 500, about one-third were being maintained with a view to registration for grant when conditions were satisfied. Of these, about 60 were being run by the missions with very small numbers on roll and the chances of getting them registered were very remote. Besides it was very doubtful as to whether these schools served any educational purpose. Yet they were not abandoned apparently because they served a useful purpose from the point of view of missionaries.

In the Northern Province alone where the vernacular was Tamil, the number of Unaided schools was recorded as 157 with a total attendance of 2,867 pupils which

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worked out to an average of 18 pupils to each school. In the Sinhalese speaking areas of the South, nearly 150 similarly small schools existed. They were the old traditional schools.

Thus by the beginning of the century, the Provincial distribution of schools was as follows :

TABLE II

Provincial Distribution of Schools in 1900[6]

Government Schools	*WP*	*CP*	*NP*	*SP*	*EP*	*NWP*	*NCP*	*Uva P.*	*Sab. P.*
English	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Primary English	6	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Vernacular	198	64	—	80	6	34	14	10	78
TOTAL	208	66	—	82	6	34	14	10	80
Aided									
English	46	27	25	25	6	6	1	3	3
Vernacular	375	89	334	150	120	61	11	23	23
TOTAL	421	116	359	175	126	67	12	26	26
Unaided									
English	30	7	6	5	—	10	—	—	2
Anglo-Vernacular	19	13	2	1	1	—	1	—	—
Vernacular	276	208	80	356	105	555	168	211	19
Portuguese	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Classical	7	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	332	231	88	362	106	565	169	211	22

It would appear from Table II that there was a concentration of nearly one-third of the schools in the developed Western Province; the provision of schools in the less developed and remote provinces of Eastern, North-Central and Uva, particularly in regard to Government schools was very limited. In view of the fact that the education available in a large number of Unaided schools was of doubtful value, the educational provision in backward areas was far from satisfactory. It was, therefore not surprising that the census returns of 1901 disclosed that a large number of children who should have been under instruction were not in school, either because no schools " were provided for them or because there was no means of enforcing attendance."[7]

There was also a third reason, namely, that even when an Aided denominational school existed in close proximity, the parents refused to make their children avail themselves of the provision if the school belonged to a denomination other than their own. Table II indicates that not a single Government school was available in the Northern Province (NP.). In large Provinces like the Central (CP), North-Central

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(NCP) and North-Western (NWP) there were large areas where no educational provision whatever was available, as confessed by the Governor, who reiterated that " development of elementary education was essential "[8] especially in these neglected Provinces and that the Government had to undertake the task; a point of view the Governor had to concede in the light of the agitation and demand for provision of facilities for vernacular education in the country which preceded the passing of legislation for compulsory education discussed in Chapter 43.

Compulsory Education and Provision of Schools

Although compulsory education was introduced by the Town Schools Ordinance in 1906 and in the rural areas by the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907, the increase in the number of Government Schools was not, however, as great as had been anticipated, as the following figures show :

TABLE III[9]

	1905	*1910*
Government Schools	554	759
Grant-Aided Schools	1,582	1,910

Nevertheless, there had been an overall increase of 533 schools during the period 1905–1910 and the maximum distance a child had to travel in 1910/11, was considerably less in all areas than it had been at the beginning of the century as Table IV would indicate.

TABLE IV

Province	*Government and Grant-in-aid Schools*		*Distance in miles between Schools*	
	1901	*1910–11*	*1901*	*1910–11*[10]
Western	656	836	1·59	1·41
Central	191	415	3·73	2·53
Southern	269	342	3·03	2·69
Northern	374	422	3·22	3·03
Sabaragamuwa	113	164	4·41	3·66
North-Western	106	198	5·71	4·18
Eastern	135	174	5·88	5·18
Uva	38	71	9·79	7·11
North-Central	28	46	12·85	10·02[11]

The calculation in Table IV was accurate if all schools in each Province were exactly equidistant. But, of course, all Provinces did not have an equitable distribution of schools. In certain towns, schools were crowded together whilst in certain villages there was a duplication of schools by the existence of separate schools for boys and girls. In the Northern Province where the population was very unevenly distributed, almost three-fourths of the schools were found in one-seventh of the area of the Province. Making an allowance for these special conditions, the arithmetical mean for a Province provided an index of its position in relation to the other Provinces.

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According to this calculation the longest distance which a child had to travel in the Western Province to reach a school was less than three quarters of a mile, whereas, in the North-Central Province the maximum distance appeared to have been five miles. In 1901, in this Province, the distance was nearly six and a half miles. In the Province of Uva, a very much more remote and under developed place than the the other Provinces, the distances had been reduced from nearly five and a half miles in 1901 to three and a half miles in 1911. This, of course, was a general calculation.

Although the Department of Public Instruction was enthusiastic to forge ahead in extending the provision of schools for elementary education it could not provide adequate funds to the District Education Committees for the purpose. However, various groups and individuals and even Government Agents, who were functioning as Chairmen of the District Education Committees with whatever resources available, were taking an active and personal interest in the matter of expanding education facilities in rural areas. For instance, the Government Agent, Uva Province, reported that "education, though still backward, has made considerable advances."[12] From the distant Eastern Province, the Government Agent said " the Rural Schools Ordinance was introduced in 1910 and five new schools have been sanctioned by the District School Committee and will be opened as soon as they can be constructed."[13] In the more developed Western Province the progress of education has been very marked, more especially in the matter of Vernacular schools under the operation of the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907. The amount of administrative work to be done by the District Schools Committee had increased rapidly in four years, so much so that at the end of 1910 a special officer had to be appointed to supervise the construction of school buildings.[14]

The Buddhists, the Hindus and the Muslims impelled by the educational wave continued to show as much concern as the Christian Missionaries in opening new schools and had spent considerable sums of money on education. While all communities were showing an active interest in the promotion of education, the sudden intervention of the war in 1914 hampered considerably the expansion of education in Ceylon. The Director of Education issued a circular in November, 1914, to the effect that applications for registration of new schools would be held over temporarily and that no action would be taken to open any new schools by the Government. At that time a large number of applications for new schools was awaiting attention. Therefore, it can be inferred that this seriously interfered with the educational progress in rural areas and prevented a significant increase in the number of registered schools.

In 1915, the number of Government schools stood at 824 as against a total of 2,072 grant-in-aid schools. During the five-year period from 1910 to 1915, while the Government had established 65 schools, the denominational bodies and other private agencies had been able to get 162 new schools registered for grant; that is nearly two and a half times the number started by the Department of Education.

Reasons for the Restricted Expansion of Government Schools

The reasons for this slow pace in the provision of schools by the Department of Education were not far to seek.

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Although the Town Schools Ordinance was passed in 1906 to enforce compulsory education, it was not brought into operation promptly in a large number of important towns, namely, Colombo, Galle, Negombo, Kurunegala, Badulla, Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Batticaloa, Matara, Jaffna, Puttalam and Chilaw.

It was only in 1916, ten years later, that the Director of Education thought it fit to invite the attention of the authorities of these towns to this Ordinance and action was taken to introduce it into Colombo, Kurunegala, Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Matara and Chilaw. Arrangements were made to introduce the Ordinance to Galle and Puttalam later. The Chairman of Local Boards in Negombo, Badulla and Batticaloa had reported that all the children in the towns were attending schools and that compulsory education, therefore, need not be introduced.

Jaffna town was brought with the entire District under the Rural Education Ordinance in 1916. Attempts made earlier to introduce the Education Ordinance to Jaffna were not successful as vested interests objected to it. It was only at a conference held on August 11, 1916, attended by the representatives of various denominational bodies in Jaffna, the private managers of schools and the Director of Education, that a decision was taken in favour of the introduction of Ordinance.

On the recommendation of the Municipal Commission in 1916, Vernacular Education in the city of Colombo received special attention. Reference was made in Chapter 43 to the necessity of amending the Town Schools' Ordinance by the Ordinance No. 34 of 1916 and the bringing in of the city of Colombo within the operation of this Ordinance to relieve the Municipality of the responsibility of providing educational facilities in vernacular in the city and constituting the Director of Education as the " Local Authority " for the purpose.[15] Thereupon, arrangements were made to get a census of children of school going age within the limits of the town and action was taken to use vernacular school buildings for teaching of Sinhalese and Tamil both, by giving one half of the building to the Sinhalese Schools and the other to the Tamil. This was only a temporary expedient.

It would, therefore, appear that until a decade passed the benefit of the provision of educational facilities under the New Ordinance for compulsory education was not made available to a larger portion of the country, for the simple reason that the Department had to face a number of difficulties before the full impact of compulsory education was felt throughout the country.

Progress under the New Education Policy of the Government

As already mentioned in Chapter 43, Sir William Manning's famous Memorandum of 1919 outlined the new Government policy on education. The main principle underlying this policy was that " a compulsory system must be a state system "[16] because it was felt that educational provision was lagging far behind the requirements of the country.

The new policy was aimed at " preventing unnecessary multiplication of schools and at securing greater efficiency in teaching staff, accommodation, and equipment in all schools."[17] The new policy was, in fact, directed " to promote the interests

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of education and to a decimation in the number of Aided schools and to the establishment of a larger number of Government Schools."[18] With a view to immediate implementation of this policy, a substantial amount was allowed as grant to District School Committees. The significant fact in the new arrangement was that it was confined to a vernacular school, where the majority of pupils studied in the primary classes. The new policy found legal expression in the Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920, which provided for " the establishment of schools in purely non-Christian areas and the closing of missionary schools in these areas."[19]

The immediate effect of this drive for the expansion of educational facilities was a notable increase in the number of Government Schools as the following table would show :

TABLE V

Year		*Number of Government Schools*		*Number of Assisted Schools*
1921	..	971	..	2,120
1922	..	1,035	..	2,047
1923	..	1,082	..	2,084
1924	..	1,121	..	2,076

The demand for reorganisation of educational facilities in rural areas was so great that the Director of Education observed :

" (*a*) That definite requests for additional schools were constantly being received by the Department.

(*b*) That there was no need to launch prosecutions of parents, especially in coastal areas.

(*c*) That there were frequent offers of lands and sometimes buildings to start Government Schools."[20]

The very fact that a Commission was appointed on the 17th July, 1926, to examine ways and means of

" extending the scope of education in Vernacular Schools "

established that further expansion of schools provision was desired by the people.

This Commission examined the question of compulsory education and the issues connected with it and unanimously adopted the following decision :

" With a view to securing compulsory education throughout the Island, Government should establish schools—(1) where there are no schools; (2) where there are children for whose education no provision exists as a consequence of the resolution already arrived at, namely, that parents should not be prosecuted for failing to send their children to a school of a different denomination from that to which they belong."[21]

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Perhaps the comparatively phenomenal increase in the number of Government Schools in the twenties was mainly due to :

(1) Tightening of the rules for registration of Denominational schools.

(2) Keen awareness shown by the general public in expansion of education and interest shown by the members of the Legislative Council.

The rapid expansion of educational provision by the Department of Education continued so that in 1930 there was a total of 1,395 Government Sinhala and Tamil Schools in the country as against 895 such schools in 1920 ; in other words an increase of 500 new schools at an average of 50 schools per year. This was, indeed, a significant achievement for the Department of Education.

Progress in Enrolment and Attendance

Some statistics, pertaining to enrolment and attendance, critically reviewed in the light of circumstances so far discussed in this chapter, will be relevant and helpful in understanding the extent to which there was qualitative progress in education during the period.

According to official records, there were 209,645 pupils under instruction in 1900, distributed in the following manner in the various provinces :

TABLE VI[22]

Enrolment in Schools

Province	*Government*	*Aided*	*Unaided*	*Total*
Western	21,282	49,701	16,004	86,987
Central	6,727	8,923	3,790	19,440
Northern	—	26,954	3,518	30,472
Southern	8,277	18,021	6,423	32,721
Eastern	272	7,553	2,680	10,505
North-Western	3,656	5,762	3,288	12,706
North-Central	1,480	677	1,158	3,315
Uva	688	1,572	1,302	3,562
Sabaragamuwa	6,260	1,588	2,089	9,937
TOTAL	48,642	120,751	40,252	209,645

The figures in respect of Provinces such as the Uva and the North-Central were very low. Comparatively, the attendances in Central Province were far from satisfactory. On the whole, as mentioned in Chapter 42, there were still 650,000 children at the beginning of the century who were not enrolled. The vast majority of these pupils were in primary classes. Leaving out the enrolment in Unaided

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schools as the information was unreliable the enrolment in the elementary classes during the five years prior to the introduction of compulsory education can be noted from the following table :

TABLE VII[23]

Standard		YEAR			
	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905
1	30,159	31,164	32,535	38,041	36,418
2	24,787	25,321	27,665	29,645	30,792
3	17,891	19,156	20,336	21,833	22,132
4	12,032	12,494	13,867	15,180	15,152
5	7,255	7,588	8,403	9,610	9,678
6	3,454	3,590	3,921	4,632	4,728
7	1,623	1,870	1,885	2,319	2,405
8	900	909	1,473	1,220	1,242
TOTAL	98,101	102,092	110,085	122,480	122,547

As a result of the introduction of compulsory education and tightening of the laws of attendance there was a marked improvement in the enrolment figures during the period between 1908 and 1914; the number of children attending school rose from 287,000 to 385,000. After that the effects of the war began to be felt and in 1920 the number was only 390,000.

It was noted earlier that the age of compulsory attendance was raised to 14 years in 1917. The effect of this was felt in the twenties. Although the enrolment in schools was considered fairly good, yet in 1923, in the city of Colombo alone, there were 10,000 children who did not attend any school and the Director of Education commented :

> " It is interesting to note that out of 815,571 children of school-going age (excluding the Municipalities) 405,000 or approximately 50 per cent do not attend school."[24]

However, the enrolment figures for the latter half of the second decade show progressive increase in enrolment as seen from Table VIII. There is no doubt this was the result of the successful direction and efficient manner in which the new policy pertaining to compulsory education was pursued by the Department.

TABLE VIII[25]

Enrolment in Schools

Year	Government	Assisted	Total
1925	183,336	262,396	445,732
1926	187,440	279,255	466,695
1927	195,649	293,562	489,211
1928	205,123	299,502	504,625
1929	212,373	316,479	528,852
1930	220,431	319,324	539 755

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Yet another method of studying the situation is to compare the proportion of children under instruction in each Province, at the beginning of the century, after the introduction of compulsory education, when the impact of Sir William Manning's new policy began to be felt at the end of the period under review.

TABLE IX[26]

Province	*Proportion of children under Instruction to the total population in* 1901	1910/11	1921/22	1930
Western	1 : 10	1 : 9	1 : 8	1 : 7
Central	1 : 29	1 : 17	1 : 15	1 : 10
Northern	1 : 11	1 : 8	1 : 8	1 : 6
Southern	1 : 15	1 : 11	1 : 10	1 : 8
Eastern	1 : 17	1 : 14	1 : 13	1 : 10
North-Western	1 : 25	1 : 15	1 : 11	1 : 10
North-Central	1 : 28	1 : 22	1 : 17	1 : 13
Uva	1 : 54	1 : 44	1 : 30	1 : 20
Sabaragamuwa	1 : 32	1 : 25	1 : 14	1 : 13

The figures in Table IX show an all round progressive increase in enrolment. The highest increase in the proportion in enrolment had been in the Kandyan areas, especially in the Provinces of Uva and Sabaragamuwa. Perhaps, the exact proportion of pupils under instruction in 1930, studied in relation to population of school-going age in each Province will make the picture clearer.

TABLE X[27]

Province	*Proportion of pupils under Instruction in 1930 to the population of school-going age*
Western	5 in 7
Central	5 in 9
Northern	9 in 10
Southern	5 in 9
Eastern	1 in 2
North-Western	1 in 2
North-Central	5 in 12
Uva	5 in 18
Sabaragamuwa	5 in 12

The proportion of pupils in attendance in schools to the population of school-going age in the whole Island was 5 in 9. It should therefore appear that about 45 per cent of children of school-going age were not receiving education in 1930 in areas under compulsion. This was due to a variety of reasons.

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Some Difficulties Encountered in Enforcing Compulsion

The greatest difficulty that the Department experienced in enforcing attendance was the inadequacy of financial resources available to furnish sufficient accommodation to increasing numbers of children of school-going age. In fact, year after year, the Director of Education reported that attendance at school between the ages of six and fourteen, was compulsory subject to a few exceptions, but such compulsion, however, applied when school accommodation was provided within a reasonable distance of the residence of the pupil. The Chairmen of District Education Committees of almost all areas bitterly complained every year that sufficient accommodation could not be provided as funds available for the purpose were woefully inadequate. Certain Education District Committees went to the extent of restricting the enrolment of pupils for want of accommodation, thus illustrating the fact it was one thing to have compulsory legislation in the Statute Book but without adequate funds progress becomes invariably slow.

Perhaps, parental apathy in sending children to school was another difficulty that the Department had to surmount.

In rural areas both the Department and the parents were faced with the difficulty of ascertaining the correct age of children because of the difficulties of obtaining birth certificates owing to the neglect on the part of the parents in getting the births of children registered. Of course, the onus of establishing the correct age of the child was cast on the parent as in England[28] and this would have no doubt made matters very difficult for parents in rural areas.

There were also difficulties arising out of caste in some areas. The admission of low caste children to schools—occasionally caused problems to the Department The legal provision that no child should be refused admission to school on account of religion, nationality, race, caste or language[29] had induced the depressed classes to seek admission to schools. When these children were admitted, the high caste children refused to be seated along with them in one class or at times refrained from attending school.[30] But in course of time, as a result of the insistence by the Department on the universal adoption of equal admission, caste barriers were broken through to a large extent.

The large-scale employment of small children from rural districts as domestic servants in the houses of well-to-do people especially in urban areas, and the employers not being generally concerned with the education of such children contributed to a reasonable number of children of school-going age being kept out of school. However, certain Education District Committees took steps to get a census of such children and compelled the employers to send them to school.

The health and sanitary conditions in rural areas had often affected the regular attendance of pupils as a result of the outbreak of infectious diseases and epidemics and also " seasonal floods which occurred with regularity in certain villages " were points often mentioned in the annual reports of the Education District Committees.[31]

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Conclusion

In evaluating the work done by the Department to promote compulsory education, bearing in mind the numerous obstacles and handicaps it had to face, we can safely conclude that within the resources available, the provision of education during the period was quite gratifying, although it did not fully meet the requirements of the country. As a Director of Education commented later, the enrolment of all children of school age and ensuring their regular attendance was a gigantic task which necessarily had to take time.

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[3] Sessional Paper XXIV of 1898, p. 2
[4] Gratiaen, L. J., *op. cit*, p. 2
[5] Olcott, Col. H. S., Old Diary Leaves. The Theosophical Publishing House, Madras (1936), p. 17
[6] Administration Report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1900, p. 32
[7] Governor's review of the Administration, Legislative Council Debates, Session, 1903, p. 42
[8] *Ibid*
[9] Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 18
[10] Denham, E. B., Ceylon at the Census of 1911, Ceylon Government Press (1912), p. 405
[11] This calculation is based on the formula :

$$\log. d = 1{\cdot}0312347 - \frac{\log. n}{2}$$

n = number of schools in 100 square miles
d = distance between them.—Denham, E. B., *op. cit*

[12] Administration Report of the Government Agent, Uva Province, 1910, p. 3
[13] *Ibid.* Eastern Province, 1910, p. 4
[14] *Ibid.* Western Province, 1910, p. 16
[15] Administration Report of the Director of Education, 1917, p. 10
[16] *Vide* Appendix VI
[17] Administration Report of the Director of Education, 1919
[18] *Ibid*
[19] Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, p. 19
[20] Administration Report of the Director of Education
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[22] Administration Report of the Director of Public Instruction, 1910, p. 32
[23] *Ibid.* 1905, p. 33
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[28] *c.f.* Elementary Education Act of England, 1880, S. 24 (6)
[29] Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920, s. 13
[30] Administration Report of the Director of Education, 1930, p. 43
[31] *Ibid.*, 1929, p. 18

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CHAPTER 45

PROMOTION OF LITERACY

U. D. I. SIRISENA

In addition to the extent to which schools covered the whole country and the attendance of children in schools, success of education policy can be measured in terms of literacy. This gives some qualitative as well as quantitative assessment. But the criterion on the basis of which literacy could be measured is difficult to establish. Nevertheless, general progress particularly of elementary education can be fairly accurately assessed by means of statistics on literacy and illiteracy derived from national population censuses[1] An attempt will, therefore, be made in this chapter to examine the rates of literacy recorded at the population censuses since the beginning of this century with a view to ascertaining the extent to which matters discussed in the previous chapters have contributed to the promotion of literacy in Ceylon.

Definition of Literacy

It appears that there is no standard definition of literacy accepted throughout the world.

> " We must remember that there are many levels of literacy, varying all the time from mere abilty to read a simple statement and to write one's name, to high level of maturity in reading interests and habits."

says Professor William S. Gray and continues,

> " Unfortunately, however, no universally accepted standards have been adopted. "[2]

But it is noted, according to the recommendation relating to international standardisation of educational statistics adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its tenth session held in Paris on December 3, 1958 that :

(i) " A person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life. "

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(ii) " A person is illiterate who cannot with understanding read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life."[3]

Perhaps the definition that " at minimum level literacy may be vaguely defined as ' ability to read and write in the language ' "[4] seems to accord with the definition given in the various Census reports published in Ceylon since 1900. For instance :

> " at the 1901 census in Ceylon, enumerators were directed to enter the columns pertaining to literacy the word ' yes ' if the person enumerated could both read and write any language and ' no ' if he could not. In the 1911 and 1921 census, census enumerators were asked to enter the mother tongue for each person who read and wrote it. In the case of persons who could read and write another language, but not the mother tongue, that other language was to be entered, but if anyone could read and write a language in addition to the mother tongue, the latter alone was to be entered. The entry ' none ' was to be used in respect of persons unable to read and write any language. "[5]

At the 1946 Census, however , " ability to read and write a language "[6] was regarded as a standard of literacy. On the basis of these definitions, the progress of literacy during the period 1900 to 1946 will be examined.

Level of Literacy Before the Introduction of Compulsory Education

According to the census figures collected in 1901 there were 657,615 males and 115, 581 females who were literate as against an illiterate population of 1,237,157 males and 1,553,078 females. Therefore, the percentage of literates was 34·7 males and 6·9 females in 1901. The figures collected at the previous census in 1891 revealed that 29·9 per cent males and 4·4 per cent females were returned as literate ; therefore, the 1901 figures indicate an improvement in the literacy of the country on what was recorded in 1891.

In view of the uneven distribution of schools and absence of legislation to compel attendance at school, it is helpful to note the percentage of literates in such Provinces in 1901 to assess the state of progress in respect of each area after the introduction of compulsory education.

TABLE I

Percentage of persons able to read and write in each Province in 1901

Province	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*
Western	42·6	14·6	29·5
Central	26·04	3·5	15·8
Northern	42·2	6·02	24·2
Southern	32·8	5·9	19·6
Eastern	27·9	3·07	16·05
North-Western	37·8	4·9	23·1
North-Central	37·2	1·04	20·8
Uva	23·0	·9	12·5
Sabaragamuwa	31·1	2·7	18·3

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Literacy After the Introduction of Compulsory Education

The first census to be taken after the introduction of compulsory education was in 1911. The number of literates recorded at this census was 878,766 males and 204,062 females; the percentages were 40·4 and 10·6 males and females respectively. or, if we exclude infants, 47·2 and 12·5 per cent for males and females respectively. The increase of literates between 1901 and 1911, therefore, was 5·7 for males and 3·7 for females, or excluding infants 5·2 for males and 4·6 for females being the highest recorded at any census.[7]

The percentage of literacy in respect of the nine Provinces as revealed at the 1911 census might now be examined.

TABLE II

Province	Percentage of Literacy among : Males	Females	Persons
Western	48·9	21·2	42·0
Central	32·4	4·9	22·8
Northern	47·4	10·6	33·5
Southern	38·3	9·5	29·1
Eastern	30·6	4·7	21·3
North Western	44·6	8·1	33·3
North Central	42·1	2·0	27·9
Uva	26·3	2·2	17·8
Sabaragamuwa	34·3	3·5	24·1

The above Table when compared with Table I indicates that every Province had recorded an increase in literacy for both males and females during the period 1901 to 1911.

The higher rate of literacy in the Central and North Central Provinces was attributable specially to the action taken by the Government to expand educational facilities in the Kandyan areas after the introduction of compulsory education.

However, the provisions of the Town Schools Ordinance and the Rural Schools Ordinance were not introduced into a group of large and important areas until 1916. These included the towns of Colombo, Kurunegala, Trincomalee, Nuwara Eliya, Matara and Chilaw. Therefore, as the effect of these legislative measures on literacy would be more truly reflected in the figures collected at the census of 1921, it might be helpful to examine these figures for better assessment of the progress of literacy in the country in relation to educational provison.

The population of Ceylon returned at the census of 1921 was 2,381,812 males and 2,116,793 females (total 4,498,605) of whom 56·4 per cent males and 21·2 per cent females were reported literate. This shows an increase of 9·2 per cent for males and 8·7 for females over the percentages of literacy recorded at the census of 1911. When it is noted that the percentage of increase in literacy during the period 1901 to 1911 was only 5·2 for males and 4·0 for females the effect of the legislation

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for compulsory education on the population as a whole becomes obvious ; but the true picture of the spread of literacy in all parts of the country will be revealed only by an examination of the percentages of literacy in respect of the Provinces separately.

Percentage of literates in 1921 of the total population by sex in each Province is given in the following table.

TABLE III

Province	*Males*	*Females*	*Persons*
Western	64·7	36·8	51·8
Central	46·3	11·5	30·0
Northern	62·4	23·8	43·0
Southern	56·9	20·5	38·7
Eastern	45·7	8·8	27·5
North-Western	61·8	18·5	43·1
North-Central	55·2	4·5	33·8
Uva	37·3	6·8	23·1
Sabaragamuwa	50·7	10·6	32·8

It was significant that by 1921 in six out of the nine Provinces more than half the population was literate and in no Province was the population of male literates less than 37 per cent. In every Province the percentage of male and female literates had shown a considerable increase since 1911. The Province of Uva has somewhat lagged behind the other Provinces in literacy, although the authorities in Badulla, the capital of the Province, complacently claimed in 1916 that there was no urgent need to introduce compulsory education as all the children in the town were attending school.[8] The comparatively very high percentage of literacy in the remote North Central Province in the dry zone can be attributed to the schools there which although few and far between, were almost all village Committee schools so that attendance had been compulsory and had received the close personal attention and patronage of the Revenue Officer in charge of the Province.[9]

Female Literacy

The Census figures disclose a most striking backwardness in female education, particularly from the beginning of the century till about the twenties. Perhaps when the reasons are examined the situation is not surprising. In Oriental Society caste and custom die hard. Old world conservatism of the people of Ceylon in the early part of the century with fantastic prejudices based on the idea that education of the female would—

> " upset traditional customs of home life and render women unable or unwilling to perform the duties which are usually assigned to them",[10]

had apparently influenced the provision of educational facilities for girls. The fact that a lower age limit was fixed for compulsory education of girls in the legislative enactments[11] and the Director of Public Instruction reporting that,

> " it would be unwise at present to attempt to carry out any wholesale measure of compulsory education "[12]

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indicate that even the official attitude to this question had not been very enlightened. What the Commission on Elementary Education had to consider was the question,

> " Is it desirable that the male population as a whole should receive some elementary education ? " [13]

and they recommended compulsory education only for the male population.[14] It was believed that minds of Ceylonese villagers had to be gradually habituated to send their girls to school rather than to compel them to do so by legislation. In spite of these circumstances, every Census taken since 1901 had recorded a remarkable progress in the matter of female literacy in Ceylon as noted in Table IV.

TABLE IV

Table showing percentage of literates in Ceylon during the period 1901–1946 in respect of population aged 5 years and over

Year	*Males Per cent*	*Females Per cent*	*Persons Per cent*
1901	42·0	8·5	26·4
1911	47·2	12·5	31·0
1921	56·4	21·2	39·9
1946	70·1	43·8	57·8

Reduction of illiteracy among the female population had been much higher than among the males in all the successive censuses; and yet the rate of progress in literacy among the female population had lagged behind that of the male. Even though the percentage of illiteracy decreased more among the female population than among the male during the whole period of 45 years between 1901 and 1946 the average decennial rate of progress for female population was only 10 per cent compared with 14 per cent for the male population, as seen from Table V.[15]

TABLE V

Reduction of illiteracy among males and females in Ceylon aged 5 years and over during the period 1901 to 1946

	Percentage of illiterates				*Reduction in Illiteracy*	*Average Decennial Rate*
	1901	*1911*	*1921*	*1946*	*1901–1946*	*of Progress*
Males	58·0	52·8	43·7	29·9	28·1	14%
Females	91·5	87·5	78·8	56·2	35·3	10%

The decline in illiteracy and the rapid increase in literacy specially during the second quarter of this century were due to many factors particularly to the establishment of Government Schools which were mainly co-educational in character [16] and " the emergence of women from the seclusion of home "[17] and the opening of avenues of employment to educated women.

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Literacy According to Religion

The following table shows the percentage of literacy according to religion as returned at the census of 1901, 1911 and 1921.

TABLE VI

Religion	*Males*			*Females*		
	1901	*1911*	*1921*	*1901*	*1911*	*1921*
Christian	55·2	60·3	66·0	30·0	38·8	50·1
Buddhist	34·9	41·8	50·4	5·2	9·1	16·8
Muslim	34·4	36·2	44·8	3·3	3·2	6·3
Hindu	25·9	29·6	36·9	2·5	4·0	10·2

Every religion had shown an increase in the percentage of literacy among both sexes, but regarding certain religions there had been a very high percentage of increase. The greatest increase had been among the Christian females, due apparently to the work of Christian Mission Schools. From the very outset Missionaries attached great importance to the education of the females because they found that females adhered more zealously to Christian principles than males and the former's love and attachment to Christianity were manifested in after life in more cheerful conformity to the practices of the Church.[18] There had been a considerable increase among the Buddhist males but the rate of progress of literacy among the females had been more remarkable, being three times as much in 1921 than it was in 1901, obviously due to the expansion of Buddhist education under the Buddhist Theosophical Society in Colombo. The figures for Hindu literacy, both among the males and females were low perhaps being influenced by the illiteracy of the immigrant Tamils in the plantations. The progress of literacy among the Muslims was considerable when it is remembered that this community was slow in even availing itself of educational facilities provided by the Government, at the beginning of the century.[19]

Literacy in the Mother Tongue after Forty Years of Compulsory Education

At the 1946 Census, mother tongue was considered as the " language of the race ". In the case of Ceylon Moors (Muslims), Burghers and Eurasians the mother tongue was regarded as the normal language of the home. On this basis, it was ascertained that 2,442,418 persons were able to read and write in their mother tongue.

Among the Sinhalese, out of every 100 of the " race group ", 52·9 were found literate in the mother tongue. About 63·2 per cent of the Sinhalese males and about 41·5 per cent of Sinhalese females were able to read and write in their own language. When the age group 0–4 was excluded, general literacy in the mother tongue among the population was found to be 60·8 per cent. According to sexes, the percentage of literates in the mother tongue among the Sinhalese was 72·4 males and among Sinhalese females the percentage was nearly 48·0; with the exclusion of those below 5 years of age in both groups.

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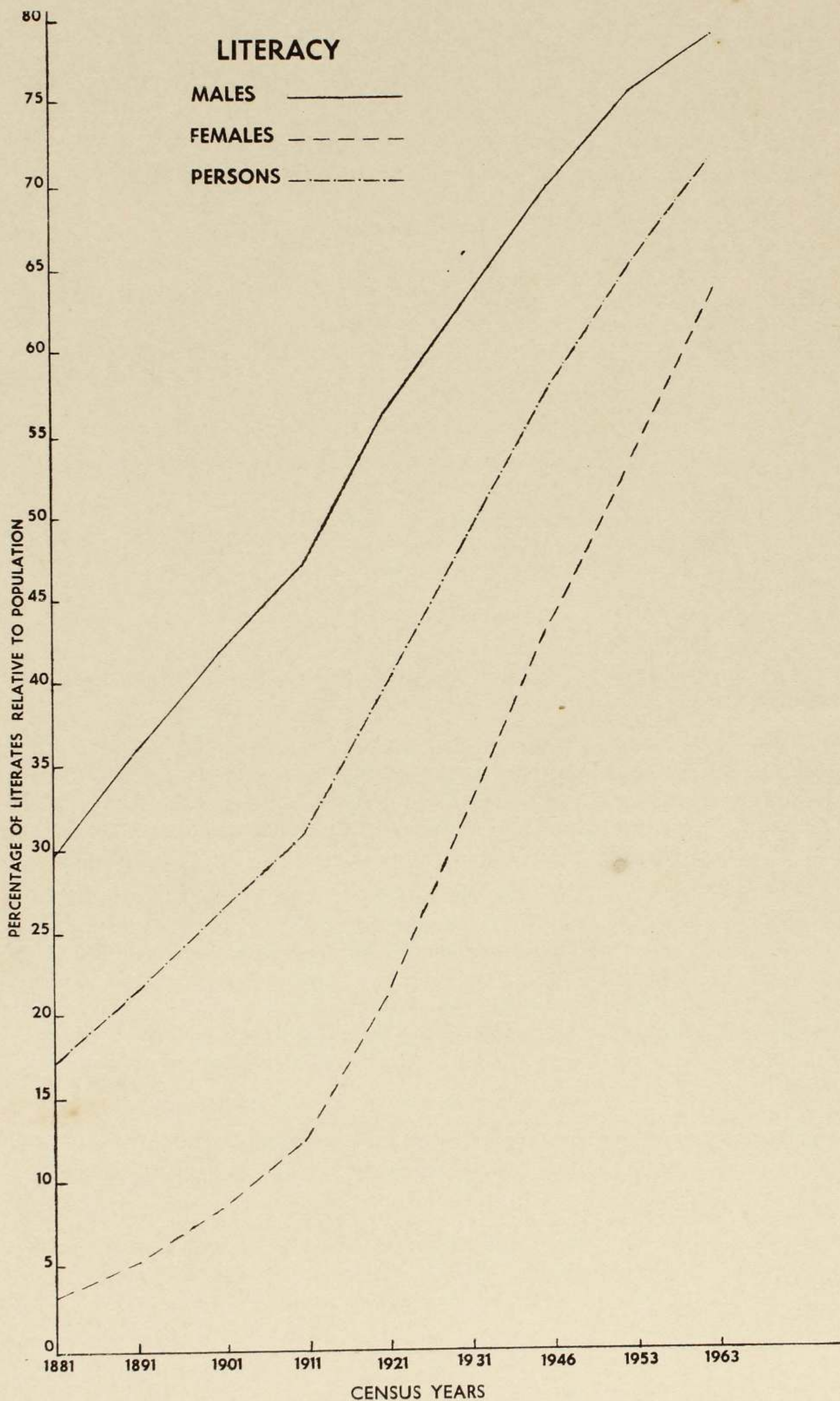

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Among the Tamils 815,436 persons were enumerated in 1946 as being able to read and write in their mother tongue Tamil. This comprised 48·0 per cent of the population aged five years and above. According to sexes, 62·4 per cent of the males and 30·7 per cent of the females were ascertained as literate in the mother tongue; only those aged 5 years and above being taken into account in both groups.[20]

Literacy in English

The census of 1946 returned a total of 17,622 or a percentage of 6·3 of the population aged 5 years and above as being able to read and write English. Male literates in English numbered 259,865 or 8·4 per cent and 107,757 females or 4·0 per cent as literate in English.

TABLE VII

Literacy in English among the Population of Ceylon (5 years and over) as recorded at the Census from 1901–1946

Census Year	*Percentage of Persons literate in English*		
	Males	*Females*	*Both Sexes*
1901	3·7	1·4	2·6
1911	3·8	1·5	2·7
1921	5·2	2·1	3·7
1946	8·4	4·0	6·3

During a period of forty five years the rate of progress made in English literacy was apparently most meagre, in spite of the demand for more English and better English. Nevertheless, some progress had been made. Whether the progress in this regard was commensurate with the money and energy spent to achieve this was another matter.

In the light of the data examined in this chapter, one cannot get behind the fact that the progress in general literacy during the period under review was very significant and marked particularly in the second quarter of this century. This was a period of rapid political progress in Ceylon. The Donoughmore Commission in 1929, while highlighting the extent to which education in rural areas had yet to expand, commented that literacy should not remain as one of the qualifications for votes at election and recommended unrestricted franchise.

As the Rt. Hon. Patrick Gordon Walker has commented,

> " when the Donoughmore constitution came into force in 1931, Ceylon elected a Parliament on a full and unrestricted franchise seven years after the introduction of such a system to Britain, sixteen years before its introduction in India."[21]

This radical change in the system of Government placed ultimate political power in the hands of the masses. The need to provide necessary education for the proper

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exercise of the franchise, therefore, became a matter of paramount importance. This had to be done,

> " if not in the interest of the people themselves, at least in the interest of good government."[22]

Obviously, it was through the national languages that literacy had to be promoted to educate ' the masters ', because, as a politician remarked in the late twenties, it would take 2,000 years to give an English education to the entire population of Ceylon, assuming that only 5 per cent of the population were educated in English in a century.[23] In these circumstances, the national leaders evinced a keen interest in the promotion of education in the national languages which had a tremendous impact in the socio-political position of the country in the years that followed.

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CHAPTER 46

DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

SWARNA JAYAWEERA

Secondary Education in 1900

British educational policy in the 19th century led to the development of an educational system which saw few radical changes in the first three decades of the 20th century. Two basic needs had determined the establishment of educational institutions under the aegis of British administrators in the 19th century. In the interests of both economy and efficiency local personnel had to be trained to man the subordinate post below the policy making and supervisory levels in the administrative service. A westernized *elite* was, moreover, a useful ally in the task of disseminating western culture and influence, one important ingredient of which was Christianity. As the language of the administration as well as that of the colonial *elite* was English, British educational policy viewed as one of its important tasks the establishment of institutions which imparted an English education to a select few.

This policy of giving precedence to the education of an *elite* dominated official thinking till 1867 when the Morgan Commission recommended a shift of emphasis to mass education.[1] The missionary organizations, which had interested themselves in providing education mainly for religious purposes, established as early as the third decade of the 19th century a few institutions which imparted a secondary and higher education to the *elite*, in addition to their parish schools for the masses. " Secondary education " was a term which was not widely used even in 19th century England but ' superior ' institutions, imparting a post-elementary education to those desirous of obtaining it, therefore enjoyed the patronage of both governmental and denominational authorities in the 19th century.

Although government restricted itself to the promotion of elementary education in the Sinhala and Tamil languages

JAYAWEERA, (Mrs.) SWARNA, B.A. (HONOURS) LONDON, M. A., LONDON, Ph.D. LONDON, DIP.ED. CEYLON. Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Ceylon. Before taking up her present appointment, Dr. (Mrs.) Jayaweera was a Lecturer in Education at the Government Teachers' Training College, Maharagama.

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after the coffee crisis of the eighteen eighties, the Colombo Academy, established in 1835 and renamed the Royal College in 1881, continued to be the premier government educational institution and to impart a secondary education which was claimed to be parallel to that given in the Public Schools and other secondary schools of England.[2] By 1900 non-governmental secondary educational institutions had expanded rapidly as a result of educational and social changes. The introduction of the grant-in-aid system for denominational schools in 1870, the increasing popularity of the English university examinations from 1880 and the prestigious position of the English language in the socio-economic structure led to the growth of a number of aided schools which took as their model the English Public and High schools. In 1900 there were 142 English aided schools of which only 40 presented candidates for the Cambridge examinations and were considered secondary schools.[3] Though numerically in comparison with the 3086 government and aided " vernacular " schools (as the Sinhala and Tamil schools were then known) they constituted but a small proportion of the schools in the Island, their social and economic prestige gave them a key position in the educational structure.

These ' secondary ' schools had several distinctive characteristics. English was the sole medium of instruction in these schools, whereas elementary education was given in English as well as in the two local languages. To this linguistic distinction was added a socio-economic criterion. English schools were fee-levying while ' vernacular ' schools were free. Secondary education was in consequence restricted to a socio-economically favoured minority,—to approximately 12% of the school population. The influence of the British University examinations as well as the administrative needs to which these schools were geared gave their curriculum a highly academic and literary bias as well as an English orientation. Finally, government policy since 1884 had led to a virtual monopoly of secondary education by denominational agencies.

Policy Regarding Secondary Education after 1900

The Census Report of 1901 with its trenchant criticism of existing educational facilities in the Island stimulated interest in the educational system of Ceylon in the Colonial Office in London as well as in the British Parliament (*Vide* chapter 45). As a result of pressure from London, the colonial government in Ceylon was driven to adopt a more positive policy regarding the problem of educational provision. Nevertheless, the axiom of British colonial policy that a colonial government must finance its social services from its own resources compelled the Government to be rather chary of embarking on any ambitious schemes of educational expansion. Pursuing, the policy recommended by the Morgan Commission, the government, therefore, confined itself to the task of promoting 'vernacular' elementary education, and the educational legislation of the first decade of the 20th century—the Town Schools' Ordinance of 1906 and the Rural Schools' Ordinance of 1907—were specifically intended for this purpose, (vide Chapter 43).

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Secondary education was, therefore, only a matter of subsidiary interest to the administration during this period. The official attitude to this field of education is summed up in this extract from a Colonial Office memorandum in 1906 on the Wace Commission recommendations :

> " The government, thus, for the last 20 years, has practically confined its attention to the vernacular primary education of the native masses, and has left English and secondary education almost entirely to private enterprise which as regards quantity if not quality seems to have fairly carried out its task. It is thus with primary vernacular education of the Sinhalese, Tamils and Moors that we are really concerned in considering the educational problem of Ceylon. "[4]

It is obvious that the British administration did not envisage any need for further expansion of secondary education. The colonial government owned and managed the " premier " secondary school in the Island, Royal College. Although the state had decisively entered the field of secondary education in England with the Balfour Act of 1902, the administration in Ceylon was so concerned with the increase in the expenditure on education that it preferred to leave English and higher urban education to non-government agencies.

The government, in fact, almost withdrew entirely from secondary education in the 20th century and Royal College had a very chequered career in the first two decades, narrowly surviving abolition on two occasions in 1908 and 1916. The government was actuated by motives of economy in its anxiety to dissociate itself from this institution. As the Governor stated in his memorandum to the Committee appointed in 1908 to discuss the future of this College, " each pupil at Royal College cost the government Rs. 77.50 per year while each pupil in an English grant-in-aid school cost it only Rs. 4.94 per year."[5] The committee was divided in opinion as to whether the College should be continued under government management, but the Governor finally decided to retain it to be a pioneer in the curricular reforms he contemplated.[6]

In 1916 the problem of finding suitable accommodation for the proposed University College led to the suggestion that Royal College should be abolished and its buildings used for this purpose. The Director of Education once again raised the issue of the higher cost to government of education in this College as compared with the expenditure incurred on grants to aided secondary schools.[7] The Director also felt that the need for a government institution of this type was no longer so pressing. Agitation on the part of the past students of the College led him to change his opinion and he advised the government to continue the College as a model secondary school.[8] On both occasions some Christian denominational interests had strongly opposed the continuance of the College which they complained received preferential government treatment and, therefore, had an unfair advantage over their institutions.[9] But Buddhists and Hindus were equally insistent that a non-denominational institution of this type was necessary for the higher education of their children.

Royal College thus survived and flourished but the government otherwise restricted itself to promoting the expansion of secondary education through liberal grants to assisted schools and Code Regulations to ensure suitable standards. It was by no

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means indifferent to the welfare of these secondary schools, for while no comprehensive survey of elementary education was made after the Wace Committee's investigation in 1905, the second decade of the 20th century saw a great interest on the part of the government in re-organising secondary education. The Macleod Committee of 1911 was concerned with the improvement of secondary and higher education, and at the same time the government secured the services of Mr. J. J. R. Bridge of the English Board of Education to advise it on the development of secondary education.

That the government was deeply interested in the educational facilities provided by these aided schools is seen from this extract of a speech by the Governor in the Legislative Council on the subject of the appointment of the Mecleod Committee :

> " It is desirable that the Committee should take the broadest views, independently of financial considerations under the present grant-in-aid regulations. Far from reducing the amounts of annual grants to secondary educational establishments I am in favour of increasing them, provided they give evidence of real progress. These establishments have been doing excellent work and even with an improved scheme of school fees have serious difficulties to contend with for want of sufficient funds."[10]

Nor can these non-government secondary schools be really categorised as private enterprise for they were assisted by substantial government subsidies. Secondary education in Ceylon was not free and part of the cost was therefore met by fees.

In 1929, 56% of the expenditure of government records of schools was met by governments appropriation and 36·3% of the cost of aided secondary schools was contributed by public funds.[11]

On the whole, however, educational policy tended to restrict secondary education permanently to a minority. Although secondary education in England was reaching a broader section of population in the 20th century, the British administrators in Ceylon were chiefly products of the Public school type of educational organization, and their prejudices might have had some influence in preserving the exclusive character of secondary education in Ceylon.

The first barrier was created by restricting secondary education in English schools. The Morgan Report had unequivocally stated that,

> " by the term vernacular education it is here intended to imply only elementary education whereby the endurements of knowledge should be conveyed to the masses in their own tongue."[12]

The Code Regulations of the late 19th century had continued to restrict vernacular schools to elementary education and no post-elementary subjects other than the oriental languages were permitted in their curriculum in the code revisions of the entire period under review, although 84·60% of children attending schools were in vernacular schools in 1931.

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Nor were all English schools encouraged to impart a secondary education. Official policy was thus clearly stated.

> " Secondary education must necessarily be confined to the few who can find employment in the professions. Elementary education must meet and satisfy the demands for English as a wage earning commodity."[13]

The government was so concerned about the indiscriminate multiplication of English schools to meet the economic and social demand for an English education that the Macleod Committee and Mr. Bridge were both asked to consider this problem.

Attempts to Re-organize Secondary Education (1900-1930)

Although the interest of the administration was mainly centred on the problem of extending facilities for mass elementary education, efforts were made by code regulations even in the first decade of the 20th century to improve the quality of secondary education. Following trends in England, a beginning was made in abolishing the system of payment by results in secondary schools. From 1903 attendance grants were given gradually to the bigger schools and eleven schools enjoyed this freedom by 1911.

The 1908 Code made the first attempt to classify English schools into elementary and secondary. The elementary schools were restricted to the schedules in the standard subjects and to Drawing and ' vernacular ' Literature. The secondary schools were to be those which included in their curriculum a reasonable number of specific subjects, and in which a fair number of pupils were presented for the Cambridge, London and Indian University examinations. They were to be registered according to such requirements as the nature of the premises, equipment, staff etc. The curriculum of the secondary school was stated to be less definite than that of the elementary school.[14]

Scholarships to British Universities were no longer awarded on a special examination but on the London Intermediate examinations, thus encouraging the growth of classes preparing for these examinations. Lord Curzon's territorial reorganization of Indian Universities in 1905 meant that Ceylon schools could only be affiliated to Madras University, and no longer to Calcutta University. The government, too, tried to wean the schools of the north from this Indian connection, but six schools continued to be affiliated to Madras University.[15]

The years between 1910 and 1914 marked an interesting, period in the development of secondary education. As mentioned earlier, the government appointed the Macleod Committee to investigate the problem of secondary and higher education, while Mr. J. J. R. Bridge was invited to report on the provision and organization of secondary education in the island.

The Bridge Report[16] was severely critical of the facilities provided by institutions which claimed to impart secondary education in Ceylon. Bridge had no hesitation in pooh-poohing the analogy frequently drawn between the Ceylon secondary schools and the English Public Schools. He found the bigger " colleges " on a par with the grammar schools in England while the smaller schools which formed the larger proportion were somewhat akin to the old Higher Grade schools.

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Only 55 of the 179 English schools could really be described as secondary schools. Twenty-five of these were in the Western Province while four of the nine provinces—the Sabaragamuwa, North Western, North Central and Uva Provinces had no secondary schools at all. Twenty-four were boys' schools, twenty girls' schools and one a mixed school. Royal College and the Training College English school were under government management, five schools were under private ownership, while the rest were controlled by denominational agencies—seventeen by the Roman Catholics, thirteen by the Wesleyans, ten by the societies of the English Church, four by the Buddhists and one each by Hindus, Muslims, Presbyterians, and American missionaries.[17]

The buildings of these schools were cramped and overcrowded, and the equipment was sadly inadequate. Of the 179 English schools only nine had laboratories, two had manual workshops, and two had art examinations. The age range in a single class was as much as nine years, and forty eight per cent of the children left school before the age of fifteen years. The staff was poorly paid and less than one-sixth of the teachers were adequately qualified.

The standard of instruction was adversely affected by the handicap of the foreign medium, for less than twenty per cent of students knew any English before they entered these schools. Bridge felt that the English school denationalised Ceylonese children by giving them " a mere veneer of Europeanization."[18]

The curriculum was organized in an uniform pattern. Departmental examinations and the external examinations of Cambridge and London dominated the curriculum. While the latter had provided a powerful stimulus to the development of secondary education, there was a tendency for schools to concentrate their resources on scholarship aspirants. As four-fifths of the students did not reach a standard which qualified them for the Cambridge examinations, Mr. Bridge was forced to conclude that,

> " the system fails originally for the many and succeeds but partially for most of the few ".[19]

The one feature of the secondary schools which won his unstinted praise was the extra-curricular work of the schools.

> " The two things that most impress the Western visitor are the school games and the affectionate regard of old Boys for their schools."[20]

The crux of the matter, according to Bridge, was the " over-supply " of English schools. His analysis of how this situation came about is remarkably accurate.

> " The English schools owe their origin to the activities of the various missionaries and religious bodies, and the competition resulting from the rival interests of these bodies has led firstly to a very serious over supply of such schools, and secondly to a very grave confusion in the type of education provided. The schools in their struggles to obtain numbers and so to maintain their existence, have been placed at the mercy of their pupils and their parents, and the demands of these have determined the curriculum and even the organization. Such competition " he said was " highly detrimental to efficiency and highly prejudicial to economy ."[21]

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In his views regarding the extent to which secondary education facilities should be provided, Bridge was in agreement with the general pattern of British colonial policy which looked on secondary education chiefly as an instrument of creating a select and westernized *elite*.

" The English school system, designed in the first instance for that section of the community which was either Europeanized or was bound to become so, has by an artificial development, inevitably produced by the excessive degree of competition prevailing, been indiscriminately extended to include practically the whole of the population that wishes to learn English ".[22]

His suggestions for reorganizing secondary education were clearly influenced by the close relationship between the social structure and the educational system which was a characteristic feature of English education. Instead of one type of secondary school, he recommended three types :

(i) for the higher social classes who were earmarked for the professions, secondary schools giving instruction in the English medium to the Senior Cambridge level and corresponding to the grammar and high schools of England.

(ii) for the next social structure who were destined to fill the lower ranks of government service, English medium imparting a sound general education with a practical bias to the Junior level ; and

(iii) Anglo-Vernacular schools for the poorer sections of the community.

Education upto the age of twelve should be in the home-language of the student irrespective of this social background.

In addition to this demarcation of secondary education according to occupational and social needs, Bridge further suggested restricting English education to urban areas. Colombo would require three of four boys' and two or three girls' schools of type (i) and (ii) respectively ; Jaffna should have two boys' and one girls' schools of both types ; Kandy, Galle, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Panadura or Moratuwa one each, while Matara, Point Pedro and Badulla were suggested as possible locations—the latter two to be confined to boys' schools. Anglo-vernacular schools would answer the needs of all other areas.[23]

Bridge did not therefore suggest any radical change in either the conception or organization of secondary education already favoured by the colonial administration. His other recommendations were of a practical nature and were intended to improve the quality of secondary education. Royal College should be developed into an institution of university rank so that secondary schools should not have to waste their resources on a few students. Local examinations should be introduced in place of the Cambridge examinations if the curriculum was to meet local needs. The inspectorate should be strengthened, teachers paid better salaries and grants increased while secondary schools be freed from the invidious system of payment by results.

The Macleod Committee, to which Ceylonese were also appointed, presented a much more conservative document than the Bridge report. If Bridge had been influenced by the British concept of selective secondary education, this Committee

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merely echoed the views of what the Board of Education in England itself referred to as the " vested interests " of English education in Ceylon. [24]

The Committee's ciriticism of the schools did not differ much from that expressed in the Bridge report. The English medium was a handicap to Ceylonese students. Cambridge examinations and scholarships dominated the curriculum so that,

> "The weakness of the main body of pupils has been in a measure concealed by the success of individuals "[25]

A University College was a crying need and the Department of Education should be strengthened to ensure more effective supervision.

The Committee was largely concerned with the curriculum and here it suggested the compulsory provision of science, manual work (for boys) and domestic science (for girls) in secondary schools. But on two issues, the Committee succumbed to the most conservative pressures in Ceylon. It not only refused to consider the local languages as media of instruction but was also opposed to making them compulsory after standard four and to including them as subjects for the School Certificate examinations. Local examinations would not be desirable and the Cambridge Certificate examinations should replace the Cambridge Locals.[26]

A widespread system of Anglo-Vernacular schools was rejected on the grounds that it would be difficult to define an English-speaking home, and the Committee suggested instead a reorganization of English schools into four types (i) elementary schools (ii) elementary schools with secondary departments up to Junior standard (iii) elementary schools with secondary departments up to Senior standard and (iv) fully organized secondary schools. The last category had to conform to prescribed standards and would be paid grants on average attendance.

The Governor and the Executive Council obviously preferred the more cautious recommendations of the Macleod Committee to those made by Bridge.[27] Although the Board of Education in London also advocated the inclusion of the local languages in the curriculum and examination syllabuses of secondary schools,[28] the Colonial Office thought it more prudent to accept the advice of the colonial government. The recommendations of the Macleod Committee which affected the school system were therefore, incorporated in the Revised Code of 1914.[29] Once again it was stipulated that ' vernacular ' schools could not offer post-elementary subjects unless they were boarding schools and could find suitable texts in the ' vernacular '. The four-fold classification of English schools was put into effect and only thirteen of these were found to conform to the requirements prescribed for secondary schoools.

After 1915, secondary education ceased to be a focal point of educational discussion. The Education Ordinance of 1920 made no reference to the provision or organization of secondary education and much of the educational activity of the next ten years was concentrated on the improvement of the position of the teaching profession, the establishment of the University College and the "battle of the sites" for the, proposed university. The inauguration of the University College in 1921 was

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however, a significant event for the development of secondary education, although the absence of any practical courses strengthened the academic bias of the secondary schools and precluded any diversification of secondary education. The obnoxious system of payment by results was at last abolished in the Sinhala and Tamil schools, and the attendance grant in English schools was also superseded by the system of basing grants on teachers' salaries.[30]

School organization followed the lines laid down by the 1914 Code till almost the end of this period. 'Vernacular' schools had been divided into primary, middle, and classical schools. The curriculum of the last type which catered to pupils of secondary school age was confined to the oriental languages. The attraction of English was so great that 'vernacular' schools often lost their older pupils to English schools, and it was estimated that only. 6 % of those who entered these schools completed the 8th standard in 1922. In the hope of checking this drift, the Vernacular Schools Leaving Certificate examination was instituted that year as a qualification for such appointments as those of Village Headmen and Registrar, and Vernacular High Schools were begun. There were ten such High Schools in 1923 and fifty in 1925 but they were all government schools, as aided schools claimed that they had no competent teachers to give instruction in Pāli and Sanskrit.[31]

The English schools were divided into elementary and secondary on a functional basis. But the privileges enjoyed by the secondary schools naturally made it the ambition of every elementary school to become a secondary school as soon as possible by satisfying the necessary conditions. The Department was compelled to recognise these elementary schools with secondary departments under the caption of Higher Grade Schools following the practice in England towards the end of the 19th century. They were described thus :

> " Schools which satisfied the conditions of elementary Grade I Schools and provide a further course of instruction up to the Cambridge Senior School Certificate or the Matriculation examination for pupils who have passed the Elementary School Leaving Certificate or equivalent examination are classed Higher Grade."[32]

While the total number of schools in the Island increased from 4303 in 1915 to 4741 in 1928, the number of English schools increased from 197 to 262. Only 13 of the 55 secondary schools described by Bridge in 912 were recognized as secondary schools under the new and more difficult regulations in 1914 and this number increased gradually to 47 in 1928.

Types of English Schools 1915 and 1928[33]

1915		1928	
Fully organised secondary schools ..	13	Secondary schools.. ..	47
Elementary with secondary departments to Senior	23	Higher Grade schools ..	38
Elementary with secondary departments to Junior	8	Elementary schools ..	116
Efficient elementary schools	19		
Non-efficient (payment by results) elementary schools	100		
Primary schools	34		

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The decision of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education in England (The Hadow report) in 1926 to omit the word ' elementary ' and to alter and extend the term ' secondary education ' to cover all forms of post primary education from the age of eleven or twelve influenced the Ceylon authorities to rename the schools on this basis while preserving at the same time the linguistic division of English and Vernacular schools.

The 1929 Codes[34] reclassified the post-primary schools as—

(*a*) English—

(i) Junior Secondary—to Elementary School Leaving Certificate or equivalent

(ii) Senior Secondary—to London Matriculation or specially approved course

(iii) Collegiate—to London Matriculation and any approved course.

(*b*) Vernacular—

(i) Vernacular Junior Secondary—to Vernacular School Leaving Certificate examination.

(ii) Vernacular Senior Secondary—to Vernacular School Leaving Certificate examination and a two year course in Sinhalese, Tamil, Pāli or Sanskrit literature or special course approved by the Director.

Henceforth, for the first time all forms of post primary education were referred to as secondary schools. Only English schools could aspire to the status of ' Collegiate ' schools. The new system, however, differed from the old mainly in nomenclature.

Conclusion

British policy consistently stressed quality rather than quantity in secondary education, and certainly the Donoughmore Commissioners at least seem to have thought that the policy had been a success when they remarked that,

" Ceylon is fortunate in possessing a remarakable number of admirable secondary schools."[35]

In 1929 there were only 47 Secondary and 40 Higher Grade schools out of a total of 251 assisted English schools, i.e. there were together with government secondary institutions 90 secondary schools out of a total of over 4,000 schools. Less than three per cent of the population were receiving secondary instruction. Secondary education was still the near monopoly of denominational agencies who received financial assistance from the government for while there were only sixteen State English schools, there were 1199 Government and 2055 Aided Vernacular Schools.[36]

The slow expansion of secondary education during these thirty years can be attributed to both policy and circumstances. We have seen the deliberate attempt made to restrict secondary education to a small group who had a specific role to play in the socio-economic structure. At the same time, scarcity of resources as well as a marked reluctance to spend liberally on education limited expansion in this

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field, particularly in view of the fact that elementary education was given pride of place in the educational programme. In 1901 government expenditure on education was only 3·3 per cent of the total expenditure while this figure had increased to a mere 6·7 per cent in 1924.[37]

The absence of any diversification in secondary education and the strong literacy bias that permeated the curriculum was the result of economic and educational policies. The failure to make a realistic appraisal of economic needs and the lack of a constructive policy for agriculture and industrial development other than the encouragement given to the plantation sector of the economy meant that the secondary school structure had to be geared primarily to administrative needs. This economic demand naturally had its repercussions in ascribing a high status to literary studies.

Moreover, British educational practice favoured separate institutions for general and vocational education at all levels, and the grammar school tradition dominated general education both at home and in the Empire. As vocational education tended to have less prestige, such studies were regarded as the refuge of those unfit for academic studies. Nor was it surprising that an administration which was continually obsessed by the need to curtail expenditure should give priority to literary courses which were certainly less expensive as far as the provision of facilities was concerned.

The two main features of the secondary educational institutions of this period—their selectivity and their literary bias—had in them the social and economic consequences. Ceylon could boast of a limited number of secondary schools which could bear comparison with those in other parts of the world. The products of these schools formed the nucleus of the western oriented middle class which assumed leadership in political, social and economic life as colonial control was gradually withdrawn. But the wide gulf between these schools and the 'vernacular' schools created by educational policy was reflected in the rift between the westernized *elite* and the unprivileged masses, while the psychological implications of this separation constitute a problem to this day. At the same time, the secondary schools which themselves thrived on the economic demand for academic education, became by their very prestige, an obstacle to both educational reform and economic development.

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CHAPTER 47

EDUCATION ORDINANCE NO. 1 OF 1920

C. S. V. Jayaweera

The Education Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920 was an important landmark in the educational history of Ceylon since it was the first fairly comprehensive legal enactment on education in the country. It marked the turning point from a policy of *laissez-faire* to an attempt at constructive effort and control on the part of the State. The Provisions of this Ordinance had an important bearing mainly on—

(*a*) the partnership between the State and private agencies in the provision of education ;

(*b*) the finance of education; and

(*c*) the relationship between the State and Local Government Bodies in education.

A.—The State and Private Agencies

(*a*) OPPOSITION TO THE STATE-DENOMINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

During the nineteenth century a partnership had evolved between the State on the one hand and private agencies on the other as regards the provision of education in the Island. This partnership presented a somewhat confused picture at the beginning of the twentieth century in that " the machinery of administration was all governmental but the actual provision of education was largely in the hands of the Missionaries and other private agencies."[1]

This confusion in the educational administration in the country was condemned in several governmental reports as well as by private bodies. First a forthright account of the sorry state of education in the country was given in the Census Report of 1901 and this opened the eyes both of the State and the public.[2] The Wace Commission of 1905 was appalled at

" the government policy of not intruding its schools into localities which either were or seemed likely to be

JAYAWEERA, C. S. V., M. A. (London), Dip. Ed. (Ceylon), Dip. Ed. (London), Lecturer, Junior University College. Before taking up the present appointment, Mr. Jayaweera was the Principal of Pilamathalawa Maha Vidyalaya.

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provided for by aided schools and at carrying this policy to such lengths that many places were left quite unprovided for or very insufficiently provided for owing to the unwillingness of the Department of Public Instruction to intrude into places where Managers of Aided Schools were working."[3]

Further, in 1911 E. B. Denham, the Controller of Census, reported that in Ceylon almost 60 per cent. of the male population and 90 per cent. of the female population were still illiterate and that as long as the existing system was allowed to continue there was no hope of a planned expansion of educational facilities for the country.[4] The Bridge Committee of 1912 also came down strongly against government policy.

" It is time ", it said, " for the State to call a halt to the unplanned expansion of denominational schools as being highly detrimental to efficiency and entirely prejudicial to the economy."[5]

Among the private bodies there were some Christian denominations themselves who were in favour of ending the state-church partnership in education, e.g. the American Mission, the Wesleyan Synod and the Anglican Mission.[6] As the Buddhist educational movement started by Colonel Olcott in 1880 gathered strength, opposition to the Christian domination of the educational system also gained ground. From 4 schools in 1880, the Buddhists increased their numbers to 249 in 1915,[7] and in the Buddhist Theosophical Society they found a movement strong enough to hold its own with the long established institutions of the Christian Missionaries. The Buddhist Congress founded in 1917 became one of the strongest moulders of Buddhist public opinion and it began incessantly to campaign against the existing dual system of education. Newspapers too, especially the Sinhala medium ones, played an important part in the fight against the Christian domination of education. Among these the most influential were the *Sinhala Bauddhaya* 1906, the *Dinamina* 1907 and the *Sinhala Jātiya* 1910.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, hand in hand with the clamour for political reforms went agitation for greater state control and state provision for education, for it was realized that education and political progress were inseparable. There was also an insatiable demand for education everywhere and a just grievance at the apathy of the government in providing the necessary facilities. The change from an agricultural to a commercial society based on a plantation economy gave rise to numerous occupations from which the Ceylonese increased their wealth. With this wealth they were anxious to provide for the education of their children for

" the older generation regarded education as an investment for their children which would enable them to take up positions to which their newly acquired wealth entitled them."[8]

In the Memorials of the Ceylon Reform League to the Secretary of State as well as to the Governor there were contained strong condemnation of the denominational control of education and pressure for enhanced state control and wider provision of educational facilities at all stages.

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These Memorials further complained that—

> "the Christian Schools were really disguised instruments of proselytisation, stumbling blocks to real educational expansion and an excuse for government inactivity and laissez-faire policy." [9]

One Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies stressed the importance of education for the development of the country. It pointed out that scarcely 5 per cent. of the national revenue was being spent on education while in countries like the Philippines 32 per cent. of the national revenue was being spent on education

> "The League therefore desires to invite your special attention to the vital question of education. In the eyes of the government it occupies a subordinate place and receives scanty attention."[10]

(*b*) THE BILL AND THE ORDINANCE

It was Governor, Sir William Manning,(1918-1925), who had given a sympathetic ear to the agitation for constitutional reforms and initiated much needed reforms in the educational field also. The first intimation of impending change in the government's educational policy was given by him on 31st October 1919 when, while addressing a deputation of school Managers, he said,

> " Except in the case of such schools as had a majority of pupils of the particular denomination, it was the policy of the government gradually to replace denominational by Government schools. "[11]

Then on 20th November of the same year a new Education Bill was tabled in the Legislative Council by the Attorney-General.

> "The State is now," he said, "provided with machinery of its own. And it would be inadvisable to seek for any remedy except a system of state education in areas other than those where the large majority of the inhabitants are Christians."[12]

Government's new policy on denominational schools as contained in the Bill received the wholehearted support of the majority of the people. The non-Christian Communities namely, the Buddhists, the Hindus, and the Muslims, who together formed about 90 per cent. of the population, were willing to hand over all their schools to the State.[13] Among the Christians, the Anglican Church, the Wesleyan Mission, and the American Mission welcomed the new government policy. Opposition to this measure was chiefly confined to the Roman Catholic Community and the Baptist Mission. The Catholics led by the Archbishop of Colombo, the Prelates, and their lay Associations voiced their disagreement in the shape of two petitions to the Government and a pamphlet entitled "The New Education Policy of the Ceylon Government."[14] They condemned the new policy as being inimical to their liberty and rights. . . .

> "Our right to Catholic Schools, staffed by Catholic teachers under Catholic management, wherever the number of Catholics is insufficient to enable us to open such Schools, and our right to such share in the funds of the Colony which are set apart for education as the number of children attending our schools and the results obtained in the examinations held by Government entitle us to."[15]

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A certain section of the Press too came out against the new measure. It was pointed out that in India state education had been a failure ; that although it was true in Ceylon only the Vernacular Schools were to be affected, once the principle was conceded, the extension of its application to all schools would be only a matter of time;[16] that the government in the past years had failed to devote to education, funds and attention commensurate with the needs of the country and that one of the few bright features of the history of education in Ceylon had been the splendid achievement of the various Missionary Societies which had done what the government had conspicuously failed to do, i.e. to place at the disposal of the country education that was good, sound and cheap.[17] Questions were also posed as to whether the taxpayer would be ready to pay large sum of money for an article of identical quality and also whether the state could afford the extra funds entailed.[18]

The new Bill did not at all envisage the complete abolition of denominational schools for, firstly, it referred only to Vernacular schools, and secondly, Christian schools which served areas in which the pupils were overwhelmingly Christain were recognised and allowed to continue with government grant. The Attorney General made this absolutely clear when, while speaking on the Bill, he said—

" There is no obstacle whatever in the way of any person or body of persons opening a school as a result of anything that may be contained in this Ordinance. When there are schools in existence or which are brought into existence whether Christian or not and which serve the needs of a district, there is nothing in the Bill which prevents aid being given. Where there are districts which are not pronounced in their character, the policy of government in such districts will be to create government schools. Only where the conditions are such as to show that in any locality a particular belief predominates that the principle of giving assistance is to be continued. When there is a variety of interests, the government believes that the principle of the government school is the one which should be adopted. "[19]

The powers of the denominational bodies and those of the Managers of schools were considerably reduced by the provisions of Part III of the Ordinance. No child was to be refused admission to any Assisted School on account of religion, nationality, race, caste, or language of the applicant or of his parents. In Assisted Schools Religious Instruction was to be subject to a Conscience Clause. Time for religious observance had to be shown in an approved time table either at the beginning or the end of each day so that the parents could withdraw the child from such instruction if they so wished. Unlike the Town Schools and Rural Schools Ordinances of 1906 and 1907, respectively, where the Conscience Clause was applicable only to Vernacular Schools, this time it was made compulsory in all Assisted Schools both Vernacular and English. No Religious Instruction was to be permitted in any of the government schools.[20]

Regarding Managers of schools there was provision for the Director of Education to appoint such persons as he thought fit to be local Managers of Government schools. The power to appoint and dismiss local managers for assisted schools

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was to rest with the heads of the denominations concerned, but the Director of Education could require the retirement of any such local manager if he thought it necessary.[21]

The new Education Ordinance, also for the first time in the history of the Colony, gave a status and legal position to the officers of the Department of Education and to the Board of Education.[22] In 1912 following on the Macleod Committee Report[23] the nomenclature of the Department of Public Instruction had been changed to that of the Department of Education with the Director of Education as the head but up to 1920 there was no law in Ceylon which established the office of the Director of Education or his Department.

Part 1 of the new Ordinance gave statutory sanction to the Department of Education and also created a new Board of Education with definite and considerable powers. Although there had been a Board of Education in existence since 1896 its functions appeared to have been somewhat limited by the Minute which had brought it into existence, namely,

> " to advise the Director on such questions connected with the working of the voluntary schools receiving aid from the public revenues as he might wish to take their advice upon."[24]

The new Board was to consist of not less than 16 or more than 20 members nominated by the Governor of whom the Director of Education, the Assistant Director of Education and two Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council had to be four. The Board was to be an advisory body and not an administrative or an executive one and the Governor or the Director could refer any matter to it for advice. The really important function of the Board was to be the framing of the regulations to be known as the Code. So important was the framing of the Code considered to be that the Ordinance was not to be brought into operation till the Code was ready. The terms of the Code were left deliberately wide but there was no danger of any conflict arising between the Board and the Legislative Council in the regulations effected because no regulation was to come into operation until it had been laid before the Council which could within 40 days alter, amend, disallow or otherwise deal with it.[25]

B.—Financial Provision

The Results Grant Scheme introduced in 1870 came in for some severe criticism in the Macleod Committee Report of 1912. In its stead was recommended a new scheme suggested once again by developments in England. Grants were henceforth to be based on average attendance and not on results, an increased rate per pupil being paid for each trained teacher employed. The suggested grant scheme was reviewed by the Executive Council and approved with certain slight modifications.[26]

There was one important thought uppermost in the minds of the framers of this new grant scheme, namely, the raising of the standard of teaching in schools by the employment of trained teachers. This it did effect because qualitatively the new grant system had a beneficial effect on the school system as a whole. It helped to

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relieve the curricula from the domination of examinations. Payment by results had stunted enterprise and experimentation in education and had increased the number of unqualified teachers. Now better qualified teachers were employed and a better type of person was attracted to the teaching profession.

Though not liable to many of the objections raised aganist the old system of grants the new attendance grants scheme had its own disadvantages, due mainly to the peculiar conditions existing in some parts of the country. The prevalence of malaria, the necessity of extra labour during the harvesting seasons in the villages, and also competition from neighbouring schools caused considerable variation of attendance from year to year. This was bound to show in a corresponding variation in the assessment of grants.

The Education Bill of 1920 could be regarded as the first serious attempt on the part of the government to give the vital subject of educational finance its legitimate sphere in the official schemes. The one great criticism that had been consistently directed against government education policy in the past was that while it lavished its money on the construction of roads and buildings it had starved the education of the people. The new Education Bill rightly gave an important place to the question of finance in education by laying down that henceforth it was to be met not by hap-hazard grants and casual endowments as in the past but by a regular sum drawn from the revenue.

Many, however, viewed with suspicion the statement of the Attorney-General who while discussing government's financial policy in education said,

> " The amount provided for education must in the last resort depend on the financial capacity of the Colony. "[27]

According to the method of taxation in vogue it was felt that the Colony was being taxed and even overtaxed to its utmost capacity and that there was the danger of the sum voted out of revenue in the future hardly keeping pace with the increasing demands made under the head of education. It seemed that this was bound to continue till the Government arrived at a better and more accurate process of gauging the financial capacity of the Colony.[28]

C.—The State and Local Government Bodies

The whole question of the relationship between the central and local authorities with respect to education was re-examined by the government in view of the failure of the Rural and Town Schools' Ordinances of 1906 and 1907, respectively, to solve either the educational or the financial problem. The Attorney General informed Legislative Council in 1917 that a Commission had been appointed to report on the question of placing the control of education, roads, sanitation and general local government in one body.[29] The Commissioners in their Report attributed the failure of the earlier Ordinances to the lack of financial resources and to the inadequate

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role given to the local authorities in education. Their recommendations suggested a partnership between the central and local authorities similar to the situation in countries like the U.K.. The Commission recommended that,

" with the object of fostering local interest in education it is desirable that each local body should be encouraged to provide itself with a system of education."[30]

The government however had been disillusioned earlier with local participation in education and therefore in introducing the Local Government Ordinance which created Urban District Committees and a Local Government Board, the Attorney General told the Legislative Council that contrary to its earlier intention, government had decided to exclude education from the Bill and not make it a function of Local Government. He said,

" The Education Bill which is also on the Order of the day, proposes a departure with regard to education, and that is, that the expense of education, having regard to the general benefit that accrues to a community from a good system of education, should be met out of general revenue."[31]

Financial centralization was resorted to in order to ensure a more equitable dis tribution of available resources and the new Ordinance required that funds for education should be voted by the Legislative Council and allocated by the Director. This naturally resulted in the exclusion of the contribution in money and labour that Village Committees had earlier made.

Although control and finance were to be the function of the central government some administrative decentralization was provided for by the creation of a new local education organization.

" The government," said the Attorney General, " is fully alive to the advisability and propriety of enlisting local assistance to a considerable extent to deal with educational matters."[32]

Under the new Ordinance every Municipal and Local Board town and every local authority created in the future and every district was to be an educational district. In every educational district there was to be an Education District Committee consisting of not less than six, not more than nine members, as might be ordered by the Governor in the Executive Council. Two of these members were to be nominated by the local bodies concerned and the rest by the Governor for three years.[33]

Thus, unlike the Town Schools' Ordinance which had endeavoured to make the local authorities the educational authorities for the area, the 1920 Ordinance created a new educational organization whose only connection was the fact that two of its members were to be nominated by the local authority. Thus by the New Ordinance the relationship that existed between the central and local authorities in Ceylon was altered to give greater weight than ever to the central government and to minimize the role played by local authorities. This new policy was warmly endorsed by the Legislative Council whose members were anxious to relieve local bodies of the financial burden but at the same time were keen to expand educational opportunities in the areas which they represented.[34]

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(*d*) Developments Following the 1920 Ordinance (1920-1930)

(*a*) STATE-DENOMINATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The new Education Ordinance did go a long way, especially immediately after its promulgation, to help curtail the unplanned expansion of elementary education in the towns and in the villages, but it was not without considerable opposition that the new policy was put into operation. The Christian denominations were perturbed at the thought of having to curb their activities in the villages :

> " This is a serious matter for all Missionary Societies working in Ceylon, for the policy is quite revolutionary. It will ultimately lead to a closing of a large number of our schools. "[35]

The immediate effect the Ordinance had on the expansion of Government and Aided Vernacular Schools was an increase in the number of state schools yearly. Aided Schools for the first time since the inception of the denominational system, began to register a fall in numbers. (Vide Table V in Chapter 44)

The actual formation of the Board of Education came in for some criticism. It was felt that in the selection of personnel to comprise the Board, the objects the framers of the legislation had in view did not seem to have been achieved, in that, in a country which had more than 60 per cent. Buddhists, 22 per cent. Hindus and less than 10 per cent. Christians, on the Board there were only one Hindu, one Muslim and three Buddhists out of a total of twenty members[36] Although the Board was originally constituted in an advisory capacity only, soon it began to wield much influence over both the educational system and successive Directors of Education, With the years it acquired so much power that when the time came for the legislature to curb it, a bitter struggle ensued between its supporters and the members of the Executive Council for Education.[37]

The provision regarding Religious Instruction whereby no such instruction was permitted in government schools did not seem to satisfy the majority Buddhist community for whom the State Schools predominantly catered. Also to many ardent Buddhists and Hindus it seemed that the Conscience Clause in force was not a success. Hence they agitated for a new Conscience Clause to be introduced. On 24th, February, 1927, a motion was introduced in the Legislative Council to the effect that,

> " in the opinion of this Council provision should be made for a training in their religion for all children attending Government or Assisted Schools where compulsory attendance is enforced. "

This was a signal for another onslaught on denominationalism in education in the country.[38] The debate was inconclusive and fresh legislation had to wait for almost another two decades.

(*b*) FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

As constitutional power passed more and more into the hands of the people of the country, insistent demands for more expenditure on education kept on apace.[39] The government, however, was not in a mood to increase the education vote especially

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because after the Education Ordinance of 1920 the whole cost of education was being borne by the central government with almost no financial help whatsoever from Local Bodies.[40]

Meanwhile, however, as a result of pressure from teachers increased grants were sanctioned by the Department to Sinhalese and Tamil schools, so that higher salaries could be paid them.[41] This also made it necessary for the Department to lay down minimum salary scales and to enforce the payment of salaries accordingly in the Assisted Schools. The new scales were incremental and were dependent upon qualifications. But there was this difficulty in that incremental scales were impracticable in the vernacular schools since no fees were charged. Even in the English schools where fees were charged difficulties in maintaining even the minimum scales did exist. Moreover a grant paid on the basis of averge attendance of pupils could not be expected to increase year by year sufficiently to help to pay the increments. A new scheme of grants, therefore, was essential, and any future scheme to be successful had to make the annual cost of increments to be borne by the grant and, therefore, it was necessary to make the grant bear a direct relation to salary cost. It was on this principle that a Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Education Codes, appointed on 19th, April, 1923, based its recommendations for a new grant scheme, namely, that the grant should be a proportion of teachers' salaries for English Schools and in the Sinhalese, and Tamil schools the grant should cover the whole salary cost of an adequate staff and also a fraction for the maintenance and equipment of the school.[42] The Board of Education duly approved the recommendations, drew up salary scales, and defined an adequate staff by reference to maximum units of pupil attendance for teachers of different qualifications. The Board also drew up a scale of managers' contributions.[43] On 25th October, 1925, the Governor, acting on the advice of the Board of Education, appointed an advisory Committee composed of the members of the Board, members of the Legislative Council, and representatives of teachers' associations to inquire into and report upon matters that may be referred to him by the Department in connection with the working of the new salaries and grants' scheme.[44]

The new system of grants was a great advance on the existing system and was beneficial both to the teachers who were now guaranteed a definite incremental scale of salaries and a security of tenure not previously enjoyed and to the managers who were now assured of enhanced grants for needed improvements to their schools. The School Teachers' Pension Ordinance of 1927 further improved the status and prospects of the teachers.[45]

By the end of the decade there were in all 2,425 Assisted Schools provided for by government grant. In the Assisted English Schools 35·4 per cent. of the expenditure was met by government while in the Assisted Vernacular schools it was 89 per cent. In the Government English Schools the State was meeting 56 per cent. of the expenditure and in the Government Vernacular schools 98.3 per cent.[46] The State was spending approximately Rs. 5 more per head in the government schools than in the denominational schools. The whole cost to the government for all elementary and secondary education in the Island was Rs. 12,128,844.00.[47]

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(c) CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONSHIP

By 1925 the Education Ordinance of 1920 had been proclaimed to cover the whole of Ceylon and in addition to the 8 Urban, 3 Municipal and 3 Rural Education District Committees, 16 new Committees were formed to replace District School Committees. Not one of the Local Board towns was proclaimed as a separate Education District as it was felt that these towns, not being sufficiently important educationally, might very well be included in the Education Districts of the respective revenue areas. The Government Agent or the Assistant Government Agent was in most cases unanimously elected the Chairman of the Committee. While this tended in some respects to perpetuate the official character of such committees it nevertheless helped to secure the services of headmen as attendance officers and made the Kachcheries available as the Committee offices.[48]

From their inception itself the new Education District Committees had to face many difficulties, financial and otherwise. They had to create new machinery to carry out the provisions of the Ordinance and since these Committees were, in theory, independent of the local government or Municipal authorities they were deprived of much assistance which the old Committees used to receive from these authorities. Close co-operation between the Department of Education and the Education District Committees was not always easy to maintain.

Before long the government began to realize that the financial arrangements of the 1920 Ordinance were involving it in educational expenditure which it was finding more and more difficult to bear. In 1923, therefore, a Commission was appointed to report on whether the police, education, communications, and public health should be public or local services.[49] The recommendations of this Commission were a compromise between the suggestions of the Local Government Commission of 1917 and the policy incorporated in the Education Ordinance of 1920. It suggested that education should be a national service for the present but as the general revenue could not bear the whole burden of educational expenditure, local funds must help to increase resources for education. The Commission, therefore, proposed an education rate in areas where rating machinery was available. Local authorities were to be permitted to control the expenditure of these funds if they were willing to assume complete responsibility for educational services in their areas.

There was widespread opposition to the recommendations of this Commission, and especially to the proposed education rate.[50] The policy laid down by the 1920 Ordinance was therefore adhered to, and the central government continued to bear almost the entire burden of educational expenditure.

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CHAPTER 48

ATTEMPTS AT CURRICULAR REFORM

SWARNA JAYAWEERA

The Curriculum in 1900

As the modern system of education in Ceylon took shape in the nineteenth century the curriculum of Ceylon schools had acquired a definite pattern by 1900. This curriculum naturally reflected the trend of general colonial policy and the educational traditions of the colonial power. Two primary needs of the colonial government were administrative personnel of subordinate rank, and a professional and social westernized *elite* who would help to popularise the values and way of life of the ruling power. Colonial administrators were also naturally influenced by the educational practices of contemporary England which reflected a dual society consisting of an *elite* educated in selective schools and ill-educated masses. Similarly, they felt that they should confer on the Ceylonese *elite* what they considered were the benefits of the education which nurtured their own leaders. This situation was complicated in Ceylon by a linguistic division by means of which the local languages could only be the vehicle of elementary mass education.

The colonial economy which evolved in the nineteenth century was another factor which helped to determine this curriculum. The development of the plantation sector of the economy which was the characteristic feature of this period involved so little local participation and demanded such elementary skills that it made little impact on the curriculum. On the other hand, the economically rewarding type of education was that which aimed at producing administrators. The curriculum, therefore, grew in response to administrative, cultural and religious needs, and was, in consequence, an English oriented and highly academic and literary one suited to the needs of an urban society.

The curriculum of the 3,086 ' vernacular ' schools (as those which imparted instruction in the Sinhala and Tamil

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media were called) was limited to a bare minimum of the three R's and a few meagre extras mentioned by the Morgan Report[1] and the Ceylon Code, which was, incidentally modelled on the English Code. The ' secondary ' or post elementary schools, such as the government Royal College and the aided ' High Schools ' and ' colleges ' borrowed their curriculum from the English Public and Grammar schools. The highly popular examinations of Cambridge and London Universities introduced from 1880 and the award of scholarships to British Universities further encouraged this type of cultural borrowing. These foreign examinations, at which, for example, Botany questions were set on the dandelion and the buttercup[2], and text books dealing with unfamiliar background, created a gulf between the curriculum and the environment while the system of payment by results, borrowed from Lowe's Revised Code, introduced in England, was largely responsible for the mechanical methods which were so severely criticized by members of the Inspectorate.

Demand for Curricular Reform at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

While the curriculum described in the preceding paragraphs had often been criticized, the early twentieth century saw a demand for curricular reform which had its mainsprings in the political and cultural movements of the time.

The religious-cum-national revival which began in the last decades of the nineteenth century with the Buddhist and Hindu renaissance, the psychological effects of the national movement in India, and the victory of Japan over Russia, a western power, in 1905, released forces which found expression in a demand for the nationalization of the curriculum and the introduction of a scientific and practical bias in line with developments elsewhere in the world. As the political influence of members of the western educated middle class increased slowly with the McCallum reforms of 1909 and the Manning reforms of 1920 and 1924, they constituted an unofficial opposition to the administration through the first three decades of the twentieth century. Their influence on policy making was infinitesimal but their criticism did probably stimulate the administration to consider afresh curricular problems. The ' controversies ' of this period, therefore, merit some description.

In 1905, the Ceylon Social Reform Society was started with Dı. Ananda Coomaraswamy as President. The manifesto of the society gave as its aim " to encourage and initiate reforms in social customs among the Ceylonese and to discourage the thoughtless imitation of unsuitable European habits and customs,"[3] but efforts to influence public opinion regarding language and education also figured in its programmes.

These nationalists also tried to resuscitate the local languages and culture through the curriculum, and formed the Ceylon University Association to agitate for a local University.

> " It will be the chief aim of the Ceylon University, while making efficient provision for the study of English and the assimilation of Western culture, to take care that our youth do not grow up strangers to their mother tongue, and to their past history and traditions. . . . The Ceylon University, then will

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represent and carry into effect the vital principle of Education, that local needs and conditions are the first and most important elements for consideration in framing an educational scheme."[4]

It is easy to overestimate the strength of this agitation when one reads the periodicals published during this period. At the same time the educational system by enforcing the norms of the rulers had already tended to create an attitude of superiority towards the national culture in a fair proportion of the English educated. These interests made common cause with the administration to prevent any nationalisation of the curriculum. Their attitude was reflected in the views of the Principal of a large college who advocated national education in the 'vernacular' schools, commercial education in some English schools and English secondary education in the large schools, thus implying that the higher the social strata the greater should be the gulf between the school and the local environment.[5]

The official attitude to the demand for recognition for the languages of the country was expressed by the Governor in his address on Royal College Prize Day in 1906.

" The question was asked by a deputation which waited upon me and pressed upon me and urged that in all schools vernacular education should be compulsory. I was not prepared to agree to that and I am not prepared to agree to it now, because I think there are instances where some boys ought not to be under the necessity of studying Sinhalese who may not intend to spend their lives here. But I have no hesitation in saying that every man who looks forward to a professional career in Ceylon ought to be able to communicate with the people of his country . . . . I am, therefore, going to consider very seriously the question of placing within the reach of the students of this college, of adding to their curriculum, vernacular education, either Sinhalese or Tamil."[6]

The students who did not intend to live in Ceylon (whoever they were !) seemed to have determined the curricular provision made for the Ceylonese child. In pursuance of this statement, however, Saturday classes in Sinhala and Tamil were begun at Royal College in 1907 and in 1908 they were on the regular time table of the lower forms. Ceylon History was introduced into the upper forms of the school and Ceylon Geography started in the third form from 1907. The Revised Code for aided schools 1911 said that no grants were to be paid for Sinhalese and Tamils in the secondary forms if they had not studied their own language till standard III. But in the face of the steady opposition of the majority of the school managers the government could do no more at the moment, nor were most of the aided schools anxious to follow the example set by Royal College in this respect.

The literary bias of the curriculum was also subjected to severe criticism. The Technical College had failed and its engineering classes had to be closed partly because the students coming to it had not had a sound foundation in scientific education.[7] Heads of firms complained of the inefficiency of their staff. There was an increasing awareness of the danger of an English educated unemployed class similar to that in India, as well as a fear of the neglect of agricultural pursuits.[8]

The need for industrial development was beginning to impress itself on thinking people.

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" There is really no reason why the country that contributes materially to the rubber supply of the world should not manufacture its own rubber goods. . . "[9]

There was also the feeling that the expansion of wealth in the country did not profit the people of the country because business was not in native hands.

A letter to the editor of ' The Ceylon ' carried the following statement :

" what we want in our young men is a sound commercial, industrial and agricultural education—sound and practical enough to control, nay to monopolise the commercial, industrial and agricultural situation of our island."[10]

These demands too met with horrified resistance from some educationists. One Principal said,

" to those who object that it (the educational system) is not utilitarian enough I would reply that it is a mistake to consider the school as an office or workshop."[11]

Attempts to Introduce Changes in the Curriculum: 1900-1930

While curriculum problems thus attracted the attention of the Ceylonese, the colonial government was itself aware of the need to modify the literary bias of the curriculum. The period 1900 to 1930, therefore, saw some effort made to introduce changes in the curriculum of both elementary and secondary schools. The decision to appoint the Macleod Committee and to invite Mr. J. J. R. Bridge, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from London, also indicated that the government was anxious to reorganise the curriculum.

(*a*) The Elementary Curriculum

As stated earlier the ' vernacular ' schools which formed the bulk of the elementary schools not only had a prescribed curriculum laid down by the Code but were also not permitted to offer the " specific subjects " which were from time to time added to the Code for the benefit of the English schools. But practical education was advocated in England , and the colonial government, too, at last began to recognise the value of relating elementary education to the needs of the community.

When the agricultural school was closed in 1901 the decision was made to introduce instead an agricultural bias to the elementary curriculum by means of school gardens.[12] In 1902 the Director of Public Instruction described the school gardens scheme as,

" a first step towards making the vernacular school something very different from what it has been in the past viz. a centre for practical useful knowledge, as well as for mere book learning,"

and expressed his hope that,

" the garden scheme may shortly be supplemented by a simple industrial scheme and a sanitary knowledge scheme suited for village requirements."[13]

The Wace Committee recommended a more practical curriculum as part of the new scheme of compulsory education [14] and the Governor in his letter to the Secretary of State regarding the recommendations of the Commission, referred to the need to give a more practical bias to vernacular schools.

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"I desire to incorporate such elementary science as will enable the pupils to appreciate sound principles of agriculture. To this end school gardens are being encouraged, and extended. It is also my desire by technical instruction to save from extinction, and if possible, restore village industries now rapidly disappearing to the detriment of the character and decrease in the prosperity of the people."[15]

The Committee appointed to report on a scheme of agricultural training for Ceylon in 1909 also recommended that the existing system of education in the vernacular schools should be modified to introduce more agricultural training, and that Nature Study should be introduced into the curriculum while assisted schools should be given grants to encourage them to start school gardens.[16]

The 1911 Code for Assisted schools provided for a grant for school gardens. In 1912, the school gardens were attached to the newly created Department of Public Instruction, which prepared text books to give elementary agricultural training in relation to school garden work. There were 282 school gardens in government vernacular schools and 47 in aided schools in 1912 and these numbers increased to 748 and 99 respectively in 1927.[17]

But when one considers that there were over 3,000 vernacular schools by 1927, it would appear that despite government policy nearly three-fourths of the vernacular schools did not give an education suited to the agricultural environment of their students. Nor were the school gardens themselves a success. They were rarely utilised to provide any real agricultural training and remained always a mere artificial appendage of the vernacular elementary educational system. In the nineteen twenties the scheme received a further set back through the inability of the Education District Committees to provide the necessary tools for these gardens from their meagre resources. School gardens were, of course, never considered to be a necessary requirement in English elementary schools which were mainly situated in urban areas.

Industrial training was the other aspect of education that the government wished to introduce into elementary schools. The Director considered that the 32 aided industrial schools were a farce and that the expenditure on them was wasted. The colonial government had, however, some hopes of introducing industrial work into the vernacular elementary curriculum. In 1905 the Director was asked to report,

"if it is possible to fit in some technical instruction in the school system in outlying districts in the island."[18]

He suggested that carpentry schools should be attached to some government schools in the North-Western, Central, Uva and North-Central Provinces, the weaving industry be revived through schools and sewing classes introduced into the ordinary elementary schools.[19]

Industrial classes in these schools, however, were only begun after 1916 and by 1921 twenty three carpentry, forty basket weaving, three rattan work and two lacquer work classes were attached to vernacular schools.[20] Nevertheless, it appears that the educational administration was as unsuccessful in integrating industrial work into the elementary curriculum as they had been in effecting any real connection between class work and school garden work. These industrial classes were held in

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the afternoons after the school sessions were over or on Saturdays. They were aimed at providing vocational training for the vernacular school boy who was generally unequipped for any employment when he left school. After 1924, the policy was to separate these classes and organise them as separate industrial schools for boys over fourteen years of age who had left the vernacular school after standard five and were unemployed. After 1926, the government preferred to promote industrial training through aided schools as the products of the government schools began to clamour for government employment. In 1930, industrial schools offering elementary instruction numbered 146, but the Health report on industrial education in Ceylon was very critical of the instruction given in them.[21]

Nor did periodical revisions of the Departmental Code help to enrich the curriculum of these schools. Even after the 1914 Code, vernacular education continued in its narrow groove, the curriculum to standard eight being limited to the three R's, Geography, History and Needlework. Grants were given for Drawing, Physical Training and school gardening.[22] The 1922 Code permitted two ' specific ' subjects from the following three (1) Physiology and Hygiene and Temperance (2) Linen Embroidery and (3) Lace Making.[23]

On the whole, the vernacular school continued to offer the majority little more than a narrow elementary education while a small minority escaped into English schools. It provided no adequate preparation for either the agricultural and industrial pursuits of normal life or for the more lucrative professions which were the monopoly of English education.

The English elementary schools were luckier, for by the 1914 Code they could offer in their upper classes a few subjects such as Algebra, Geometry, Book-keeping, Shorthand, Mensuration, and English Literature. Unlike the 'vernacular' schools they could with some effort and expense such as by the addition to their curriculum of subjects such as Science and Latin develop into fully fledged secondary schools.

Commercial education was also restricted to English schools for the reason that English was the official language in which all business was transacted. In 1919, the Director of Education proposed that grants should be given to five assisted schools in Colombo, Kandy, Galle and Jaffna which had started commercial classes.[24] There is no evidence, however, that commercial instruction was given in more than a handful of English schools in the large towns, and the English elementary schools were generally viewed as a preparatory stage to the academic secondary schools.

In 1927, the Department made another effort to give a practical bias to the elementary curriculum. This time, the aim was to re-orientate the entire elementary curriculum,

> " to bring the work done more into harmony with the lives of the people—especially the agricultural community."[25]

These new schemes for both vernacular and English schools laid particular stress on elementary science, rural science and house-craft. Although the administration was enthusiastic about the success of this scheme, the following extract from the 1930 Administration Report is an interesting assessment of its progress.

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" The new scheme of studies has been in circulation for three years and in theory all schools are working on it. In practice the adoption of the principles of the scheme depends on the teachers themselves. These principles have been more successfully adopted in the vernacular schools than in the English schools. The reason is not far to seek—the English schools like those of every other country that is keen on education are dominated to a certain extent by external examinations."[26]

(b) The Secondary Curriculum

Much of the local criticism of the curriculum described earlier in this chapter was directed against the secondary and not the elementary school for English education was of strategic importance to all ambitious Ceylonese. Nationalist agitation had evoked little response from the government in the first decade of the century. In a memorandum sent in 1909 to the Board of Education in England, whose help he requested in reorganizing secondary education, Governor Sir Henry McCallum was, however, extremely critical of the literary bias in secondary schools. He thought the entire school system in Ceylon " too mediaeval, hidebound and illiteral " and he felt,

" that secondary instruction particularly should be made much more elastic and adaptable, as is already the case in many modern secondary schools, in order to satisfy the ever increasing demands of commerce, industries and public utilities generally. "[27]

He suggested that, (*a*) commercial education, (*b*) science in a practical way, and (*c*) manual training should be introduced to make the curriculum more modern. Another interesting pronouncement by officialdom was the Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Clifford's memorandum to the Board of Education in which he stated that,

" he did not think it would be practicable to try and introduce any big change in the direction of making the curriculum more oriental " because " there had grown up in the island a class of persons who were to a very considerable extent Europeanized. "[28]

The English Board of Education suggested a general educational survey and the result was the appointment of the Macleod Committee in 1911 and the arrival of Mr. Bridge from the English Board of Education to report on secondary education.

Bridge discovered that secondary schools had generally a uniform curriculum and that there was little differentiation according to the needs of the pupils or of the community.

" One school offers three courses to its pupils, literary, scientific and commercial; another has a technical side, and several have commercial sides ; but under the present conditions of the literary traditions, the staple differentiation is between those pupils who can take Latin and those who cannot. "[29]

He found that out of 179 English schools, only 9 had laboratories, 2 had manual workshops and 2 art rooms. These schools had naturally a predominantly literary bias.

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As both the Macleod Committee and Bridge covered almost the same field, the comments and suggestions in the two reports and in the evidence submitted will be next discussed under the following themes (a) the position of the languages in the curriculum (b) scientific, commercial and practical education (c) the place of examinations and (d) the curriculum of girls' schools.

(*a*) THE POSITION OF THE VARIOUS LANGUAGES IN THE CURRICULUM

The Bridge Report stressed that four-fifths of the children entering English schools came from non-English speaking homes and, therefore, condemned the neglect of the vernaculars.

> " Education based on a medium other than that in which the whole of a child's ideas are contained is in reality education limited to the acquisition of a new language. "[30]

It, therefore, recommended the use of the local languages as media to the age of twelve and English as the medium in the upper forms.

The Macleod Committee merely endorsed the views of the protagonists of English. Ninety eight people were asked whether Sinhala and Tamil should be compulsory in English schools. Forty-nine were in favour, thirty-three against and sixteen undecided. Of the forty-nine, twenty-two said it should be compulsory to standard five, nineteen wanted it to a higher standard and eight to a lower. The Committee decided that standard four as a compulsory limit was the best compromise.[31] Eighty-eight people were also questioned as to whether Sinhalese and Tamil should be optional at the proposed Elementary School Leaving Certificate examination. Forty two were in favour and forty six against. The Committee then decided that they should be excluded from the list of subjects for secondary school examinations but that any school wishing to provide higher teaching in the local languages could do so. [32]

The extent to which denationalisation had already been carried on is seen from the number of Sinhalese who objected to the study of their own language, as apt illustration of the important role the curriculum can play in altering the values of a people.

Many school authorities also objected to the suggestion to limit the study of western classical and modern European languages (other than English). Latin was taught in the majority of boys' schools and in some girls' schools, French in a number of boys' and girls' schools and Greek in five boys' schools.[33] A few students learnt three languages, a good many two and many one, in addition to English—which, the Bridge Report pointed out, was absurd in a country in which English itself was a foreign language.

The Macleod Report recommended that neither Latin nor a modern European language should be compulsory while these languages and the Oriental classics should be optional for those specializing in arts. Latin, however, had an economic value which the schools could not ignore and, in any event the position of these languages could not be altered because they figured prominently in the English examinations.

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(b) SCIENTIFIC, COMMERCIAL AND PRACTICAL EDUCATION

Grants were made to schools for equipment in science teaching from 1909 although at that date they were only for Experimental Science, Chemistry and Physics in boys' schools and Experimental Science in girls' schools.[34] As a result of this policy more schools began to teach science, and by 1911 eight had applied for grants whereas in 1900 only Royal College had a laboratory. As far as commercial education was concerned, Royal College started a class in 1910 and its rival St. Thomas' College followed its example. But such was the strength of the academic tradition that the commercial class at Royal which started with thirteen boys dwindled to seven in 1911, and then to one in 1912, and was thus abandoned.[35]

The survey in the Bridge Report of science, commercial and practical education in secondary schools revealed glaring inadequacies which were mainly due to lack oe equipment, and to the fact that commercial classes were confined to the dull while practical subjects were not given their due importance. The Macleod Committes recommended that within a reasonable period, boys' organized secondary school' must provide for science, drawing, physical training and manual training, and girlsf schools for drawing, singing, physical training and domestic science. The academic curriculum once again had its loyal champions as evident from the resolution passed by the Chilaw Association stating that it,

> " considers commercial and industrial instruction and manual training to be out of place and altogether inappropriate in the secondary schools of the Island."[36]

(c) THE PLACE OF EXAMINATIONS

The numbers sitting for the Junior and Senior Cambridge and the London Matriculation and Intermediate examinations increased from 522 in 1901 to 1980 in 1915. But the large percentage of failures began to alarm the authorities and Inspector Strickland said that the Ceylon schools,

> " were employed in performing a routine march to the Oxford and Cambridge Universities which less than 99·8 per cent had any prospect of ever reaching. "[37]

Bridge criticized very strongly the influence on the curriculum of examinations designed for England and recommended local examinations because,

> " the needs of Ceylon can only be met by means of an examination designed by those who know and appreciate local circumstances. "[38]

While admitting the ill-effects of the Cambridge fetish, the Macleod Committee, however, preferred to be guided by the views of the managers and Principals of the English schools who set great store by these examinations. Forty of the fifty-nine who were consulted were solidly for the retention of the examinations while the majority of the nineteen who favoured their abolition were from the North and the East where Indian examinations had always been most popular.[39] The Committee, therefore, opposed the idea of a local examination but recommended the substitution of the Cambridge School Certificate Examinations for the Cambridge Locals.

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(*d*) THE CURRICULUM OF GIRLS' SCHOOLS

The Bridge report did not make a study of the problems of girls' schools, but the Macleod Committee gave special consideration to this subject. The Committee decided that the girls' schools in Ceylon had followed the English pattern in approximating to the curriculum of boys' schools with just the addition of needlework, and that this was a harmful development in both countries. It found that the system in Ceylon conferred social distinction but did not provide an adequate curriculum for home life, while on the other hand it tended to denationalise the educated women of the country. It recommended better domestic science equipment and certificates for domentic science which it hoped would soon equal the Cambridge examinations in social value. This was a period when a Medical scholarship was first won by a girl and when the first Arts scholarship winner went to Cambridge. Hence it is not surprising that schools preferred to concentrate on winning these distinctions while parents themselves did not demand a practical education.

(*e*) THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REFORMS

The recommendations of the Macleod Committee on school organization and curriculum were accepted by the government as they were in accord with its own views, and were then put into effect through the Revised Code of 1914. According to the new classification of schools, organized secondary schools were paid on average attendance and the regulations for them were made more liberal to conform somewhat to the secondary school regulations in England. The movement for a more national and practical curriculum failed to a large extent because it met with resistance from established interests and conservative opinion and because it was not accompanied by any socio-economic changes.

The years from 1915 to 1930 formed a comparatively uneventful period in the history of the secondary curriculum and any developments in secondary education merely strengthened the exisitng pattern. An impetus was given to education by the establishment of the University College in 1921. Unfortunately the College prepared students for the examinations of the University of London and the content of education in secondary schools was therefore unaffected. Sinhala and Tamil were optional subjects and there was no provision for practical courses such as agriculture. As access to higher education became easier more schools became dominated by the literary curriculum of the University College.

Although the 1914 Code permitted the secondary schools to frame their own syllabus, most schools followed the departmental schemes for elementary schools up to standard eight, and thereafter adhered rigidly to the Cambridge schemes which did not change much with the years. The detailed prescription of the curriculum in the departmental Codes ended with the 1922 Code and schedules of work were omitted in the 1929 Code.

This was a period, too, of slow development as far as the introduction of subjects and activities was concerned.

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In 1919, permission was granted to students to offer Sinhala and Tamil as optional subjects for the Cambridge and London examinations. Nevertheless, the picture was not altogether easy, for it was stated in 1921 that,

" it is clear from the reports on the vernaculars taught in English schools that this subject is not regarded with the seriousness it deserves."[40]

Meanwhile the government slogan at the time was " English, more English and better English," and apart from official encouragement, economic considerations were responsible for the great demand for English. The Macrae Committee[41] was appointed in 1926 to investigate the possibility of making Sinhala and Tamil the media of instruction in schools and to suggest ways of improving the teaching of oriental languages in English schools. It recommended that all schools should provide facilities for teaching pupils in their mother tongue and for compulsory instruction in it at the earlier stages and advocated bilingualism as a solution to the language problem. But it shied from the task of making the national languages compulsory in secondary schools.

The 1914 Code placed emphasis on the teaching of science and the equipment of good laboratories. The establishment of the University College and the demand for the Ceylonisation of the public service provided a stimulus to science teaching and by 1933 regular science courses were given in 38 out of 52 schools teaching science and mathematics. The sudden activity in the direction of science teaching in girls' schools seems to have been impelled by administrative reasons. According to the 1914 Code, girls' schools could only qualify to be secondary schools if they provided practical instruction in Domestic Science preceded by a course in elementary Experimental Science. The regulations were subsequently relaxed and science seems to have vanished from the curriculum of girls' schools.

The 1922 Code offered grants for commercial education and even went to the extent of authorising a curriculum for commercial classes. Although several schools started these classes few continued them because the schools were concerned with the academic education of the important minority and commerce was the refuge of those who failed at academic examinations.

But the regulation in the 1914 Code which was doomed to complete failure was the condition (following the regulations in England) that manual instruction should be a part of the curriculum of secondary schools. The code requirement was never fulfilled because there was strong objection to the word ' manual ' as used in association with English secondary schools. Also schools found it expensive to provide the equipment necessary for such instruction. A few of the ' big schools ' did attempt to make provision for practical education but these were isolated instances.

Some Comments

As evident from the fore-going pages, the demand for curricular reform and the various policies favoured by officials and commissions made little impact on the total pattern of the curriculum of both elementary and secondary schools. While minor

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changes were introduced by administrative fiat and popular demand, the elementary schools continued to give an attenuated form of education mainly in the local languages while secondary education retained its selective and alien features.

The reason for this failure to achieve any significant curriculum changes during these thirty years are to be found in the socio-economic milieu of the time. Policy makers themselves were clearly dominated by their own cultural pattern and were largely immune from the changing social and cultural influences of the time and attempts at reform accordingly tended to be both lethargic and conservative. The political structure limited the influence that local opinion which favoured change could exert on policy formulation, while some of the most powerful forces in the educational sphere were zealous champions of the existing curriculum, and formed, therefore, a solid barrier to reform.

The socio-economic environment, moreover, inevitably limited the success of any reforms. The colonial economic structure underwent no basic change during this period. While the large revenues accruing from the export of tea, rubber and coconut were responsible for the extension of elementary education facilities, this prosperity was not accompanied by any developments in the traditional sector of the economy, (paddy and subsidiary crops) which provided a livelihood to the majority of the population, or in the industrial field. The *laissez-faire* economic policies of the nineteenth century had not given way to any constructive policies. Ceylon had to import a part of its rice requirements. In 1930 manufactures were still confined mainly to the processing of agricultural products and projects such as the manufacture of rubber goods were not even contemplated while commerce continued to be largely in the hands of aliens.

As the curriculum did not operate in a vacuum the attempts to introduce a scientific and practical bias could not succeed in an economic structure which could not even absorb the small numbers trained at the few vocational institutions in the Island. On the other hand the avenues of employment which continued to be remunerative were the professions which developed to meet the expanding public services such as administration, health, justice and education–the ' black-coated ' and ' white collar ' professions. These economic needs favoured a western urban literary curriculum which accordingly enjoyed a high prestige among parents and education authorities. The findings of the Macleod Committee relating to the vocational ambitions of secondary school students[42] indicate clearly the disparity between the occupational structure and these ambitions as well as the close relationship between these aspirations and the world of economic realities.

While the content of secondary education was influenced by these environmental forces, ' vernacular ' elementary education could hardly be expected to thrive in a socio-economic structure which offered rewards to those who escaped from it and sought access to the chief avenue of social mobility in the Island—the academic secondary school.

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Presented By.
P. PARARAJASINGAM
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[36] Sessional Paper XX of 1912, *op. cit.* Appendix D, p. 277

[37] Administration Report, Director of Public Instruction, 1909, p. 7

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CHAPTER 49

STRUGGLE FOR A CHANGE IN THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Bogoda Premaratne

Introduction

The language medium employed in educating the children of the nation was no problem until our Western Masters—the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English in turn imposed their own languages, as the official languages of the territory and took upon themselves the responsibility for the education of the subject race. At the outset only a small fraction of the school-going population was concerned in this alien system but towards the latter part of the British rule it developed into a complex national problem.

At the close of the nineteenth century educationists were convinced that the best language medium for education was the mother tongue of the learner but in the face of the overwhelming privileges history had conferred on the English-educated minority the educational values had to give way to other more important social and economic considerations.

The Claims of English—the Need for a Change

Education in English became essential for a citizen to have any claim for economic advantages, financial gain, official prestige or favour at the hands of the foreign masters. The Sinhalese and the Tamils reached a stage when they had no compunction—national, emotional, or otherwise over neglecting their own mother tongue for the sake of learning a foreign language. They learnt to believe that any kind of exercise in the mother tongue would cause irreparable damage to their ability to use the English language the way the English men did.

General educational considerations militated against a system that employed a foreign tongue to introduce a growing child to his physical and social environment and to provide his emotional and intellectual nourishment. But the people were accustomed to look upon education

PREMARATNE, BOGODA, B. A. (London) M. A. (Columbia), Acting Principal, Royal College, Mr. Premaratne was the Principal of several Teachers' Training Colleges and Central Colleges. He was an Inspector of Schools and for a long period a Lecturer in Government Teachers' Colleges.

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as something that brought the individual to a closer contact with the ruling class and the learning of the English language came to be regarded as basically good education. The lure of better employment, social prestige and power was sufficient to undermine all other considerations and subject the child from its early formative years to an illogical and wasteful exercise in education. It was only with the rise of the national movement, discussed in Chapter 41, that the local languages came to be regarded as educationally important. During the early period of the British administration the Government's educational policy was based on the view that Oriental learning was of little value and that a knowledge of English would lead to a cultural and intellectual improvement of the people and was a necessity if the people of Ceylon were to emerge successfully from a feudal to a commercial society, and to be acquainted with the modes of thought and ideas of their rulers. The Government effort was mainly concentrated on English education and consequently education in the national languages was sadly neglected. By the end of the nineteenth century education in the English medium was fairly well established and it was in great demand among the affluent classes in the cities. As against this, the study of the national languages and the use of the national languages as media of instruction had been confined to the backward rural sector.

The Place of the Mother Tongue

The struggle to secure the rightful place for the national languages in the educational field assumed two different forms. One was to have the national languages introduced into the curriculum of the English schools, and the other was to have them used as media for general instruction in all schools.

The study of English as a language was, no doubt, accepted as essential for a complete education, but the practice of employing it as a vehicle for conveying all knowledge, attitudes, and skills was certainly regarded as educationally unsound. The anxiety of parents, and managers of schools to make their children fully conversant with English at any cost militated against any effort to introduce the vernacular languages either as subjects of study or as media of instruction.

Even as far back as 1884, the educationists had officially recognised the futility of using a foreign language as a medium of instruction. For instance, the Director of Public Instruction, Mr. H. W. Green, made the following comment in his administration report for the year 1884 :

> " At present the state of affairs in too many of our primary and middle English schools is much as if in England, at the Board Schools, the boys learnt all the subjects *in French* paying no attention to English at all ; for here a Sinhalese or Tamil boy in our English schools learns all his Arithmetic, Geography, History, etc., in English and (with a few exceptions) receives no instruction in his own language at all.
>
> " English should be taught as a language only and should not be the medium of instruction in Arithmetic, History, Geography, etc., which should be taught in the vernacular and I argued that boys would learn a great deal more English on the one hand, while on the other hand they would understand a great deal more

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about Arithmetic and other subjects in which I have often observed that a boy in an English School will fail by not properly grasping the English of a question whereas if it were put in his own vernacular he would at once understand and answer it.

" School managers have told me frankly and unofficially that they agreed with me but as a rule there has been a disposition to shirk grappling with the problem officially. It must however be dealt with sooner or later unless we are to go on teaching our slipshod smattering of English and encouraging more generations to ignore their own vernaculars, and the sooner it is dealt with, the better. I trust therefore that the year will not close without serious consideration of my proposal. It is a grave matter, and one in which all school managers should aid me with their opinion and counsel." [1]

Most managers criticised this proposal at that time and suggested that the national languages be used as the media of instruction in the Primary Department (Standards I-V) only. After the Standard V it was expected that a boy ought to be able to profit by instruction in English whatever the subject be. Burghers were opposed to any idea of using Sinhala and Tamil as general media of instruction and Green had the following comment for them :

" An Englishman born and bred in France or Germany would be ashamed not to learn French or German, and I think it is an equal shame that a Burgher or Eurasian born and bred in Ceylon should ignore the language of the people in Ceylon." [2]

Mr. P. Arunachalam, Superintendent of Census, in his Census Report of 1901, drew a melancholy picture of the education given in the English schools at the time.

" They are taught from early childhood not things but words, and in the town schools the words of a foreign language. In these schools which attract the best pupils in the Island English is the medium of instruction to children imperfectly acquainted with the language. In the lower forms students scarcely understand what is taught or understand only at the cost of great mental strain. Think what it would be in England if, say, German was made the medium of instruction in the elementary school and English was entirely excluded. Yet German is more akin to English and easier to an English child than English is to a Sinhalese or Tamil child. A parrot-like repetition of words with little understanding of their meaning is necessarily encouraged. The pupils of the English schools are, in fact, worse off from an educational point of view than the pupils of the vernacular schools who at least are taught to think. English itself is so imperfectly taught that, after spending over a dozen years in its study many are found unable to express themselves without committing gross blunders of grammar and idiom, though sometimes they acquire a certain vocabulary of English speech which they mistake for education.

The cultivation of powers of observation hardly finds a place in the curriculum."[3]

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Early Twentieth Century Efforts to Include National Languages in the Curriculum

Towards the close of the nineteenth century positive steps were taken to introduce the national languages at the Primary level of education and the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907 was professedly an Ordinance for making provision for education in the national languages.

In the early twentieth century the national leaders genuinely felt that the education of the country's youth would be totally inadequate without a knowledge of the national languages. On July 2nd, 1906, *The Ceylon Social Reform Society* sent a deputation to the Governor to press for the introduction of Ceylon History and the national languages into all schools. The members of the deputation were Messrs. W. Chapman Dias, D. B. Jayatileke and Donald Obeyesekera. The Governor inquired from the members of the delegation whether they wanted the whole of the education in the English Schools of the country to be administered through the medium of these native languages. To this the deputation answered that what the society wanted was to see that all boys when leaving school, were able to read and write the mother tongue correctly. They pointed out that

> " under the system of education then existing, the higher class youths of the country, owing to their extremely inadequate knowledge of the native languages, found that not only could they not carry on an intelligent conversation with the villagers but they could not even express their ideas intelligently in their own homes where as a rule the parents talked the native language, as was quite natural."

The Ceylon National Review of January 1906 published a report of Mr. S. C. R. Rutnam, the Principal of Colombo Central College, where he had put down the introduction of the study of the national languages as the most important event in the history of the school during the year. Every student of the school, up to and including the Junior Local standard was urged to learn daily either Sinhala or Tamil according to this report. The far-sighted educationists who were genuinely concerned with the national integrity of the people of the Island fought against the exclusion of the national languages from the curriculum of the so-called English schools.

Mr. F. L. Woodward, Principal of Mahinda College, Galle, was one such foreign educationist. In July 1906, he wrote an inspiring letter to *The Ceylon National Review* of the Social Reform Society.

In that article he said that the knowledge of English in Ceylon to the exclusion of the national languages had become a sort of fetish and he attributed this mainly to a lack of knowledge of the nation's past and ignorance or indifference to its possible future. Mr. Woodward had the highest admiration for the Eastern ideas of life when he said that a subject nation might absorb or rather be absorbed into the language of the conquerors or rulers and would probably be affected by its laws and disciplines, but the East would never be absorbed by the West because its ideals of life were quite different. The British Empire might impress its practicality,

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its sense of duty and discipline upon the East but it could never imbue it with their way of looking at life. The life of the East was a sacred treasure stored up in its customs, in its religion, and in a language that had given its imprint to that of younger nations. From Sanskrit they came and to Sanskrit, after many devious windings, they should return perhaps in the future.

" I believe ", he said, " that a lack of the sense of nationality is at the root of the whole matter. I believe that the use and study of the mother tongue will tend to strengthen this sense. Revive this pride in nationality ; and language, religion, and nation social life and customs will also be revived ; but it cannot be a work of months, or even of a few years. If you cannot read the very language in which your nationality is enshrined or speak the tongue which reflects its underlying life, you become at once a pariah. You will not be acknowledged as belonging to your adopted nationality. You will be out of touch with your own people and then miserably fall between two stools. You will be deprived of the advantages which may be derived from one side or the other.

Empires have flourished and passed away with their languages and civilisations but the East has still the password to the common treasure of all, enshrined in a great literature, of science and metaphysics written in Pāli and Sanskrit, Tamil and Sinhala, and here must be sought the progress in real life. My own view is that the mother tongue should be enforced in all grant-in-aid schools if government has the real welfare of the people at heart."[4]

Types of Schools

Mr. J. J. R. Bridge, H. M. Inspector of Secondary Schools, has described to us the system of education that prevailed in the early years of the 20th Century.

The schools employing the national languages as media at the time were mostly ' Primary ' with classes up to the Fifth Standard only, ' Middle ' with classes above Standard Five, and ' Classical '.

" The Classical Vernacular Schools, providing as it were an indigenous secondary education of a literary type seems to be in very little demand " he said.

There were then upwards of 2,000 vernacular schools providing instruction to something over 200,000 pupils, but " in the turmoil that has recently disturbed the educational world and even the general public of Ceylon the great national importance of the vernacular school seems in danger of being forgotten ".[5]

The popular preference of English to Swabhasha even in the rural areas was quite obvious.

" One feature that is to be found in some of the vernacular schools is to be deplored, and that is the growing custom of currying parental favour by a pretence of teaching English out of school hours. The English, so taught, appears in many cases to be beneath contempt, and likely to prove a positive hindrance to a pupil who subsequently passes to an English School."[6]

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There were also, what were named, the Anglo-Vernacular schools, numbering less than fifty, and in these a limited amount of time was given in the Standards above the Third to the study of English.

The English schools were those in which English was regarded as the sole medium of instruction and most of them were grant-in-aid schools. The Education Code provided two schedules to be followed in these schools at the discretion of the management, subject to approval by the Director of Public Instruction. Schools that had to follow Schedule ' A ' worked on an English basis and taught Arithmetic, Geography, History, etc., in English. The teaching of the vernacular language as a subject depended on the option of the managers. The Code provided for the examination of vernacular standards 1 to 8 in all English Schools which elected to do that work. In such schools Reading, Writing and Grammar were taught in the vernacular.

The schools which adopted the Schedule ' B ' taught English on a vernacular basis. In addition to the use of the vernacular as the basis of instruction in the primary standards, provision was made for translation from the vernacular into English. Schools of this class had also further opportunities for vernacular instruction in the preparation of pupils for examinations in the vernacular Standards 1 to 8.

In actual practice, in the English Schools proper, nothing but English was countenanced, though in the infant classes the Code contemplated the possible necessity of some use of the vernacular. Mr. Bridge made the following observations on the general result of the English School System that functioned during the first decade of this 20th Century :

> " It is evident that by reason of the large proportion of non-English speaking children the English School system in Ceylon involves a striking departure from the accepted principle that the early education of a child must be in its mother tongue. Clearly, education based on a medium other than that in which the whole of a child's ideas is contained is in reality education limited to the acquisition of the new language. The teacher gives new names to things familiar to a child and the child learns them and gradually secures vocabulary in the new tongue, but it is obviously impossible to add to the medium except by means of the concrete, viz, objects or actions which the child identifies and understands. This is necessarily a slow process in which the whole of the mental faculties are occupied with language, new names are given to the old ideas, but no new ideas can be added. It seems obvious that approach-to-the-mind-education is absolutely conditioned by the extent to which the child has progressed in the new medium, and that anything added outside the range of that progress can only be added mechanically as a matter of verbal memory. The English school system in Ceylon disregards this essential limitation on progress, and, proceeding independently of understanding, bases its work largely on the mechanical use of the memory. The result is evident both in the very small proportion of pupils who attain to the standard of success indicated by the results of the Local Examinations, and in the absence of almost all prospect of progress in the majority of those who fail to reach even that standard."[7]

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The Education Committee of 1911

In 1911, an Education Committee was appointed to report on, among other matters, what provision there should be for instruction in the national languages.

Opinions were sought on the value of the national languages in the education of the classes in the elementary and secondary English Schools, the point up to which national languages should be continued and the substitution of the national for the classical and modern languages of Europe at the higher secondary level.

A large majority of European Principals of schools, and leaders in the social and political sphere strongly supported the introduction of the national languages as subjects of study at all levels of education.

There were also local leaders and managers of schools who openly declared that if it was meant that the national languages should be the medium of imparting knowledge to the classes they thought that they would be of no value except in rural areas. Some Ceylonese Principals argued that in the English Schools the value of the national languages was practically nil except for the illustration of differences in idiom or the elucidation of English words and phrases.

The memoranda sent by educationists of the calibre of A. G. Fraser of Trinity College, Kandy, and Charles Hartley of Royal College, emphatically brought out the value of the national languages in education.

A. G. Fraser, for instance, made a powerful plea for national languages in the English schools. He said that the use of a foreign language as a teaching medium in the Primary classes of Secondary Schools was destructive to the vigorous mental growth of students of eight to ten years, who came to school knowing little or no English and fluent only in their national language. He said that this system inevitably tended to make the mind concentrate on the medium of expression rather than on the idea expressed. It greatly increased the emphasis laid on memorising rather than on understanding. Also it fostered a shallowness of mind which was ready to accept any pleasing statement without inquiry. In the classroom the boys were trained to accept statements without understanding and thus an immoral habit of mind which finally made its victim an easy prey to any unscrupulous writer was fostered. Truth became little valued. The critical habit of mind and the sober judgement were left undeveloped.

Fraser stated that he had been told by the employers of labour, merchants, planters, and government officers, etc., that the chief defects they observed in the boys trained in the colleges were untruthfulness and a want of readiness to think reasonably. These, according to Fraser, were defects immediately encouraged by an education through the medium of a foreign language.

> " First, thought on, and a rational grip of, the subject taught are made almost impossible. Then, much has to be accepted and repeated on hearsay by the boy with therefore a dwindling sense of the necessity of proving all things whether they be true."[8]

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Fraser advocated that subjects having an educational value of their own and intended to develop the reasoning power of the pupils should be taught through the medium which presented the least difficulty to the pupils. Otherwise, the subject was sacrificed to the medium.

Fraser had introduced the teaching of Scripture through the medium of the national languages up to the 7th standard at Trinity College in 1909, and he said he had encouraging results. He said that he also hoped, in Trinity College, to use the national languages as the medium of instruction in each and every subject taught in the Lower School whilst teaching English thoroughly at the same time.

Mr. Fraser was of opinion that the teaching of the national languages should in no way affect for ill the teaching of English as feared by many.

> " The English of the Trinity College " he said, " has certainly improved immensely during the past few years and is said by Mr. Strickland to be unsurpassed elsewhere."[9]

He said that the introduction of the national languages, however, affected some other subjects at first; as an extra subject, it must curtail time spent on other subjects, but he was convinced that it was repaid with interest by the effect on the general intelligence. By way of proof he pointed out that in the few cases where boys had gone up the school two classes per year it had been each time an instance of good education in the national languages at first.

He maintained that unless the national languages were taught well in the Lower and Middle classes of the College, an educated class would be created which knew little of the lower ranks largely dependent on them. He wrote in his memorandum to the 1911 Committee on Education :

> " Many have been trained in Ceylon to pass the Senior Cambridge Local who could not read or write a letter in their father's tongue. I have found the need for a knowledge of the vernacular readily recognised in Trinity College. No boys have left on account of it, on the contrary, many have come because of it. "[10]

The Principal of Royal College, Mr. C. Hartley, in his memorandum to the same Committee was in favour of the national languages being taught in the schools but brought out the general mood of opposition the privileged class would have to such a proposal. Quoting Dr. G. Stanley Hall :

> " The heart of education as well as its phyletic root is the vernacular literature and language. They are the chief instruments of the social as well as the ethnic and patriotic instinct."[11]

Mr. Hartley stressed that he held the study of one's own language was the most important to which a boy can apply himself. He also touched on the difficulties in the way of implementing such a policy owing to the multiplicity of languages English, Sinhalese, Tamil and Malay, the difficulty of providing good trained teaching in each language simultaneously, and, worst of all

> " the apparently universal ill-will with which the proposal to introduce the vernacular as a substitute for Greek or Latin had been received."

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The opposition, he admitted, was often based on wrong grounds but was none the less a fact which must be reckoned with.

He stated that if he was to take a place among that class whose education and mode of thought was preponderantly Western the study of the national languages should be relegated to a secondary place, and as far as he could judge, he said, the study of the national languages at a high Standard in his Upper School, if optional, would be neglected, if compulsory, would end by emptying the school. This was a realistic portrayal of the general attitude of the influential class of the period.

Mr. J. J. R. Bridge, H.M. Inspector of Secondary Schools, who also served on the 1911 Committee, issued his report in which he pointed out that providing for the teaching of the national languages was not the same thing as making the national languages the media of instruction. The second point was more strictly educational. The doctrine as to the mother tongue was so universally held that it could hardly be necessary to substitute another for it. But as regards provision for the teaching of the national languages as a subject in the English Schools, the Code laid down the lower level up to which national languages should necessarily be taught. The compulsory requirements in the national languages according to the Education Committee's recommendation was not to go beyond the 4th standard. This was a lowering of the requirement of the Code by which Sinhalese and Tamil pupils of English Schools were required to pass in the 5th Standard in simple Reading and simple Letter Writing in their own language to be eligible to receive grant. There was, however, the freedom for any school to take it up to a higher level. Bridge reported that a few schools offered a determined opposition to the proposal to introduce the national languages at all, largely on the ground that it was already very difficult to teach English and it would be harder still if the national languages were not excluded. Although it was urged that the new generation was growing up ignorant of its own language and out of possibility of touch with the larger mass of the population, and consequently unable to impart to them the influence of their own general education and enlightenment, the Committee was made to understand that it was not a fact that the young generation was growing up unable to speak or even write the national languages and that the fear of their losing touch with their people was groundless.

The Committee provided for the national languages as an optional subject in the Elementary School Leaving Certificate Examination. As regards making national languages optional in place of Latin, French, Greek, etc., in the Junior and Senior examinations of Secondary Schools, the Governor, Sir Henry MacCallum, in his memorandum stated that the majority of the Sinhalese and even of the Tamils felt strongly that education regarded as education would suffer by such a change.

The Governor's Memorandum, stated :

" On the whole, we do not think that the study of Sinhalese can be regarded as educationally equivalent to the study of the other languages now taught, and as it is clearly desirable that Sinhalese and Tamil should receive similar treatment, we think that for the present both should be excluded from the list of subjects for the examinations of Secondary School Certificate. "[12] He was of opinion that,

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as regards a native vernacular as a subject in Secondary Examinations many of the Indian vernaculars had literatures of much educational value. There was no means of providing higher teaching in Sinhalese which would be at all educative in its character. Tamil was different in this respect but under local conditions they said they could not allow one vernacular as a subject of examination without the other as an alternative.

As regards the medium to be used in the English schools the Committee's recommendations were that, normally, to the vernacular speaking child English should be introduced on the basis of education through the medium of the Vernacular, with special attention to English in the Direct Method. "[13]

It follows that the early education offered in the English Schools must be of two kinds, according as the mother tongue of the pupil is English or one of the national languages.

By this time the English students generally worked on two schedules, one providing a curriculum in the English medium, the other, a curriculum using a national language as the medium of instruction in the lower classes while English was taught as a foreign language.

Legislative Council Debate on Swabhasha

On February 25th 1926 the Legislative Council debated a motion presented by Hon. Mr. A. Canagaratnam on the Education Policy of the Government. This motion is reproduced in its original form as it brings out an accumulation of opinions on the effects on society, of an educational system that had established itself in the country.

" As the educational policy of maintaining two sets of schools for the people of this Island, English and vernacular, has resulted in the following :

(1) Vernacular schools being reduced to the level of teaching pupils just to read and write and not proceeding much further in the imparting of knowledge ;

(2) The vernacular languages having no chance of development as vehicles of modern thought in spite of their being cultured languages, although under an altered policy, all modern knowledge can be easily incorporated into them so as to become the property of the Ceylonese people, just as it is the common property of all other civilised nations ;

(3) The people being deprived of originality of thought and of culture in their own languages and the growth of their own literatures having come to a dead stop ;

(4) The training given in English Schools alienating the pupils from the traditions, instead of enabling them to utilize their own ancestral culture and advancement on foundations upon which to build further intellectual progress ;

(5) The environment in English schools encourage the indiscriminate adoption by Ceylonese youths of European modes of living which are unsuited to their own traditions and the conditions of the climate ;

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(6) An economic and social revolution caused by such indiscriminate imitation of European modes of living which is causing new social irregularities and an increased cost of living ;

(7) Education in English schools, owing to such schools being regarded as of a superior class, leading to a false sense of dignity and causing distaste to manual labour ;

(8) Children whose mother tongue is Sinhalese or Tamil being unable, when sent to English schools, where alone some substantial knowledge is imparted, to connect ideas imparted to them at school, and the natural and progressive growth of their intellect being thus checked ;

(9) The necessity under which such children are placed to acquire knowledge of a new language in their infancy, in order to acquire fresh ideas creating an undesirable mental strain on them and leading to considerable waste of time and energy ;

(10) Neglect of provision for instruction in Sinhalase and Tamil languages in Sinhalese and Tamil schools respectively ;

this Council recommends that the policy adopted in most civilised countries, of having only one set of public schools graded according to the standard of instruction imparted in them be adopted in Ceylon also, and that English, Sinhalese and Tamil be made language subjects in all schools, mother tongue of the students being gradually adopted as the medium of instruction in schools of all grades, and that with a view to devising practical measures to give effect to this recommendation a Committee of the House or a Commission be appointed consisting of members who understand the traditions, culture and present requirements of the mass of the people. "[14]

A very stimulating debate followed the introduction of this motion in the Legislative Council and Hon. Mr. A. Mahadeva countered some of the arguments against education in English.

Mr. Mahadeva very realistically pointed out the radical solution to the problem when he said :

" I should have thought that if my Honourable friend was keen on the subject-matter of the motion he would have started action on an entirely different line ; that he would have come forward with a resolution asking that in the conduct of the business of this Council the members be given the option, if they so desire, to speak in the Vernacular. If he had done that, there might have been a few members of the learned class who would have at least thought of pursuing their studies in the Vernacular, in order to enter this Council. The Honourable member might also have brought a resolution in Council to say that the Government business should be conducted in the Vernaculars. He must prepare the soil before sowing the seed. The conditions are not favourable at present for the growth of his ideas. He should have said, as I conceive it, that the business of the Legislative Council and the business of the Law Courts should be conducted in the Vernacular. Then only, will there be such a cry in the country for the study

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of the vernacular, that none of us here in Council would have dared to oppose my Honourable friend. But to come forward with a scheme and say " Fashion your scheme of education on the Vernacular, and do not allow outlets for those educated in that medium of instruction is to court disaster."[15]

These, indeed, were the genuine considerations which kept down the speed of the Swabhasa movement. Mr. D. B. Jayatilake introduced a sober note into the debate when he said that,

" There is, perhaps, no other question in regard to which prejudice, sentiment, and even ignorance may direct the views of those who discuss it. We have to avoid two dangers in discussing this matter ; on the one hand we have to steer clear of the rock of false nationalism and on the other hand the rock of national indifference and lukewarmness which masquerade in the guise of cosmopolitanism. It is not easy to navigate between this Scylla and that Charybdis, but if we do not do so, we shall be doing a great wrong by the country." Mr. Jayatilleke moved an amended resolution to the effect that—" A Commission be appointed to inquire into and report upon the system of education in Ceylon particularly with reference to the question

(*a*) What measures should be adopted in order to extend the scope of education in Vernacular schools ;

(*b*) How far is it practicable to make Sinhalese and Tamil the media of instruction in the schools ;

(*c*) What steps should be taken to improve the teaching of Oriental Languages in the English Schools."

This amendment was carried, and a Commission was appointed on 17th July, 1926. The Commission Report was issued as Sessional Paper XXVIII of 1929. The Commission did not find it easy to make definite proposals regarding the use of Vernaculars as media of instruction.

Three proposals came under detailed discussion of the Commission.

(*a*) The first was, that in spite of the multilingual character of Ceylon, the medium of instruction should be confined throughout school life to one language, viz, the vernacular. It was felt that to adopt that as a solution for all schools would not only over-accentuate the division of the social organisation on a language basis, but it would also deny to the pupils of Ceylon a knowledge of languages other than their mother tongue which is essential for the future development of the country.

(*b*) The Second proposal was that the medium of instruction in all subjects should be the Vernacular up to a definite stage of school life when a second language could be introduced.

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(*c*) The third proposal which was considered suitable to Ceylon schools was that the medium of instruction at the beginning of school life should be the vernacular and that introduction of a second language should be done in a carefully graded and progressive manner, thus avoiding the abrupt change in the medium of instruction which appeared to be a defect in the then existing system.

Although the Education Commission of 1929 failed to face the language problem boldly and make a firm decision, the movement for the introduction of national languages as media of instruction gathered momentum in the later years. The story of how the issues raised by it were settled with the achievement of political responsibility during the following decades will be discussed in a subsequent Chapter.

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VII

THE CURRENT PHASE—ITS BASES AND TRENDS

(a) Administration, Organisation and Management of Education

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THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA

J. R. JAYEWARDENE

Introductory Comments

In 1829, Lt. Col. W. M. G. Colebrooke and C. H. Cameron were commissioned by the British Government to conduct an ' inquiry into the administration of the Island of Ceylon, among other dependencies. The findings of this Commission, so far as they deal with education, are dealt with elsewhere in this volume. Suffice it to say that the proposed reforms were purely utilitarian, directed more at effecting economies and generally making the wheels of administration work more smoothly than at achieving any idealistic or humanitarian ends. They did, however, in the end, lead to an increase in literacy among the people of Ceylon by suggesting the establishment of more schools and the provision of better facilities for education.

In the years that followed, the State, through the Schools Commission, attempted to provide educational facilities to meet the administrative requirements of the country, and education in the vernacular was almost neglected. As a result of the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction, the formation of policies for mass education and the enactment of necessary legislation to enforce compulsory attendance in the first decade of this century, there was a marked increase in the rate of literacy in the country. The English educated elite in particular, who were through their education in touch with political developments in the other parts of the Empire, continued their agitation with great vigour for greater control in the affairs of the State. As a result of this agitation, the elective principle was introduced into the Legislature and a seat for a Ceylonese representative covering the whole Island, called the Educated Ceylonese seat, was created in 1911.

In 1924, the Legislative Council was reconstituted mainly on an elective basis. For the first time the elected representatives of the people outnumbered the Governor and the

JAYEWARDENE, Hon. J. R. Member of Parliament for Col. South in the House of Representatives, Minister of State since July 1965, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister,—Minister of Defence and External Affairs, Chief Government Whip in the House of Representatives. Mr. Jayewardene was the Member for Kelaniya in the State Council 1943–1947, Minister of Finance in the first Parliament of Ceylon 1948–1952, second Parliament of Ceylon, 1952–1953 and fourth Parliament of Ceylon March 1960 to July 1960. Minister of Agriculture and Food and Leader of the House of Representatives October, 1953 to April, 1956. Chief Opposition Whip July, 1960 to March, 1965. Mr. Jayewardene has been Leader of the Ceylon Delegations to various conferences abroad between 1948 — 1955 and 1965–1968. He was the Vice-President UNCTAD II, New Delhi, February and March, 1968. Co-author of Colombo Plan, 1950, author of " Sermons of Buddha ", " Buddhist Essays " and " Buddhism and Marxism".

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Nominated Unofficial Members. This Legislative Council had, however, a vital defect in itself—it wielded power without responsibility.

Donoughmore Commission—1928

In 1928, almost one hundred years after Colebrooke and Cameron, the British Government, under well nigh three decades of continuous pressure from the people of this Island, sent out the Earl of Donoughmore at the head of a Commission to ' visit the Island of Ceylon and report on the working of the existing Constitution'. The Commission in its report said,

" We have no hesitation in saying that the educated element of the Ceylonese people, of which they are typical and representative, provides as fine a material as could be wished for the realisation of their country's political progress. Had the existing Constitution extended to them, within limits however narrow, responsible participation in the Government we should have been in a better position to estimate their reactions to high office and to determine . . . . this capacity for handling affairs of State".[1]

The year 1931 can be considered as a landmark in the history of our country. For the first time, not only in Ceylon but in the whole of Asia, manhood suffrage was granted and Legislators and Ministers were elected by this suffrage. It is true the Donoughmore Commission, inaugurated in that year, did not give complete freedom, but over a wide range of internal matters the Ministers were given complete authority, subject to the over-riding powers of the Governor. The Sun of independence had begun to shine in the eastern horizon. A new era had dawned. Now to the ' power ' of the legislative body was wedded ' responsibility' for its actions.

Under the pre-Donoughmore Constitution administration, primary education was largely in the hands of the Government. Higher education was gradually established under the direction of different religious group, particularly the Catholics and the Church of England and the Wesleyans. The first important Government higher educational institution, the Colombo Academy, which still exists under the changed name of the Royal College, dates from 1835. The Donoughmore Constitution provided for an elected Minister of Education. For the first time a man who was from the people and knew their problems was put in charge of the education of their children.

Changes under the Donoughmore Constitution

This Constitution provided for an elected Minister of Education.

The change had immediate results. The Minister and his Executive Committee of elected representatives were responsive to the needs of the people. Firstly, they considered the problems of teachers and decided that those in the employ of private bodies and persons should be paid direct by the Government. This liberated the profession and helped teachers to be independent.

The next problem they had to face was the inadequacy of accommodation. The increase in the population had not been met by the increased number of schools. More and more funds were voted in the Annual Budgets ; there were also

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consequent increases in the recruitment of teachers and in the provision of other requirements for the teaching profession such as science equipment and furniture. With the advent of Freedom in 1948 it was possible to build schools from loan funds, and thus one of the impediments to the provision of adequate education facilities was removed. Prior to this, even capital expenditure on education had to be found from current revenue.

Another problem that had to be solved was the medium of instruction. Since the advent of British rule English had become the official language ; it was only those who had a knowledge of English who were able to take part in the transactions of the State. The vast majority of schools taught in the mother tongue, but the English medium was only available in the secondary schools managed largely by private organisations. These were few in number and available only to the children of rich parents who were able to pay fees. The Executive Committee had to proceed cautiously as British rule still persisted. A beginning was made with the establishment of a Sinhala stream in the kindergarten class of the Royal Preparatory State School.

The Executive Committee on Education then turned its attention to the pupils themselves. One of the most advanced measures they adopted was the provision of the free mid-day meal to all school children. This scheme operates even today and has been of great benefit to children whose parents are not well off.

In this way the Minister of Education and his Committee laid the foundations for a new educational structure. They also considered the recommendations made in the Report of an Education Commission appointed in 1926. A new Bill, to give effect to the redistribution of functions in regard to educational policy and administration as a result of the new Donoughmore Constitution was made in 1936. The most important step, however, was when the Education Committee appointed a Special Committee on Education in 1940. The Report of this Committee published in 1943 was debated in the State Council in 1946, and its implementation opened a new and modern era in education in Ceylon.

Defects Remedied by Elected Representatives

If one considers the defects of our educational system as it existed when the Donoughmore Constitution was inaugurated, and even ten years later, when the Education Committee was functioning, one will be able to realise how those defects were met by subsequent Governments. At the time the Committee was appointed in 1940, primary education was controlled by the Government and by denominational bodies and private persons.

The medium of instruction in these schools was in the mother tongue. The secondary schools conducted their work through the English medium and except for the Royal College and one or two others they were all controlled by denominational bodies and private organisations. The denominational schools were entirely in the hands of Christian organisations until the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the Buddhist Theosophical Society was formed. Even in 1940 the majority of schools were controlled by the Christian organisation. Since the secondary schools were

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largely in the main towns and in the Western Province, in the larger area outside this region children were learning in primary schools through the mother tongue. The Education Committee recommended that this system should be abolished and that all schools should adopt the national languages as the media of instruction. This was a revolutionary but essential recommendation. The State Council adopted this and began to implement it, and within ten years every school in Ceylon taught through the mother tongue media with English as a compulsory second language. It was the Donoughmore Constitution State Council that accepted and began to implement this proposal.

The next defect that existed was the excessive uniformity in the type of education given to the children. The syllabus was weighted heavily in favour of academic education. Little consideration was paid to the practical aspects of life. The Education Committee and the State Council sought to change this system in order to afford every pupil an opportunity of being taught according to his natural capacity. This process is still being implemented and more and more emphasis is being placed on agricultural, industrial and scientific training.

The third defect was the lack of opportunity for children to be educated. The important schools both primary and secondary, particularly secondary, were in the main towns. In the village there was only the primary school teaching through the mother tongue media. The foundations for changing this system, whereby educational opportunities were brought to the village were laid by the State Council. Today without leaving the village a pupil can secure an education which enables him to sit for the University Entrance Examination.

Conclusion

Under the Donoughmore Constitution, General Elections were held in 1931 and 1936. Owing to the second World War, the 1936 State Council's life was extended till 1947. In September 1947, the Soulbury Constitution was introduced and a few months later, in February 1948, Ceylon regained its political independence. By this time the Members of the State Council, elected by manhood suffrage, and particularly those vested with educational functions, the Executive Committee led by the Minister of Education, the Hon'ble C. W. W. Kannangara, who was Minister from 1931 to 1946, had studied the educational problems of Ceylon, brought their minds to bear on them and taken some of the steps I have mentioned to solve these problems and to inaugurate a system of education suited to the people of Ceylon.

With the sudden transformation of an electorate, hitherto restricted to a literate and property-owning minority, to one where every adult, male or female, regardless of literacy or property, was given the right to vote for the person of his choice, reforms of all sorts began to occupy the minds of the legislature. Not least among them were the reforms in the sphere of education. The most sweeping of all was the introduction of measures to make ' education free from the Kindergarten to the University '. The State thus accepted and assumed full responsibility for the provision of educational facilities to all, and thus inaugurated an era in which equality

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of opportunity, at least in education, was an established fact. The national languages were progressively used as media of instruction throughout schools so that now for the first time there was no barrier to the pursuit of education through all its stages in the mother tongue. Now for the first time, too, those who guided the destinies of our nation approached the problems of education with some definite end in view. Gone were the days when the pressing problems of education were studiously evaded and ad-hoc policy decisions were made by the Imperial Government to suit its convenience rather than for the benefit of the people of the country.

REFERENCE

[1] Report of the Special Commission on the Ceylon Constitution—Ceylon Government Press, (1928), p. 29

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CHAPTER 51

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION—IN ACTION

A. RATNAYAKA

The Donoughmore Commission was appointed as a result of a series of agitations which began in 1915. That was the year of the riots when the British Government became panicky and arrested all the Sinhalese leaders and declared martial law. There was a reign of terror during which the whole nation was intimidated harassed and oppressed. The people realised that their plight was due to their political condition and they united to fight for political freedom. The Donoughmore Constitution was a step in the direction of self-government taken as a result of this agitation.

The Donoughmore Commissioners recommended, among other things, the association of Committees with the Ministers. After a General Election the State Council was to elect seven different Committees (namely—Home Affairs, Agriculture, Local Administration, Health, Education, Labour, Industry and Commerce, and Communications and Works) and these Committees were to elect their own Chairmen who became the Ministers of State and comprised the Board of Ministers together with three officials who were known as Officers of State (the Chief Secretary, the Legal Secretary and the Financial Secretary). These Committees were charged with executive functions although vital changes in policy could not be effected by them, that was exclusively a matter for the Governor. The Governor under this Constitution was virtually the Government of Ceylon. Decisions of Committees and the Council were reversed by the Governor's powers of certification. I remember moving a cut of Rs. 5 in the salary of the Chief Secretary. Although it was carried by the State Council, e Governor restored it within 12 hours. That was the nd of responsible government that Ceylon enjoyed under the Executive Committee System.

RATNAYAKA, HON. A., B.A. (LONDON), President of the Senate. Mr. Ratnayaka was the Minister of Food 1947–1952 and Minister of Home Affairs 1952–1956. He was a Member of the State Council from 1931–1947 and served on the Executive Committee for Education during this period. He was Acting Minister of Education during December 1943.

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Whether the Donoughmore Constitution should be accepted or not was hotly debated in the Legislative Council. The principal issue was the Executive Committee System. Arguments for and against were adduced by legislators. The Commissioners said that Party Government was the best method of government, but for certain reasons the people in this country could not have Party Government. The people were divided by caste, race and religion, and not being homogeneous, the Commissioners thought that every section of the people would be represented in these Committees. They also thought that Members would get an insight into the functions of Government and that these Committees would be a training ground for future administrators and ministers.

Mr. E. W. Perera was one of the most vehement opponents of the Committee System. He was of opinion that these Committees would move in concentric circles with their Chairman like planets and their satellites and then, in the Council Chamber, revolve like the solar system ; and in this way no effective work would be done. He maintained that this was an experiment which was being tried out in Ceylon and that we were being treated like guinea pigs for a political and constitutional experiment. He referred to the numerous committees that were appointed by the Legislative Council which never functioned efficiently and whose decisions were never carried out. If a member moved a resolution in open Council it would be referred to the Executive Committee concerned with the subject matter of the motion. There the matter would be discussed with or without that particular member. Such motions would often come back to the Council, with or without reports, and would be perpetually wandering in a political cul-de-sac. When such motions were reported on by the Committee, they would be discussed by the Council in executive session. It could happen, and often did that the report of the Committee, would be contrary to the wishes of the Minister concerned or for a matter of that even the Board of Ministers.

The Committee System was the prototype of the London County Council. The most dangerous element of Committees in the scheme is that it was designed to prevent the formation of parties and to render self-government on the footing of the British Parliamentary System unattainable.

The Parliamentary System of Government is essentially dependent for its success on combined, as opposed to individual effort, on the existence of parties whose representatives agree on a common policy and work together in support of their party's aims, are loyal to each other and to the party's decisions, and present on all major issues a united front in Parliament. It is the balance of the parties which gives stability and prevents too frequent changes of Government. It is the party system which renders politics intelligible to the electorate and reduce to a minimum the intrigues, bargaining and understanding which in a House of petty groups or independents are apt to become an essential preliminary to every parliamentary decision. " To begin with, parties are inevitable. No free country has been without it. No one has shown how representative Governments could be worked without parties. Thus party strife is a sort of education for those wishing to receive instruction, and something soaks through even to the less interested of our electors." (Bryce).

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The Commissioners on the other hand also thought that the League of Nations functioned in committees. Under this scheme the responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature is not possible, for the entire Legislature will be converted into an executive, and executive power is so divided that no one can be held responsible for any particular executive act. It is a case of responsibility divided between the Committee, the Minister and the Governor. Nominally, the Minister, who is the Chairman of the Committee, must be responsible. But, in reality, the powers of that Minister will be divided equally between himself and ten other members. It is a case of assumption by each individual Member of a Committee of a share of the responsibility, the only difference between the Minister and a member of this Committee is that the former holds the title and draws a higher salary. The Minister would not be in a position to carry out a policy of his own if the other members of the Committee did not agree with him. It might be a policy which would be supported by the State Council if it were brought before the Council. These members of the Committees, if they had any distrust of each other, would always be spying on one another and the life of the poor Minister would become unendurable. It was also urged that the Committee System would lead to a dead wall and could not lead to anything like constitutional progress on the road to self-government.

In the Committee System there was no collective responsibility. The responsibility was individual. If the Chairman found himself outvoted in his own Committee on some question of importance, what was the position ? Did he go out of office ? There would be no leader under the Committee System. The Chairman of each Committee would be responsible only for his own Committee's proposals. That is, the responsibility would be more individual than collective.

However, those who supported the Report admitted its short-comings but urged that the new Council might well be a more formidable platform for the fight for full freedom.

After a long and acrimonious debate the Legislative Council accepted the Donoughmore Report by a majority of one vote. The elections to the newly created State Council were held in June, 1931.

Messrs. D. B. Jayatillake (later Sir Baron) and D. S. Senanayaka got busy trying to set up a Board of Ministers acceptable to them. To get a sufficient number of supporters to each Executive Committee was a problem of mathematics. At that time the National Congress was not a political party but its members were keen to capture the Board of Ministers. They had only 12 members in a Council of 54. The task of the leaders to secure a homogeneous Board of Ministers became thus well nigh impossible. However, Messrs Jayatillaka and Senanayaka managed to get sufficient members into their own Executive Committees. But their plans to capture the other Executive Committees were not a success. They were unable to secure for their supporters a single place either in the Executive Committee of Communications and Works or of Labour, Industry and Commerce. These were manned by a cosmopolitan lot representing all communities. And they selected Mr. Mohamed Macan Marker and Mr. Peri Sunderam as their Ministers, neither of whom either planned or expected to be so elevated.

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In the Executive Committee of Education there were three Kandyans (Messrs. W. T. B. Karalliyadde and G. E. Madawala and myself). The Congress expected the Kandyans to capture the portfolio. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara was assured only of Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya's support. The Kandyans decided that I should be a candidate.

The election of the Chairman was to take place at 12 o'clock. At 11.30 a.m. I was sure of a majority. But Messrs. Jayatilaka and Senanayaka and Molamure (later Sir Francis Molamure, Speaker of the State Council) pleaded with me to stand down in favour of a senior and I agreed to do so. This demonstrates the uncertainties in forming Cabinets under an Executive Committee System of Government.

Though the leaders were themselves sceptical about the new legislative assembly they thought that the Committee System might be given a trial.

A feature that became quite apparent on many an occasion in this new system was that Committee Members overshadowed the Minister and practically dictated policy to him. Having, perhaps, no alternative, the Ministers themselves willingly co-operated and created no crises. In fact, most of the important reforms, social, cultural and educational, were initiated by private members either by motions moved in the Council or initiated in the Executive Committee. A few examples will illustrate my point.

My memorandum on Pansala Schools taken up for discussion on 2nd June, 1933, bore fruit and within a short period of time it was possible to have established 75 such institutions registered and functioning. They soon proved to be very useful in remote and inaccessible areas, particularly in the North-Central Province.

Mr. G. R. de Zoysa's motion that steps be taken to declare every full moon day a holiday in all Government Schools where 75 per cent and over of the strength of such schools were Buddhists resulted in the decision that Buddhist pupils were at liberty to absent themselves on such days from schools for the purpose of religious observance.

Capt. E. A. Nugawela's motion taken up for discussion at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 17th August, 1936, regarding the appointment of a Commission on the existing system of education resulted in the appointment of the *Special Committee on Education* of which I had the honour of being a Member. It was due entirely to the suggestions of this Special Committee that Free Education at all levels in Government academic institutions in Ceylon was initiated.

Though accepted, Mr. S. C. Canagaratnam's motion that Government should make provision for the compulsory teaching of Sinhalese in Tamil Schools and of Tamil in Sinhalese schools in order to bring about a better understanding and create closer cultural co-operation among the communities of the Island was not fully implemented, but if done with foresight many of the latter day ills may possibly have been avoided.

My motions regarding permission being allowed to teachers in Government schools to give religious instruction to children in their schools immediately before or after school sessions, as well as the one seeking the acquisition of all private buildings in

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the neighbourhood of ancient monuments at Anurādhapura were unanimously accepted as far back as 1938. So also was Mr. Bernard Aluwihare's resolution to effect a better distribution of Government grants or award of scholarships to enable opportunities for higher education to be more equally distributed.

However, Mr. George E. de Silva's motion in 1938 to construct a national playground in a central area in this country to serve as a venue for Olympic Games as well, and Mr. S. Natesan's resolution of June, 1942, that institutions of University status be set up in Colombo for the Sinhalese and in Jaffna for the Tamils with a view to providing higher studies in these two languages with particular reference to modern scientific knowledge and culture have yet only been partly implemented though the necessity for such has been long felt.

The most revolutionary proposal, viz., to make education free from Kindergarten to the University came from a private member. I had the privilege of moving this motion in the Special Committee that was appointed to consider educational reforms. Their recommendations were adopted by the Executive Committee and finally implemented by the Government. When I proposed that all education should be free, I was concerned that it will not only abolish all inequalities in providing educational facilities for the children of the nation, but the scheme I suggested would prove to be a profitable investment. I suggested that we should adopt the basic scheme of education that was being worked out in India on the lines inspired by Gandhi. It was called " Basic Education. " Educationists throughout the world acclaimed basic education as the most scientific method of imparting instruction. There are universities today in America which are run on the principles of Basic Education. The students earn and learn. Learn and earn. One such university claims to make a profit after paying the teachers and providing board and lodging for the students.

As mentioned before, the Executive Committee of Labour, Industry and Commerce comprised a cosmopolitan lot. This Committee, which was generally regarded to be Left dominated, took the initiative to introduce useful legislation affecting labour and social service. The Poor Law Ordinance of 1939, making the State liable to grant relief to the unemployed, the setting up of Employment Exchanges, the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance of 1934, an Ordinance dealing with the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children on the lines laid down by the International Draft Conventions, a Maternity Benefits Ordinance, a comprehensive Factories Ordinance and a Wages Board Ordinance were some of the more important legislative measures adopted by the Council on its initiative during the period 1931–1946. And this too despite the fear entertained in certain circles that ' socialist ' legislation would overstrain the financial resources of the country.

The State Council, consisted of members who were more interested in the country than in any particular political party or dogma. Private Members were thus able to influence the decisions of the Government more than now. In fact, they had a greater knowledge of the science of Government than the majority of the politicians of the later eras. Not only did the State Council and the Executive Committees provide forums for the discussion of matters of public interest but they also served as places of training for many talented young men of high scholastic achievements

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who were potential Ministers and persons who were quite capable of 'jumping into the shoes of any Minister ' at any moment and functioning efficiently in such capacity. In fact, a majority of those elected to the legislature in those days were persons of some academic achievement and experience who could be expected to see through the political manoeuvres and intrigues of our then political masters. Despite many a shortcoming under the Executive Committee System of Government there was more co-operation between Ministers and private Members and although the budget was only 10 per cent of what it is today there was less discontent and more harmony prevailing in the country then.

Whatever its shortcomings may have been, it must be stated in justice to the State Council that it came to office at a time of acute and world-wide economic depression. This had serious repercussions in Ceylon, for dependent as it is largely on the export of its three agricultural products—tea, rubber and copra—the collapse of world markets inevitably involved much distress. Hardly had the signs of recovery shown themselves when the failure of the South-west monsoon in 1934 brought new disaster. The shortage in the foodcrops meant famine over wide areas. This was followed by the most severe malaria epidemic in history which lasted from autumn of 1934 to the summer of 1935 necessitating relief measures on an extensive scale. For these reasons there was an urgent call for extraordinary expenditure at a time when the revenue showed a considerable shrinkage. In 1935 the cost of various forms of relief had amounted to more than six million rupees, and despite the imposition of an income tax there were deficits in the National Revenue.

Concentration of attention on the criticism of the Executive Committee System of Government served to reveal the phases through which the reform movement had passed during the 10 years prior to the appointment of the Soulbury Commission, but it tended, however, almost completely to obscure the progress achieved, particularly in the sphere of social improvement despite its inherent defects.

However, as time went on even the Governor was of opinion that 'the Committee System of Government must be regarded as a proved failure.' In fact the case against the system seemed to him overwhelming. The Executive Committees made administration cumbrous and dilatory, they prevented any co-ordinated effort and hindered the emergence of any real Ministerial policy or responsibility. These were noticed to be the defects so inherent in the system that it could not be efficiently operated. He therefore recommended the abolition of the Committee System as he was not convinced that it provided any safeguard for the minorities, the only argument which was strongly urged on many an occasion in favour of its retention.

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CHAPTER 52

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION—FROM INSIDE

RAZIK FAREED

In contributing this chapter to the Centenary Volume it is proposed to deal with my experiences as a member of the Executive Committee on Education and record in brief some of my personal views from within. With the establishment of the State Council in 1931 the Committee system of administration was introduced. I am no authority nor do I have the knowledge of the type and nature of business that was transacted in the formative periods of the Executive Committee system. My public career started in or about this year and I did not get a foothold in the State Council of Ceylon immediately.

But agitator as I was and am still, my concern was for the people of my community. I had their interest in particular at heart and that of the nation in general. But my ultimate aim was a harmonious blending of all communities and my goal was a united Lanka under one flag.

I made constant and persistent representation to the Executive Committee on Education to remedy the many ills that the members who composed my community—the Ceylon Moors—a proud progeny of the early Arab traders from the Persian and Arabian Gulfs underwent. This Committee consisted of members who gave their time ungrudgingly. Their decision on any matter brought before them was unbiased. They considered every matter at issue, however small.

FAREED, SIR RAZIK, Sir Razik is High Commissioner for Ceylon in Pakistan. Before his appointment to the present post he was the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and a Memb_r of Parliament. Sir Razik was in the Senate from 1948–1952. He was also a Member of the Executive Committee for Education from 1942–1947. Sir Razik is a life President of the All-Ceylon Moors' Association and founded the First Muslim Ladies College in Ceylon. He has also founded the Moors' Islamic Cultural Home in 1946.

Father of Free Education

The Committee was fortunate in having Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, (later Dr.), as its Chairman. He is affectionately remembered as the father of free education in Ceylon. My close association with him helped me to form an indelible impression of the man. He is a man of unimpeachable integrity, soundness of opinion and a tireless worker. He entered the Legislative Council in 1923. In 1931 he was chosen as the President of the Ceylon National Congress and also Minister of Education of the

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first State Council that was formed in this year. He was re-elected as Minister in the 1936 State Council as well. He was fortunate enough to continue in this capacity till the first Parliament of independent Ceylon. So, he had almost 20 years of successful leadership on account of his ability, honesty, sincerity of purpose, and, above all, a national consciousness.

He made a speech in India in 1947 on " Education in Ceylon with special reference to the introduction of free education. " Even on neighbouring soil he never minced words. He was outspoken in his condemnation of any oppression on the part of any foreign power. Speaking on Colonial education he said :

> " The educational system of Ceylon, like the system obtaining in India, bears the impress of the needs of an alien Government rather than those of a people possessing widely differing ideals and traditions, ... "[1]

What brave words at a time when complete power had not yet come into Ceylonese hands ! He detested people who had taken on the airs of the British and who imitated their white masters in their own lives. He quoted the famous words of Lord Macaulay who said :

> " We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, opinions, morals and intellect." [2]

Their reason was obvious, as he said, "to raise up a class of persons to help in the administration of the Government, loyal to the Imperial masters and imbued with traditions imported from abroad. "

This was the period at which English education was the key to the door of office and material prosperity. While a few looked to material prosperity and made English its gateway, society began to divide itself into two classes. So, under the Committee system the Minister of Education had to deal with an educational system which rather than promoting retarded the unification of the people.

The Committee

At first the Executive Committee on Education consisted of seven people. For convenience, I am taking the position that existed in November, 1940, because incidents from then on are fresh in my mind. These seven men were dedicated to the cause of education. I have enumerated the role of the Chairman above. The others who assisted him—yes, assisted him often and fought with him sometimes—were Mr. G. A. H Wille, a Member of the State Council and I would term him the most vociferous critic in the Committee, Mr. A. Ratnayake, an elderly statesman who is the present President of the Senate, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, a well-known politician, but an equally well-known Buddhist social worker, the late Mr. S. Natesan who distinguished himself in various fields, chiefly in politics, the late Dr. T. B. Jayah, who was a famous Muslim educationist, for a long time Principal of Zahira College, Colombo, Member of Parliament, Minister of Labour in the first Parliament, and until his death in the Holy City of Medina, the High Commissioner for Ceylon in

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Pakistan. Then there was Dr. A. P. de Zoysa who has done yeoman service as a lexicographer. The Dictionaries he published are of invaluable assistance to today's scholars.

The Committee was very ably assisted by its Clerk, Mr. K. Alvapillai, who has had a distinguished career in public service and after him by Mr. T. D. Jayasuriya who later became the Director of Education.

First Contact

I was very well aware of the work of this Committee, and my dogged perseverance to bring certain glaring injustices to the notice of this Committee, brought me in contact with its members one day in 1941. On the 7th of March I walked into the Board Room of the Ministry of Education wherein the Executive Committee on Education met. The relevant minute states :

> " *Mr. A. R. A. Razik, M.S.C..* In view of numerous representations made by him with respect to the neglected conditions of the Muslims in the Government Schools in the Batticaloa District, the Executive Committee on education permitted him to appear in person and state his case."[3]

This was one invitation I looked forward to and one that happened to be the stepping stone to my membership of the Executive Committee on Education. On appearing before them, I made three main points, viz.,

(*a*) The Sainthamaruthu Government Girls' School and other schools had gone down very much in attendance ;

(*b*) Muslim children in Government schools were being asked to use text-books on which appeared pictures of Hindu deities ;

(*c*) That there were not sufficient Muslim teachers in the Government schools where Muslim students preponderate.

This brought about immediate results. The Committee suggested that Maulavi Abul Hassan be added on to the Tamil Text Books Committee.

Other than the Committee inviting members of the Public who made individual representations, there were officials concerned with the subject matter under discussion who would be present at a sitting of the Committee, For instance, there would be the Director of Education, the Principals of the Ceylon Technical College and The University College, the Legal Secretary and others.

The meetings were very regular and well attended. The meetings at times went on from day to day. Perhaps, since this Committee was the life-blood of education in Ceylon, it may not be out of place to mention the number of meetings it has had not since its inception, but since 1940, the period in which I got interested—year to year.

November 28, 1940–December 4, 1940	—	3	meetings
January 22, 1941–December 3, 1941	—	42	,,
,, 6, 1942–December 9, 1942	—	45	,,
,, 20, 1943–December 13, 1943	—	38	,,
,, 21, 1944–December 13, 1944	—	37	,,
,, 16, 1945–December 6, 1945	—	37	,,
,, 21, 1946–December 11, 1946	—	33	,,

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Free Mid-day Meal

One of the most important decisions of the Committee and the one that benefited a large section of the poor students of this country was the grant of free mid-day meals to needy children. This was not the sole responsibility of the Committee. As children in free municipal schools came under this category, the municipal council too contributed its mite. The cost of a meal then was 4½ cents of which the municipality contributed 2½ cents and the Committee 2 cents.

Autonomy

The Ceylon Technical College, being the premier trade school to be opened in the Island, played an important role in the discussions and gave many a headache to the Members as more and more shortcomings in its internal administration were brought to light. On the 27th of September, 1940 the Committee decided to separate the Ceylon Technical College from the Department of Education and give it a measure of autonomy.

District Committees

The nucleus of the Educational set-up was the Executive Committee which met in Colombo. It had to be well informed on educational problems. The members of the Committee, unless specially deputised, were unable to gain access to or possess knowledge of educational problems. For the convenience of the Committee, the country was divided into various educational districts and prominent residents appointed to the Education District Committees who were responsible for giving advice to the Committee on local problems.

National languages

The question of the two national languages being included in the curriculum cropped up as early as the 29th of November, 1940 on which date the Committee authorized the teaching of Sinhalese and Tamil at Royal College. It also authorized the inclusion of Sinhala and Tamil as optional subjects in the syllabus for the C. C. S. and Police Probationers' Examinations.

Though education was the chief problem of the Committee, there were many matters that came within its purview, some of which were the question regarding housing of the Regalia in the Colombo Museum, schools, archaeology, technical education and universities.

Appointments being the chief concern of the Executive Committee on Education, we often faced the situation that when there would be two candidates seeking appointment and the members formed their opinion about the capability of each person, invariably there was a division at voting time. If the Committee divided equally, the Chairman gave his casting vote to the most suitable candidate, in his opinion.

The other matters that came within the purview of the Committee were : Antiquities, Pensions, Board of Appeal, appointment of non-Ceylonese teachers to schools for which permission had to be obtained from the Executive Committee

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on Education, the business of the Royal Asiatic Society, permission for the use of the old Palace, loan of objects in the museum, use of text books, inquiry into allegations, leakage of question papers, award of research scholarships, permission to sell copyrights of books, petitions, prayers, extension of scholarships and payment of grants.

Private Candidates

When the higher examination was conducted by the Department of Education private candidates were not permitted to take up the S. S. C. examination. It was only on the 4th of December, 1940 that a decision was taken by the Committee to permit private candidates to sit for the S. S. C. (English) Examination.

In addition to the Education District Committees there was a Board of Education which looked after various matters pertaining to education and rendered advice to the Committee.

On January 22, 1941 the Committee organized Teachers' training courses at Alutgama, Kandy and Batticaloa.

Definition of the Needy

The question as to who the " needy " were who were entitled to receive free mid-day meals arose on March 19, 1941 and a definition was sought from the Committee. The Committee defined needy children as " children whose parents or guardian are in the opinion of the civil authorities, unable, owing to poverty, to feed them. "

It was on this day that the question of the constitution of advanced courses in Sinhala and Tamil for oriental scholars at the University College arose and the late T. B. Jayah, the only Muslim in the Committee, asked that Arabic too be included.

Second Visit

My next peep into the Committee was on March 20th 1941, as an invitee, on which day I urged that the salary of provisionally registered vernacular teachers should not be reduced on the lapse of the registration period pending a decision on my motion which I was intending to move at the State Council. After discussion it was decided to lay it by pending the decision on the motion.

It was also on this day that the Committee decided to have two Muslims in the Text Books Committee. The second Muslim to be included was Maulavi Habeebu Mohamed of Zahira College, Colombo.

Men With a Mission

The members of the Committee were men with a mission. The case of any deserving student received their careful consideration. On March 28, 1941 they created five scholarships for poor deserving students at the Alutgama Teacher Training Colle e at Rs. 150 each per annum.

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By May 14, 1941 the Committee was beginning to feel that the Ceylon Moors were left far behind their sister communities where education was concerned. It went all out to accommodate Muslim students to get whatever training they required. The Committee, on this day, approved the proposal by the Minister for varying the regulations governing admissions to the Training School Entrance Examination, thereby permitting Ceylon Moor candidates who had passed the J. S. C. and had service as teachers and Maulavies to enter for the examination—a step in the right direction, no doubt, and a boon to the members of my community.

Also, on this day, the Committee took another important step. It considered the question of converting the University College into a full-fledged university pending the construction of buildings at Peradeniya.

Self-sufficiency in Food

A recurring problem with successive Governments in Ceylon was self-sufficiency in food. My mind goes back to the 8th of July, 1941 when the then Financial Secretary in a letter dated 9th April, 1941, asked for a list of schemes considered by the Committee as suitable for assistance from the Colonial Development Fund.

The Committee, after a protracted discussion, decided to suggest the following :

(*a*) A scheme to promote food production in school gardens

(*b*) A scheme to establish public libraries and play grounds

(*c*) A scheme for putting up new schools in the under-developed areas

(*d*) A scheme for placing educated boys on the land

The problem we faced in 1941 and what we face today are not different.

Arabic Too

The agitation for a place for Arabic too was gaining ground and it was a happy day for the Muslims when on 6th August, 1941, the Committee recommended that papers in Arabic and English (special) should be included in the scheme of examination for recruitment to the Ceylon Police Service.

The recommendation made by the Committee to make Arabic and English as optional subjects for recruitment of Police Probationers was formally approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I was next in the Committee asking that provision be made for 20 scholarships each year for at least eight years at the Government Training School, Alutgama. However, the Committee was not inclined to grant this request of mine, as they had already allowed five scholarships.

Emergency

When the war clouds were drifting over this country by virtue of our dependance on Britain, it became necessary to form a Defence Emergency Commission. On the suggestion of the late T. B. Jayah, all the members of the Board of ministers and

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five members of the State Council representing minorities were co-opted. It was also at this time that a decision was taken to hold only one full-time session in schools on account of the war, and supply rice for free mid-day meals.

Archivist

On the 27th of January, 1942, I sent in a communication regarding the allocation of the scholarships reserved for Muslim children of vernacular and bilingual schools but the Committee resolved that the awards made by the Department should stand. They let the unawarded scholarships lapse. They also decided on this date to make the Archivist's Department a separate department under Executive Committee on Education.

Arabic Teachers

On the 10th of February, 1942, a communication was received by the Committee from the Matara Muslim Association relating to the appointment of Arabic teachers to Government Tamil schools in which Muslims were in a majority. The Committee resolved to make provision in the next Estimate.

First Entry

On the 10th of March, 1942 came my big break. I was fortunately appointed to the Executive Committee on Education on Mr. D. Wanigasekera's going out of the Committee. This gave me the opportunity to carry on my fight from within. My effort from without came to an end when I attended the meeting of the Committee on 11th March, 1942.

Madrasas

On the 8th of April, 1942 another milestone was reached in the interest of Muslim education when a provision of Rs. 1,000 was included in the personal emoluments Vote for recognized Madrasas, which were to be included immediately after " Pirivenas ".

The Committee also decided to fill the vacancy in Grade I of the Inspectorate by the appointment of an inspector of schools well qualified in Arabic from abroad. However, there was no suitable candidate among non-Ceylonese applicants and it was resolved to appoint the best qualified candidate among Ceylonese applicants to the post.

The University College too received provision for a lecturer in Arabic.

It was further decided to instruct the Director of Education to appoint, wherever possible, a teacher competent to teach Arabic to each Government vernacular school where the majority of pupils are Muslims.

Also, at this time the Committee invited Khan Bahadur Mohamed Shah Ulla, a recognized Archæological Chemist of India and made a supplementary estimate under Head 113 to meet the extra cost of inviting him.

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Vice Chancellor

On the 19th of May, 1942 the University Ordinance, No. 20 of 1942 was enacted and Sir Ivor Jennings who was hitherto Principal, University College, was made the Vice Chancellor of the new university.

On the 21st of May, 1942 the Committee decided to discontinue the Cambridge Senior Examination at the end of 1942, the London Matriculation Examination after June, 1943 and allow only the local S. S. C. Examination instead.

Objection

In January, 1943 there were two objections raised :

(1) The book " Golden Island " by Dennis Clerk, prescribed for the J. S. C., hurt the religious susceptibilities of Hindus; it was ordered to be withdrawn.

(2) " Tamil Readers " that were used in Muslim schools were not suitable for Muslim children and it was decided that Tamil Readers which the Muslims object to should not be used in Government Muslim schools.

The modern trend started actually on 10th March, 1943 when Sinhala and Tamil were made compulsory subjects for G. C. E. Examination, also providing a lower paper for those whose nationality is neither Sinhala nor Tamil.

New Clerk

On the 8th of June, 1943 our very efficient and capable clerk of the Committee went out and Mr. T. D. Jayasuriya who later became the Director of Education was appointed Clerk of the Committee with Mr. K. A. Ratnapala as his assistant.

For the year 1943-44 it was decided that provision should be made to afford board and lodging facilities for poor children attending Central Schools at the rate of 40 scholarships per central school and that monetary provision of Rs. 135,000 should be included in the Estimates.

There were occasions when the argument was so heated that the Committee divided on important issues and the responsibility lay on the Chairman to cast his deciding vote. I am reminded of an occasion when the question whether a manager of a school had the liberty of discontinuing a teacher if the particular teacher was of the manager's faith and married a person of a religious faith other than the one to which the manager belonged. Strangely in this matter the Committee concurred but the Chairman dissented.

Fearless

The Committee was never afraid of political or other influence. I remember how a site was chosen for a Muslim school at Madampe. There were various objections, the chief of which came from Hon. G. C. S. Corea. But the Committee was not swayed, after inviting him and hearing his objections the Committee refused to agree with him and ordered that acquisition proceedings should go on.

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Special Committee

On 2nd December, 1943 the recommendation of the Special Committee on Education was taken up for discussion and we discussed each recommendation thoroughly and voted on it.

In March,1944, religion came to be recognized as an optional subject up to J.S.C. and S.S.C.

Free Education

The pearl of great price—free education was mooted in this country in the year 1945. This was a proud occasion for the Executive Committee on Education. The Chairman announced it, but it was a co-operative endeavour of the entire Committee devoid of any dissent. All schools that elected to join the scheme had to decide in 1945. All schools that declined to join received no assistance from Government but they were free to remain as fee-levying unaided schools.

On 5.12.1944 the Muslims had their big say and a grand leap forward when a Sub-Committee, that was appointed to go into the special difficulties of Muslim Schools, desired the Director of Education to have the following data before they met on 12.12.1944 :

(*a*) The number of Muslim pupils in Government schools attending Standards IV and V

(*b*) Places where new Muslim schools are necessary

(*c*) A list of offers made by Muslim individuals and societies for the establishment of Muslim schools

(*d*) A list of requests made from time to time for Muslim schools in Muslim areas

This Sub-Committee's recommendations were accepted and from that point onwards there was no turning back; over 300 schools began to be established for the benefit of Muslim children and Muslim education.

Co-education

A step in the direction of co-education too was taken when it was decided on 15.2.1945 that in view of the fact that Muslim women teachers are practically unobtainable in Muslim areas, as a temporary measure Muslim male teachers be appointed to Muslim Girls' schools.

The Moors who were up to now badly neglected began to get a foothold in the educational progress of this country. This does not mean that the other minority communities were overlooked.

Result

If this was the useful work undertaken by the Committee on Education,the question may be asked what purpose did it serve? Was it of benefit to this country? Each

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individual has his own opinion about a particular matter. Before I hazard an opinion on this matter, it is better for me to quote the words of a truly national patriot who said :

" This recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission—the Committee system of Government—was a novel experiment, a system of Government not tried in any other country. It was " Take it or leave it ", It had grave defects. It was unsuited as a system of Government for the people of this country. It had certain advantages but such advantages were out-balanced by positive disadvantages ".

If I may set out my own view on this positive disadvantage I can put down one concrete fact. There were two members in the Committee who were educationists—Messrs. Jayah and Natesan. As Manager or Principal of an educational institution they received orders from the Director of Education. But when they sat as Members of the Committee they gave orders to the Director of Education, which to my mind, is quite an anomalous situation.

" This system of Government, instead of centralizing and fixing responsibility it divides responsibility and disperses it. I consider that as a fatal defect in any Government of the people.[4]

All in all I feel that it had a blend of temper, a greater measure of understanding, a quicker way of getting through business, a safer method of appointment completely free from influence and above all a comprehensive understanding of problems, however minute.

Even the report on Constitutional Reform said that the Executive Committee system was a division of various Ministries into watertight compartments each of them, as it were a separate Cabinet.[5]

Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara once said in an address :

" It was with pardonable pride that the great Augustus, commenting on his magnificent achievements, stated that he found a Rome of brick and left it of marble. May I venture on this occasion to conclude this memorandum on Education in Ceylon with the flattering but just remark that the State Council of Ceylon found education dear and left it free,that they found it a sealed book and left it an open letter, that they found it the patrimony of the rich and left it the lasting inheritance of the poor."

Having gone through all the types of Governments that were established in this country, may I conclude by saying that by far the best system suited to this country is the one time experimental form—the Committee System—and that, no doubt, would solve many a problem facing this country effectively.

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[3] Minutes of the Executive Committee on Education—7th March 1941

[4] Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Hansard, Volume II, March 9, 1939

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CHAPTER 53

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

K. Alvapillai

Introductory

Knowledge was necessary to the human race for its existence in harmony with its environment, for the mitigation of the rigours of such existence and indeed for its very survival. In ancient times, education meant the process of acquiring such knowledge and also the mental and moral training necessary to the evolution of cultural values. Education was conceived of as mere instruction. It was in the hands of voluntary organizations such as the church and temple or even individual teachers. The ' gurukula ' system of India and the pirivena system of this country are examples of voluntary systems of education in vogue in those days. Needless to say, only a tiny fraction of the community benefited by these systems. It was a long time after, when Governments and organized private effort came to be interested in education ; and even then public education was restricted to the few who were needed to assist in the administration of the country. Man's search for new wants and the economic development that followed his aspiration to a higher culture and his evolution as a political being gave education a new importance. Inevitably it came to be regarded as the key to social progress and stability. National Governments had, therefore, to encourage, assist and even control the education of the community. A political scientist, discussing the priority which Governments should allot to their various subjects and functions, wrote that defence (external and internal) should come first, food should be second, education third, health fourth and so on. But it is indisputable that the progress and development achieved by mankind in the last one hundred years, whether it be in the political, economic, social or cultural sphere are the result of education. With the growth of democratic concepts education came to take its place as the most important instrument of all advancement. Whatever be the organization needed to promote and administer education, it came to be gradually accepted

ALVAPILLAI, K., B. A. HONS. (LONDON), O. B. E. Mr. Alvapillai was a Member of the Ceylon Civil Service and has held several appointments including judicial posts under the Government of Ceylon. He functioned as the Secretary of The Executive Committee for Education from 1937–43 and as Food Commissioner till 1953, and later as Permanent Secretary in three Ministries from 1953–1963. Presently, he is the Chairman of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation.

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that national governments should accord it first priority among all their functions and bring it under their close attention. Ministries of Education were created to look after all aspects of its development.

Said an educationist :

" It is difficult to think of any new movement in national life which does not owe its inception, or at least the rapidity of its subsequent development, to the fact that we are becoming an educated democracy."

The role of education in the development of democratic ideas has been significant but at the same time the democratic ideal has stimulated the development of education. But later developments have proved that the educational organization of a State is determined by the character of the society which it has to serve and by the nature of the State. Hence, we see today vast differences in the systems of education of different countries. The character of an educational system is accordingly largely determined by social and political forces.

Origin of the Special Committee

The report, findings, and recommendations of the Special Committee on Education constitute a milestone in the history of education in Ceylon. Its work derives its importance on several grounds. First and foremost is the fact that it is the result of the only complete and comprehensive investigation of all aspects of education undertaken during a hundred and fifty years of British rule in Ceylon. The Portuguese and the Dutch, who ruled the country for varying periods before the arrival of the British, showed very little interest in the education of its inhabitants. As the main aim of administration in those days was the exploitation of the ruled by the rulers, all that was necessary in the field of education was to make the people willing collaborators in the process of this exploitation. On the heels of the foreign invaders came the propagators of Western religion and culture and they were encouraged by the former in their activities, aimed at weaning the people away from their traditional religion and culture. Education thus passed largely into the hands of the foreign missionaries and the principal aim of the education they were keen to control was proselytism. The traditional system of education in vogue was accordingly pushed to the background. During the time of the Dutch some Government Schools imparting instruction in Sinhalese and Tamil were established to supplement the efforts of the missionaries. With the advent of British rule, however, there was a marked change in the attitude of the colonial government to the education of the people.

Although following the policy of laissez faire, held sacred in their own country, and as such giving the missionaries still greater encouragement, the Colonial Governors started to take a direct interest in education. A Central School Commission was set up in 1841 with the object of providing more Government schools. Apart from the realization that education of the governed was necessary in the interest of good and orderly government a more enlightened outlook was evident on the part of the government. For instance, Governor Mackenzie laid down that schools should be open to children of all denominations, children should be taught their own language before being taught English, books should be translated into Sinhalese and Tamil and that teachers should be trained. The number of inquiries and investigations

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instituted regarding the provision and administration of education beginning from 1830 was an indication of the importance attached by the Colonial Government to the evolution of a progressive system of education. Of course, a large share of the credit for moving the government to act was due to the agitation carried on by the Ceylon leaders of that time. But most of the Commissions or Committees that were set up from time to time were called upon to report on questions or problems piecemeal. One of the earliest investigations, which attempted to cover most aspects of the educational problems of the day, was by a Sub-Committee of the Legislative Council set up in 1865. It was required to,

> " inquire into and report upon the state and prospects of education in the Island and the amount of success which has attended the working of the present system of education."[1]

The report of this Commission contained two important recommendations, namely:

(i) that elementary education in Sinhalese and Tamil should be undertaken by Government on a larger scale. More Government schools should be set up, but greater encouragement should also be given to denominational bodies ;

(ii) that the School Commission should be abolished and a Department of Public Instruction under a Director of Public Instruction established.'[2]

Two policy questions were accordingly settled as early as 1868, i.e., the Government should intervene actively and supervise the provision of education, while at the same time supporting private effort ; and that there should be more liberal provision for education. We have now reached the centenary of the introduction of these and other reforms recommended by this Sub-Committee in Sessional Paper VIII of 1867. In this period of one hundred years, there has, no doubt, been systematic progress in education as is evidenced by the many investigations made from time to time by Committees and Commissions into almost every aspect of educational policy and administration. Secondary and higher education, technical education, medium of instruction, agricultural and commercial education, the grant system and teachers' salaries and pensions were among the questions reviewed and in regard to which progressive changes were introduced. There were, however, questions which were not adequately covered by investigating bodies. For instance, two important questions were submitted to the Education Commission of 1926 namely—

(i) What measures should be adopted to extend the scope of education in vernacular schools ?

(ii) How far is it practicable to make Sinhalese and Tamil the media of instruction in the schools of Ceylon ?

The Commission did not give serious consideration to these questions. However, whatever may be the criticisms of the pace of educational progress till 1940, it cannot be denied that great strides had been made in education. In one sense, we already had a complete system, although in the strict sense of the term, it could not have been called an integrated educational system as it had developed in piecemeal fashion, without clearly laid down aims. A complete investigation was, therefore, long

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overdue, particularly as the conflicting and competing interests of the State and different organized bodies in regard to the control of education were making it difficult for any system to function efficiently.

The work of the Special Committee also derives importance from the fact that in formulating a system of education it had to take into consideration the constitutional changes introduced in 1931, and also the general expectation that these changes would be an intermediate phase in the process of devolving full responsibility for the government of the country on the people. Universal suffrage and the Executive Committee system of government, the two pivotal planks of the reformed constitution of 1931, had been worked for about nine years. Although the Executive Committee system had its merits, apart from being a training ground for responsible government, its defects surfaced to the point of outweighing its advantages. It, therefore, came to be accepted that the goal of a democratic system of government should be attained as early as possible and discussions had already been started to introduce parliamentary democracy into our system of Government. Accordingly, it was to be expected that the Special Committee would interprete its main task to be, to formulate and lay down the principles of a national system of education which will contribute to the emergence and maintenance of a democratic society. We may pause a while to consider what is meant by a national system of education for democracy. A national system presupposes the existence of a nation which Ceylon was not during the four hundred years of alien rule. It comes into importance with our regaining independence. One educationist said that " a successful national system must arise out of and be adapted to the ethos of the nation concerned". This implies that in founding a national system due regard should be had for the traditions and cultures of the people constituting the nation while not ignoring the continuing cultural and other developments brought about by international intercourse. " A national system of education," wrote another educationist,

> " may be defined as one in which free and equal opportunities are afforded to all according to their abilities and in which education is actuated by certain common purposes. Whether such purposes should be defined by a dominating central authority can be determined only in terms of what is the most desirable concept of nationalism and of an appropriate philosophy of administration."

This definition implies that national systems can vastly differ from country to country. Some have a fully state controlled system in which a central authority defines and prescribes virtually every aspect of its organisation, including courses of study and methods of instruction. In others, there is a limited state control resulting in a variety of organisation, administrative practices and methods. thus it is safe to assume that the character of a national system will be largely determined by the theory of the State which is accepted or prevails in the country. Although very few could have anticipated at that time that Ceylon would become an independent democratic state within a few years, the Special Committee definitely

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set out to formulate an integrated system which would lay adequate stress on education for democracy. What that system should be is summed up by the Special Committee at the commencement of its report as follows :—

" Our main effort must be directed towards devising a system that will enable every citizen to play his full part in the life of the nation. This appears to us to mean two things. First, it means that the individual must be helped to achieve the highest degree of physical, mental and moral development of which he is capable, irrespective of his wealth or social status. Secondly, it means that the individual as a result of his education, should be able to use his abilities for the good of the nation in the fullest possible measure and should be able to pass judgement on affairs of State and exercise intelligently the franchise the State has conferred upon him."[3]

Implied in this statement is the important principle which has gained universal acceptance, namely, equality of opportunity so necessary to the success and survival of democracy but not always easy to give practical effect to. The Special Committee had also to take cognizance of the difficult national problem arising from the heterogeneous character of the country's population. People of different racial origins and religions, and people speaking different languages have lived and still live together in many other countries too. In political parlance they are referred to as majorities and minorities, and as we see all the world over, the fusion of these different groups into a nation, demands very great effort, and only education correctly administered can generate the healthy forces that foster national unity. On this subject the report states :

" In planning the future of education in Ceylon we should strive to increase the common element (in our cultures) and to foster the idea of nationhood."[4]

It is a matter of doubt whether, even after twenty years of Independence, the eruption of sectional and communal differences, sometimes of an aggravated nature, has due to the failure of our system of education or to other reasons. Later, in the same chapter the Report goes on to say—

" The diversity of our cultures renders even more important, if that is possible, the fundamental democratic principle of toleration. Though we emphasize the importance of establishing national unity, through education, we urge precisely the reverse of the strident and intolerant nationalism with its national bigotry, its racial discrimination and its contempt for religion of all kinds, which is the fundamental cause of the present conflict."[5]

The implication here would appear to be that education should serve as a potent weapon for bringing about not only national unity but also international unity. But the prime need of Ceylon today is the development of a true national consciousness which puts the country before sectional or class interests and the national system of education which we are still endeavouring to perfect should be fashioned to promote this development.

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Some Important Recommendations

The task allotted to the Committee being a comprehensive investigation of the educational system of Ceylon as a whole, there was very little about education which its investigations and recommendations did not cover although university and professional education were left out as being outside its terms of reference. The three main divisions of education are the system, administration, and content, and all these are fully dealt with in its report. It is impossible to refer to all the matters dealt with in the report in a short article and I would like to draw pointed attention only to those problems which are of general interest and on which the Committee or the majority of the Committee expressed itself forcibly.

The composition of the Committee was criticized at that time on the ground that there were very few who were connected with the problems and practice of education and who could have been expected to bring to bear an independent mind on the subject. On the other hand, the presence of so many educators eminent in the profession of teaching (many members of the Executive Committee of Education were in this category) could have been considered an advantage as it gave the Committee the character of an expert body. The disadvantage was that on several important questions, acute differences emerged as was evidenced by the number of dissents and riders attached to the report. I shall content myself by referring only to three of the important problems the controversy over which has since been laid to rest. Policy decisions of Governments since Independence have, in regard to two matters, gone even beyond what the Committee had recommended.

Control of Education

Who should have control of education is a problem as old as Plato and Aristotle. In the march of time the following contending parties emerged :

(1) the family through the private school ;

(2) the church which made its claim on the ground that education was a spiritual process ;

(3) the State ; and finally

(4) the educational theorists who based their claim on the principle of occupational self-determination.

The controversy became acute with the rise of the concept of a national system and the emergence of the essentially democratic ideal of equality of opportunity. It was obvious that private or denominational control cannot ensure equality of opportunity according to ability. As the functions of the State in relation to those under its care expanded, the notion that education was the basis of political stability and security of the nation became indisputable. As long ago as 1805, Napoleon is said to have stated that "of all political questions that of education is the most important." That the State represents the realization of reason and justice in social life and should, therefore, have the right to organize education is yet another clinching argument. In Ceylon the problem of the control of education became aggravated owing to historical circumstances. As stated earlier, the cultural invasion that

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followed on the heels of foreign conquest had as its main objective the spread of an alien religion and way of life—with the undisguised intention of destroying the indigenous culture. So although there was some effort by the State from time to time to have a measure of control, the foreign missionaries could not be thwarted in carrying out their aims. It must be said to the credit of the British rulers that they were not slow to appreciate the shortcomings of a system of denominational or other private control. The following words of Governor Manning appearing in a memorandum he put up to the Legislative Council in 1919 are worth recalling :

> "Government can hardly acquiesce in the suggestion that compulsory attendance could in any way connote the suggestion of compulsory Christianity, and such an idea it has never entertained. The Christian Manager of Schools in non-Christian villages is within measurable distance of being superseded by the non-Christian proprietor of the private school and it would be inadvisable to seek any remedy except a system of state education in areas other than those where the large majority of inhabitants are Christians."[6]

In fact as early as 1905 a Commission considered the question of compulsory education and recommended that there should be compulsion as well as a suitable conscience clause. This was unacceptable to the Wesleyan and American Missionary bodies who considered that in the circumstances a state system was the best. Governor Manning's policy was implemented through the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920. State neutrality in regard to religious instruction and the observation of a conscience clause by Assisted Schools were given statutory sanction. The controversy was revived in 1939 when a draft Education Bill was published. By that time the number of Government schools had proportionately increased more than the number of denominational schools. The Government did not, however, do anything to discourage denominational schools. Although the balance of evidence placed before the Special Committee favoured a State system, it recommended that both State and denominational schools should continue side by side. This was only to be expected as the majority of the members of the Committee happened to be ardent enthusiasts of the theory that only denominational control of schools could ensure a religious atmosphere in schools. Of course, the Committee, as a whole, considered a religious background to education essential and, therefore, recommended that religious instruction should be provided in state schools also. It may be noted that the Minister of Education, who was the Chairman of the Committee (Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara) and Mr. A. R. A. Razik strongly dissented from the recommendation that denominational control of education should be allowed to continue. Even in the subsequent decade or two there was vacillation on the part of Government on this question, the reason being that it had come to be regarded as an important political issue. It was only in mid 1960 that the Government of the day, in response to mounting public opinion, decided to implement a system of state education, and the dual system which had worked grave injustice to the adherents of the majority religions of the country was ended. The controversy still remains as to whether denominational schools should be permitted to continue without any state assistance. Those who advocate compromise as an essential ingredient of democracy want such schools to be permitted while the opposition rests

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its argument too on the absolute need to preserve the democratic principle of equality of opportunity. A solution may, perhaps, be possible only if the question is taken outside the arena of party politics.

Medium of Instruction

Although the Special Committee was of opinion that the ideal should be the mother-tongue medium at all stages of education, it did not contemplate the possibility of giving up English as the medium of instruction for a considerable period of time at the higher stages. Whether English is to be retained or not as a medium of instruction at the post-primary stage the Committee laid special emphasis on its being taught as a second language right through. Apart from the fact that English is admittedly a " window " to the world outside, it was necessary for any effective advanced study and research.

A further reason given was that by serving as a common second language it " may cease to be a badge of class distinction and become a means of common understanding."[7] That English should continue as a subject of study in the curricula of our schools is a view that is still accepted by all. It is, however, somewhat strange that thinking at the time was not directed to the consideration of making Sinhala, and Tamil, the only two major national languages, as the means of common understanding. If one of these two languages was made a compulsory subject of study during a certain stage of education for those whose mother-tongue and medium of instruction is the other and vice versa the official language controversy would not have assumed the proportions it did after Independence. Perhaps it was considered that the study of three languages would be an unbearable burden on young minds, but present day opinion does not support such a view.

One important reason advanced by the Committee for retaining English as a medium of instruction at the post-primary stage or for teaching to be done through a bilingual medium (under which some subjects are taught through the mother tongue and others through English) was the practical difficulty of text-books and suitable teachers. This difficulty, it is true, is being gradually overcome, but it is sad to think that twenty five years have passed since the Committee made its report and a great deal of work in this direction still remains to be done. As another reason the Committee stated that " the language of administration will continue for some considerable time to be English".[8] That this considerable period of time proved to be only a matter of twelve years should not be regarded as reflecting on the sense of vision of the Committee, as the rapidity of the political changes after Independence inevitably brought about the displacement of English as the official language sooner than would have been normally possible. Although this view expressed by the Committee could be criticised, considered against the background of conditions then prevailing, the Committee's recommendations on the subject of the medium of instruction were very valuable and have been largely accepted in the reforms implemented in later years.

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Free Education

Although the recommendation of the Special Committee that " education should be free from the kindergarten to the University " was at that time considered revolutionary, one would have expected it to flow from some of the other suggestions made in the report for establishing a national system of education suitable for a democratic state. Particularly the Committee's recommendations about the grading of schools, selection of pupils for the different grades of schools, and the medium of instruction could have been effectively implemented only under a system of free education.

> " The democratization of education implies an extension of educational opportunities according to ability,"

states an educationist. A complete programme of democratic education involves free tuition, and the selection and distribution of pupils. It is, however, true that the Special Committee thought of free education at the " last minute ". Throughout the discussions in the Committee the consensus of opinion was that education should be free up to the VIIIth standard only. Actually, education has all along been free in the Sinhala and Tamil medium schools up to the S. S. C. The Committee had recommended that there should be no differentiation between schools on ground only of the medium of instruction.

The circumstances that weighed with the majority of the Committee in 'plumping' for free education are interesting. The idea originated with that confirmed democrat, Mr. A. Ratnayake, (now President of the Senate), and he was strongly supported by the Chairman of the Committee. It was discussed only at the 88th meeting of the Committee. Three eminent members of the Committee dissented from this decision not because they were opposed to the principle of free education, but because, as Mr. E. L. Bradby, one of the dissentients put it, " this Chapter " (on finance of education) was adopted without sufficient consideration of its implications—educational, financial, and administrative,"[9] One reason that helped in making the decision was that " vernacular education " was already free and the additional money required to make education in the English schools, the Training College, and the University was only Rs. 4,000,000 per annum—not a large amount, particularly, at a time when the economy of the country was fairly sound.

The total estimated cost of free education for the year 1942–43 was only Rs. 21,306,000 of which University education absorbed Rs. 1,200,000. Accordingly, the question as to the ability of the country to pay for free education was not analysed with regard to factors, such as the natural increase in population, the future development of the country and the likely increase in demand for secondary, higher and technical education. But, of course, if expenditure on education is regarded as an investment, perhaps a medium-term if not a long-term investment as it should be, nobody should have regrets about the introduction of free education.

One lesson of the last twenty five years of free education is that it has helped in the survival of democracy. If free education has not brought all the political, economic and social gains expected of it, the blame has to be attached to organisational or administrative defects in the system of education. It is true that a disproportionate share of the country's resources is used up by free education, and the

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question will always be asked whether the country is getting value for the money. But, as stated by the Committee, the proposition that education in a democratic society shall be free at all stages, cannot be challenged.

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[3] *Sessional Paper* XXIV, 1943, p. 10

[4] *Op. cit.* p. 12

[5] *Op. cit.* p. 13

[6] Manning's Memorandum to the Legislative Council, 1919

[7] *Sessional Paper* XXIV, 1943, p. 49

[8] *Op. cit.* p. 49

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CHAPTER 54

DR. C. W. W. KANNANGARA— HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE

S. F. De Silva

The Background

The Free Education scheme has always been associated with the name of Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara. The Scheme is really not so revolutionary as some people imagine it to be, because at the time, the vast majority of schools in Ceylon, for example, the Vernacular Schools gave free tuition, whereas a small number of English Schools charged fees. It is worthwhile examining the background to the Free Education Scheme, to appreciate the importance of the contribution made by Dr. Kannangara to the education of the people. Roughly speaking, there were two kinds of schools. English Schools and vernacular Schools including the Pirivenas. The English Schools provided the English Administration with clerical personnel. In course of time, this narrow concept was widened and it was firmly believed that with the introduction of English Education, modern concepts such as the 'liberty of the individual' and 'Parliamentary Government' would help to replace mediaeval ideas of a feudal society emphasizing caste. There is no doubt, as far as a small number of Ceylonese who were educated in these schools were concerned, that these concepts influenced their political thought and it is from their ranks that the leaders of a later Ceylonese National Movement came.[1]

These English Schools were for the most part run by the denominational bodies, the majority being Christian. They had the trained personnel, particularly Graduates of distinction from well known British Universities, to be the Heads of their Schools. They naturally built their schools on the lines of the public schools of England. The curriculum of studies was based on them. The Examination system was centred round the Cambridge Senior Examination. These schools having a wide concept of education

De SILVA, S. F., B.A. (London) HON. D.LIT., Vidyodaya University of Ceylon. Director of Education 1957–1964. Ambassador for Ceylon in China, 1964–1965. Author of a large number of school textbooks on the Geography of Ceylon Ceylon History and Civics

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while emphasizing games and other forms of school activity did not fail to pay attention to character building, to them we owe the beginnings of and the development of a really fine legal and medical service and an excellent civil and public service. We appreciate this all the more when we realise that when Ceylon was given freedom, there was the administrative machinery in existence manned by trained Ceylonese. It may be relevant to comment on what some of the African Diplomats told me "how several African States could not make good use of their political freedom for want of personnel for administration". The system of English Education was however something imported into Ceylon. It had therefore naturally plenty of shortcomings. Several English Educationists, among them, Walter Sendall and J. J. R. Bridge[2] made very direct references to the inadequacy for Ceylon, of an imported system of education. Walter Sendal believed that it trained the young people to look down with contempt on the traditional culture of the people and trained them to be 'hangers on' at the doors of offices. Bridge also pointed out that it was important to relate the curriculum to the educational needs of the Ceylon child. One very pungent remark made by a very distinguished French Educationist[3] was, that teaching Sinhalese and Tamil children of Ceylon in the English language helped to "emasculate the intelligence of the young".

These English Schools were all for the most part located in towns, and it was only the pupils in the town or the children of relatively wealthy parents in the rural areas, who could take advantage of the type of education provided in these schools. This education was the one and the only means to social and economic advancement whether it was the public service, civil, medical or judicial services. This gave the English Schools a very high economic value.

On the other hand, the Vernacular Schools were originally intended for one purpose only, and that was to make the people literate in the mother tongue. English Education was expensive and therefore benefited a few. The Vernacular Schools were built on a general pattern mainly with a large hall where children were crowded[4]. Ordinary class room equipment was very limited. There were no libraries. There were no playgrounds, no science laboratories, and education was confined to book learning. The large number of pupils educated in these schools had no avenue of social advancement unless their parents were rich enough to send them to English Schools later. The only prospect of gainful employment for a vernacular educated person was to become a school master. Yet these schools with all their defects were an asset to the country; for one thing, in the Vernacular School a child was taught in his mother tongue which is now admitted by educationists, to be the best means of educating a child; in the second place, these Vernacular Schools made a devoted study of the Sinhalese and Tamil languages and literature which contained in the spirit and in the letter the cultural heritage of the country. Thus the Vernacular Schools so much despised were in fact, truly national schools both educationally and culturally. It is not, therefore, surprising that some of our finest scholars came from their ranks. Thanks to these Vernacular Schools, the standard of literacy in Ceylon is remarkably high among Asian countries.

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A vast disparity did exist between the English and the Vernacular Schools. There was a disparity in educational opportunities. There were also strong elements of social injustice and what was worse, it gradually divided Ceylon, socially into two classes. Conditions such as these could not help to build a united nation or a society, particularly when universal franchise replaced the educated Ceylonese vote. Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara realized too well the impact of this on the people. He had been a boy from the country and was educated in a very good English School. He knew the advantages of the education he received and contrasted that with what the poor in the rural areas got. If I be permitted to make a personal reference, very few people knew Dr. Kannangara as well as I do. He was my teacher and taught me Geometry and I got accustomed very early in life to the typical Kannangara voice. All through the days when he was the Minister of Education, he treated me as his old pupil, and very often unburdened his mind to me. I remember on a return from Kandy with him, he, I believe, was thinking aloud when he made a remark ' what do X and Y know of poverty as I know it ? To sleep on a mat, on a bare floor and have only rice and sambol to eat. I must see that village boys get a better chance in life than I had'.

This is the key to an understanding of the significance of the Free Education Scheme. It may be that the original intention was not to extend it to the University; at that time it was believed that what now corresponds to the General Certificate of Education should be the top level of free education. There was a fear that stopping free education at a lower level, for example at the end of the Primary School, would bear no results because pupils in later life would lapse into illiteracy. Dr. Kannangara also realized that as the poor pupils of the rural areas could not come into the town, it was the duty of the State to take good schools into the rural areas. This was how Free Education began with the Central Schools on the basis of one for each electoral district.

The Central Schools

Dr. Kannangara was very anxious that everything should be done to improve the quality of his Central Schools. For this purpose he created the post of Officer in Charge of Central Schools—an Education Officer with the District Inspectors to assist him. They were in full charge of the reorganization, drawing up of the curriculum and constant supervision of the work in these schools. As days went by, these Central Schools enlarged the scope of education which a rural child got. In addition to the older academic bias, much attention was paid to what is called extra curricular activities. For instance, oriental music and dancing were introduced into these schools, the real motive being to give the pupils something of the development of emotions, particularly, where they had only academic or book learning. In course of time games and athletics found a place in these schools, and in recent years, one observes an almost revolutionary consequence of these. On Independence Day Celebrations thousands of boys and girls from the country colleges have taken part in musical and dancing displays. In every province and every district boys and girls take a very active interest in games and athletics and these have taken hold of the imagination of the rural school child. I remember

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one year, the boys of the Kuliyapitiya Central School came first in an all Island Competition for Scouts. The Cadet movement, too, though in a limited way, was introduced into these Central Schools and on several occasions the Central Schools have come first at the Diyatalawa Training Camp Competition. To a lesser degree, cricket is also being played, the handicap being want of suitable playgrounds, but these I know have been supplied year after year. Perhaps an unforgettable impression I have is the enthusiasm created in these schools in the minds of parents in rural areas. I wish to mention two examples without giving the names of the schools ; in one school in a very remote area, the parents had assembled and levelled the top of a hill to form a full-size playground. As the work proceeded they ran short of funds and one of the villagers, a most public-spirited gentleman, spent Rs. 3,000 which he had won in a lottery. The other example is where I saw a very large hall built by the parents which a technical officer valued at Rs. 50,000. I was deeply moved when I went through the accounts to find that even very poor parents had contributed a quarter measure of rice, others a bunch of arecanuts and yet others manual labour. I spoke to the parents and I was very happy to note that they said—" This is our school, our children ". They did not consider it a government concern. Perhaps this enthusiasm has been one of the most remarkable results of the free education scheme. Parents realized what an opening had at last been provided for their children's advancement and it is a well-known fact that year after year the pupils of these schools have certainly taken full advantage of the educational opportunities provided by these schools. I must also add that in some schools gardening was introduced as a practical subject ; in the past what were merely book learning institutions slowly developed into institutions for the education of young people. Some of the results of the free education scheme may be summed up as follows :—(*a*) About ninety per cent of pupils of school going age are now in Central Schools and in similar institutions of secondary education established thereafter, (*b*) a steadily increasing number of pupils who had never a chance before of higher studies are now in the Universities. It is true that the vast majority have entered the Arts Faculty, but in recent years a very great effort has been made by the Department of Education to provide an increasing measure of facilities for the study of Science and Engineering. Here again I may be permitted to record a personal testimony to these schools. In my last year of service I was the Chairman of the Board of Selection of Scholarships for non-graduates. Eight young persons from Central Schools came, everyone of them having obtained seven distinctions at the General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) Examination. One of them was a girl—daughter of a tailor, another a boy, was the son of a betel vine cultivator, two were sons of lorry drivers. These facts indicate something new in the educational make up of the pupils of our schools. In former times pupils from the middle class homes from Urban area schools, had the monopoly of scholarships. Today with wide opportunities given to a larger circle of pupils, particularly from rural areas, pupils of real talent have succeeded by merit, in obtaining scholarships in all manner of spheres. There is not the slightest doubt that they have now come back to Ceylon with their varied technical training and that they will be an asset to the country. Perhaps this is the greatest benefit that the free education scheme has given to the children of Ceylon—the opportunity for boys and girls of talent to make the best

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use of their abilities for advancement of the country as well as their own. The future of this country depends on the maximum use made of the largest number of talented pupils in the country. If this is true, the free education scheme has opened the doors for the talented pupils who before this had scarcely any opportunities.

The Teachers' Colleges

Dr. Kannangara who had been a teacher himself, realized that the success of the free education scheme depended on the training of competent teachers on a larger scale than before. In order to effect this he secured Government sanction for the establishment of what was then known as New Type Training Colleges. I happened to be the officer appointed to be in charge of training colleges at that time. The new type Training College meant a newer conception of teacher training. The older training schools were more concerned with teacher training in the narrow sense of the term, viz., making successful class room teachers whose success could be assessed by the passes obtained by their pupils. In the new type training colleges the ideal was not so much the training, but the education of the teacher. It was felt that the vast majority of young trainees who came from rural vernacular schools were themselves persons whose education was limited. The aim was to give these young trainees during their two years course of training , wider and more varied opportunities for their personal education. It is for this reason, among other things, that all training courses were made residential. This was a new experience for young trainees who had never in their schools, known what hostel and community life were. The community life of the trainees was controlled by themselves with elected office bearers and this practice was a valuable training in the art of living together. This was extremely valuable, particularly to those who had rather orthodox views apparently based on custom and caste. Living together also lent opportunities for debating and literary societies which were governed and controlled by persons appointed by the students themselves. Many of them were trained as Scout Masters and Girl Guides. The curriculum of studies was greatly varied. In addition to what were professional subjects, more emphasis was placed on the teachers studying music, drama and dancing. It was felt that these have a very valuable educational influence and one noted with great pleasure the interest shown in these by Sinhala teachers. Health and physical education were compulsory for all. All women students studied Home Science ; practical subjects were also introduced—the underlying purpose being to help the trainee to realize that work with the hand requires as much thinking and application of knowledge as orthodox subjects such as Mathematics. They soon realized that hand-work was not merely manual labour ; hand-work implied thinking out of patterns and putting them into practical operation. In Home Science it was not merely cooking of food, but how food should be cooked and why certain foods were more desirable than others, and in this way the teacher trainee learned to look upon domestic and manual work as something scientific. In needle-work, which was once a craft, teachers learnt to design their own garments and that of their children. This required accurate measurements, designing and cutting out of patterns. It required a good deal of thinking before the garment was stitched.

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Instead of drawing objects placed before a class teacher, a trainee was shown that the value of art teaching was encouraging the pupil to express his or her thoughts in form, shape and colour. In this way teachers began to appreciate that art was somewhat like language teaching. One could see the effect of this training in music, art, handicraft and homecraft in the College Exhibitions and showed the teacher trainees' ability in the work they had done in the course of their training. In the men's colleges gardening was introduced not as manual labour but as a study of applied science. The extent of the land cultivated was of very little importance, but the study of the life cycle of the plant grown, the quality of soil, rainfall and sunshine on the development of plants, interested the teachers who had never had an education in science. The practice of gardening was very valuable to the teacher trainee who came from the rural area and whose real attention was solely confined to books. The teachers' colleges organized regular field trips connected with the study of natural science, history and geography. These provided wider experience than before. I may be permitted to make a statement based on my experience in teacher training service in the Department, I had occasion to see the splendid work done in schools by the majority of the trained teachers who introduced new spirit into the schools, and several Principals of Colleges told me that the backbone of the teaching staff was these trained teachers. Dr. Kannangara was right in his emphasis on the new type of training colleges and it was borne out by the quality of teachers trained. In my opinion this is yet another significant contribution made by Dr. Kannangara to the education of the people.

Diversification of Curriculum

In 1943, a report of the Special Committee of Education was published. The Chairman of this Committee was Dr. Kannangara. I remember very well, the personal interest he took in the deliberations, and I am certain in my own mind, that its major recommendations bear the impress of his own thinking. Amongst other matters, the Special Committee made certain recommendations of lasting educational value to the nation. In the first place, it recommended the use of the mother tongue as the medium of education, in the primary schools. This was a reform which has been carried out to this day by the gradual extension of the mother tongue medium right through the schools. It has also a social value because the moment Sinhala or Tamil became the medium of instruction, it acquired in the eyes of pupils and parents a status and importance hitherto attached to English. The use of the mother tongue encouraged creative work particularly in the rural schools. I have memories of the work done by school societies once the mother tongue became the medium of instruction ; in particular, I remember most interesting and successful science meetings where the boys and girls of a school in the Central Province spoke with ease and effectiveness on subjects like Chemistry and water plants in the neighbourhood. I have also noticed that school drama has made immense strides after the mother tongue became the language of the schools. Some of the best plays I have seen, have come from schools, and one noted with pleasure, the ease and naturalness of the actors. Today a parent of a school child in a rural area can go direct to the

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Principal of a College and tell him what he has to say. At Parent Teacher Associations, the parents can speak to the Heads of Schools on what they consider shortcomings. The contact between the school and the parent certainly came in with the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in schools.

Another recommendation of the Special Committee was that English shall be taught in all schools from Standard III. It was realized that if the mother tongue became the medium of instruction, the ability to use the English language particularly to read for meaning would enlarge the pupils' horizon of knowledge and ideas. A great nationalist like Mahatma Gandhi once declared " I should like to have my house with all its doors and windows thrown wide open so that fresh air from all quarters shall blow freely inside the house ". A house with its doors and windows closed would mean death to its inmates. Intellectual death can also come if the doors and windows to wider world knowledge were shut.

Third, the Committee made a very important recommendation regarding the curriculum for schools. It realized that all educational thinking must gravitate between the two poles—the child, its nature and its needs on the one hand, and society and its needs on the other.

The Committee, therefore, recommended a curriculum for the child which would develop its ' head, heart and hands.' What was really meant was that education should not be only for the intellectual development of the child. It was realized that there are some children who think well in the abstract whilst others think best in a concrete medium. Hence, the emphasis given to the ' hand ' by which is meant ' practical education '. This is one of the most important educational changes the country requires. A study of handicraft implies training in thinking out and putting into operation what has been thought i.e. knowledge in action. On this kind of education is based most of the later education in technical and other schools. The reference to ' heart ' is the appreciation of the truth that not only must we train our pupils to ' think correctly ' but we must also train them to ' feel for the right things '. In other words, the education of the emotions is as necessary as the education of intellect and practical ability for the well-being of the child. The cultural life of a nation has its roots in the education which the pupils in the school receive.

Conclusion

When one considers the educational changes of the last 50 years, Dr. Kannangara's period of office as Minister of Education has been one of remarkable reforms. The free education scheme threw open the doors of higher education to a large number of pupils in rural areas. This was a national gain. The adoption of the mother tongue was another great educational reform which in its turn had also done tremendous good to the nation. The development of training colleges, attempts made to diversify the curriculum were also reforms that made a lasting impression on the educational system of the country. The best investment a nation makes is in the education of the young, and there is no doubt that Dr. Kannangara's share of the contribution towards this investment has been most significant and noteworthy.

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[1] *Vide* Chapter 41

[2] Mr. Walter Sendal was an Inspector of Schools who was later appointed as the Director of Public Instruction (1871). Mr. J. R. R. Bridge an H. M. I. who was invited to report on Secondary Education in Ceylon in 1911. *Vide* Sessional Paper 19 of 1912

[3] Christopher Ernest Bonjean, Archbishop of Colombo (1886–1892). As Archbishop of Colombo, he planned the foundation of St. Josephs College and made all arrangements for it. But did not live to see its opening on 27th November 1896

He supported the big English Colleges and Convent Schools, but insisted most of all on the vernacular schools.

[4] *Vide* Chapter 61

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CHAPTER 55

" A PEARL OF GREAT PRICE "— AN EVALUATION

F. R. JAYASURIYA

It is now a little less than a quarter of a century since " Free Education from the Kindergarten to the University " was adopted by the legislature as a guiding principle of national policy, and if the prophetic dream of its creator has not been literally realised, it is at the same time true that a reality even transcending the grandeur of that vision had carried its radiance into every nook and corner of our country. Today, thanks to the impetus given by Free Education no less than the transforming social and spiritual power of two thousand five hundred years of Buddhist cultural activity, Ceylon finds herself in the front rank of the literate nations of the world.

How complete and far-reaching that transformation was cannot be described by statistics alone, for it was qualitative and psychological even more than quantitative. Its nature and extent may be comprehended better by contrasting it with the social consequences which resulted from the foreign occupation as stated with unusual candour by the late Sir William Ivor Jennings in his book " The Economy of Ceylon. "

> " The Portuguese and the Dutch came for the profit to be made out of cinnamon and pearls. The British came to keep Trincomalee out of the hands of the French but remained like the Portuguese and the Dutch for the sake of profit. They became, in effect, a wealthy caste ; unlike other castes, however, they claimed no exclusiveness (except socially). On the contrary, they welcomed those who would become sufficiently Westernized so as to fit themselves for subordinate positions under the Government, and equally those who would assist in the development of the country and so prevent its becoming a financial liability to the British taxpayer. What is more, England in the early part of the nineteenth century was in the throes of the Evangelical Movement,

JAYASURIYA, F. R., B. A. (HONOURS), B.SC. ECON., (LONDON), Ph.D. (JADAWPUR). Professor of Economics, Vidyalankara University of Ceylon, Visiting Lecturer in English, University College, 1930–1933. Former Reader in Economics at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya. Author of three works in Sinhala, " Principles of Economics ", " Introduction to Economics, " and " British Constitution ".

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which demanded not only that the ' heathen ' be converted but also that they be educated. Nor had the British then made up their minds as to the language in which the less advanced peoples should be educated. In the present century it is accepted doctrine that primary education, at least, should be in the language of the home. In the nineteenth century it seemed easier, in the absence of books and teachers using the language of the people, to make use of English.

The result of this development was to create a special class of Westernized Ceylonese, holding Government posts or making profits from coconuts or coffee, wearing European clothes, eating European food, worshipping (often) in Christian churches, and above all, speaking English. Economically and socially they are dominant, not merely through the wealth that they have acquired in the course of four generations, but also because they hold the key that opens the door to all the better-paid posts under the Government, in the professions, and in commerce. The one requirement for any position of affluence is a knowledge of English ; but that knowledge could be acquired only by some years study in schools which charged fees. The fees, though, were the least significant item : for the ordinary child of the working class, if he went to school at all, left at the age of 11 or 12, before he had acquired a competent knowledge even of his own language." [1]

Here, then, is the dilemma which has bedevilled educational advance in Ceylon for almost a century and continues still to cast its eerie shadow over the educational scene. So long as English was the official language of the country, entry into the public service, which was the most prized avenue of national advancement, remained the jealously guarded preserve of an English educated minority which if it was not, in literal fact, microscopic in size nevertheless constituted a section of the population whose influence in political and economic affairs was out of all proportion to its numbers.

It was into this social milieu that the conscience stricken members of the Donoughmore Commission, in their famous report on Constitutional Reforms for Ceylon in 1931, with deliberate intent threw their revolutionary proposals by which they hoped, with a success which even they could hardly have anticipated, to undo in he space of a few years the neglect and wrong of centuries of colonial rule.

The effect of the sudden transformation of an electorate based on a literacy and property qualification which limited its voting strength to approximately 4 per cent of the total population into an electorate in which every adult member, male and female, regardless of property ownership or literacy, was accorded the right of a vote by secret ballot to determine the character and composition of their Parliamentary representation was nothing less than electrical. Proposals for social reform poured out of the legislature like lava from an erupting volcano. Since, however, social habits and customs and the institutional growth of decades and centuries cannot unlike molten lava be fused overnight into new compounds of uniform texture and consistency, the social product which emerged from the spate of legislative activity following the Donoughmore Reforms left behind it a legacy of loose ends, gaping crevices and dangerous fissures which called insistently and urgently for repair and

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recasting. To purify and put into new moulds and shapes the raw material of the education process which the Free Education system is beginning to churn out annually with such breath taking speed is the urgent and vital task upon whose successful solution depends the future of our youth and, it might be added without exaggeration, the future of the nation.

A Gross Anomaly in the School System

The course of historical development of the Free Education programme may be briefly described as follows. Prior to the coming into force of the Free Education Scheme on 1st October 1945, there were in this country two clearly demarcated classes of schools : namely, the Sinhalese and Tamil Schools on the one hand, dispersed throughout the country and catering to about 95 per cent of the school-going population, education in which was free, but for the most part without proper buildings, staff or funds; and, on the other hand, the English Schools catering to less than 5 per cent of the school-going population, situated mainly in the principal towns, and even there concentrated in Colombo, charging fees but assisted by the State with liberal grants and subsidies. They were for the most part well and even sumptuously equipped with respect to buildings, staff and other amenities. The disparity between the two types of schools was in fact so great as to constitute in effect two different educational worlds. Thus of the total of 4,023 schools which were in existence in 1931, only some 271 (or about 7 per cent) were English schools catering to 62,706 of the total estimated school-going population of 553,701 at the time. Likewise out of total Government expenditure on education of Rs. 16,225,836.17 something like Rs. 6,174,972 or 37 per cent of the total expenditure was spent on the 7 per cent of children in the so-called English schools. While the balance of Rs. 9,929,243 or 63 per cent was spent on the 93 per cent of the children in the Sinhala and Tamil Schools. Nor did even this represent the sum total of the disparity between the provision for English education and that for education in the Swabasha, since a not inconsiderable part of the expenditure on the Swabasha schools represented expenditure on buildings and equipment, whereas in the case of the English schools, the financial assistance added to the income from fees went mainly to pay the staff, while the buildings and a part of the equipment were provided by voluntary contributions from parents and the public.

Need for Social Justice

The real significance of this distribution of pupils, staff and amenities between the English schools and the so-called Swabasha schools was to conceal the fact that it was the instrument by which the rigid system of class privilege and class exclusiveness, created by the adoption of English as the official language of the country upon which the social and economic structure was based, was carried into the educational sphere. Wealth and social distinction were gifts reserved for those who had acquired a knowledge of the English language and the opportunity for acquiring a knowledge of the English language was reserved at the time of its adoption as the State's policy in the middle of the 19th century for those who would consent to abandon the loyalty and attachment to their language, culture and religion. Furthermore, the

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entire school system, and in particular the English school structure, was entrusted partly as a matter of imperial policy, but partly also as a reproduction of the system then prevalent in the mother country, to the sole control and direction of the Christian missionaries. So far as educational and economic opportunity went, the system of Swabasha schools, described as " vernacular " schools, might not have existed at all. And yet the colonial rulers kept up, with astonishing success, the pretence that they had established a system of education which, in conformity with the accepted norms of a civilized and democratic social order, provided " free and compulsory " education for the entire community from the age of five to fourteen. Not more thoroughly or more deliberately during the French Revolutionary era did Napoleon endeavour by means of the redistribution of land surrendered by the former French nobility, among his supporters and soldiers to create a new French nobility dependent on and loyal to him, than did the British Colonial Rulers particularly in India and Ceylon, set out to create a class of persons who, in the famous prophesy of Macaulay, its arch founder and exponent,

> " may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern ; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."

There is, perhaps no better proof of how complete had been that transformation, than the protest voiced by a member of the State Council, in the course of the debate on the Free Education proposals :

> " The Hon. Member for Point Pedro the other day said that a large number of children were not attending school. I am not trying to analyse all the causes for such a situtation. But I can give you one instance. For example, in the electorate that I represent, in every Hindu village you find Christian schools . As a matter of fact, I have received a very urgent letter asking me to go and compel certain Hindu parents to send their children to a Christian school and also to interview the Asst. Government Agent and get these people prosecuted. That is the position. They expect me to go and force Hindu parents to send their children to a Christian school. These parents may have a conscientious objection. How could I then co-operate with the Education Department and go round the electorate asking people to send their children to schools when there is no single State school, not a single Hindu school in the area ? Even to the extent that we could go, we do not go." [2]

The riots of 1915 had partially released the forces of nationalism which the British colonial rulers had by various devices successfully held in check. The rapid development of the Buddhist Theosophical Society and the Hindu educational movement were among its immediate and more important social consequences, just as the successive constitutional reforms which followed represented its major achievement in the political sphere. However, the changes which occurred in both these fields of public life were still very largely contained within the broad pattern of a social structure based on privileges from which the vast mass of the population was rigidly excluded, chiefly through the instrumentality of a suffrage limited to 4 per cent of the population. The grant of the adult franchise under the Donoughmore Constitution,

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coming as it did in the wake of world advances in socialism and communism, had the unexpectedly explosive result in Ceylon of causing the nationalist and socialist forces to join hands, in a well meant search for the Holy Grail of a humanitarian Utopia in which social justice and equal opportunity for all would be secured by resort to the simple expedient of the use of the ballot box and the adult suffrage. Even this, however, was soon found to be not altogether a simple matter. For the will of the people could be manifested only through the existence of rival political parties declaring their readiness to carry those wishes into effect should they be returned to power. But even before this it was necessary that the people should be able to determine wherein lay their interests and then to give expression to these decisions. Thus the extended use of the radio, distribution of radio sets to *praja mandalas*, the creation of new organisations of newspapers to overcome the monopoly power of the existing newspapers, some of which were still owned and controlled by foreign interests, and finally even the adoption of colours and symbols by parties were among the devices adopted to enable the older generations of the rural population to readily identify the parties and individuals to whom they would entrust the execution of their will.

' A Pearl of Great Price '

Against this background of prolonged preparation for the great social changes which were in the air, it is not surprising if, not unlike the reputed creation of the British Empire in a fit of absent-mindedness, the adoption of free education should have come as the result of a sudden awakening to the fact that a social change of such magnitude could not be secured as a result of gradual, half-hearted or piecemeal educational reform. Some part of the process by which this decision was arrived at is revealed in the following statement made in the legislature during the debate on Free Education :

> " It would appear that really this free education was not a thing that was contemplated for three and a half years, by this Committee. We have internal evidence in this report, and we have external evidence from the riders of the Rev. R. S. de Saram and Dr. Jennings that, in point of fact, this pearl of great price was dropped like a red brick on to the heads of the Members of the Special Committee at the 88th meeting of the 90 meetings. This pearl of great price was not discovered ; it was thrown at their heads, and it is no use their now saying, " This is a discovery of ours. Here is a pearl of great price . . . .
>
> In point of fact, after this pearl of great price was thrown in, it seems to have acted, not like a pearl, but like an apple of discord, because I am credibly informed that several of the Members of the Special Committee who were most vocal about the virtues of this pearl, got into a temper, showed a great deal of signs of excitement, threatened to leave the Committee and go away ; they felt that there was disruption. "[3]

Some Misgivings

The doubts and anxieties voiced by politicians that the free education proposals were not far reaching enough have a queer and almost ironical ring in the context

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of today, nearly a quarter century after their adoption, when the 3,000 or so candidates who appeared for the school leaving examination of the 1930's have multiplied to nearly one hundred times that number and the trickle of graduates passing out of the University has swollen into an avalanche. How, then, did these free education measures which even the more financially cautious among the legislators considered too niggardly in 1945, reach proportions which threaten not only to swallow up the revenue of the government, but to create a body of so-called educated unemployed beyond the capacity of the economy to support ? The answer is to be found in a development of the principle of free education which took place silently and almost imperceptibly until it had given to the free education proposals as envisaged and formulated in 1945, a twist by which the educational pyramid was, at one bound as it were, overturned and made to rest upon its apex. This development was the adoption of Swabhasha as the medium of instruction throughout the educational structure, even before it had been declared the official language of the country. Free education in the Swabhasha had existed even at the height of Colonial rule in Ceylon, but it was an education which was so devoid of any economic value, that it might as well not have existed. Thus, what was , in fact, meant, when the principle of " Free Education from the Kindergarten to the University " was adopted as a guiding principle of national policy, and hailed throughout the country as one of the obvious benefits of increasing self-Government, was Free English Education. Behind a smokescreen of increasing liberalisation and democratisation, English education, confined to a little more than 5 per cent of the population, was being even more securely enthroned, and state expenditure, devoted to it, was being still further increased, when the condition of the 95 per cent for whom the economically blind alley of Swabhasha education was the only road of intellectual advancement remained virtually unchanged. As Sir Ivor Jennings, who was himself a member of the Special Committee on Education shrewdly observed :

" The Special Committee recommended the complete abolition of fees, but it will be seen that this,

(*a*) will not benefit the great mass of the children, who already receive free education in Vernacular schools and who leave school before the age of 12 ; and

(*b*) will bring no additional children into the Secondary Schools except those whose parents can afford maintenance but not fees. "

In fact continues Sir Ivor,

" the remission of fees is a further subsidy to the middle classes. In the University it is estimated (on the basis of information supplied by students to the Scholarships Board) that of 100 students only 89 can afford both fees and maintenance, 6 can afford maintenance but not fees, Thus, the immediate effect of ' free education ' in the University would be to subsidize parents who can afford to pay including some of the wealthiest persons in the Island. At the other end of the scale there are children of equal or greater ability who finish their education at the age of 10 or 12 in spite of ' free education '. From the educationist's point of view the ideal is to provide free education and maintenance for all : but if there

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are only limited funds they should first be used to subsidize those who need subsidies, not those who do not. The popularity of the slogan 'free education from Nursery school to University', combined with the lack of interest taken in the wastage in the Primary Schools, seem to show that, in spite of the adult franchise, the middle class continues to dominate Ceylon politics. "[4]

It was precisely this defect in the Free Education proposals which the Government itself, as represented by the Minister of Education, sought for many years to set right by increasing the number of English schools, through Senior Schools and Central Schools, first, at the rate of one such school per electorate, and then at an accelerated pace, as fast as the teachers and equipment could be found and provided. The single University, sited at Peradeniya, based on the exclusive residential models of Oxford and Cambridge, was finding itself unequal to the task of mass-producing the graduates needed to supply the demand for teachers for the newly established Senior and Central Schools. Meanwhile imperceptibly, grudgingly, and almost unwittingly, at least so far as its ultimate implications were concerned, the Minister of Education was yearly pushing up from class to class the level of education at which instruction in the Swabhasha medium was being imparted. Each year the vested interests were holding public meetings to protest against any further raising of the classes in which teaching through the Swabhasha medium would be done. Now, however, as the teaching through Swabhasha was reaching the Senior School Certificate class, the Sinhalese masses suddenly awoke to the benefits they would derive as a consequence, and began to organise public meetings to demand the abolition of English as a medium of instruction in schools. The critical decision was taken in 1954 when the Prime Minister to whom the matter was referred by the then Minister of Education declared that the medium of instruction in all schools up to and including the Senior School Certificate class should be in Swabhasha.

The scene of the Swabhasha battle now shifted to the Universities. Meanwhile however, new factors had entered into the picture. The passage through Parliament of the Official Language Act in 1956, making Sinhala the official language of the country with effect from 1st January 1960, created a new enthusiasm for the use of the Swabhasha in Education at all levels including the University. The establishment in 1959 of the two Pirivena Universities of Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara, by Act of Parliament, and the conferment of Governmental recognition on the degrees in Swabhasha granted by these two Universities made it inevitable that before long the Peradeniya University too would be compelled to abolish instruction in English, at any rate for the Arts Degree Courses. With the decision made for the Arts Courses, the Government next set 1968 as a deadline after which the Science Degree Courses and the Professional Examinations at the Universities and elsewhere must commence to switch over to teaching and examining through the Swabhasha medium. The Bastille of Education through the English medium, behind which the privileged middle class of the colonial era in Ceylon had entrenched themselves, had fallen. Educational opportunity had come within the reach of all. But ironically, the economic privilege which had gone with it, namely lucrative employment and high professional incomes, which had been possible only so long as the aspirants to them

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were a small group, had vanished almost simultaneously. Free Education from the Kindergarten to the University from which so much had been hoped seemed to be a cruel deception. The promised land turned out to be a barren waste.

Why was this ? Were the prophets wrong ? Was free education a mistake and if so how could it now be remedied ? Were those who had warned against the dangers of free education right after all ? Let one of the most outspoken of these critics speak :

" It must be remembered, too, that the great majority of those in attendance at school study in Sinhalese and Tamil schools. Educational experts are now firmly of opinion that primary education ought to be given through the medium of the child's home language. The difficulty is, however, that neither Sinhalese nor (apparently) Tamil has yet been adapted for modern educational purposes. Both languages, too, are difficult to read and write. Accordingly, more and not less instruction is necessary to reach a reasonable standard of literacy than is the case with a European language. On the other hand, research among bilingual students suggests that, in the early years, there is a slight retardation, though this is more than made up in the later years of school life. The development of bilingualism in Ceylon and the use of English for purposes of instruction in all schools would not, therefore, improve the position unless education for the minimum of nine years were made genuinely compulsory. There cannot be any doubt, however, that if the people become completely bilingual, if English were used (at least after a couple of years) as the medium of instruction, and if at least nine years of education were compulsory, the capacity of Ceylonese workers would be improved and their standard of living raised. Though spurious educational reasons are given against this course (as in the *Report of the Majority of the Special Committee on Education*), the genuine reasons appear to be sentimental, and may perhaps be summarized as an anxiety to create a somewhat exclusive nationalism in the Island."[5]

It is, indeed, curious to see how persons like the late Sir Ivor Jennings, who were never weary of extolling the English educational system which, by means of an " educational ladder " created through scholarships, gave poor children of ability the opportunity to reach the highest educational levels, could not see that the very perpetuation of " English education " in Ceylon which they advocated with equal vigour, erected an unscalable barrier which prevented the poor boy, however intellectually gifted, from securing even a glimpse of that educational Paradise of the English School excluded from which he must live forever because of the original sin of having been born poor.

It is, however, interesting to examine Sir Ivor's prescription for this educational malady :

" The Special Committee, by assuming that 15 per cent of those at school in each year will require ' commercial and technical ' training in Senior schools, postulates an economic change for which at present there is no justification. The essential problem is not to train the employees but to find the employment. If by some change in the economic system which cannot yet be anticipated the

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nation required some 24,000 persons every year with commercial and technical training, it would not be difficult to give such training, if every person who left school had had at least ten years' elementary education. The first task, therefore, is to make compulsory education compulsory, a task which requires only a small change in the present law and its adequate enforcement. This would not be heroic, but it would be both practical politics and good economics."[6]

Looking Ahead

It is perhaps, a little consoling, to think that some at least of the conditions which Sir Ivor regarded as necessary for a solution to our ills have, thanks to free education, now come to be fulfilled. For example, it can now be confidently stated that nearly " every person who left school had had at least ten years' elementary education". Of course, this education has necessarily been in and through the Swabhasha. Strangest of all, the industrialization which Sir Ivor was certain was incapable of attainment by a " small country " such as Ceylon, is now not only a reality, but seems even capable of producing finished goods of a quality acceptable to even the most industrially advanced countries. Nevertheless, it is not without interest to examine some of the other observations of so eminent a writer and scholar who had unique opportunities of studying at close quarters the working of the economic and educational system of Ceylon :

"Apart from the absence of genuine compulsory education, the great defect at present is that the school system does not meet the economic needs of the country. Every year it requires, in addition to unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers, a number of persons in the clerical, executive, administrative, professional and technical grades of employment. These are all drawn from the 'English' Secondary schools and the University: but they are selected not according to the child's ability but according to the parents' ability to pay. The working classes produce the manual workers and the middle classes produce the middle class. This is so to some degree in all countries, but in most there are means for ensuring that at least the ablest children of each generation will make their way to the top of the educational system. In Great Britain, for instance, this is done by a good scholarship system which enables the able students to proceed from Elementary school to University without expense to his parents. In Wales, which has been most successful in this respect, 92 per cent of the University students started in the Elementary schools. In Ceylon, on the other hand, there are hardly any scholarships, except in the University itself, so that very few of those who enter the more highly-paid posts started their education in the Sinhalese and Tamil schools."[7]

Nor was Sir Ivor alone in his misgivings regarding the merits of free education. There were Ceylonese members of the legislature too, who, while conceding the

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value of free education, demanded at the same time an examination of the merits of alternative measures :

" Now, I stand here as an unrepentant advocate of truth and honesty, for free education as the only means of deriving for the country at large the best possible form of education. But I do not believe in a slogan which is going to deceive the people . . . .

Mr. Speaker, I want, by analysis, to prove to you that even a system of special placing which ruled England for nearly half a century gave a larger measure of secondary education to the people than this *hocus pocus* of free education adumbrated in the Special Committee's Report."[8]

Similarly with regard to the place and value of English the views of even those Ceylonese leaders who acknowledged the importance of English were considerably different, both in their aim and character, from those advocated by Sir Ivor, will be evident from the following :

" Just a few words on the question of the medium of instruction. I welcome the recommendation made by the Committee. I think it is the one recommendation with which I heartily agree. The medium of instruction in the primary schools must definitely be the mother tongue. I also agree that English must have a very high place in the curricula of the various schools. When I say I agree with the recommendation, I cannot help being amazed at one or two recommendations in that connection. Speaking of practical schools, the Special Committee contemplates that the hallmark of excellence of students passing through practical schools should be not a general culture in their own languages, not merely education or acquaintance with the English language, but this :

"To enable those who have passed through the practical schools to use the language in their daily lives."

The Minister now feels that students passing out of the practical schools should be able eventually, not merely to be conversant with the English language, but to use that language in their daily lives.

Apparently, in the educational millennium that is to be, no carpenter will be efficient unless he is able to talk in the newest possible slang that comes from England ; apparently, when a carpenter chisels or saws, he must either hum an English tune or speak in English ; otherwise, the excellence of his carpentry will be called in question. Take, for instance a bookbinder. How can a man bind an English volume unless he is able to read the volume himself ? Or for a matter of that, take a shoemaker. How can he efficiently make a pair of shoes with English leather unless he knows English ? "[9]

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[2] Ceylon *Hansard*, June–August, 1944, p. 1261

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 1211–1212

[4] Jennings, Sir Ivor, *op. cit.*, pp. 180–181.

[5] *Ibid.* pp. 169–170

[6] *Ibid.* pp. 174–175

[7] *Ibid.* pp. 175–176

[8] Ceylon *Hansard*, June–August, 1944, p. 1207

[9] *Op. cit.*, pp. 1213–14

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CHAPTER 56

CONTROL AND DIRECTION OF EDUCATION

V. G. B. MUNASINGHE

The Legal Basis of Education

Public education in Ceylon is governed by Ordinance, No. 39 of 1939, the title of which was " An Ordinance to make better provision for Education and to revise and consolidate the law relating thereto," and the subsequent amending Ordinances and Acts.[1] It replaced Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920, which too had the same title and which in turn replaced two other Ordinances, the " Town Schools Ordinance 1906," and the " Rural Schools Ordinance, 1907."

Central Authority

The Director of Education, subject to the general direction and control of the Minister of Education,[2] is the central authority for education under legislation now in force. But in contrast to provisions in previous legislation, the exercise of his discretion in enforcing the provisions of the Ordinance is subject to review.

Under the Ordinance of 1920, the Director was requested to submit for approval regulations to enforce provisions of the Ordinance to the Board of Education, an advisory body without administrative or executive functions, the composition of which was,

> " not less than sixteen or more than twenty members nominated by the Governor, of whom the Director and the Assistant Director and two unofficial members of the Legislative Council shall be four.".

The Director was the Chairman. The regulations required the approval of the Governor and had to be tabled in the Legislative Council, which could disallow or amend them. Under the Constitution of 1931, the subject of education

MUNASINGHE, V. G. B., B.Sc. (LONDON) DIP. ED. (CEYLON), Director of Education (Colombo Region), Ministry of Education. Before his promotion to the present position Mr. Munasinghe served the Department of Education in different capacities, as Assistant Teacher, Principal, Inspector of Schools, District Inspector of Schools and Education Officer. Mr. Munasinghe was a Member of the Ceylon Delegation to the Commonwealth Education Conference in 1964 and to the General Conference UNESCO, 1966.

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was entrusted to the Executive Committee for Education of the State Council. The need to divest the Board of Education of its

> " power to make regulations on subjects which have to be administered under the control of the Executive Committee of Education"

transformed it into an advisory board for the Director, without regulation making power, in the principal Ordinance of 1939. The amending Act of 1951 replaced it with a Central Advisory Council to advise the Minister. For the first time the Minister is given by statute the power of controlling and directing the execution of the state policy of education by the Director, in contrast to the provision for Superintendence in the previous Ordinance. He can now, on appeal or otherwise,

> " rescind, alter or revise any order or determination which is made by the Director in the exercise of his discretion "

under the provisions of this Ordinance or regulations made under it. He can " for the purpose of giving effect to the principles and provisions of this Ordinance " make regulations, which require the approval of Parliament. He can also by Order publish in the Government Gazette defined areas in which certain sections of the Ordinance shall be operative or make order, which needs approval of Parliament if its validity exceeds 3 months, to remove difficulties in bringing into operation provisions of this Ordinance.

In part III of the present Ordinance there is provision for the devolution of financial aspects and the preparation of a local education scheme, to local authorities. The local education committees to be set up would not be composed of official or nominated members as was the case under the Ordinances of 1906, 1907 and 1920. But the Minister has still not made an Order to apply these provisions to any part of Ceylon.

Under Section 10 (2) of the Ordinance there is statutory recognition of an officer (referred to as the Education Officer) who would be

> " authorised by the Director to enforce or execute in any area the provisions of this Ordinance and the regulations made thereunder."

Although the Department, which at its commencement had only a small staff stationed at its head-quarters, had expanded rapidly during the past decades and their functions and status widened enormously there had been no recognition of delegation of Central Authority, limited or otherwise, appearing in Ordinances preceding the current legislation.

Ownership of Schools

" The two main features of Ceylon education, the division of function between Government schools and voluntary schools, and the distinction between ' English education ' and ' Vernacular education ' have been with us for almost the whole period of the British connection " was a comment in the Report of the Special Committee on Education 1943.[3] In spite of the principle tacitly accepted by the Government one hundred years ago to have more State Schools while encouraging

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the denominational bodies in the sphere of education,[4] what happened in actual practice was that more and more of education passed into the hands of the Missionary Societies. As seen from Chapter 43, Government policy apparently influenced by what obtained in India at this time, was not dissimilar to whatever described so effectively as,

" We desire to see local management under Government inspection and assisted by grant-in-aid, taken advantage of whenever it is possible to do so, and that no Government Colleges or Schools shall be founded in future, in any district where a sufficient number of institutions exist, capable with assistance from the State of supplying the demand for education."[5]

Under these circumstances the attempt made through the Ordinance of 1920 for the Government to assume greater responsibility for education by opening new Government schools was only a partial success, as the denominational schools too increased in number subsequently. A more positive statement on the unsatisfactory nature of the dual system of schools is continued in the concluding paragraph of a report of October, 1929 to the effect,

" . . . . the State should acknowledge its full responsibility for providing a free and compulsory education to all and for this purpose should also acknowledge its responsibility for providing the necessary schools and the required staff, and further, in the existing conditions in Ceylon at the present time the Commission considered it absolutely essential that where the management of any assisted school desired that such a school should be run by the State, every facility should be given to take such a school under the control of the State."[6]

A marked change in the Government policy is reflected in the observations of the Minister of Education in moving a supplementary estimate in March, 1945, to meet the cost of new schools :

" Some years ago, owing to the existence of a large number of rural areas without educational facilities that had only a few inhabitants in scattered groups, it was decided to follow a policy of establishing, provisionally, primary schools in the temple or mosque premises with the consent of the authorities as a nucleus for schools to be established by Government as soon as attendance of pupils warranted the same. This policy was followed from 1935 onwards and now there are 220 such schools to be converted into full-fledged Government Schools."[7]

In the debate in 1945 on the motion of the Minister of Education for the reform of the system of education, an amendment was moved that Ceylon should have a system of State Education, but it was lost and the State Council accepted that there should be a system of State and Denominational schools, but imposed new conditions in the registration of new Denominational schools.

The Ordinance of 1939 merely recognised the existence of Unaided schools, but the amending Ordinance of 1947 and the amending Act of 1951 empowered the Director to issue closure orders on the proprietor of an Unaided school if on specified grounds it was " open to complaint." These developments no doubt slowed down the rate at which new non-state schools were opened. As discussed in Chapter 57,

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it was however only in 1960 that the state versus denominational controversy was finally settled and the new policy was embodied in Act No. 8 of 1961, which provided inter-alia,

"for the vesting in the crown without compensation the property of Assisted schools . . . . and to regulate the establishment of schools on or after the date of commencement of this Act."

The existence of private schools has legal recognition, but all such schools, though not receiving aid from the State, are required to conform to the national policy in education and are subjected to the control of the Central Authority.

Application of Compulsion in Education

As the history of compulsory education is dealt with in detail in another chapter, reference to it will be made here in so far as it related to the control of education.

Various administrative changes introduced for the enforcement of compulsory education along with the pressure of enlightened public opinion resulted in a significant expansion in the enrolment of pupils in schools especially at the elementary level. The powers for enforcement to compulsory attendance which were transferred to the Education District Committees under the Ordinance of 1920 were later transferred under the provisions of the 1939 Ordinance to the Executive Committee of Education. However, in spite of legislation and appointment of officers to enforce compulsory attendance the Special Committee on Education in 1943 remarked that "Compulsory education is in substantial measure not compulsory", suggesting that insufficiency of schools in certain areas, absence of Schools belonging to the same denomination as that of parents, and parents' own apathy were contributory causes to the failure to enforce compulsory education.

Certain changes in the law relating to the teaching of religion, notably in the amending Ordinance of 1947, substantial amendments to Code regulations relating to registration of new schools for grant, introduction of free education in 1945 and greater interest of Government in expansion of education in the post-war years which remedying some of these defects raised school enrolment thus bringing compulsory education closer to the ideal. It is now estimated that over 90 per cent of the age group 5 years—11 years and 75 per cent of the age group 5 years—14 years is enrolled in school.

New Schools

It has to be noted that expansion of educational provision by "missionary enterprise" was limited by two "articles" in the code, one that,

"Grants cannot be claimed for any school, irrespective of the circumstances of the case and the limits of the sum at the disposal of Government"

and the other in regard to the siting of new schools, for which aid was sought, in relation to existing schools. The minimum attendance for an aided school was fixed in relation to its location, being lower in villages than in towns, due note being taken of the difficulties in enforcing attendance. Local authorities under the

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Ordinance of 1906 and District School Committees set up for rural areas under the Ordinance of 1907 were permitted to establish new schools for "instruction in the vernacular languages." This power was transferred under the Ordinance of 1920 to the Education District Committees set up in place of the local authorities and District Committees under the earlier Ordinances.

In the very early Codes for aided schools, an application for grant would not be entertained for a boys' school, if there was another "flourishing" boys' school within 2 miles without an intervening obstacle unless the school had an average attendance of more than 60. Later the distance was made applicable to all types of schools. Under the Codes of the Board of Education set up under the Ordinance of 1920, the distance was reduced to one mile for vernacular schools and provision was included for the category of unaided but "certified" schools. Later Codes required the Director of Education to ascertain the necessity for the new school, whether on educational or religious grounds, and in the case of the latter to stipulate the minimum number of children of the same denomination as the managing body who should be in attendance. A quarter mile as the minimum distance between two schools, with a proviso for the Director of Education to treat a case as exceptional in this regard, was also adopted.

A major change in policy was the opening of Government Central Schools in 1944, mainly in the rural areas to provide secondary education up to the Higher School Certificate level in the English medium. These schools were the pivot on which the benefits of free education were subsequently brought to the rural child. A few years ago public spirited individuals and welfare organisations were encouraged to construct school buildings in areas which were without adequate facilities for education and hand them over to the Government for the purpose of starting schools. The legislation in regard to the establishment of new schools is now in Section 25 of Act No. 8 of 1961.

"25 (1) No person shall, on or after the date of the commencement of this Act.

(*a*) establish any school for the education of persons who are between the age of five years and the age of fourteen years (both ages inclusive)

(*b*) establish any school other than a school referred to in paragraph (*a*) for the education of persons who are below the age of eighteen years without the prior approval of the Director."

Curricula

The curriculum is still prescribed by the central authority, just as it was a hundred years ago. Change at first was slow, but it has been much faster after the introduction of the free education scheme in 1945 and the recognition of the needs of an expanding and diversified economy in the post-war years.

In the latter half of the last century the official view was that children in Sinhalese and Tamil primary schools

"should be taught to read and write fairly, in their own language, and as much arithmetic as will enable them to manage their own affairs, in matters where

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arithmetic enters, with ease and confidence. What they must know for this purpose, is how to deal with rupees and cents, and the weights and measures in use. This much at least of useful knowledge ought to be within reach of every child in Ceylon ".[8]

The Director of Public Instruction intended that a Vernacular middle school should " place a native boy or girl in a position to master all the existing resources of their own language ", and that an Anglo-Vernacular school should provide a pupil with

" a very useful practical knowledge of two languages for the Ordinary concerns of life, or if he has higher aims he will be fit to enter the first stages of superior instruction in an English School."[9]

Some of the English schools however were permitted to teach other subjects in Standards 6 and above, and of them some were permitted to present candidates for Cambridge Local Examinations. Later more subjects had been added, for example, drill, grammar, some form of manual instruction for all pupils and needlework for girls. The pressing need for books for Sinhalese schools was met by a programme initiated by the Department of Public Instruction, as described in Chapter 85.

By 1920 schools which had a sufficient number of children between the ages of 5 years and 8 years had been permitted to organise Infant Departments in place of Standard I. The observation lesson, which included lessons on things in Nature, Familiar Objects, Form, Primary Colours, was added to the subjects in the Infant Classes and Standard I. Drawing Hygiene and Physiology in Vernacular and English Schools, and Sanitation in Vernacular Schools were additional subjects in the higher Standards. Changes were made in the curriculum of Standard 8 so that pupils could prepare for the English School Leaving Certificate in which 5 subjects were compulsory and two were electives, or the Vernacular School Leaving Certificate in which a pupil was examined in ten subjects, with no electives. The former was held twice a year at specified centres, while the latter was conducted by the Inspector at the annual examination of the school thus continuing the grip of control through what was taught in the schools.

The Special Committee on Education, 1943, commented

" It is not possible for this Committee or any other body to determine in detail what is the most suitable curriculum for the Schools of Ceylon."

It also recognised that "a large part of Ceylon education is determined at present by the subjects of examination ", it drew attention to certain principles in the determination of the curriculum and suggested that whatever the system of control, " School should exhibit a considerable variety."

Although even after the reforms of 1945, the central authority continued to prescribe curricula, the effect of the recommendations of the committee began to be felt. The regulations in the Amending Act of 1951, by which the use of Sinhala and Tamil as media of instruction was extended to the post primary classes, also provided for selection of pupils at 14+ for higher education and "a scheme of continued education with a practical bias " for the unselected. But this was not implemented.

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The curricula now in force have been laid down by circulars issued by the Director.[10] In the first five grades the subjects are grouped under Religion, Languages, Arithmetic, Environmental activities, Constructional activities, Aesthetic subjects and Health and Physical Education. In the next three grades Arithmetic is replaced by Mathematics, Environmental by Social Studies, and Constructional by Practical subjects. In the ninth grade there is a preliminary diversification, the Core being Religion, Languages, Mathematics and the electives from the Languages, Social Studies, Science and Technical or Aesthetic groups. English is the second language from Grade III, and Work Experience is compulsory in all grades.

The General Certificate of Education (Ordinary Level) Examination is held at the end of the course in the tenth grade. The courses in the eleventh and twelfth grades leading to the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) Examination, are for those who wish to qualify for entry to institutions of Higher studies and entry requirements to the various courses at this stage are prescribed by circular of the Director.[11]

Inspections

The adoption of a grant-in-aid system and the encouragement of " missionary enterprise " in education, led to the prescription of minimum standards to be maintained by the schools. According to the early codes, the major functions of an Inspector of Schools were to verify the fulfilment of conditions for payment of grant, furnish report for such payment and examine pupil-teachers for certification as teachers. Both in Government and Aided schools, examination of each pupil in all subjects, specified in the Code, in every class was the pattern. Directives were issued to Inspectors of Schools in the form of circulars published in the Government gazette for general information. One circular relaxed the requirement that the principal teacher of an English school should hold a certificate of competency to teach English, but informed the Inspectors of Schools that in regard to the examination for grants

> " and standards prescribed strictly enforced and if the results be, as may be anticipated to diminish the grants earned, the Managers will then doubtless consult their own interest by employing a better class of teachers than they generally do at present . . . . and that a weak English School in a small town or village is not to be any more leniently examined than an efficient high school in a central town "[12]

Another laid down detailed schemes of assessment for the examination of various subjects in English schools. For example in Standard 2 Arithmetic— " Three sums " one in addition, two in subtraction. Pass, if two are correctly worked."[13] Though the directives were issued in great detail, the inspections appear to have been in the main a mechanism for ensuring that minimum standards prescribed for schools had been maintained.

The abolition of the " result " grant for English Schools, was followed by triennial inspections of schools, whereby every aspect of the work of a school was investigated.

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The innovations in inspection not only enabled assessment of good organisation and good teaching method, but also provided a mechanism to disseminate information on recent advances to the schools.

The Special Committee on Education of 1943 also stressed that the chief function of the Inspector of Schools was " giving guidance to the teacher and offering friendly criticism of his work." The decentralisation of some of the educational work so far handled by the central authority to the Officers in charge of the Provincial Offices, an increased cadre in the Inspectorate and more funds for Seminars and In-service training programmes have relaxed to some extent the rigid control of schools through inspection in recent years, though the ideal has not been reached. A circular issued in 1962 offered suggestions on the organisation of Inspections.[14] A pilot project for " Improvement of school practices through supervision and assessment of school performance " referred to in Chapter 60, may well set the pattern for school inspection in the future.[15]

Teachers

Teachers in the State schools are regarded as public servants enjoying security of tenure and various privileges extended to other public servants, but teachers in aided and unaided schools are the employees of the Managers of their schools, governed by regulations in the Code.

At the time the grant-in-aid scheme was adopted, teachers of Government schools were trained or certificated. But the establishment of new Government schools in the interior districts of the Island at about this time created a demand for more Head Teachers. This was met by transfer of the trained assistants from the established schools and their replacement by monitors, who by passing appropriate examinations, became qualified. The scheme though reasonably successful at the start, was less so later on as the " trainers " themselves were only " qualified " and not trained. But there is no doubt that expansion would have been impossible without such a system, particularly as education budgets were very small.

A pupil-teacher system and aided Training Schools were the two agencies devised by the Government to assist Managers of aided schools to fulfil the Code requirement that their vernacular schools should within a stipulated period be staffed with certificated teachers. As regards aided English schools, the Director at that time felt that the

> " head master of an English school with three years' experience as pupil-teacher by the intelligent use of two or three books such as Mr. Blakiston's ' Teacher ' or Mr. Fearen's ' School Inspection ' can really make himself master of the secrets of method and organisation, to an extent altogether beyond the horizon of a vernacular teacher ".

But limits on training were set by permitting a particular management, to train at any time, in the case of males a maximum number equal to 10 per cent of the number of vernacular boys' and mixed schools under its management, and in the case of females 15 per cent of girls' vernacular schools. While Government teachers

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enjoyed stable, though low rates of pay, and bonuses for the successes of pupil teachers trained by them, teachers of aided schools were paid at rates fixed by their Managers.

The opening of the Government Training College for training English teachers did contribute to an improvement in the quality of teachers. As discussed in Chapter 71, it was not until the Government introduced incremental scales of salary, scales being made appropriate to qualifications, and a pension scheme, that the status and prospects of teachers were improved. The opening of the University College in 1921 was another factor which contributed to qualitative improvement in teaching staffs.

Until 1931 there was no restriction on the employment of non-Ceylonese graduates by Managers of Aided Schools. When the Government was made aware that there were Ceylonese Graduates who had failed to secure appointments as teachers, the Director issued a circular in October of that year informing Managers that non-Ceylonese teachers could be appointed only in exceptional circumstances. In 1932, a Code Amendment created a category of " maintained schools " as a retrenchment measure designed to prevent an increase in the cadre of Govenment teachers eligible for non-contributory pensions. The cadre of Government teachers was virtually static until it was decided that all teachers in Government or aided schools appointed after June 15, 1934, should contribute to the School Teachers' Pension Fund.

Provisions in the Code that a Manager should obtain prior approval of the Director before a teacher was appointed to a school staff or discontinued from it, while circumscribing the powers of Managers, maintained quality and ensured some security of tenure for teachers. However, the Director's power in regard to approval of appointment was limited in that he could only impose a penalty of forfeiture of part of the grant if a Manager refused to accept his order. Besides, a Manager could plead exceptional circumstances and employ a teacher outside the eligible quota and pay him from school funds.

During the last twenty years conditions of service of teachers have been improved a great deal, particularly with higher scales of pay, study leave with pay for betterment of qualifications and increases in cadre of posts of responsibility carrying special scales of salary resulting in a remarkable improvement in the Status of teacher as a profession.

Grants

Changes in conditions of eligibility for grant in regard to charging of fees, size of classes, attendance of pupils, quality of staff, and mode of calculation were made from time to time during the next thirty-five years. A major change in 1914 was the abolition of results grant in English Schools. This was followed by the new policy of Government meeting the full salary cost in Aided vernacular schools and full salary cost less a fixed amount to be contributed by the Managers in Aided English schools.

In 1935 the Government decided to pay salaries direct to teachers of vernacular schools to ensure that they were paid in full and on time. The Managers relieved

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of financial responsibility, began to fill vacancies with teachers with good qualifications. The quality of teaching improved but Government costs also rose. Government controlled the rising cost by issue of circular E 43 of December 3, 1936, by which Managers were prevented from replacing an outgoing teacher with one of higher qualifications.

Both reduction and augmentation of grant have been used to promote the study of particular subjects. In 1912 proficiency in a vernacular language was made a condition of eligibility for grant at a particular stage in Aided English schools, while in 1939 the study of English was encouraged in vernacular schools by the appointment of an additional teacher of English outside the quota. In 1945 the Revised School Grants Scheme made provision by the abolition of fees and increased grants, for the introduction of Sinhala or Tamil as the medium of instruction in all primary classes of English Schools.

A new grading of aided English Schools, involving clearer definitions of adequacy and suitability of staff, curriculum at different levels, minimum pupil enrolment and pupil accommodation, was adopted from July 1, 1947, The basic principle of grant-in-aid was still the full salary cost of a teacher. But new regulations permitted, with appropriate rules for award, a school to have a maximum of four posts of special responsibility, the salary scales of which depended on the grade of the school. The rule that a teacher appointed as Head of a school for the first time after March 25, 1938 would be eligible to receive salary on the scale for a Head only if the staff was not less than five remained unchanged, and the Minister was empowered by regulation to decide award of posts of special responsibility in exceptional cases. The regulations of 1951 permitted the Director to order the discontinuance of a senior class if he was satisfied that it was " unnecessary or inexpedient, having regard to financial and educational considerations." The penalty for non-compliance was cessation of grant for pupils or teachers of such class. In the same regulations enhanced rates of equipment and maintenance grant were sanctioned.

Summary

The full cost of public education, except for a very small fraction provided in fee-levying private schools,[16] is met by the government. Legislative sanction is, however, available for the charging of regulated fees, known as the " Facilities and Services Fees, " to defray the cost of certain school activities and programmes, generally of a co-curricular nature. The Director of Education, under the general direction and control of the Minister of Education, is the Central Authority for education. He prescribes curricula, syllabuses and text books, issues general directives on methods of instruction, supervises allocation of budgetary funds, is responsible for the appointment of teaching personnel in cases in which such powers have been delegated to him, and directs teacher-training. New school construction, repair and maintenance is carried out through senior divisional executives, to whom certain administrative functions of the Director have been delegated. A continuous check on the adherence to prescribed curricula and syllabuses and other directives issued to schools, is kept through a system of inspections by school inspectors,[17] who are themselves supervised by the divisional executives.

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REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] Government of Ceylon Legislative Enactments (1956 Revision) Cap. 185
Acts No. 37 of 1958. No. 5 of 1960, No. 8 of 1961

[2] The functions of the Department of Education were decentralized with effect from October 1, 1966. The composition of the new Directorate—Director-General of Education, Directors of Education and Regional Directors of Education is indicated in the Budget Estimates of the Government of Ceylon, 1966–1967

[3] Sessional Paper XXIV of 1943, Report of the Special Committee on Education

[4] Sessional Paper VIII of 1967. Report of the Committee of the Legislative Council

[5] Despatch from the court of Directors of the East India Company to the Governor-General of India in Council of July 19, 1854

[6] Sessional Paper 28 of 1929. Report of the Commission to inquire into and report upon the present system of Education in Ceylon

[7] Minutes of the State Council of Ceylon, 1945

[8] Explanatory Memorandum annexed to revised code for Aided Schools, 1879

[9] Government vernacular schools 1870–1900 by L. J. Gratiaen, Education Office Press, 1933

[10] Circular No. 1 of 1963 issued by the Director of Education, Circular No. 48 of 1967 and Circular letter No. 62 dated December 7, 1967 issued by the Director-General of Education

[11] Circular No. 9 of 1962 issued by the Director of Education and subsequent amendments

[12] Circular No. 13 of 1884 issued by the Director of Public Instruction

[13] Circular No. 17 of 1882 issued by the Director of Public Instruction

[14] Circular No. 14 of 1962 issued by the Director of Education, Ministry of Education, Ceylon 1967

[15] Working Paper issued by Division of Secondary Education, Ministry of Education, Ceylon 1967

[16] Under Act No. 8 of 1961 managements of Grade I and II Aided English Schools were allowed the option of retaining such schools under their own management provided they did not charge fees from pupils and ceased to receive grant from Government. The option was exercised in respect of a few schools.

[17] The Island is divided into educational circuits, each with about 40 to 50 schools, and is in charge of a Circuit Education Officer, which is the new designation of a School Inspector.

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CHAPTER 57

FULL STATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

B. L. Ranasingha

Introduction

In this chapter an attempt will be made to trace how the State assumed full responsibility for education in Ceylon. Since the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction the State whilst continuing to assist denominational schools started schools of its own. Christians, Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims vied with one another in establishing schools, towards the end of the nineteenth century, thus adding to the number of denominational schools. These two types, called Assisted Schools and Government Schools respectively, existed side by side till 1960, in which year the State assumed full responsibility for almost all schools in the Island.

State Responsibility Widened in the Donoughmore Era

During the Donoughmore period the government in its endeavour to build a welfare state began to assume greater responsibility for education. The Executive Committee for Education, with its Chairman designated the Minister of Education, had control of general policy, finance and administration of education. The task of executing the education programme to build a welfare state fell on this Executive Committee of Education, which, during the period 1931—1947 under the distinguished Minister of Education Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, made significant changes in the Island's schools system through a series of measures that widened the responsibility of the State for education.

The introduction of the scheme of direct payment to teachers was a noteworthy achievement of this era. During the great economic depression of the 1930's, a considerable proportion of teachers in aided schools did not often receive their salaries from the respective managers. In an effort to remove this anomaly, the Director of Education withheld the payment of grants to defaulting managers, and made direct payment to teachers in aided schools that forfeited their

RANASINGHA, B. L., B. A. (Honours) London, M. A. (Education), Ceylon Dip. Ed. (Ceylon), Circuit Education Officer, School Administration Branch, Ministry of Education.

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grants-in-aid. With the adoption of this scheme state responsibility for education widened to the extent of the services of teachers in all aided schools becoming a financial obligation of the Education Department.

The activities of the Education Department widened in yet another way during the period of the economic depression. Some managers who found it difficult to maintain their schools for want of finances opted to hand them over to the Education Department. This largely increased the number of schools directly managed by the State. The Executive Committee on Education decided not to take over any privately established school unless its buildings and land were forthwith handed over to the State too. Schools thus handed over came to be known as ' maintained schools.' As the then Director of Education pointed out,[1] this policy helped in rapid spread of education. A manager could now, without having to finance the running of a school any length of time, provide a school for any area by erecting a school building on a suitable land. The Department of Education would then take it over and maintain it, meeting recurrent expenditure.

After tiding over the epidemic of malaria in 1935, which severely affected educational progress, the Ministry of Education continued its policy of expansion opening up more and more schools in still unserved areas. Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara whilst pursuing this policy was quite determined on widening State control of the Island's schools system. He remarked thus in 1938:

> " In all justice to the country and the State Council, if the State Council pays the money for educating the youth of this country, it should be able to control education ; he who pays the piper should be able to call the tune. "[2]

Expansion of State Control

The Education Ordinance of 1939 whilst consolidating the provisions of the Education Ordinance of 1920 made certain important changes in the educational policy of the State. This Ordinance converted the Board of Education into an advisory body and made the Director of Education under the Executive Committee of Education, the central authority. Similarly, local Schools Committees were changed into advisory bodies, too. It sought, quite unsuccessfully as later developments proved, to devolve educational finance on local bodies. The Ordinance changed the form of the Conscience Clause, stating it as a positive requirement to be observed rather than a negative effort at protection. The Ordinance empowered the Executive Committee on Education to make regulations known as the Code to cover all aspects of education. Also a clear policy on Estate schools was laid down in this Ordinance as discussed in Chapter 66.

The significance of the Education Ordinance of 1939 lay in the provisions it made for subsequent achievements in education. It gave the Executive Committee on Education the power it required to expand, and retain control of education. Thenceforth the responsibility of the State for education became grounded on a clear legal base.

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The Demand for Educational Reforms

During the last years of 1930's the prevailing schools system came in for severe public criticism—originating from denominational bodies, teachers unions and the press mainly—as not making for equality of opportunity for all sections of the welfare state. Government, on the other hand, found expenditure on education rising beyond its capacity and desired to check its sharp increase.[3] Consequently, a Committee was appointed to report on the existing schools system and make recommendations for its improvement.

The existence of two types of schools—one fee-levying in the English or bilingual medium and the other non-fee-levying in the Sinhala or Tamil medium, which resulted in a split in the educated layer of society—the Report of the Special Committee pointed out, was a grave failing in the prevailing schools system. To equalising educational opportunity by removing the factor of money as the criterion of selection the committee recommended the introduction of the free scheme (discussed elsewhere in this volume), which devolved complete financial responsibility for education on the State. In deference to the views of the different sections of the community, the Report recommended the continuance of the system of dual control in education, viz., by the State and denominational bodies. Virtually all Christians, the Report pointed out, stood for denominational schools whilst the Buddhist and Hindu popular opinions were divided in favour of State and denominational control and the Muslims singly preferred State control. It was, therefore, recommended " that the system of direct state control and the system of denominational control should be permitted to exist side by side. "[4] Private schools to be conducted in conformity with the national education policy were to be allowed to exist, too.

The revised Grants Regulations came into effect on 1.10.1945 after the introduction of the free education scheme. Most denominational schools entered the free education scheme, between this date and 1.5.1960, the last date given to aided schools to either enter the scheme or remain unaided private schools. A few schools preferred to remain thus fee-levying and independent. So there came into being three categories of schools in the Island : (1) Non-fee-levying Government schools ; (2) Non-fee-levying denominational schools ; (3) Fee-levying private schools. Schools of the first type were entirely financed by the State, and schools of the second type received a grant-in-aid plus the teachers' salaries while schools of the last type involved no cost to Government at all.

It will be seen that the financial commitment of the State considerably widened in the new scheme. Leaving out the private schools, and the capital cost of the already established denominational schools, the State bore the entire education bill of the country. But only a part of the control of education was in the hands of the State. In the circumstances, one is reminded of the remark of the architect of this new education scheme, Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara :

> " . . . . he who pays the piper should be able to call the tune. "

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Subsequent Legislation

The Education Ordinance of 1947 made provision for giving instruction to pupils in their respective faiths in Government Schools. This measure paved the way for the State to assume full responsibility for education. The criticism, till then levelled at State control, that it neglected the spiritual aspect of the pupils' development became invalidated. And with this, the need for denominational control of education stemming from the argument of the need for religious instruction disappeared altogether.

On the impact of political independence gained in 1948, a demand for a more dynamic system of education geared to greater and quicker social change was made on the State. The Education (Amendment) Act, No. 5 of 1951 was intended to answer that demand.

Grants paid to Assisted Schools were re-classified. In addition to teachers' salaries and the basic maintenance grant, special allowances were stipulated for maintaining workshops, laboratories and libraries. Further, greater scope was given to assisted schools by permitting grants to cover pupils of unlike faiths, which the previous Ordinance had disallowed.

A Wider Concept of State Responsibility

The educational reforms that followed the Special Committee Report significantly widened the concept of State responsibility for education. Hitherto State responsibility was, in the main, a matter of finance. Little attempt was made to shape the content of education. But soon it began to be felt that the rapidly expanding education required to be geared to the economy of the country, lest it became a massive financial commitment without commensurate economic benefits. The educational legislation of the previous decade brings out a clear awareness of this need. The attempts at diversification of education, the introduction of a pattern of selection for secondary education, the policy of change over to the mother tongue as the medium of instruction all derive from a wider concept of State responsibility than mere financial obligation.

The Demand for Full State Control of Education

In the 1950's the education policy of the State came to be criticized for making financial provision for a system of denominational schools which was controlled by non-government sectarian agencies. The demand for full State control of education that some select Buddhist and Hindu factions expressed before the Special Committee of 1943 had by now gathered the force of a widespread social movement. The view that the Christian community enjoyed undue social and economic advantages through schools managed by their respective denominations, which the State paid for, had gained in popularity. To bring about a just distribution of educational opportunities it was demanded that all denominational schools be taken under direct State Control.

The All Ceylon Buddhist Congress spearheaded the agitation for full State responsibility for education liquidating the system of dual control. A Buddhist Committee

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of Inquiry was set up by this Organization in April 1954. Its purpose was "to inquire into the present state of Buddhism in Ceylon and to report on the conditions necessary to improve and strengthen the position of Buddhism and the means whereby those conditions may be fulfilled."[5] The Report of this Committee published in 1956 created Island-wide public interest. The economic, political, social and religious circumstances of the Buddhist Community in the Island were exhaustively examined in the Report of the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry. Adducing comprehensive evidence, the Report came to the conclusion that Buddhists experienced many unfair disadvantages in social and economic life resulting in a widespread disequilibrium in society. A fundamental cause of it, the Report emphatically stated, was the system of dual control in education. Of the many recommendations of the Committee, the most significant was the recommendation that all Assisted Schools and Training Colleges should be taken over by the State.

The Christian denominations, in general, opposed this recommendation. The Catholic Union of Ceylon published a commentary on the Buddhist Commission Report entitled "A Companion to the Buddhist Commission Report" in which charges levelled at the system of dual control in education were re-examined.

Whilst this controversy raged on, public opinion in favour of the State assuming full responsibility for education gathered greater and greater momentum. Responding to this wide-spread public agitation, the State passed legislation to take over all Assisted schools and Training Colleges.

The history of the Island's education during the last century, however, shows a clear trend towards this final achievemnt. The State in agreeing to take over active administration of all Assisted schools brought to a close a trend towards full State control of education which had been latently developing within its own policy, simultaneous with the increase in the State's financial obligation for education.

Full State Control of Education

By the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act No. 5 of 1960 and the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act No. 8 of 1961, both the administration and the ownership of Assisted schools and Training Colleges came under the State. Only those schools that opted to function as non-fee-levying independent schools, besides those that did not enter the free education scheme earlier, remained out of the pale of State control. The land, buildings and equipment and all material used in Assisted schools and Training colleges became State property. The Director of Education took complete charge of the control and administration of those institutions.

The Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act No. 5 of 1960 marks the first stage of the assumption of full control of all schools by the State. This act was viewed as an interim measure. The then Minister of Education introducing the bill in Parliament said thus :

"You will see Mr. Speaker, that all the major issues pertaining to the question of the schools take over have been reserved for the next bill, which will provide for a unified system of national education. It is in that bill that provision will

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be made for the *de facto* take over of schools . . . . It will provide for the take over of Assisted schools without paying any compensation to the proprietors or the managers. It will outline the steps to be taken where there are disputes as to the demarcation of school land and premises and those of church, temple or mosque."[6]

This Act made provision for the appointment of the Director of Education as Manager of every Assisted Training College and every Assisted School, excepting those the Managers elected to administer as unaided non-fee-levying schools.

The implementation of the provisions of this Act was by no means easy. Some schools went under the management of the Director of Education without any hindrance. But much resistance was experienced in the assumption of the management of others. Certain schools, in predominantly Roman Catholic areas, were barricaded barring admittance to the officers of the Education Department. In certain instances members of the public occupied the school premises. All schools, however, that did not wish to remain non-fee-levying unaided schools came under the administration of the Director of Education and were, during the interim period, referred to as " Director-managed schools. "

Subsequently, the next bill referred to above was introduced in Parliament on 18th January, 1961, providing for the assumption of full ownership of Assisted schools and Training Colleges by the Director of Education. Introducing this bill the then Minister of Education, Dr. Al Haj Badi-ud-din Mahmud, said :

" This Bill gives the necessary legal power to effect the complete take over. It provides for the indisputed vesting of school property in the Government . . . . It removes all proprietory rights which societies, corporations and individuals had enjoyed hitherto. . . . This Bill is designed to transfer the ownership of school property to its real owners . . . . the children of this country . . . "[7]

After its passage through the Parliament this Bill came to be known as the " Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act, No. 8 of 1961." With the implementation of the provisions of this Act the property and equipment of Assisted schools and Training Colleges were vested in the State. I also provided for full protection of them until they were duly handed over to State and the review of the cases of teachers dismissed on the impact of the take-over. Also the Act regulated the establishment of new schools, by not allowing any person to establish schools for children between the ages of 5 and 14 years and 14 and 18 years, without prior approval of the the Director of Education.

With those Acts, the entire schools system of the Island, with the exception of the aforementioned few, came under full State control. This has clearly facilitated the implementation of a uniform education policy, which often met with a variety of impediments within the system of dual control that had been prevailing. Educational planning and administration, which clearly form part of State responsibility for education in modern government, thus became set on an uninterruptible course. The structure of the Education Department has undergone significant change through the process of de-centralization, initiated recently. Educational planning and policy-making has been revitalized and the content of education has begun to receive close

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expert attention. Several programmes of research have been initiated with a view to developing teaching techniques and preparing suitable material in relation to national culture and economic needs. Of them the most outstanding are the production of school text-books in various subjects, the preparing of syllabuses of work and the drawing up of detailed Courses and the introduction of new methods of teaching devised for their efficient application. Such extensive projects already undertaken and more that is planned, make State responsibility for education very much more of a reality than the mere supply of finance with which it originated.

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[2] Ceylon Hansard, 1938, p. 1974

[3] Ceylon Hansard, 1937. Sir D. B. Jayatillake the Leader of the State Council made special mention of this fact in the speech to be delivered presenting the budget for the year 1937–1938

[4] The Report of the Special Committee on Education, 1943 : Sessional Paper XXIV, 1943, p. 27

[5] Buddhist Commission Report

[6] Official Report, Volume 40, C. 1595

[7] Official Report, Volume 42, C. 400

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CHAPTER 58

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES IN EDUCATION

N. L. D. F. KARUNARATNE

The evolution of the present system of education of the Island has been dealt with in some of the foregoing chapters. In this Chapter an attempt is made to trace the succession of administrative changes that accompanied various changes in the education sytem. Under the Department of Public Instruction established in 1869 the powers of control, direction and supervision of the schools system of the Island was centralized in the Director. The whole Island was divided into three administrative districts and each was under an Inspector of Schools. The Department had direct control of all government schools but it was through the grant-in-aid scheme that it gained a measure of control over schools conducted by missionary agencies. When the Department sought to tighten control by means of regulations governing grants, the managers of aided schools resisted it very much. In fact, they considered such control as undue interference with their just powers and privileges. The Department, however, persisted in better regularizing its control over all schools through administrative and financial measures. Consequently, managers of schools began to regard the Director with suspicion as if he were attempting to widen the powers of his office overriding the just claims to powers of direction of other educational agencies. Thus in 1895 an Education Association was formed by those actively concerned with the management of schools for the purpose of safeguarding their interests in educational activity. As mentioned in Chapter 37 on the representations this Association made to the Governor, a Board of Education was instituted to advise the Director on matters of education. The Director and the Inspector of Schools for the Western Province, representatives from the Church of England, the Wesleyan Methodists, the Roman Catholics and the Buddhists were made members of this Board. But before long conflicts of the different interests represented arose within the Board interrupting the smooth functioning of the

KARUNARATNE, N. L.D.F., B.A. (CEYLON), DIP. ED. (CEYLON). Presently attached to the Ministry of Education as an Educational Adviser. Previous to the present appointment, Mr. Karunaratne served as an Assistant Teacher and later as a Circuit Education Officer.

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Department. And when, with the introduction of compulsory education which led to rapid spread of literacy in the Island, the activities of the Department became more extensive and complex, the need for a wider concept of administration began to be felt.

In the circumstances an Education Committee was appointed in 1911 " to make a general survey of the system." It was assisted by Mr. J. J. R. Bridge, an Inspector of Schools of the English Board of Education. This Committee made certain recommendations for reforms in the secondary and higher education and unanimously decided to implement those recommendations. The Department of Public Instruction required an increase in staff and improvement in status. The Committee resolved :

(1) that the status of the Director of Public Instruction should be raised and that the officer should hold the position equivalent to that of an officer in the First Class of the Civil Service ;

(2) that the Director of Public Instruction should more appropriately be designated Director of Education.

In recommending these proposals the Governor in his despatch dated December, 24, 1912, to the Secretary of State submitted—

" It is recognized that the proposals will entail a considerable addition to the educational Vote, but the Council are unanimously of opinion that such additional expense cannot be postponed if the Department is to have a reasonable chance of making effective the reforms now adumbrated."[1]

Thus the Department of Public Instruction was designated the Department of Education and an Assistant Director was appointed from 1912. By 1914 Senior Inspectors of Schools responsible for the educational administration of the five Districts were replaced by District Inspectors of Schools.

Conferment of Legal Status on the Department

By 1919 the Department of Education had completed fifty years of its existence. It controlled and supervised the work of 885 Government Schools and 2,098 grant-in-aid schools with a total of 377,949 children. To discharge the numerous duties, the staff had gradually been increased. Despite the multiplicity of Ordinances relating to education, there was none legally establishing the office of Director and his Department.

To remedy this and many other defects in education, steps were taken to present in the Legislative Council, a Bill—

" to make better provision for education and to revise and consolidate the law relating thereto."[2]

In giving notice of the second reading of the Bill the Attorney General said:

" It is felt that the time has come to organize the Department of Education and this Bill has been prepared with that object."[3]

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Explaining the anomalous position of the Department he observed—

" The Director of Education and his officers are named in certain Ordinances, powers of a certain kind are given to them, large sums of money are being distributed by the Director of Education, but his control and power of laying down policy for education as a whole is derived from the fact that he holds the purse strings."[4]

Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 was the outcome of this Bill and was a significant piece of legislation. One of the most noteworthy provisions of the Ordinance was that it gave statutory sanction to the Department of Education and made it a lawful instrument of Government. In addition, from an administrative point of view, it gave legal status to the Board of Education and provided for the setting up of District Committees to assist the Director in matters relating to elementary schools within their areas. It laid down that the whole cost of education should be transferred to the general revenue and it allowed allocation of funds to District Committees for the purpose of controlling and maintaining buildings.

The Proposed Changes and the Expansion of the Department

The two Ordinances passed to make vernacular education compulsory, the administrative changes, the ' Conscience Clause ', provided in the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 and the interests evinced by the denominational bodies contributed to bring about a rapid expansion in education in the nineteen twenties. New schools had to be built and old ones extended to accommodate the sudden influx of children. By 1927 the total number of schools was 4,495 with 489,211 pupils. These totals, though encouraging, included not more than fifty per cent of the children of school-going age. Therefore, an extensive building programme was suggested to accommodate the balance.

With the rapid rise of the school-going population the number of teachers should have been increased and their quality improved and the machinery of administration and supervision re-structured correspondingly. But no attention had been paid to these educational problems. It soon became abundantly clear that initially the Department had to be reorganized and its cadre increased to achieve these educational objectives.

Between 1907 and 1927 the field staff had been strengthened from 21 to 67, while only 5 officers had been added to the Head Office Staff. The latter included 2 Chief Inspectors who were burdened with work relating to the assessment of grants of assisted schools and the supervision of public examinations. Thus in 1927 specific shortcomings of the exisitng educational administration and the requirements that must be met found expression in a memorandum submitted by the Director to the Government.

Firstly, the Director said, the supply of qualified teachers was far behind the rate of increase of pupils, and therefore, any hasty

" attempt to erect school accommodation for the fifty per cent of the children who are still illiterate will result in disaster. "[5]

He laid emphasis on the need to establish more Training Colleges, to reorganize the existing ones, to modify the Pupil Teachers' Courses and to revise the Teachers' Examination in order to provide a sufficient number of qualified teachers.

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Secondly, he stressed that the curriculum of rural schools which was academic in character should be reconstructed to include agriculture and rural industries so as to relate the work done in these schools with local life.

Thirdly, the Director observed that the division of the Inspectorate into the English and the Vernacular cadre was undesirable as it hindered the co-ordination of the work of inspection of English, Sinhalese and Tamil Schools and recommended their amalgamation.

The memorandum proceeded to mention a need, related to the above proposals for the provision of an adequate number of text-books in Sinhalese and Tamil to ensure progress in the new scheme of studies that was to be introduced into the schools.

In 1927 a Sub-Committee was appointed to consider and report on the scheme for the reorganisation of the staff of the Education Department and it stated that :

> " The main purpose of the scheme, as explained by the Director of Education is to ensure (1) that certain important functions relating to (*a*) the training of teachers and (*b*) industrial and agricultural education are performed by special officers whose whole time will be devoted to these subjects and (2) that the work of inspection of English and Vernacular Schools is co-ordinated. "[6]

The Sub-committee recommended that the Head Office Staff be increased to include one Deputy Director, one Chief Inspector, 4 Education Officers and a Supervisor of text-books and vernacular examinations. In 1929 the structure of the Department was reorganized by establishing branches, each under a special officer. Those officers dealt severally with general administration ; the Inspectorate ; the Government schools ; the grant-in-aid schools ; the industrial and agricultural schools ; the examinations and printing ; the training of teachers ; the translation of textbooks and other documents and finally, *the audit work.*

The educational administration at the field level was arranged in 4 territorial divisions. Each division had its sub-office with a Divisional Inspector charged with administration and inspection. The amalgamated English and Vernacular Inspectorate was distributed among the 4 divisions. Divisional Inspectors and their Inspecting colleagues met at regular intervals to discuss problems which arose in their respective areas. Any problem requiring clarification was referred to the Department's Chief Inspector who exercised general control and supervision over the Inspectorate. The Chief Inspector also visited the 4 divisions in turn to co-ordinate the work done by them.

The second form of local administration stemmed from the Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 which provided the establishment of District Education Committees. In 1929 there were 32 such Committees in Municipalities, Urban and Rural Districts which corresponded to revenue areas. These Committees were appointed by the Governor to enforce rules relating to compulsory education, and to ensure the buidling and maintenance of schools. They were financed by an annual departmental grant which was allocated on the basis of a programme of work approved each year by the Department.

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Rapid Expansion Since 1931

The period 1931—1948 was characterised by general state of ferment in the sphere of education. The new national awakening found expression in revolt against existing conditions in the political, social and economic life of the country. Sometimes it expressed itself in movements of religious and social reforms. A situation which would almost certainly bring far-reaching changes and profoundly alter the pattern of education had arisen.

In 1931 Ceylon was granted partial responsible government. Under the new constitution there was a State Council consisting of members elected on the basis of adult suffrage in territorial constituencies. There were seven Executive Committees, the Chairmen of which were the country's Ministers. All departments of Government, except three, were divided among the seven Ministers. One such department assigned to a Minister was Education and the Minister was vested with powers to frame policy, control and direct the educational administration.

The first Minister—dynamic and courageous—diagnosed the trends of his time with subtlety and wisdom. He felt that the educational system prevailing in the country had been developed more to meet the needs of the colonial administration than to express the aspirations of the people and assist the economic and social progress of the country. He realized the need to establish a national system of education which was free and compulsory and in which the State was the dominant partner. Hence from 1931 the policy of the Government was to make education more equitable and broadly based and to exercise greater control over denominational schools. These two major aims were achieved by a series of Ordinances and Acts passed by the State Council and later by the Parliament. The result of these legislative enactments has been the rapid expansion of education since 1931.

As the first step in the implementation of the Government policy and as a much needed measure to revise the educational legislation in conformity with the altered constitutional position, the Executive Committee for Education presented a Bill in the State Council in August 1938 "to make better provision for education and revise and consolidate the law thereto." In the course of a stormy debate the Minister dealt with the administrative powers of the Executive Committee for education in relation to the existing Board of Education.

> "I just wanted to show that the Board of Education cannot function as an administrative body side by side with the Executive Committee for education and the State Council . . . . The very first thing we propose to do in the Bill is to do away with the Board of Education as an administrative body." [7]

He was keen to bring the assisted schools under State control on grounds of efficiency and economy. The unhealthy competition between different denominational bodies in establishing schools without considering the educational needs of particular areas had led to waste. Developing his arguments for State control of education the Minister observed that :

> "If the State can control education, then we can say that in such-and-such a place there should not be more than one school. If the State were to run schools,

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and if facilities would be given for religious education, what is the necessity for some people to say ' we must have a school to educate our children' and for another to say ' we should have another school for our children' ?" [8]

The Bill was passed as the Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939 and with several amendments made by Ordinances and Acts in 1939, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1951 and 1953 continues to be in force. The principal changes effected by this Ordinance in so far as they relate to education and the provision of better facilities were—

(1) the transfer to the Executive Committee for Education the power to make regulations ;

(2) the removal of the administrative powers of the Board of Education and its reconstitution as an advisory body ;

(3) the transfer of authority to the Director of Education to appoint, suspend or dismiss managers of assisted schools ; and

(4) the replacement of the District Committees by Local Advisory Committees to advise the Director on matters connected with education in their respective areas.

This Ordinance vested the Minister with powers to make and enforce regulations for the provision of education subject to the approval of the State Council. It also substantially increased his powers to control the denominational schools.

The most revolutionary reforms in the educational history of this period were the recommendations of the Special Committee of 1943 to introduce free education and to make the mother tongue the medium of instruction in the primary classes. These were educational concepts born of an idealism in the country ; an idealism which demanded that, with the transfer of political power to the people, high priority should be given to the elimination of social injustices of the 19th and 20th centuries, and that no child should be deprived of an equal educational opportunity because of the circumstances of his parents. Educational reforms that derived from this movement for emancipation sought to eliminate the major injustices that arose from having higher (English) education, which was economically and socially advantageous, controlled by the strength of parents to pay for it.

When the Minister asked for the approval of the State Council to implement the Free Education Scheme along with some of the other significant recommendations of the Special Committee, he made a clear statement of the national system of education that was envisaged.

" If it is going to be a national education, let it certainly be religious in spirit, let it be patriotic in tone. If it is going to be a national system of education, let it draw its inspiration from the historic past, and not from recent times. If it is going to be a system of national education let it be based on principles of justice, equality and mutual service. If it is going to be a system of national education, let it be under national control. If it is going to be national sytem of education, let it be directed to their physical, moral and intellectual welfare. "[9]

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The scheme of Free Education from Kindergarten to the University was put into operation with effect from 1st October, 1945. The Government offered the assisted schools the option either to join the free scheme and enjoy the benefits of increased State aid or to remain outside the scheme and continue to levy fees but forego all State aid. A large number of them joined the scheme in 1945 and the others were given time up to April 30, 1948 to decide whether to come into the scheme or not.

The revised regulations governing the provision of free education were :—

(1) the abolition of fees, other than a games fee not exceeding six rupees a year ;

(2) the introduction of the mother tongue of the pupils as the medium of instruction in primary classes and the provision of English as a compulsory second language from standard 3 upwards, in primary classes where the medium of instruction was Sinhala or Tamil.

The free education scheme resulted in an explosive increase in numbers seeking admission to schools and this necessitated immediate adjustments and improvisations in school administration. A directive sent from the Head Office to schools in 1946 indicates the magnitude of the problems connected with accommodation and staffing. It advised how these were temporarily to be solved.

> " To meet accommodation difficulties, schools may be run in sections meeting at different times, as in the case of double schools. The Government is prepared to take over teachers whose qualifications and records are satisfactory, from eligible staffs to enable schools to adjust their staffs to the new requirements. Managers should be prepared to adjust their staff to ensure the presence of teachers qualified in vernacular by transfer of teachers between schools under their management. Teachers may be transferred from vernacular schools to primary sections of English schools. A code amendment is under preparation which will allow the transfer of English Teachers from primary departments of English Schools to vernacular schools. Such transfers should not be carried out for the present until this amendment is passed."[10]

The Education Ordinance, No. 26 of 1947 regularised the action taken in 1945. By then, it was felt that the *ad hoc* arrangements made regarding accommodation and staffing in 1946 were inadequate. Hence the Government had to carry out a greatly expanded school building programme and to appoint more teachers to provide education for the increasing numbers of children. Comparative statistical figures for the years 1938 and 1948 indicate the phenomenal increase in the school-going population and the provision of accommodation and teaching facilities. The number of schools which in 1938 was 5,065 with 19,460 children rose in 1948 to 6,236 with 1,181,422 children. The number of teachers increased from 20,628 to 32,870.

A noteworthy development in administration during this period was the increase of the administrative divisions from 4 to 6 in 1939. Again in 1945, these 6 administrative areas were reorganised and 9 sub-Offices were established on a provincial basis under Education Officers with enhanced powers. With the expansion in the cadre of the Inspectorate from 68 in 1938 to 83 in 1945 the circuits for which the

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Inspectors were responsible became smaller and more compact. However, the number of schools each Inspector had to supervise remained more or less the same owing to the increase in the number of schools.

Proposals for Decentralization

From its very inception the Education Department developed as an essentially headquarters organization with centralized powers, moulding policy and issuing advice and instructions to Regional Units and Schools. The machinery of the Department had first been designed to meet the educational needs of a relatively few schools and a small number of pupils. As the school-going population increased in relation to population increase and as a result of the better provision of educational facilities, the Department rapidly expanded without any conscious planning which could have produced a flexible instrument of administration. The eventual result was that the Department lagged behind the ever increasing volume of work. Even after the realization of the complexity of the problems it had to solve, no attempt had been made to delegate any of the powers to the Regional Officers. Apart from the need to remove these inherent deficiencies, there were other compelling reasons for reorganizing the whole Department and distributing the functions between the centre and the Regional Units.

The social and the economic revolution gathering momentum after Independence had brought about far-reaching changes. Sinhala replaced English as the official language. The pace of progress of the newly established welfare state quickened and the needs of the masses received high priority. Economic changes directed towards increased production in agricultural and industrial spheres called for new knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes. The content of education and administration had to be geared to these changes and demands.

In November, 1960, and March, 1961, two Acts of Parliament were passed to implement the Government's policy that education financed by the State should be controlled and managed by the State. The Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act, No. 5 of 1960 provided the appointment of the Director of Education as the Manager of Assisted Schools. By Act, No. 8 of 1961 the properties of such schools were vested in the Crown ; the Director was empowered to regulate the establishment of new schools on or after the date of implementation of this Act. These legislative measures dissolved the partnership in education between the State and the denominational bodies and established a more democratic partnership between the state and the community. Such a stupendous change also necessitated modifications in the administrative structure.

The appointment of the National Education Commission in March, 1961, to make recommendations for the establishment of a Unified System of Education,

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envisaged qualitative and quantitative changes in education. An administrative structure sufficiently viable to implement the proposals of the Education Commission had to be designed in advance.

Two new partners—the parents and teachers—had entered the educational field. Parents were less disposed to tolerate without protest the conditions in schools that seemed to them unsatisfactory or to accept without question decisions which they considered unjust and misguided. Teachers, too, had developed a more discriminating attitude to the administrative actions of the Department.

The antiquated administrative machinery of the Department prevented important decisions from reaching the different levels of the educational system. It also acted obstructively on the channels of communication between the administrators, the teachers and the general public. Equally distressing was the absence of an effective avenue through which expression of the needs of the people could reach the policy-makers. In this situation it was recognised that the administrative system should be completely overhauled so as to reflect the nation's interest in education.

Before 1961 several attempts had been made to formulate a scheme of decentralization to establish an administrative system suited to our new society and new education. A Committee headed by a former Deputy Director (Administration) submitted a scheme in 1958. This was not considered a satisfactory working proposition. Subsequently, on the proposals made by the Department, the O & M Division of the Treasury issued a tentative report. But more significant and feasible were the recommendations of a Conference of Officers of the Department held at Bandarawela in April, 1961. The terms of reference established by the Minister required the conference to—

> " explore the administrative set-up in the Department of Education with a view to making recommendations for any changes that may be necessary to gear administration to changed and changing conditions in the country."[11]

The conference agreed that the Head Office wielded too much power and responsibility and the sub-offices were relegated to the position of reporting authorities ; a good portion of the work done at the Head Office could be delegated to sub-Offices if they were given the necessary power. It was also observed that with the expansion of education and the resultant increase in the volume of work more accommodation and personnel whre needed.

The conference proceeded to explain the nature of decentralization that was being considered—

> " Decentralization is one of the important means of securing efficiency and speed in handling the day to day work of administration. Decentralization connotes delegation of authority to Regional Offices and the lessening of concentration of power at the Head Office."[12]

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It was recommended that complete decentralization be effected forthwith in order to obviate delays and unnecessary duplication of work. The first-stage was to affect in respect of education, establishment and finance, 10 of the 20 units envisaged. An Assistant Director of Education was to take charge of each of these 10 units. The decentralization proposals put forward concerned also the provision of accommodation for Regional and District Offices, the posting of District Inspectors to these Offices, and the transfer of authority to Regional and District heads to approve lay-out plans and estimates.

The Decentralization of Administration in 1961 (First Stage)

The recommendations of the Conference were implemented on the 1st of October 1961, ushering in the first phase of decentralization of educational administration. While all 10 Educational Regions were under Assistant Directors, the 13 Educational Districts were under Education Officers. In the distribution of functions, the Head Office retained the power to deal with questions of policy with regard to all administrative matters of the Department and, in addition, reserved for itself the following eight subjects :

(i) Physical Education and Public Health Education.

(ii) Science Education, Handicrafts, Mechanical Crafts and Agriculture.

(iii) Adult Education, Audio-Visual Education and Schools Broadcasting.

(iv) Vocational Guidance, General Education, Syllabuses, Schemes of Studies, Inspectors and maintenance of standards, and Educational research.

(v) Religious Education, Arts, Home Science, Music, Dancing, Arabic, Commerce and Pirivena Education.

(vi) Training Colleges.

(vii) Pensions, Gratuities and Central Accounts.

(viii) Procurement of stores and supplies.

The Regional Offices were made responsible for accounting and payment work in the whole Region and for Administration, Establishment and Educational work of the area controlled by the Office. The Assistant Director was charged with the overall administration and was made answerable to the Director for implementing the policies laid down by the head Office.

District Offices were authorized to exercise the same functions as the Regional Offices for accounting and payment. The Assistant Director supervised and co-ordinated the work of the District Offices in his Region. But the Education Officers were expected to refer to the Director policy matters requiring clarification.

Decentralization of Education in 1966 (Second Stage)

Judged by the criterion of its effects on education the first phase of decentralization was a success. It removed many of the defects that had been inherent in the over-centralized administrative structure at the Head Office. It created effective machinery to satisfy local educational needs. Decentralization infused administrators

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with a breadth of vision and with sensitivity to the aspirations of the nation. It also provided much needed functional efficiency at the centre and within the units to cope with the range, variety and complexity of problems which arose with the expansion and democratization of education.

These positive gains led our educational planners to consider the feasibility of pursuing this educational programme to its logical conclusion. By 1966 the concept of decentralization had caught their imagination. They found that the situation had become favourable to take another leap forward to build a peripheral administrative structure to enable the local communities to participate fully in the conduct of their educational affairs. The same cogent considerations argued at the time of the first facet of decentralization, formed the background of far-reaching educational proposals that were being presented as a White Paper.

With the growing regard for education, parents and teachers became much more concerned about educational administration. They recognized the value of consultation between the administrators, the teachers and the general public to make administration more efficient. Thus the White Paper stated that :

> " As every citizen is in one way or another connected with education, adequate and efficient machinery should be provided for their views and observations to be made use of in the educational planning and organization. This is particularly true with regard to the manner in which specialized knowledge available within the teaching service and the educational administration is concerned. Consultation with teachers, administrators and the general public is a *sine-qua-non* in education administration."[13]

Referring to the desirability of demarcating and distributing power among different units of administration as a means of protecting freedom, the White Paper considered :

> " A strong and well-organized administrative set-up with well-defined lines of authority as well as checks and balance among different authorities, reinforced by adequate provision of the consultation of public opinion, is of vital importance to an efficient system of administration."[14]

Another reform urged at this time was the integration of the Ministries and the Departments. A Committee on administrative Reforms issued its report as Sessional Paper IX of 1966 and recommended complete integration of stable Departments like Education, Health, Local Government and Labour with their respective Ministries. The purpose was to obviate duplication of work and to create machinery for expeditious handling of day to day business. The Ministers concerned were requested to examine the proposals and to effect integration at the beginning of the financial year in October 1966, if the problems arising from such action could be overcome.

The Minister of Education recognized that the colossal task of implementing the proposed educational reforms required a planned administrative set-up designed in advance. He also saw that the integration of the Ministry and the Department would facilitate the framing of national policy. It would also lead to the creation of Education Departments in 14 Regions with complete administrative autonomy : this would

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not only help the effective execution of national policy but also establish machinery appropriate to public responsibilities. From the initial stage of decentralization there was a genuine attempt by the Ministry and the Education Department to get rid of unnecessary controls and transfer them to local units to enable those units to play a dominant part in our educational progress. Seeking the approval of the Parliament for the Education Vote which provided expenditure for the re-organization of the Ministry and the Department and the establishment of 14 Education Departments, the Minister in 1966 succinctly outlined his decentralization proposals. He said :

" The educational reforms will be presented to the House in due course. In these Estimates only the proposals for administrative changes are indicated. At present the Head Office is responsible for the educational administration of the whole country. It is proposed to divide the country into 14 Regions, each under a Director of Education who will be charged with the responsibility of administering his own area.

The Director of Education will be replaced by a Director-General who will be responsible for the drafting of policy and plans while 14 Regional Directors will be responsible for promotions and transfers of teachers and the general administration of their Regions without reference to Colombo. These are the proposals contained in the Estimates. At the same time syllabuses, schemes of work and teaching methods will be revised and reorganized from time to time by the Ministry."[15]

These proposals led to the establishment of 14 Regional Education Departments which were set up in the country from 1st October, 1966. Some of these Regions included one or more Districts controlled, as planned, by Chief Education Offices. A recent modification in October 1967 has increased the number of Regional Departments to 15. (*Vide* map 7)

Present position

The present organization of the Ministry is that, in addition to the Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary, there is a permanent staff headed by a Permanent Secretary and Director-General of Education who is responsible for advising the Minister on policy and for formulating plans for development. In this work he is helped by his staff of officers from the Administrative Service and from the Education Directorate.

This Directorate comprises separate and distinct divisions responsible for the administration and supervision of all Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Techinical Education, Teacher Training, Research, new school buildings and the repair and maintenance of existing buildings. Work Experience which is a new field in education is also directed and supervised by the Ministry.

The general direction and supervision of education in the Elementary, Secondary and Technical Divisions is under three Deputy Directors-General assisted by Directors of Education, Chief Education Officers and Educational Advisers. They carry out the policy laid down by the Minister and determine in large measure the continuity

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of that policy. Each division is responsible for the various sections of the educational programme such as the preparation of the curricula and syllabuses, of the teaching and evaluation material for inspection, professional training, in-service training, guidance and research. In addition, each division issues advice to the Regional Heads to implement the Educational programme designed by them.

The Ministry is responsible for the allocation of funds to the Regions and Districts for school premises and for payment of the salaries of officers and teachers. It scrutinises the annual estimates sent from Regional Departments and consolidates them for presentation to the Government. It also advises the Regions on how to maintain and revise the Register of Teachers, and how to interpret and administer the Teachers' Pension Regulations and the Widows' and Orphans' Pension Fund.

While there is a Director of Education at the head of the Regional Education Department, the District Office is under a Chief Education Officer. The Director who is vested with the powers of the Head of a Department is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Region and is always one who has risen from the Education Inspectorate. He is assisted by the Chief Education Officer, an Educational Adviser and other officers of the clerical service. At the field level the Circuit Education Officers provide the link between the Department and the Principals and the teachers and the general public. Similarly the Chief Education Officer of the District Office is assisted by an Educational Adviser and a field staff of Circuit Education Officers.

Regional Departments carry out the educational programme based on the policy laid down by the Minister. They are responsible for the preparation of Annual Estimates, for controlling expenditure, for accounting and for inspection and supervision of all schools building work. They deal also with applications for pensions coming under the Civil Pension Minute and the School Teachers' Pension Regulations and with forwarding relevant documents and salary particulars relating to the Teachers' Widows' and Orphans' Pension Fund.

The District Offices excercise the same functions as Regional Departments except for direct involvement in the preparation of Estimates, for accounting and for action relating to Teachers' Pensions. Regional Directors offer advice and guidance to the District Heads with the aim of securing uniform standards in education.

The results of decentralization are obvious. Decentralization has helped to relieve the heavy pressure on the Ministry and to obviate frustrating delays. It has given more officers experience in posts of real responsibility and brought them more closely in touch with the communities they serve. Decentralization has enabled the Ministry to introduce new reforms, to evolve a programme of education suited to the country and to be in a position to cope with the educational expansion. It has also encouraged the general public to take active interest in educational affairs and to make their contribution to the development of an educational system geared to the political, social and economic progress of the country.

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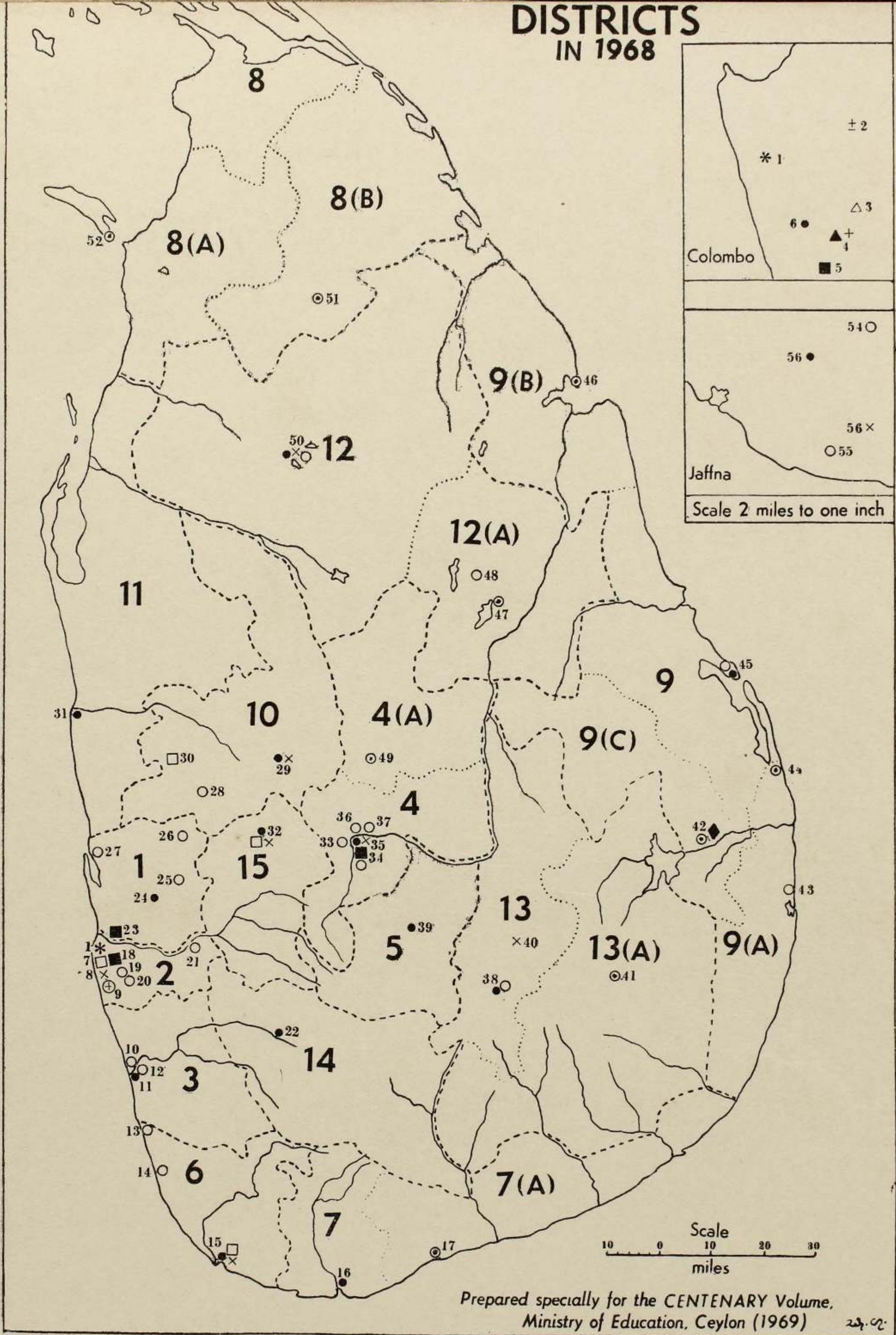

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MAP OF CEYLON

Showing Educational Regions and Districts

Key to Symbols

Ministry of Education ..	✲		Senior Technical Institute ..	◆
Regional Education Offices ..	●		Junior Technical Institutes ..	×
District Education Offices ..	⊙		Teachers Colleges	○
Universities	■		College of Art and Art Craft ..	△
Buddhaśrāvaka Dharmapīṭha ..	⌓		College of Music	▲
Junior Universities	□		College of Dancing and Ballet ..	+
Ceylon Technical College ..	±		Boundaries of Educational Regions ..	- - - - -
Ceylon College of Technology ..	⊕		Boundaries of Educational Districts ..	. . . . .

Educational Regions and Districts

Key to Numbes in Heavy Type

1. Colombo North
2. Colombo South
3. Kalutara
4. Kandy
4.(A) Matale District
5. Nuwara Eliya
6. Galle
7. Matara
7.(A) Hambantota District
8. Jaffna
8.(A) Mannar District
8.(B) Vavuniya District
9. Batticaloa
9.(A) Kalmunai District
9.(B) Trincomalee District
9.(C) Amparai District
10. Kurunegala
11. Chilaw
12. Anuradhapura
12.(A) Polonnaruwa District
13. Bandarawela
13.(A) Monaragala District
14. Ratnapura
15. Kegalle

Key to Numbers in Small Type

1.	Kompaññavidiya, Colombo	✲	**20.**	Kottawa ..	○	**39.**	Nuwara Eliya	●
2.	Maradana, Colombo ..	±	**21.**	Eswatta ..	○	**40.**	Badulla ..	×
3.	Horton Place, Colombo ..	△	**22.**	Ratnapura ..	●	**41.**	Monaragala ..	⊙
4.	Albert Crescent, Colombo	▲+	**23.**	Kelaniya ..	■	**42.**	Amparai ..	⊙◆
5.	Cinnamon Gardens, Colombo	■	**24.**	Gamapha ..	●	**43.**	Adalachchenai	○
6.	Green Path, Colombo ..	●	**25.**	Nittambuwa	○	**44.**	Kalmunai ..	⊙
7.	Dehiwala ..	□	**26.**	Mirigama ..	○	**45.**	Batticaloa ..	●○
8.	Ratmalana ..	×	**27.**	Bolawalana	○	**46.**	Trincomalee ..	⊙
9.	Katubedda ..	⊕	**28.**	Dambadeniya	○	**47.**	Polonnaruwa	⊙
10.	Kalutara North ..	○	**29.**	Kurunegala	●×	**48.**	Hingurakgoda	○
11.	Kalutara ..	●	**30.**	Kuliyapitiya	□	**49.**	Matale ..	⊙
12.	Katukurunda ..	○	**31.**	Chilaw ..	●	**50.**	Anuradhapura	●⌓○×
13.	Alutgama ..	○	**32.**	Kegalle ..	●□×	**51.**	Vavuniya ..	⊙
14.	Balapitiya ..	○	**33.**	Giragama	○	**52.**	Mannar ..	⊙
15.	Galle ..	●□×	**34.**	Peradeniya ..	■●	**53.**	Kopay ..	○
16.	Matara ..	●	**35.**	Kandy ..	●×	**54.**	Nallur ..	○
17.	Tangalle ..	⊙	**36.**	Uyanwatta ..	○	**55.**	Colombagam ..	○
18.	Gangodawila, Nugegoda ..	■	**37.**	Polgolla ..	○	**56.**	Jaffna ..	●×
19.	Maharagama ..	○	**38.**	Bandarawela	●○	**57.**	Palali ..	□○

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CHAPTER 59

THE EDUCATION INSPECTORATE— ITS GROWTH AND EXPANSION

B. P. M. SENANAYAKA

Historical Background

The traditional system of education in Ceylon which centred on the Buddhist monastery did not need the services of State inspectors. The chief monk of each monastery would have directed and supervised the work of the school attached to it. Under the Portuguese who were the first European power to rule Ceylon, the Roman Catholic Church established schools on the Western pattern as a means of converting the indigenous population to Christianity. These schools would have functioned under the direction and supervision of Roman Catholic priests as was the custom in Europe at the time. Under the Dutch who were the next European power in Ceylon, the State established schools for propagating Christianity. As discussed in Chapter 28 these schools were administered by Schools Boards (Scholarchal Commission) set up in Colombo, Galle and Jaffna. The Governor appointed two inspectors—a clergyman and a layman every year to inspect schools under the School Boards and submit a report to him. The Dutch schools system changed under the British rule and a new pattern of inspection deriving from the English School Inspectorate of the day developed in the Island.

In England, the first schools attached to Cathedrals were established to train priests and the Bishop was the prototype of the modern Her Majesty's Inspector. In 1215, when it was made obligatory to establish Grammar Schools in every Cathedral, the Bishop as the pastoral visitor became the Inspector. With the religious change in England laymen also founded schools and the clergy acted as Inspectors. With the establishment of Charity Schools during the 18th century, the first Inspector of Charity Schools began to function in London.[1] It was only in 1839, that the Secretary of the National Society of the Church of England,

SENANAYAKA, B. P. M., B. A. HONOURS (LONDON), DIP. ED. (CEYLON). Presently Director of Education, (Elementary Education). Prior to taking up his present position, Mr. Senanayaka was a Regional Director of Education. He has served the Education Department for a long period in various capacities in the Education Inspectorate since 1944.

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attempted inspection at a national level. The agents of of the British and Foreign Schools Society acted as Inspectors for their Society. Under the Factory Act of 1844, Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors visited factories where children learned. When the grant-in-aid system was introduced, Inspectors visited the schools to see how the grant given from 1839 was spent. When School Boards came into being in 1902, and later developed themselves into Local Education Authorities, they appointed their own Inspectors. Thus came into being the L. E. A. Inspectors and the H. M. Inspectors. The Inspectorate, after the 1902 Act, came to be thoroughly re-organized, and a further re-organization took place after the well known Act of 1944, on which the present British system is based.

The East India Company that administered the Island's government during the early British rule took no interest in the affairs of education. As Governor North, on his arrival in the Island, found the schools in a disorganized state, he appointed the Rev. James Cordiner, who came to Ceylon, on his invitation to be Chaplain to the garrison in Colombo, the Superintendent of Schools and Examiner of School Masters.[2] Cordiner worked as Principal of Schools. Another important step that Governor North took was to appoint preachers and catechists to supervise the schools.[3] Each preacher had to examine the catechists and the school-masters under him. Governor Brownrigg's suggestion[4] to make it a duty of the government servants to supervise the work of the school-masters significantly recognised the value of supervision in education.

With the establishment of the Archdeaconry of Colombo in 1818, the Archdeacon became the Superintendent of all Government Schools.[5] The Rev. Bisset, the Senior Chaplain became the Principal of Schools. The Rev. James Glennie, succeeded the first Archdeacon, the Rev. Twistleton in 1824. In 1831, the authority for supervising all government schools was transferred to the Archdeacon,[6] who was made the Principal of Schools and King's Visitor.[7] The King's Visitor (the Ceylonese counterpart of H. M. Inspector) was assisted by native proponents.

The Colebrooke Commission did not realize the importance of recommending the appointment of school inspectors to supervise and inspect the schools. Colebrooke pointed out that the government servants and the clergy resident in the various districts in the Island could :

> " inspect and supervise the schools in their respective divisions, and report on their efficiency and management. "[8]

The first school inspection of the Colombo Academy was conducted in the presence of Governor Horton[9]; and successive Governors of the Island too, presided over the inspections of the Academy and gave prizes to deserving children.

The Colonial Chaplains under whose immediate supervision some of the schools were established might have supervised and inspected the schools to some extent, but it is very doubtful whether full-time government servants who could hardly spare their time for inspection work could exercise any kind of effective supervision over the schools. The supervision and inspection work, undertaken in a haphazard manner by various people who were not directly responsible for their work, did not

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bring the desired results. The tendency to get schools supervised by the clergy seems to have been the continuation of a practice carried out in England at the time, but it seems probable that government servants were expected to perform this duty as no other suitable persons were available for the purpose locally.

The government schools, for want of efficient control and supervision were far behind the schools established and managed by missionary bodies who took a personal interest in this work.[10] One of the reasons for the failure of the first School Commission was lack of supervision by a responsible person. The Government of Ceylon did not want to follow a system that did not exist in England by appointing Inspectors of School at that time.

It was in 1838, that Governor Mackenzie mooted the appointment of a ' Visiting Superintendent ' to visit all government schools and report on them.[11] The Bishop of Madras who was also concerned with the education of the Island at the time, saw the need for appointing ' Stipendiary Superintendents' as agents of the School Commission to report on the schools.[12] But the British Government was not quick enough to appreciate this suggestion, probably because such steps were not taken in England at the time. However, when the British Government remodelled the School Commission in 1840 it was decided to appoint an Inspector of Schools who could also serve as the Secretary of the School Commission.[13] George Lee, the Post Master General (1841) was appointed to function in this post in addition to his normal duties, for which he was paid an extra allowance of £ 200 a year.[14] In 1845, he was relieved of this extra duty and a full-time Inspector (The Rev. Brooke Baily)[15] who did not have to perform the duties of the Secretary of the School Commission was appointed. The third Inspector of Schools (Walter J. Sendall)[16] was appointed by Governor Robinson in place of the second Inspector who resigned to become a Colonial Chaplain. This appointment is described by L. J. Gratiaen as " the coming of the monsoon."[17] His reports created a tremendous amount of public opinion against the School Commission which was dissolved in 1868. Its place was taken by the Department of Public Instruction in 1869. This was the dawn of a new era in the history of education in Ceylon.

Development of the Inspectorate

Under the School Commission, all Inspectors operated from their headquarters in Colombo. The first Inspector of Schools (George Lee—1841) conducted inspections in schools around Colombo without much difficulty. The Inspector was not in a position to visit schools in the outstations like Jaffna, Trincomalee and Ratnapura and it is said that the Sub-Committee of Education conducted inspections in these places.[18] It was also the practice of the School Commission to send printed reports of school inspections to stimulate the teachers in the outstations whose work was not inspected[19]. It is very difficult to say how successful this method was in the absence of immediate inspection. Throughout the entire period of the School Commission one Inspector alone was expected to look after all the schools in the Island.

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The Sub-Committee of the Legislative Council appointed in 1865 recommended the appointment of one general Inspector with Sub-Inspectors for each province. There is no doubt that the Sub-Committee was compelled to make this recommendation as they felt an Inspector or Inspectors stationed in Colombo could not satisfactorily inspect outstation schools.

Even with the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction in 1869, the Sub-Committee's recommendation was not fully carried out. In 1869 and 1870 only one Inspector was stationed in Colombo with the Director.[20] In 1871 an Assistant Inspector was appointed and in 1873 the number of Sub-Inspectors was increased to three. The Director stressed the need for more Inspectors. The establishment of two inspecting centres in Galle and Kandy was also suggested by the Director in 1873.[21] In 1875 an additional Inspector was appointed, but the number of Sub-Inspectors was reduced to two. The Director in 1877[22] urged the appointment of two or more Sub-Inspectors in order to visit the Vernacular Schools at least once in three months. Consequently, there was an increase of Sub-Inspectors to six in addition to the two Inspectors.

The Setting up of Educational Districts

When Charles Bruce became Director, he submitted a memorandum to the Government urging the need for a geographical division of the Island into educational districts and also an increase of the inspection staff for the efficient discharge of inspection duties.[23] He pointed out that some schools had to be left out without inspection and a lump sum had to be paid to the managers of Aided Schools instead of payment on results.[24] In accordance with Charles Bruce's suggestions the inspection staff was reorganized from the beginning of 1880. Hence the work of Inspectors was confined to the districts assigned to them. Inspections were carried out in accordance with the new classification of schools based on a geographical division of the Island. This was the beginning of the division of the Island into educational regions. At first the Island was divided into the following three districts :[25]

1. *South-Western District*
   (Western and Southern Provinces)
   One Inspector and four Assistants
2. *North-Eastern District*
   (Northern and Eastern Provinces)
   One Inspector and three Assistants
3. *Central District*
   (Central, North-Central and North-Western Provinces)
   One Inspector and one Assistant

In the year 1883, Assistant Inspectors were allotted to a " geographically arranged sub-division of the District to which they were attached. " This arrangement was the beginning of the division of educational districts into various circuits—a system which persists to the present day. After this re-organization, school inspections were conducted by the Chief Inspector of the District with assistants working under him.

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In 1886, a further division was made by separating the Southern Province from the South-Western District. The officers allotted to the four districts thus created were as follows:[26]

1. *Western District*
   One Inspector and five Assistants
2. *North-Eastern District*
   One Inspector and four Assistants
3. *Central District*
   One Inspector and one Assistant
4. *Southern District*
   One Inspector.

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The Inspector in charge of a district was called a District Inspector.

In the year 1895 when it was pointed out that the Department was 'under-manned' and an increase of cadre was suggested three more Sub-Inspectors were appointed. The position during the year was as follows :

Western District : One Inspector, seven Sub-Inspectors, 647 schools

Central District : One Inspector, two Sub-Inspectors, 286 schools.

Northern District : One Inspector, three Sub-Inspectors, 443 schools.

Southern District : One Inspector, one Sub-Inspector, 197 schools.

Director, S. M. Burrows (1899–1903), made gardening a part of the work in Government Vernacular Schools and schools with facilities for gardening were selected for the purpose.[27] This scheme which was under a Superintendent of Gardens and his assistants[28] was introduced to give :

"the school-boy something more than mere book learning and fitting him both in hand and eye for rural life."[29]

The agriculture work thus started in schools received the highest attention during certain years and was neglected at other times. Today agricultural work in schools has come to be more organized and its value in education so significantly stressed that a Director has been appointed in charge of Agriculture and Work Experience in schools.

For the first time in the history of the Inspectorate a conference of all Inspectors and District Inspectors was held in April 1902.[30] The sittings of the conference lasted two days and very useful work was done in the way of Code revision. The proposed amendments were later discussed by the Board of Education and was laid before the Government. The usefulness of this annual conference was amply demonstrated. We are informed that two conferences were held in 1931,[31] at which some of the difficulties of the Inspectors, subjects like Handwork in Rural Schools, granting leave to teachers and dual sessions in Government Schools were discussed. Amendments to Departmental regulations were introduced as a result of this conference. Such conferences of Inspectors at which educational issues are discussed have now become a regular feature of administration.

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The Inspectorate was again strengthened in 1909 by the addition of an Inspectress for the girls' schools and an Inspectress of Needlework.[32] The number of Sub-Inspectors was increased to nineteen.

The Bridge Recommendations

In the year 1911, Mr. J. J. R. Bridge, in his report on the Secondary Schools of Ceylon made certain observations which induced the Government to improve the existing conditions of the Inspectorate.[33] He pointed out that the defects in the existing system were due to the inadequacy of the Department of Public Instruction. He stated that the Department could not keep in touch with the schools because it had to rely on an Annual Inspection Report by an Inspector or an occasional visit of a much ' over-worked Director. ' He recommended an increase in the number and strength of the Inspectorate. He said,

> " an adequate system of inspection with highly qualified and competent Inspectors in constant and close touch with every department of school activity is urgently needed."[34]

Also he pointed out that two additional Inspectors—one with literary and another with mathematical and scientific qualifications were required to meet the increasing difficulties in the work of school inspection. The Director's Administration Report for 1912 says that C. A. Wicks, Professor of Physics at the Medical College, was appointed Inspector of Schools in charge of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Schools. The year 1915 saw a further increase in the Inspectorate with three European Inspectors, four District Inspectors and twenty-five Sub-Inspectors. A further increase of the cadre of Sub-Inspectors was proposed in 1919 and in 1920 the number was increased to 34.

Further Re-organisation of the Inspectorate

The Inspectorate was further reorganized in 1921 with a view to providing an adequate number of Inspectors for schools of all types in general and to facilitate the system of payment of grants on attendance in the case of English schools in special. In the year 1924[35] the Inspectorate included the Director, the Assistant Director, the Additional Assistant Director, the Inspector of Mathematics and Science, the Inspector of Arts Subjects, the Inspectress of Needlework, the Inspectress of Girls' English Schools, the Inspector of Art, the Inspector of Industry, the Inspector of Drill and Games, the Medical Inspector of Schools, four District Inspectors, four Assistant Inspectors and thirty-four Sub-Inspectors. This increase was an indication of the growing need for more and more Inspectors as a result of educational expansion.

Setting up of Educational Divisions

In 1929,[36] the four Educational Districts formed in 1886 came to be known as Educational Divisions. Each Division had its own sub-office, with a Divisional Inspector as the senior administrative and inspecting officer of the Division. Inspections of schools in the Division were arranged from these Divisions. All inspecting work and schemes of studies in the various Divisions were under the control of

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a Chief Inspector who was stationed in Colombo. This officer visited the Divisions to coordinate the work of different Divisions. The unification of the Sinhalese, Tamil and English branches of the Inspectorate took place under the Chief Inspector thus ending the compartmentalized system in which the different branches had worked till then. With a common scheme of work provided for all schools, it was expected to adopt the same methods of inspection irrespective of the medium of instruction in the schools. With the re-naming of the Educational District as Educational Division, a new class of Inspectors known as the Divisional Inspector of Schools came into being. The Divisional Inspector took the designation Education Officer in the year 1939.

By about the year 1943, two more Educational Divisions were carved out of the existing four Divisions and two more Divisional Inspectors were appointed.[37] At the time there were two grades of Divisional Inspectors, viz., District Inspectors and Circuit Inspectors. The Special Committee on Education, 1943, considered the sub-grades unnecessary and undesirable and recommended the abolition of the grade II of the Inspectorate. At the time the appointment of Inspectors to the higher grades was done exclusively by promotion. The Special Committee did not fully approve of this method. It was of the opinion that the Department

> " should not be deprived of the wealth of educational knowledge and experience which an able and outstanding teacher can bring with him to the service of the Department. "

The Committee pointed out that no hard and fast rule should prevent recruitment to the higher grades of the Inspectorate direct from the teaching profession.[38]

With the establishment of Central Schools more and more capable Inspectors were required to supervise the schools. In 1944 a large number of capable teachers from the Assisted Schools was appointed to the Inspectorate. Most of these Inspectors are now functioning as Directors of Educational Regions.

When the national languages became the media of instruction in the schools, it was thought necessary to appoint Sinhalese and Tamil qualified Inspectors, particularly to supervise the Primary Schools. In 1955, eight Supervisors were appointed to supervise the work of Primary Schools.

The six Educational Divisions of the Island were increased to nine in October 1945, by separating Sabaragamuwa, North-Central and the Uva Provinces and instituting them as three district units.[39] These nine Divisions corresponded to the nine provinces of the Island. The Education Officer in charge of each Division directed and controlled educational activities of his Division. All nine Divisions were together controlled by the Director and his staff at the Head Office in Colombo.

Educational Regions

These Divisions later came to be known as Educational Regions with Assistant Directors to administer them. The Educational Regions gradually gained responsibility to manage their own affairs with direction from the Head Office. Today, with the expansion of the nine Educational Regions to fifteen Regions and nine

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Sub-Regions, (*Vide* Map 7) Regional Directors in charge of the Regions and Chief Education Officers in charge of the Sub-Regions administer them. This decentralization of the administration of the Regions was initiated in October 1961.

The Ministry of Education, today directs the Regions on the major issues in Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Technical and Commercial Education. Curriculum Planning, Preparation of Course Guides in the various subjects and other such work of general application is also undertaken by the Ministry. The Ministry also acts as a clearing house for inter-regional transfer of teachers. Transfer of teachers within a Region is a responsibility of the Region. The Ministry also handles the recruitment of new teachers and administrative officers. In future there is room for these educational units to gain complete independence and autonomy in planning and administering education with very little or no interference from the Ministry — a system which exists in many progressive countries in the world today.

Recruitment and Promotion of Inspectors

The early Inspectors of Ceylon were Englishmen, who had wide experience in educational matters and who were scholars in their own field. Local men were appointed only as Sub-Inspectors or Assistant Inspectors. The Sub-Inspector was a man who had a training in a Training School and a few years of teaching experience to his credit.[40] The work of the Sub-Inspectors in the early days was entirely in the Vernacular subjects and that of the Inspectors entirely in English subjects. It was not possible to appoint an Inspector who was not qualified to examine English schools. For this purpose it was

> " necessary that a man's English accent and his power of using the English language should be as good as that of a well-educated Englishman. "[41]

A university degree was considered a good qualification for an Inspector, but persons who had sufficient experience of higher work in English schools and whose attainments were considered sufficient were also appointed as Inspectors. In very exceptional cases a Sub-Inspector could rise to the position of Inspector. Mr. T. S. Tillanayakam was such an officer who proved that a local man could aspire to be an Inspector. He was a Sub-Inspector from 1905 to 1911, and had obtained a degree from the University of Madras. His case was pointed out as the only one, at the time, of a Sub-Inspector securing such a promotion. When the Director went on leave, the European Inspector was appointed to act for him. There was little difference between the Director and the European Inspector as regards qualifications and experience. In fact, an H. M. Inspector was the first Director of Education in Ceylon and the second one too was an Inspector under the School Commission.

It was pointed out in 1878, that an Inspector was required to possess a sound knowledge of at least one vernacular language of Ceylon.[42] The Director observed that an inspection in an Anglo-Vernacular School was not satisfactorily carried out by an Inspector and his assistant, when the former had no knowledge of the vernacular language.[43] This requirement of an Inspector to know a vernacular

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language had now become a condition to earn increments on his salary and finally to gain promotion to a higher rank. Before promotion a Tamil officer is required to pass in Sinhalese and a Sinhala officer in Tamil. Failure to pass these efficiency bars resulted in deferment of increments and loss of promotion.

The Salaries Committee (1912) thought it unfair to allow a Sub-Inspector, who showed special merit but who was debarred from becoming an Inspector, to stagnate.[44] A special salary intermediate between his maximum salary and the minimum salary of an Inspector was recommended in such cases. The Salaries Committee also concluded that one such appointment be reserved for Sub-Inspectors of not less than twenty-five years of service. Sub-Inspectors were categorized into three classes with separate salary scales attached to them.

It appears that even in 1919, local men were not easily found for appointment as Inspectors of Schools. The Committee observed that the recruitment of Inspectors of Schools locally should be considered. It was suggested that a Ceylonese scholar be encouraged to obtain a Diploma in Education at an English University to qualify for appointment as an Inspector of Schools on his return to the Island.[45]

In the past an Inspector recruited was expected to be a specialist in at least one subject and now this requirement is necessary when Inspectors for special subjects such as Sciences, Mathematics and English are appointed. Arrangements are also now made to recruit Education Advisers and Education Officers to be in charge of curriculum work.

The present position of the Education Inspectorate and the set up of the Education Department and the Ministry of Education is as follows :

The Ministry of Education

Director-General of Education		1
Deputy Directors-General of Education		3
Directors of Education		10
Elementary Education, Directors	2	
Secondary Education, Directors	2	
Technical Education, Directors	2	
Agriculture and Work Experience Director	1	
Training of Teachers and Junior University Colleges, Director	1	
Research in School Building, Director	1	
Commercial Education, Director	1	

Department of Education

Regional Directors	15
Chief Education Officers	37
Education Advisers	50
Chief Inspector of Art	1
Chief Inspectress, Home Science	1
Chief Inspector, Handicrafts	1
Inspectors, Vocational Guidance	2
Circuit Education Officers	269
Regional Organizers, Adult Education	2
Inspectress, Kindergarten Work	4
Assistant Inspectors, Music	8
Inspectors/Inspectresses, Special Subjects	59

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Inspectors, Physical Education	..	..	22
Inspectresses, Home Science ..	..	..	10
Inspectors, Art ..	..	..	11
Inspectors, Handicrafts ..	..	..	15
Inspector, Arabic ..	..	..	1
Inspectors, Kandyan Dancing	..	..	2
Attendance Officers ..	..	..	4
Chief Inspector, Pirivenas ..	..	..	1

An Education Region is administered by a Director and a Sub-Region by a Chief Education Officer who is mainly responsible to the Director for the educational supervision of his area. A Regional Director is assisted by one or more Chief Education Officers and Education Advisers. Every Educational Region is divided into a number of circuits, the schools in which are supervised by the field-officers known as Circuit Education Officers. The Director-General of Education, who is also the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, the three Deputy Directors-General, the Directors in charge of different fields of education such as Elementary, and Secondary and a few Chief Education Officers and Education Advisers operate from the Ministry of Education in Colombo.

The Education Administrative Services Union

In conclusion it will be of interest to the reader to refer to another aspect of the Education Inspectorate which has so far escaped his attention.

With the growth and expansion of the Inspectorate there was a simultaneous growth of professional consciousness which manifested itself in the formation of a trade union.

The Union of the Education Inspectorate was formed in 1954. At the inception only Inspectors of schools of all categories and District Inspectors were eligible for membership, but with the progress of time, Education Officers too received enrolment. By 1963, with the expansion of the Educational Services and the need for increased co-ordination of work among officers, all grades of officers, from the Deputy Director-General to the Assistant Inspectors of schools became eligible for membership. The name of the Union itself was changed to " The Education Administrative Services Union. "

The chief aim of the Union from the outset was to safeguard the interests of its members and to take steps to promote their professional competence and knowledge. And in this connection the Union can safely claim that it has achieved much.

This Union, the membership of which consists of officers of high educational qualifications and professional ability, has throughout acted in a manner that is exemplary to other trade unions of the country. It has always endeavoured to act with dignity and decorum and to safeguard the interests of its membership by friendly negotiation with the authorities concerned.

Its total membership now stands close to 500 and there are a number of branch Unions in the various districts, which work in close collaboration with the parent body.

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It is noted with pleasure that the membership which consists of various types and grades of officers recruited through different language media are welded into one integrated body in the Union.

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CHAPTER 60

SCHOOL INSPECTIONS—THEN AND NOW

D. J. Nanayakkara

Introduction

When the School Commission was replaced by the Department of Public Instruction in 1869, Ceylon was set for a great leap forward in the field of education. Even in remote Hambantota,

> " the children, who are naturally bright and ready, are anxious to learn, and their parents manifest great interest and pride in their progress."[1]

It was a time when education was almost at a stand-still; when much was hoped for, where so much was required, for the attempt to diffuse education generally among the people had, till then, signally failed.

The first schools established by the British Government in Ceylon especially after the Colebrooke recommendations were, of course, English schools. These schools were established for the education of the children of English-speaking communities, principally composed of Civil and Military Officers of the Crown. In course of time, the claims of the Sinhala and Tamil subordinate Officers for education of their children gave rise to the establishment of Anglo Vernacular Schools, and finally, a few Vernacular schools were established for the children of the Sinhala and Tamil masses. But, naturally, for a considerable time, the English and Anglo-Vernacular schools were considered to be the more important, and the Vernacular schools were few and, generally speaking, inefficient.

One of the major recommendations of the 1865 Committee of the Legislative Council in Education[2] was that Vernacular schools should be widely extended by establishing Government schools and encouraging Grants-in-aid ones. A large number of Vernacular schools began to be created *ex nihilo* in the year 1870, while the number of English and Anglo-Vernacular schools

NANAYAKKARA, D. J., B. A. (London), M. A. (California). Post Graduate Trained. Presently Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education. Mr. Nanayakkara has served in the Education Department for a long period functioning in different capacities. He was the Secretary of the Education Publications Advisory Board for some time, and has also been a Visiting Lecturer at the Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara Universities.

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remained almost static. One of the first tasks of the new Department of Public Instruction was to develop the Grant-in-aid scheme, based upon a system of payment by results. Under rules for Grant-in-aid issued on 1st December, 1871, Rule 3 read as follows :

> " Grants will be made in the form of a fixed payment for ascertained results of secular education only. These results will be ascertained and their money values computed at the Inspector's Annual Examination of the School. "

These regulations led to the beginnings of School Inspections, as they are known and understood today.

Annual Examination

" There is nothing permanent except change, " said Heraclitus. This may well reflect the history of School Inspections in Ceylon. The year 1869 was the beginnings of a great and vast enterprise. There were then 64 Government schools with 3,534 pupils, and 21 Grant-in-aid schools with an enrolment of 1,600 pupils. One Inspector and three Sub-Inspectors performed all functions of inspections then. The duties of the Inspector were two-fold :

(*a*) the immediate personal inspection and superintendence of English and Anglo-Vernacular schools, and

(*b*) the general supervision of Vernacular education through the agency of his Assistants. The Headquarters of all Inspecting Officers was in Colombo.

The visits paid to Vernacular Grant-in-aid schools for the purpose of annual grant examinations were always preceded by a written notice to the Manager, leaving, of course, ample time for the teachers to get his school and its belongings to look their very best. The hour for commencing the examination has generally been 10 a.m. An earlier hour was fixed in a few cases where two schools were inspected on the same day, while 11 a.m. has occasionally been found to suit the convenience of the Inspector, where he has to come from a distance.

On the day of the examination, the school generally assembled at 9 a.m.; ordinary work was laid aside, and the children waited in eager expectation for the arrival of Inspector. The Inspector, if he arrived in good time, would devote some time to the inspection of the Attendance Register, and then commence the annual examination of the pupils at the hour named. Except where the numbers were very large, there was no difficulty in getting through a Vernacular school in one day.

The English schools took much more time. The examination of a Middle school always took about two days ; a High school three days. This did not apply to village English schools, where the numbers were small, and the accommodation rather better than in the case of Vernacular schools. In these village English schools, it was possible without the risk of ' copying ' to keep the older children fully engaged in writing during the oral examination of the younger ones, and finish the annual examination in one day.

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The system of examination then was such that the Inspector was obliged to give a pass or a failure in each subject, while the marks thus gained amounted in the Sixth Standard for instance to 5 for Reading and 7 for Arithmetic. In assigning these marks he had to take no notice of imperfect answering, bad pronunciation, carelessness, badly formed figures, and untidy work. As a given pass was always of the same value, it was impossible for him to do justice to that large group of answers which lie in the wide border-land that separates pass from failure. The Inspector was compelled to pass or fail, and any remarks he might make on the general character of the answering, either at the time of the examination or afterwards, were misunderstood or disregarded, in view of the fact that the boys all got ' marks.'

The Government school inspections served an entirely different purpose. The Inspector was the actual Manager of all Government schools in his division. He must assure himself, for the information of the Department, that the correct teacher-pupil ratio existed ; that there was a proper division of work-load between the teachers and the pupil-teachers ; that every subject was taught in accordance with the best approved methods, with the help of the best obtainable books and apparatus ; and, above all, that the teachers were skilled, efficient and energetic in getting children into school, and conscientious in keeping all registers and records. However, there was a strong feeling at that time that quite a few Government teachers were left too much to themselves, and that they would not work to collect children unless driven to do so. If children came to school they would teach them, but if not, they would fold their arms and sit contentedly in an empty classroom, imagining that thus they were doing all that was required of them and were honestly earning their salaries. It was in these circumstances that the then acting Director, C. G. Colson, said in 1877.

> " I am strongly of opinion that Government Vernacular schools should be visited once at least every month. "[3]

A topic of frequent comment by the early Inspectors was cheating at examinations. R. H. Leembruggen, Inspector of Schools, was strongly of opinion that,

> " Nothing furnishes a better test of the tone of a school than the amount of honesty shown during examinations in the midst of numerous impulses to its isolation."

In one school he had to reject the answers in Arithmetic of nearly of a whole class

> " because the pupils were detected passing the question cards through the school window to some outsiders, among whom were the pupils of a neighbouring school, where the same cards were set that very morning."[4]

W. Blair found instances where in Copy Writing the work shown was not bona fide,

> " every letter having been first written by the teacher in pencil and then traced by the scholars in ink."[5]

He also found, as early as in 1880, little girls in the First Standard presenting excellent specimens of needle work, and on requesting them to produce similar work in his presence, found that they were hardly able to thread a needle or make half-a-dozen regular stitches.

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As years went on, the art and practice of cheating acquired greater finesse in accomplishment. Once a certain teacher

> " had an understanding with his class that, when the Latin Inspector was present, if a noun was masculine he stood near the table, if it was feminine he stood near one of the pillars, and if it was neuter he turned his back. The Inspector was probably surprised at how well the class answered any question about gender."[6]

Besides cheating in pupil responses at examinations, dishonesty in the keeping of registers and other records too was prevalent. In 1875 C. G. Colson reported :

> " Out of twenty Vernacular aided schools visited in two successive days, and all situated within ten or eleven miles of Colombo, I found two in which the registers were grossly dishonest, having been evidently filled up from the teachers' imagination, and in one case for a fortnight in advance of the day of my visit ; one in which no register was in use, one in which the register was a week behind-hand, and was, according to the teachers' own account, about to be filled in from memory. . . . "[7]

Falsification of registers, though by no means unknown to Government schools, were not at all frequent. It does not necessarily follow from this that Government teachers were more honest than their brethren in Grant-in-aid schools, in as much as, with the former the temptations to falsify were fewer and the chances of detection far more certain.

> " If a boy knows enough English, enough Latin, or what not, to earn a grant under the Code, never mind the rest."

This was the view too frequently taken by some school managers as a result of the results payment grant system. According to them the proper objective of school Inspection should be not " how much or how little a boy knows," but rather to ascertain whether he has sufficiently complied with the requirements of the Code to deserve a grant. Educationists soon realized that once Managers were determined to teach only up to the mere minimum limits of a Code, and only " sufficient " to earn a grant, there was an end to any real education.

An aided school received its grant upon the result payment system pure and simple, each child presented being examined by the Inspector. But if a school did not pass a total of 50 per cent of its pupils presented, it was liable to be removed from the list of aided schools, and to lose its grant altogether, while if in any one of the three R's 20 per cent of passes were not obtained, the school was paid at a reduced rate, even though it had obtained a total percentage of passes considerably over 50. But the intention of this rule was frequently evaded, and a very bad school obtained a very fair percentage of passes in the following manner :

> " the Manager causes a preliminary examination to be held, and does not present to the Inspector at the Government Examination any child who is not pretty certain to pass. "

The spirit of the Code was thus evaded, and not only did the school escape the penalty which it really deserved, but the whole system of result payment was made a farce.

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However, the main objection was that the payment on the result system of individual examination was too rigid and not operative towards the educational development of the child ; that under its provision the tendency was to mould the child's intellect mechanically ; that it was eminently conducive to cramming and an ill-digested acquisition of " payable " date ; and that it was fatal to the encouragement of observation and intelligent interest on the part of the child.

These rumblings led to the first great change in the scheme of school inspections.

Bonus Examination

H. W. Green, Director of Public Instruction, embarked on a new experiment in 1888. While not interfering with the Code for Grant-in-aid schools, he did, however, interfere in the case of Government schools, and instead of granting result payment to Government teachers upon passes, as heretofore, he paid it upon a sliding scale on percentage of passes plus the number of pupils. Thus a teacher who presented less than 25 pupils got no result payment ; one who presented 25 pupils but less than 50, and obtained at the same time 80 per cent of passes earned a low rate of payment; one who presented 50 but under 100 pupils plus 80 per cent of passes got a higher rate; while one who presented a 100 or over and obtained 80 per cent of passes got the highest rate of payment.

This system worked well in the Government schools. Encouraged by this experiment, and by the fact that the English Code of 1889 did something similar in England, the Department launched on a new system for Grant-in-aid schools as well.

The intention of the Amended Code of Regulations of 1893 was to assess, as far as possible, not " individual efficiency, " but to ascertain and develop " average efficiency " of any school agency. It contemplated " collective " or " sample " examination.

Consequent on this Code Amendment, revised instructions were issued to Inspectors. There shall henceforth be two grants. After the inspection of the school, the Inspector will be in a position to recommend the award of the higher or lower of these two grants, or else to report that even the lower standard has not been reached and that the school should receive due warning. The assessment of the school now depends on

> " the good character of the school and on the quality of the acquirement of the great majority of the scholars, rather than on the exact number of children who attain the minimum standard of required knowledge."

The Inspectors were strictly instructed that they should in no case recommend the higher grant unless a higher standard of accuracy and achievement was reached in all three elementary subjects.

This major change in the aims and objectives of School Inspections naturally led to a change in technique and procedure. In some cases, it now sufficed to examine one third of a class in Reading, another, one third in Writing, and the remaining third in Arithmetic. In other cases, while the whole class performed the required

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exercise in Writing and Arithmetic, a few were selected for examination in Reading. In yet a few others, the Inspectors selected at random one-third to one half of the pupils whose performance was deemed sufficient to serve as a specimen of the rest. Inspectors soon realized that it was desirable to adopt different plans of examining from time to time, since a fixed unvarying form of test year after year was apt to encourage a somewhat unintelligent routine in teaching. But in all cases, the Inspector invited the teacher to add to those who were selected a few of his high achieving pupils, in order that chance sampling might not deprive the school of its due recognition.

This change in system gave the Inspectors more time to observe the frills and embellishments of the instructional programme in schools, as well as its slips and lapses. In 1916 one girls' school gave as the reason for not teaching the Geography of Europe the excuse that after the war the map of Europe was likely to be altered. Occasionally the Inspector found that a teacher had been led to show an excess of zeal, as in the case of the Head Teacher of a large Government Vernacular School, who, in order that he might better illustrate to his class the principles of ' elementary anatomy, ' dug up his deceased aunt, and hung her skeleton up to dry in the garden in order to obtain a perfect specimen of a human skeleton. Unfortunately, he had not consulted the poor lady's relatives, and one of them, being on bad terms with the teacher, lodged a complaint, which resulted in the teacher being fined Rs. 15 " under section 292 of the Ceylon Penal Code for offering indignity to a human corpse."

Although the teaching of English was pursued with great vigour, and most of the English schools

> " were employed in performing a routine march to Oxford and Cambridge Universities,"

E. B. Denham found in 1918 the following examples of the misuse of words in pupils ' written exercises.

> " David Livingstone was a missionary who gave his life to propagating negroes in Africa." "As the saying is, it is better to be a master of one job than to be a jackal of all. "[8]

Schools also offered their fair share of howlers. The same Director found these in one of the schools in 1918 :

> " He learnt Latin at a midnight school. "
> " Britannia needs no bull walks. "[9]

From Examination to Inspection

At the turn of the century, England saw a revolutionary change in the methods of Inspection and Examinations. ' Payment by Results ' and ' Individual Yearly Examinations ' were utterly condemned : a ' Block Grant ' was paid to each school for general efficiency ; fixed annual examinations were held no more ; the teacher was given very wide latitude in the framing of his time table, arranging his classes, and making promotions, and the Inspector in most cases merely listened to the work going on, or held a brief, sample examination of a class taken at random.

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The echo of this distant revolutionary roar was heard in this Crown Colony too. Educationists were becoming mindful of the fact that what had to be kept foremost in view was the education of the child and not the reputation of his master or the school. But in the pressure of examination this great end was often lost sight of, Arthur Van Cuylenburg, Inspector of Schools, took courage to say,

> " I almost feel, too, that a revolution to the decided advantage of our children would result if we could only be courageous enough to pull down the Dragon of examination that we have set up for universal adoration, and return to the practice of the period when the school master had a free hand and worked with no thought of examinations to cramp and hamper his efforts in the boy's behalf."[10]

According to the system then in vogue, the pupil was a mere machine, passively submitting to being crammed with information which his memory was relied upon to reproduce at the examination ordeal for the glory of his school and the reputation of his teachers. It produced a victim ' crammed ' to repletion, in whom the thought of any further absorption of knowledge only produced the inevitable loathing of surfeited appetite.

How little the idea of education in the broadcast and best sense enters into such a system was what the educationists all lamented. Thus as a first step towards the desirable objectives, two very important experiments were tried out in 1901.

(*a*) Three Grant-in-aid English schools were freed from the annual individual examination of pupils by the Department, and " Payment by Results " was substituted with payment on each unit of average attendance—the grant on the higher or lower scale depending on the report of the Inspector of Schools.

(*b*) Nine Government Vernacular schools were also exempted from the usual annual examination. The Head Teachers were given a free hand as regards promotion, and as regards improvements in the Time Table and Curriculum.

The progress made by these schools, especially in the direction of intelligent and methodical teaching was very encouraging. Every effort was made to train children to think for themselves—to actively participate in the acquisition of knowledge, rather than passively depend upon their teachers for everything they required to know. The remarkable success of the new Block Grant system promoted more educationists to decry the old results payment system. R. B. Strickland, Inspector of Schools, said in 1903 :

> " While other countries are eliminating examinations from their educational system, examinations constitute the very essence of education here. . . . If the individual examination system were alone abolished, there would be an immediate educational gain."[11]

The movement for the elimination of the results payment system soon gathered momentum. After 1914, a number of schools which satisfied the Code requirements with regard to staff and equipment, and were considered efficient were given an Attendance Grant in place of the grant of the results of individual examination of pupils. By 1916, the old system had almost entirely disappeared from the English schools, and finally, in 1925, the much maligned results grant system, and also the

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new attendance grant system were both replaced by a salary grant system in all schools in Ceylon. Individual examinations soon became a thing of the past. " School Inspection " replaced " School Examination. " Inspectors had more time to inspect methods of teaching, school records, and pupils' exercise books, and also to inspect the general condition under which work was done. They gave demonstration lessons and set standards for teachers to follow. There was also an enormous increase in the self-activity of pupils which was a happy contrast to the previous lethargy.

During these crucial years, the Inspectorate too underwent a gradual transformation. When the Department of Public Instruction started with one Inspector and three Sub-Inspectors, each one of them felt confident that he had the competence to examine pupils in all the classes in each school in all the subjects. But this was not to be for long. The Curriculum soon expanded from the three R's to a wider spectrum of disciplines. To cope adequately with the requirements of the specifics of each subject area, the Inspectorate too felt the need for " Specialists. " First came the appointment of the Inspectress of Girls' English Schools in 1906, soon followed by the Inspectress of Needlework. On 16th October 1912, the first Inspector of Mathematical and Science Work was appointed, and then came the Inspector of Other Subjects in Secondary Schools, and the Inspector of English. To this list of " Specialists " was soon added the Inspector of General Elementary Work, the Inspector of Drawing, and the Inspector of Physical Training. By 1929 all activities connected with the inspection of schools were placed under the control of a Chief Inspector.

Consequent on the expansion of the Inspectorate, the art and practice of School Inspection too underwent a change. The " general practitioner " gradually gave way to the " specialist. " The Specialist method of inspection first started with English Secondary Schools. Each Inspector selected one or more subjects according to his own preference and competence, and inspected the schemes of work, notes of lessons, methods of teaching, and pupil attainment of the specific subject area throughout the school. Organization and general surveillance of work, and the inspection of school records were in the hands of the most senior officer of the team. This Specialist Method had many merits to commend itself, and by early 1950's, " team inspection," as it was then known, was done in all large schools in the Island, irrespective of grade of school or language medium. At the end of inspection, a staff conference followed, at which each Inspector spoke to the teachers regarding the impressions he had formed. The praise which an Inspector was then able to bestow, and the blame which he felt it necessary to give had, it was thought, more effect than a lengthy log entry or an official report. Besides, observations made orally on the spot, while all the events of the inspection were fresh in the mind, came home to the teachers much more strongly than the summary entered in the log book or communicated in an official report.

Though assessment and evaluation, guidance, and leadership constitute the main objectives of Inspection, it cannot be gainsaid that there is a detective side to inspecpection as well. In the years that followed the change over from " Examination "

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to " Inspection, " this detective aspect assumed a major role. Of course incidental inspections were not a new technique. Even as early as in 1875, C. G. Colson, Inspector of Schools, paid a " visit of surprise " in as many cases as circumstances then permitted. The necessity of seeing schools in their " home dress " had always been recognized, and year after year the Inspectors bemoaned the lack of time and the limited travelling allocation which prevented them from paying more incidental visits to schools. In the early days the primary objective of these incidental inspections was that the feeling that the Inspector may come any day would no doubt tend towards keeping the more lazy and careless of teachers harder at work, and more attentive to their duties and obligations. Before long these inspections had a beneficial influence on the academic progress of the schools. " Last minute cramming " and " window-dressing " for the annual visit of the Inspector almost disappeared, and regular preparation of daily work and systematic teaching became more the rule. After 1925, when the salary grant system came into operation, there was a marked shift in the aims and attitudes of Inspectors. They became interested in the achievement of pupils, though not in the actual assessment of pupils. Very soon they became concerned with the upgrading of school performance, increasing the technical competence, and developing the necessary motivation and attitudes in teachers. Incidental inspections served this purpose admirably. In 1950's, Team Incidental Inspections, also called " Flying Squad Inspections " in common parlance, were much in evidence, and they were primarily devoted to the areas of criteria related to what constitutes good learning, good teaching, and a good school generally.

From Inspection to Assessment and Evaluation

While Ceylon was going through an educational transformation at a pace, great changes were taking place elsewhere in the growth of measurement methods in education. At the observatory at Greenwich, England, in 1796, an astronomer's assistant named Kinneybrook, found himself constantly at odds with his superior, the Astronomer Royal, about astronomical observations. It was found that Kinneybrook differed from his superior by eight-tenths of a second. Very soon astronomers began to compare their measurements with one another, and found that there were consistent differences among them. It became necessary then to determine an individual's " personal equation "—his characteristic tendency to over-estimate or under-estimate observations by a certain amount. This brought a recognition that people differ in their judgement.[12] This concept of " subjectivity " in judgement, and " personal equation " motivated the Ceylon Education Inspectorate to question the accuracy of their judgement, and the validity of relying on personal assessment, however educationally and professsionally competent and experienced they were. Doubts were raised on the adequacy of the age-old techniques of individual or team inspections by unstructured personal judgement.

People have always been interested in the measurement of human attitudes, and embryonic studies can be traced even to ancient China. However, it was only during the last century that the first systematic attacks were made on problems of

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educational measurement. It was during this time that psychophysics was born : the precise and quantitative study of how human judgements are made. Then came the major influence of the clinical tradition growing out of medicine, psychiatry, and social welfare research. The union of scientific technology and mathematics with the clinician's intuitive approach produced the modern methodology of testing. Next came the influence from the early developments in the discipline of statistics, and before long psychologists became interested in the application of statistical methods to the study of human behaviour. The Theory of Evolution helped to foster new concepts of human behaviour, and it interested psychologists in measuring human adjustment and the inheritance of psychological traits. More recently the two World Wars had a very important impact on psychological measurement. The need for selection and classification of armed forces personnel led to the development of psychological tests which received wide public acceptance.[13] Very soon test construction became methodical, in contrast to the pell-mell effort of earlier decades to compose tests without proper research foundation, and both test constructors and test users became concerned about the Reliability and Validity of the measures. While being aware of the limitations of particular measures, measurement specialists today the world over recognize the increased efficiency and marked economy psychological tests bring to bear in the assessment and prediction of human behaviour.

While the theory and practice of psychological measurement was taking vast strides, educationists elsewhere attempted to locate human behaviour on a continuum within a large matrix, that eventually crystallized into various domains : Cognitive, Affective, Psychomotor. They delineated educational objectives in each of these domains, and thereafter, compiled a hierarchical classification of human growth and behaviour in each of these domains.

Among the more important of these are the work of the Bloom Committee,[14] the Taxonomy by Krathwohl, Bloom and Masion,[15] and Psycho-motor Aspects of Behaviour by Jinapala Alles.[16] These taxonomies have served many purposes, the more important being the establishment of accurate communication regarding instructional objectives, and the provision of a common scale to judge expected educational standards and learning outcomes at desired levels.

The concepts of "subjectivity" and "personal equation" in human judgements, the theories of validity and reliability in psychological testing, and the taxonomies of educational objectives found their expression in an action research pilot project on supervision and assessment of school performance in Ceylon.[17] Although this project is still in its initial stages, the measurement instrument introduced by it for the assessment and evaluation of school performance is bound to gain adequacy progressively over the years. Even though individual pupils, individual teachers, individual subjects, individual classes, and individual curricular activities are "inspected" as "unit operations" assessment *per se* is now process or project-oriented. The school is now conceived as a complex functioning unit, and it is recognized that the assessment of schools is a very intricate task, having many dimensions in the domains of knowledge, skills attitudes and values. School "Inspections" now are carried out for a multitude of purposes and objectives, and evaluation and

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assessment is based mainly on valid, reliable data, and quantitative indices of performance. These naturally would enhance insight and judgement. There is now greater accuracy of communication regarding instructional objectives, and more systematic procedure and greater precision in evaluation and assessment of school performance.

Summary

School Inspections have come a long way. When the Department of Public Instruction was first established in 1869, school Inspections were held to " pass " or " fail " pupils at an Annual Examination, and payment to teachers was computed on the basis of these results. In 1893 an incentive was offered to teachers by paying them a " Bonus " for superior work, and School Inspections were held to determine whether a school deserved the higher or lower rate of payment. By 1925 result payment to teachers gave place to the salary grant system, and the annual examination by the Inspector of Schools became a thing of the past. The responsibility for the assessment of pupil achievement fell on the teachers, and School Inspections continued to be conducted for the supervision and maintenance of educational standards. The introduction of *Observation and Assessment Sheets* " on a ten-point scale and the " *School performance Profile Card* " by the Secondary Education Division of the Ministry of Education in 1967 gave an entirely new dimension to School Inspections. We are now on the threshold of a new and exciting era.

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CHAPTER 61

SCHOOL BUILDINGS—OLD AND NEW

P. SENARATH

Introduction

Since 1931 tremendous changes have taken place in the field of education in Ceylon not only in respect of objectives, organisation and administration but also in relation to social and political advancement. These changes have resulted from the demands of social justice and from national and political aspirations. It cannot, however, be said that these developments have been matched, at least until recently, by similar advances in building design. There are many reasons for this—not the least important of which was the priority that had to be given in assigning limited resources to other aspects of educational development that required more urgent attention in order to lift the system out of its colonial framework.

Building Laws and Regulations

The Education Ordinance 31 of 1939 which, with subsequent amendments and extensions is still the operative law for the present system, empowers the Minister of Education to make regulations for

> " The standards of accommodation and sanitation to be maintained in government and assisted schools and also in all other schools or places in which classes attended by children of school going age are held."[1]

The Ordinance is more specific so far as the Estate schools are concerned. Paragraph 8 of Education Ordinance 26 of 1947 which amends and extends section 36 in part 6 of the principal Ordinance 31 of 1939 requires the owner of an estate to set apart, in addition to a building of the standard as may be prescribed, a habitable house for a married Head Teacher and an uncultivated area of not less than one acre in extent for school garden and playground.

SENARATH, P., B. A. (LONDON). Chief Education Officer, Asian Regional Institute for School Building Research. Previous to taking up his present appointment, Mr. Senarath has held office as Principal of Collegiate Schools and as District Inspector of Schools.

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The regulations made under the ordinance appear in the various Codes : Code of regulations for Government Schools, Code of regulations for Assisted Vernacular and Bilingual Schools, and the Code of Regulations for Assisted English Schools.

Government Schools

Under " Buildings " in the Code of Regulations for Government schools there appears a set of rules for the teachers regarding the daily maintenance of the buildings and the premises, the care of furniture and equipment, the procedure for getting the repairs done and set of rules to the Inspectors regarding the steps to be taken for effecting repairs to the school buildings.[2] There are no objective standards laid down in respect of accommodation. The 10 sq. ft. of classroom accommodation per pupil accepted as the standard for the Government schools was mostly meant for matters of planning. Children of the age group of compulsory education had to be admitted to school even if, for various reasons, the provision of accommodation could not keep pace with enrolment.

Assisted Vernacular Schools

The Code of Regulations for buildings in Assisted Vernacular and Bilingual Schools lays down objective standards for area per pupil-place and the minimum size of a room to be used as a classroom.

> " Classrooms must be provided 10 sq. ft. per unit of average attendance of all pupils. No room will be accepted as suitable, the length or breadth of which is less than 9 ft."

The other requirements are expressed mostly in qualitative terms'.[3]

Assisted English Schools

The Regulations for buildings for Assisted English Schools published in the Government Gazette 7,613 of 1927 are different from those applicable to the Assisted Vernacular Schools only in respect of floor area per pupil-place which was fixed at 13 sq. ft. However, there appear a few additions and extensions to the sections on Buildings in the reprints of 1939 and 1948. While the 1936 reprint adds " Every school should be provided with a library of suitable books," the reprint of 1948 stipulates—

In Grade I schools— (i) accommodation of not less than 15 sq. ft. must be provided for each child ;

(ii) there must be facilities for practical courses in the Senior Secondary classes.(Workshop)

In Grade II schools—accommodation of not less than 13½ sq. ft, must be provided for each child.

In Grade I and II schools,

> " There must be a Science Laboratory with accommodation for not less than 20 pupils. There must be an adequate library of suitable books. There must be a playground and facilities for games for all pupils."[4]

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Standards for Quality

There were no standards laid down with regard to the quality of the buildings and " suitable " accommodation was interpreted according to the circumstances of each case. This latitude allowed in regard to the standards for the buildings enabled societies, denominational and other bodies, and individuals desiring to put up schools to provide buildings of varying quality and with various building materials.

The imposition of regulations for assisted schools in regard to workmanship, quality of building materials, fittings, illumination and ventilation, would have been, in a way, meaningless because the Department of Education had neither the administrative nor the technical staff for enforcing such regulations.

Standards for School Sites

Except for the Estate schools, standards have not been laid down with regard to the area of sites for each type of school.

Though the regulations state that there should be playground facilities for games of all children in Grade I and II assisted English schools, there were no objective standards fixed even in this respect. This regulation, however, did not apply to the Grade III English or to Bilingual and Vernacular schools.

Building Regulations after 1960

Afte· the nationalisation of the assisted schools,[5] and their subsequent vesting in the Crown,[6] the building laws and regulations meant for the assisted schools apply only to the following categories of schools :

(*a*) Schools for mentally or physically disabled

(*b*) Schools maintained exclusively for dancing

(*c*) Schools which were conducted on 21 July 1960 mainly for persons over 14 years of age

(*d*) Estate schools

As for the government primary and secondary schools, the Ministry generally accepts 10 sq. ft. per pupil place in calculation of classroom accommodation required.

The Manual of Instruction[7] issued by the Ministry of Education suggests the extent of land that may be acquired for each type of school. It gives guide lines for the siting of school buildings and the other amenities, modifications to type plans, tender procedures, maintenance of school buildings, payment for work done, and take over of completed buildings.

Types of School Buildings

From the design point of view, apart from the very recent designs of laboratories, the buildings of primary and secondary schools in Ceylon fall into 4 broad categories :

(i) Single storey simple hall type of building

(ii) Single or double storey hall type of buildings, provided with corridors, dwarfwalls and classroom partitioning walls

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(iii) Single or double storey building with single or double bank corridors and with all rooms provided with doors and windows, (buildings based on the design of the 19th century English Public School Buildings)

(iv) Buddhist Temple Preaching Hall in Pirivenas

Open Hall Type Building

The hall type building is the commonest and typical unit of accommodation in Ceylon. Although other countries like Burma and East Pakistan have buildings without internal walls, the hall type school is unique in its design. This unit was found in all the Swabhasa (Sinhala and Tamil) and bilingual schools before 1945 and are still found in almost all the primary schools. Most of the buildings in the secondary schools of the Island are also of this type. The long undivided hall in which are accommodated as many classes as could be conveniently seated, provide a degree of flexibility not found in classrooms with rigid permanent division walls. Small or large groups could be accommodated simply by adjusting the furniture. It suits the hot humid climatic conditions of Ceylon. The most commendable aspects of this type of building, are its economy and its suitability for the rural schools with small enrolment but many classes, necessitating a teacher to be in charge of more than one class at a time. Its simplicity in construction enables even the local craftsmen to build it with the available local materials.[8] This is illustrated by the variety of materials used for various components of these buildings in different parts of the Island to meet situations created by pressure for enrolment.

Though no statistics are available to state precisely the percentage of the primary and secondary school children in Ceylon using this type of school building, on a rough calculation it can be seen that over 85 per cent of the school children in the state schools are learning in this type of building.[9]

From the point of view of the educationist, this type of building has many inherent disadvantages. The building is not secure and teaching materials could hardly be left out without risk of damage from the weather or loss from theft. The absence of partition walls cause visual distraction during the teaching periods as the children can see adjacent groups. As several teachers talk at one time, noise is often a problem. There is not sufficient wall space for the display of visual aids.

It must be mentioned that these disadvantages have prompted many teachers to display remarkable inventiveness with regard to the methods of teaching and improvement of the physical conditions of the buildings themselves.

Whatever disadvantages this type of building has, one cannot help observing that the conceiving of such a simple but practical school building was one of the reasons which enabled Ceylon to reach an enrolment ratio of 90 per cent of the children of the primary school age group by 1960[10] and possess one of the highest literacy rates in Asia (52.7 in 1953[11] and 73 per cent in 1963)[12].

Buildings with Circulation Spaces and Separate Rooms

The second type of school building is the result of the addition of circulation space and classroom division walls to the hall type school buildings. This was the common

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Nallur Branch Library

type of classroom building found in the denominational English schools. In these buildings the section that contained the science laboratories, special rooms, offices, store rooms, etc. were, of course, provided with doors and windows for purpose of security. Walls of brick and mortar plastered with lime and sand, roofs, covered with clay tiles, and floors finished with cement were the common features of these buildings. Concrete, steel or iron which were hardly ever used in the hall type simple building were often used in this type.

Conventional Grammar School Type Building

The third type of school building is that which has been constructed in a few large denominational schools (Royal College, a government institute was, an exception) in Colombo, Kandy, Jaffna and Galle, mostly during the early part of this century. They are mostly two storeyed buildings with thick brick walls, high roofs, conventional doors and windows, spacious lobbies, entrance halls and corridors.

Temple School Building

The fourth type, the Buddhist Temple Preaching Hall, is a tall square building with a square stage in the centre. The classes are arranged round this stage and generally there is less visual distraction than in an unpartitioned hall type building. While at the time the classes are conducted the central stage serves as the office of the head priest or principal ; at other times—especially on " Poya Days " (days of the 4 quarters of the moon, which are sacred to the Buddhists) it serves as the place from where sermons are delivered or religious ceremonies are conducted.

There is, of course, today, the tendency in urban Pirivenas to broaden the curriculum and supplement the preaching-hall with classroom blocks or open type halls and thus " move with the times. " Even then the Pirivena school has a distinctive look and atmosphere of its own. Pirivenas fall under the category "schools which are conducted on 21st July, 1960, mainly for persons over 14 years of age" and hence were not taken over by the Government in 1960. They are conducted according to the regulations contained in " The code of regulations for Pirivenas. "[13]

Impact of Free Education on School Buildings

The introduction of free English education discussed elsewhere in this Volume[14] ushered in a period of intensive building activity for the construction of a large number of Senior and Central Schools mostly in the rural areas as a step taken to equalise the educational opportunities.

The rapidity with which the number of Central, Senior and Junior schools were established can be seen from the following table :

TABLE I[15]

Type of School	*1943*	*1944*	*1945*	*1946*	*1947*	*1948*	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*	*1954*
* Central ..	8	21	24	50	51	54	54	54	54	54	54	55
** Senior ..	—	—	6	13	23	33	33	36	36	54	56	57
*** Junior ..	—	—	5	27	59	171	181	197	222	230†	221†	219†

† Some schools raised to senior level, some lowered to elementary level.

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No programme of permanent building construction could keep pace with such rapid establishment of these schools. The following extract from the Administrative Report of the Director of Education, 1948, illustrates the then existing situation and the high hopes for permanent building with all amenities :

" The Central school today presents a spectacle of semi-permanent constructions grouped in a haphazard manner round the original site. During the year plans were drawn up to give permanent buildings to a few and in one case plans have been implemented. The Central school of the future will have the following :

administrative block,
assembly hall,
classrooms,
separate laboratories,
handicrafts and domestic science blocks,
hostels for boys and girls each having,
dormitories,
common rooms,
dining rooms and modern conveniences,
playing fields,
gymnasium and swimming pool.

Provisions is made for electrical plants where necessary." [16]

The new buildings were generally designed on the patterns of the existing English schools in Ceylon, but attempts were made to incorporate indigenous motifs in the architectural elements. Large imposing buildings providing all amenities, though very expensive, were in a way, necessary, at this juncture, firstly for the children learning in them to get a sense of confidence and adequacy, secondly, for the parents to be convinced that the free English education given in the rural " Royal Colleges "[17] would be as good as that provided in the traditional English schools.

Science and handicrafts were given an important place in the curriculum of the Central and Senior schools. Whilst almost all designs for central and senior schools provided laboratories for science, not all designs provided workshops. Where they were not provided in the main design they were constructed separately and took the form of a double unit workshop. By 1948 the code of regulations for Assisted English schools required a Grade I assisted school to provide practical education (handicrafts) in the curriculum. As an encouragement to Assisted schools to put up workshop, loans were provided to them for the construction and equipping of the workshops.[18]

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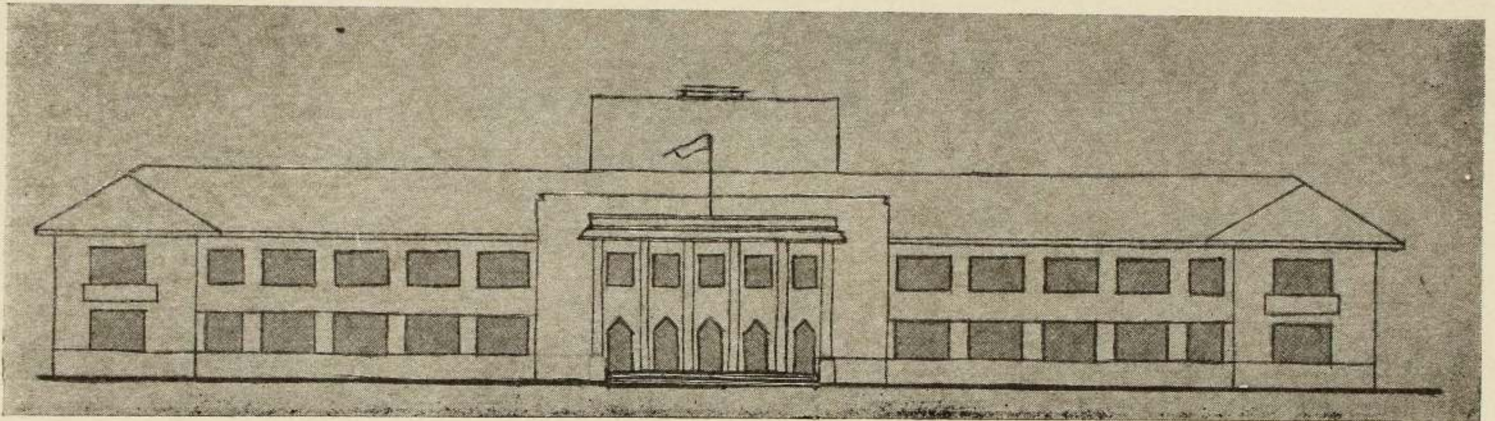
FIGURE 3



Front elevation of a Central School

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Table II

A Swabhasha School for 560 Students

Nature of Space	*Nett Area Sq. Ft.*	*Cost Rs.*	
Two—5 Classroom blocks..	4,000 ..	47,248 ..	Area/Pupil place $= \frac{6000}{560}$ = 10·71 *Sq. Ft.*
One–4 Classroom block with store and office	2,000 ..	25,632 ..	Cost/Pupil place $= \frac{72,880}{560}$ = Rs. 130·14
Total ..	6,000	72,880	

Table III

A Central School for 560 Students

Nature of Space	*Nett Area Sq. Ft.*	*Cost Rs.*	
14 Classrooms 1 Special room (Geography) 2 Science Labs. 1 Home Sc. Lab. 1 Library 1 Assembly Hall 1 Music Room 1 Office 1 Staff room 2 Store rooms 2 Latrine blocks	27,358	493,147	Area/Pupil place $= \frac{27358}{560}$ = 48·80 *Sq. Ft.* Cost/Pupil place $= \frac{\text{Rs. } 493,147}{560}$ = Rs. 880·61

The impact of the Central and Senior schools on the rural child was tremendous. They kindled fires of hope and pride in their hearts. They opened vistas of future progress before them and directed them to the path of higher education which was all this time known mostly to children of the richer class in the urban areas.

In terms of both the facilities provided and the expenditure incurred the Central and Senior school buildings were a clear contrast to the school buildings the rural child was so far used to. This becomes clear from the comparison of the kind of space, gross area per pupil place, and the cost per pupil place in a Swabhasha rural school for 560 pupils, with those of a Central School for the same number of pupils (Tables 2 and 3).

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Buildings in Response to Upgrading of Schools

The progressive adoption of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in secondary and higher education coupled with the adoption of Swabhasha in the administration, resulted in an unprecedented increase in the number of those seeking admission to secondary schools. [19 & 20]

This created the need for the opening of more and more secondary schools with G.C.E. (Advanced Level/University Entrance) classes (Grade XII). The urgency for opening such schools was so great and the funds available so limited that it was not possible to launch upon a planned scheme of construction of new secondary schools. Upgrading of the existing large Swabhasha Vidyalayas to the status of Maha Vidyalayas (schools up to Grade XII) thus started.

Rise of Government managed collegiate schools

(Schools with classes up to Grade XII)

Year	Schools	Year	Schools
*1958	162[21]	**1964–65	1140[21]
*1959	240	**1965–66	1160
*1960–61	341	**1966–67	1259
*1961–62	446		
*1962–63	778		
*1963–64	853		

TABLE IV

A new Maha Vidyalaya for 560 Students (1960–65)

Nature of Space	*Nett Area Sq. Ft.*	*Cost Rs.*	
2 Unit Science Lab. ..	1,871 ..	54,841	Area/Pupil Place
Agricultural Sc. Unit with Tool Room	642 ..	12,972	= 11942 / 560
Home Science Unit ..	1,200 ..	21,300	=21·33 *Sq. Ft.*
Workshop ..	1,565 ..	21,600	Cost/Pupil Place
Library ..	664 ..	15,624	= Rs. 199,217 / 560
5 Classroom Blocks ..	4,000 ..	47,248	
One – 4 Classroom Block with store and office	2,000 ..	25,632	=Rs. 355·74
TOTAL ..	11,942	199,217	

Additions had to be made to these new Maha Vidyalayas of not only classrooms (to take in the increasing admissions) but also specialised facilities for a wide curriculum. Designs were prepared for science laboratories, Agricultural Units and Home Science Units, Library units and new single and double storey classroom blocks. As for Science laboratories, designs for two types of laboratories (adequate for Ordinary Level work) one with single room suitable for smaller Maha Vidyalayas and the other, with two rooms, suitable for larger Maha Vidyalayas have been drawn up. It is worthwhile to note that an effort has been made to relate the design of these new units to the programme of work and the methods of teaching with a view to creating functional teaching spaces.

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It may be interesting to compare the gross area per pupil place and the cost per pupil place in a typical new Maha Vidyalaya with those of a Madhya Maha Vidyalaya (Central school) and an old Swabhasha (Vernacular) school. (Tables II, III, IV)[23]

Buildings for Vocational and Technical Education

To correct the imbalance in the field of Secondary and Higher education, and to supply the man-power requirements in the industrial, commercial, technical, and technological spheres of the national life, much importance was attached to the provision of buildings for technical, commercial and technological institutes.

Before the re-organisation of the Ministry of Education in 1966 by the amalgamation of the Department of Education and the Technical College Department, the provision of buildings for vocational and technical education was the responsibility of the Technical College Department. A number of Junior and Senior Technical schools and colleges are already established and designs are being developed for a net work of junior Technical schools.

Funds, Constructional Procedure and Organisation

FUNDS FOR BUILDINGS OF ASSISTED SCHOOLS

Before the introduction of Free Education, denominational English Schools constructed and maintained their own buildings with fees collected from the students, donations from benefactors and contributions made by the managing bodies, but the Swabhasha (Vernacular) Assisted schools received grants from the Government in respect of maintenance.[24]

With the introduction of Free English education the Assisted English schools that entered the Free Scheme also began to receive a maintenance and equipment grant.[25]

With the nationalisation of Assisted Schools the grants system came to an end. Today (1968) maintenance grants are paid only in respect of the institutions mentioned in the schedule to Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act 5 of 1960 as amended by " Amendments to Principal Act " 1 (4) (*a*) and (*b*) of Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act of 1961.

The few schools that did not enter the Free Scheme between 1945 and 1951 put up and maintain their buildings with the fees from the students and the donations from benefactors, while those schools which decided to remain private after 1960 depend entirely on donations from parents, benefactors and the Managing Bodies for funds for the construction and maintenance of the buildings.

FUNDS FOR BUILDINGS OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Before 1943 the government managed only the vernacular and bilingual schools (with the exception of Royal College) and it provided all the funds needed for the construction and maintenance of these schools.[26] Before 1939 funds for school buildings were provided to the Urban Education District Committees or the Rural Education District Committees of which the Government Agents invariably were

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the Chairmen. Construction and maintenance of the buildings were done by the building technicians attached to the Office of the Government Agent (Kachcheries) often through the Headmen.

School Works Branch of Education Department

The School Works Branch of the Department of Education was started in 1935 with the appointment of a Superintendent of School Works. Standard type plans were prepared and an organisation for construction of school buildings was set up. In 1939 the Urban Education District Committees and Rural Education District Committees transferred their functions to the School Works Branch. The steady expansion of the School Works Branch by the recruitment of draughtsmen, inspectors, sub-inspectors etc., enabled it to handle the designing, construction, supervision and maintenance of smaller schools.

Participation of Public Works Department in the Construction of School Buildings

As the School Works Branch did not have sufficient technical staff for designing and constructing of large buildings, the construction of Central and Senior schools and the Training and Technical Colleges was undertaken by the Public Works Department and funds for these large schemes were provided under votes of the Public Works Department. The period from 1945–50 saw a significant amount of funds being made available to the Public Works Department for the construction of school buildings.

Expansion of the School Works Branch

Since 1960, there was a progressive reduction of funds made available to the Public Works Department for school building construction. It can be seen that this reduction is related to—

(i) expansion of the School Works Branch and the consequential raising of upper limits of expenditure (Table v) ;

(ii) the adoption of the policy of school expansion by the addition of various units which the Department of Education was able to do within the amount it was authorised to spend for each contract.

TABLE V

The Progressive rise of limits of expenditure, the Education Department was authorised to incur on each contract

Year	*Without P. W. D. supervision Rs.*	*With P. W. D. supervision Rs.*	*Reference to authority*
Before 1944	10,000	25,000	F. R. 42 (*a*) (iii)[27]
1944	15,000	90,000	Correction slip to No. 55 of 21.5.44 of Part I F. R.
1955	15,000	125,000	Correction slip to No. 92 of 27.9.55 to Part I of F. R.
1966	50,000	200,000	788 F. R. 1966
1968	200,000	750,000	(under consideration)

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It is through the Directors of Education of the Regions or the Chief Education Officers of the districts that the School Works Branch executes its building programmes. From 1960 there was a progressive increase in the units of accommodation and other facilities provided by the School Works Branch of the Education Department. This is seen from Table VI.

TABLE VI

Units of accommodation and other facilities provided by School Works Branch—1960–65

Unit of accommodation	*1960–61*	*1961–62*	*1962–63*	*1963–64*	*1964–65*
Classroom blocks	167	347	396	900	906
Teachers quarters	57	32	46	33	49
Science laboratories	26	23	20	25	27
Workshops	3	25	30	20	19
Hostels	13	8	4	6	7
Libraries	—	1	2	8	5
Wells	32	58	40	141	130
Latrines and urinals	143	538	483	857	477
Playgrounds	16	11	13	59	36
Pipe-borne water service	9	21	53	112	61
Assembly halls	2	—	4	1	10
Agricultural science units	—	3	14	10	11
Training college buildings	—	—	—	3	5
Home science units	—	2	—	—	2
Arts studios	1	—	—	—	—

The School Works branch at present (1968) consists of a Superintending Engineer, 4 Works Engineers, 244 Technicians and 34 clerks[28].

System of Contracts for Buildings between Education Department and Private Contractors or Recognised Societies

Before 1958 contracts were let to private contractors on a tender system as outlined in the Financial Regulations. As a means of fostering and encouraging community activity, the Government decided in 1958 to give contracts for the construction of school buildings to Societies such as Parent-Teacher Associations, Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies, Unions of Multi-purpose Co-operatives, and Labour Co-operative Societies. The conditions, the financial limits up to which contracts were let to each kind of society and the nature of concessions have changed from time to time. The Parent-Teacher Associations were given special concessions as it was felt that their participation in the school building programme would enable them to provide more facilities for the schools from the profits made on contracts.

In the matter of concessions given to societies for the construction of Government buildings the position in 1968 is that—

(i) the recognised societies are given preference up to five per cent over the lowest tender. (that is if the lowest tender is not from a society).[29]

(ii) the Parent-Teacher Association can be given school repairs up to Rs. 500 and construction of new buildings subsidised by the Education Department up to 50 per cent only of the estimated cost, without calling for public tenders.[30]

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Contracts to State Engineering Corporation

Contracts have been given to the State Engineering Corporation for the construction of several school buildings using pre-stressed concrete structural components.

Other Agencies Contributing Funds for School Buildings

Though it is the Ministry of Education that gets, with its allocation, the majority of the school buildings needed for the State Schools, through the system of contracts, there are other government departments and voluntary Associations that provide school buildings with their own funds, but there are no statistics available to show the cost or the floor space of the school buildings provided by these agencies.

Rural Development Department

The Rural Development Department, established in 1948 for co-ordinating village development activities, created in its estimates a vote known as the Public Utility vote. The legend to this vote mentions the construction of school buildings, as one of the activities for which subsidies could be granted to Rural Development Societies working on a self-help basis.

Table VII gives the number of school buildings (Classroom blocks) provided by the Rural Development Societies with subsidies obtained from the Department of Rural Development.

TABLE VII

Buildings constructed by the Rural Development Societies on subsidies by the Department of Rural Development[31]

Year	*Number of Buildings*	*Self help value in Rs.*
1948–1955	1,026	900,000
1955–1956	180	280,178
1956–1957	87	437,958
1957–1958	99	67,030
1958–1959	279	182,844
1959–1960	124	not given
1960–1961	126	—
1961–1962	89	—
1962–1963	160	—
1963–1964	136	—
1964–1965	106	—
1965–1966	76	—
TOTAL	2,483	1,868,010

(Floor space provided by each building is not available from the Administration Reports of the Director of Rural Development. The expenses incurred by the department in the form of subsidies for the school buildings are not identifiable as hey are included in the expenses incurred for all Public Utility Works).

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Land Development Department

The Land Development Department, under its colonisation schemes or the River Valley Development Board constructs schools for the children of the colonists.

TABLE VIII

Table showing the number of schools constructed by the Land Development Department[32]

Year	*Schools*	*Head masters' Quarters*	*Assistant Teachers' Quarters*	*Central Schools*	*Principals' Quarters*
Before 1954	52	54	—	—	—
1954	19	20	—	—	—
1955	10	12	—	—	—
1956	14	9	—	—	—
1957	8	9	—	—	—
1958	Not available				
1959	27	16	17	—	—
1960	10	5	16	—	—
1961	23	19	34	—	—
1962	15	10	13	—	—
1963	13	13	37	—	—
1964	18	11	24	—	—
1965	—	—	—	1	1
TOTAL	209	178	141	1	1

(The costs incurred are not identifiable from the reports of the Director of Land Development as they are included in other costs.)

These buildings were constructed on plans drawn by the Land Development Department and approved by the Education Department.

The Parent-Teacher Associations

The Parent-Teacher Associations have been generally of great assistance to schools in the organisation of various activities and in obtaining many material requirements. In many schools, classrooms, buildings for dental clinics, shrine rooms, playgrounds, have been constructed by the Parent Teacher Associations with their own funds or with subsidies from the Department of Education. No statistics are available to show the value of the contributions by the Parent-Teacher Associations.

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Facilities and Service Fees Fund

The Principals and Parent-Teacher Associations of schools, with special permission from the Director of Education, often improve the existing buildings and sometimes put up new units with the facility fees.[33]

All the buildings for the state schools have to conform to the Education Department type plans or plans approved by the Department of Education.

Kandyan Peasantry Commission

The Kandyan Peasantry Commission (the Commission set up to improve the conditions of the peasants in the Kandyan areas) provide funds to the Education Department for the construction of school buildings in the areas coming under the purview of the Commission.

Expenditure for School Buildings as a Percentage of the Total Education Vote

Because of the number of Agencies responsible for the provisions of funds and for the construction, maintenance and repairs of school buildings, and the difficulty of isolating the amounts spent from the grants on building maintenance, it is not possible to calculate with any reasonable degree of accuracy the total expenditure on capital and/or recurrent work of school building as a percentage of the total educational expenditure for a period being beyond 1960.

The expenditure on capital and recurrent work of the state school buildings as a percentage of the total expenditure from funds voted by Government for Education after 1960 (that is after the take over of the Assisted schools) can be seen from the following Table.

TABLE IX

Expenditure on Capital and Recurrent Works as a percentage of total education expenditure (in Rs. 1000)

Year	1 *Total Provision for education* *Rs.*	2 *Total Expenditure for education* *Rs.*	3 *Recurrent Total Expenditure* *Rs.*	4 *Percentage (Column 3/2)*	5 *Total Capital Expenditure on buildings* *Rs.*	6 *Percentage (Column 5/2[34]*	7 *Total Capital and recurrent Expenditure* *Rs.*	8 *Percentage Column 7/2*
1960–61	289,086	267,454	2,198	0·82	8,105	3·03	10,304	3·85
1961–62	315,121	285,969	2,680	0·94	10,802	3·78	13,482	4·71
1962–63	306,172	299,589	2,879	0·96	9,958	3·32	12,837	4·28
1963–64	322,146	326,660	7,700	2·36	18,386	5·63	26,086	7·99
1964–65	343,872	342,479	4,573	1·33	24,139	7·05	28,711	8·38
1965–66	346,821	334,172	3,763	1·13	15,626	4·67	19,389	5·80

Figures in columns 1, 2, 3 and 5 obtained from " Account of Government of Ceylon " for years 1960–1966.

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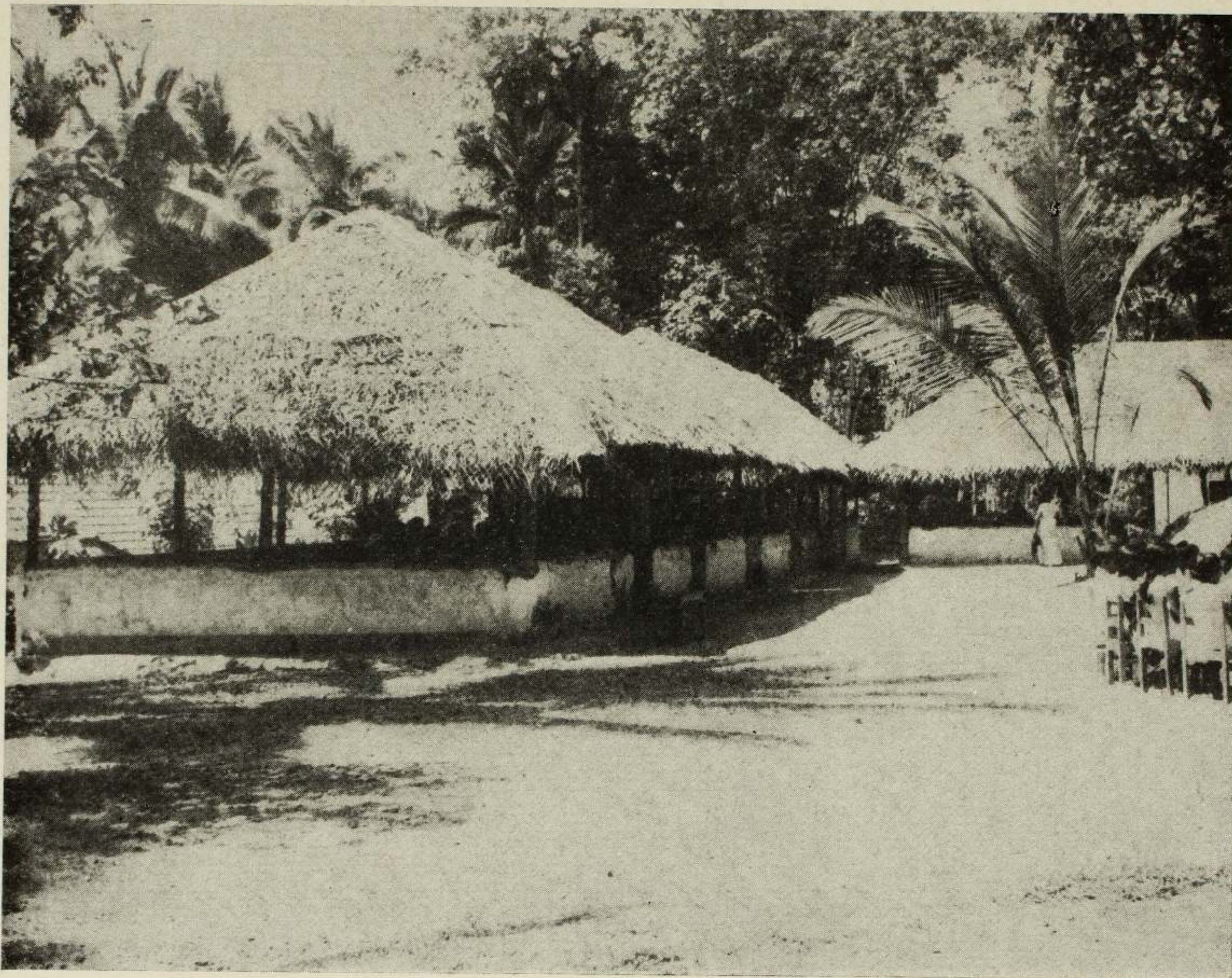

A Rural Primary School of the Old Type

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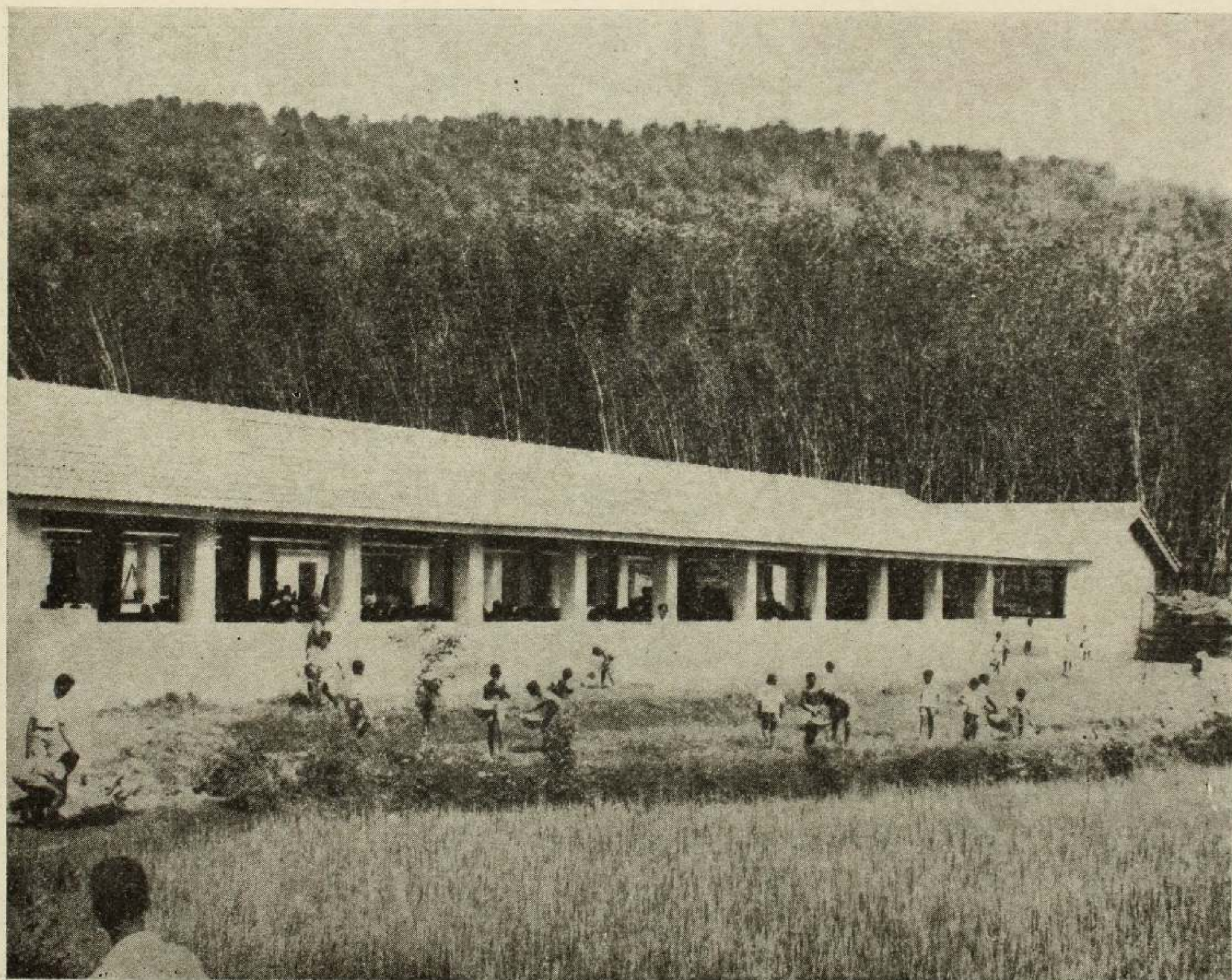

A Rural Primary School of the New Type

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REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] Ceylon Government—Education Ordinance 31 of 1939, Section 32 General (*d*)

[2] Ceylon Government—Code of Regulations for Government Schools Section 106–109

[3] Ceylon Government—Code of Regulations for Assisted Vernacular and Bilingual Schools—Section 18

[4] Ceylon Government—Code of Regulations for Assisted English Schools—Section 3, 1948

[5] Ceylon Government—Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act 5 of 1960

[6] Ceylon Government—Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act 8 of 1961

[7] Ceylon Ministry of Education—Manual of Instructions, Part I, Section 298 and Sections 311–335

[8] A well illustrated article dealing with the constructional educational and design aspects of the hall-type school building appears in Volume I No. 2 of " Building for Education " issued by the Asian Regional Institute for School Building Research, Colombo.

[9] In arriving at this figure it is assumed that 90% of the 957,960 + pupils in grades I—VII in all state Schools, 100% of the 135, 548 + pupils in grades VIII–X in State Vidyalayas, (Elementary chools with VIII–XII grades attached)

50% of the 316,490 pupils in grades VIII–XII in all state Maha Vidyalayas (Schools with classes up to grade XII are in this type of building) + Latest rough figures supplied by the Ministry of Education.

[10] Unesco Regional office for Education—*Bulletin Vol. I No. I*, 1966, p. 13, p. 71

[11] Unesco *Year Book*, 1965

[12] Unesco Regional office for Education—*Bulletin Vol. I, No. I*, 1966, p. 213, p. 71

[13] Ceylon Government Gazette No. 11828 of August 7, 1959, *Code of Regulations for Pirivenas*

[14] *Vide* Chapter 55

[15] Figures obtained from Administration Reports of the Director of Education 1943–1954
(*) Central School : A Senior Secondary School up to Grade xii and having hostel facilities
(**) Senior School : A Senior Secondary School up to Grade xii but without hostel facilities
(***) Junior School : A Junior Secondary School (Most of them were later up-graded to Senior Secondary level):

[16] Ceylon Department of Education: *Administration Report* 1948, Director of Education, Section on Central Schools

[17] Royal College, Colombo, was regarded as the model of a good Government English School and the Ministers of Education at the time often announced, in reference to Central Schools that they were providing " Royal Colleges " in the rural areas

[18] Ceylon Department of Education—*Administration Report* 1950, Director of Education, Section on Government and Assisted Schools

[19] Ceylon Government Gazette No. 10,332 of 21.12.51, notification regarding medium of Instruction

[20] Before 1953, though secondary education up to Grade X was available in some Swabhasha (Vernacular) schools, the number of children who remained in these secondary classes was not large, as the curriculum in them was confined to a few arts subjects and as the students who studied in them had no avenues for higher education or much scope for employment in the public services or professions. Not very many children had the means to attend the Secondary English Schools in the towns or the Central Schools away from their homes.

[21] From the Administration Reports of the Director of Education

[22] Supplied by the Ministry of Education

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[23] By 1959, most of the English schools had started teaching most of the subjects in the curriculum in the Swabhasa up to Grade XII, so that as far as the medium of instruction was concerned, the distinction beteen swabhasha schools and English schools was beginning to disappear. After 1958 the Government Central Schools and Senior schools were named Madhya Maha Vidyalayas and Maha Vidyalayas, respectively, while other Government schools were known as Vidyalayas. The Assisted English Schools taken over by the Government at the end of 1960 and vested in the crown after 1961 retained their own names but were regarded as Maha Vidyalayas.

[24] This system of payment of grants started in 1925 (Administration Report of the Director of Education 1935, page A 7) on the recommendations of a special committee appointed to go into the question of grants. This committee recommended that grants be paid for

(1) Promoting education
(2) Maintaining schools
(3) Teacher education

Before 1925 (as recommended by the Schools Commission set up in 1834) a capitation grant and a results grant were paid to Assisted Schools.

[25] Ceylon Government—Regulations Under Education Act No. 5 of 1951

[26] Special financial provision was made for the Royal College as a separate item in the Annual Financial Estimates

[27] (*a*) F. R. = Financial Regultions—Financial Regulations of Ceylon is a subject that has been assigned to the Finance Minister by the Prime Minister acting under the powers vested in him by Ceylon (Constitution and Independence) Order in Council 1946, 1947

[28] Asian Regional Institute for School Building Research—*Report to Government of Ceylon on cost and Space utilisation of Second Level Schools*

[29] Section 698, F. R. 1966

[30] 783 (1) F. R. 1966—This section pertaining to the Parent-Teacher Association, does not invalidate the special authority given to the Director of Education by Treasury Circular No. 1077 letter T. 293/2/33 of 1.11.63 to offer new constructional work up to Rs. 25,000 to Parent-Teacher Associations on Departmental Estimates without calling for public tenders. The Treasury Circular letter 1076/TPEN/7/30 of 5.8.66. informs the Ministry of Education that 783 (1) F. R. 1966 does not invalidate the Tresury Circular of 1.11.63

[31] Ceylon, Department of Rural Development—*Administration Reports* 1955–1966, *Director of Rural Development*

[32] Ceylon Department of Land Development—*Administration Reports* 1954–1965 Director of Land Development

[33] Fees for facilities and services charged from the students and regulated by the regulations of 1958 made under Education Act 37 of 1958

[34] *C.f.* % of Capital expenditure in some other countries of Asia

Nepal	.. 32·5	Singapore	.. 14·0
Afghanistan	.. 22·5	Malaysia	.. 14·5
Thailand	.. 16·5	Phillipines	.. 7·5
India	.. 12·3	Korea	.. 8.2

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CHAPTER 62

WELFARE SERVICES IN EDUCATION

S. P. Jayasuriya

In this chapter we will trace the development and make a brief survey of the ancillary welfare services provided by the Ministry of Education. Within the limits of the Island's developing economy, the Ministry extends to the students several welfare services, which form an integral part of its extensive educational programme. Certain Local Authorities too have, mainly by distributing free school-books and supplying a free midday meal to those in need, willingly supplemented the Ministry's welfare services in their respective areas. Although such assistance, originating from these twin sources, had existed earlier it was in 1931, the beginning of the period under discussion, that they first came under integration and over-all organisation.

Free Midday Feeding Scheme

Of the many welfare services conducted by the Ministry of Education the most outstanding, both by its very significant results and uniform extension over the whole Island, is the free midday feeding scheme. Before 1931 a variety of feeding programmes of a spasmodic nature were operating in several areas. Under such programmes the Parent Teacher Association of a school with a subsidy from the Local Authority of the area would supply the pupils with a meal that ranged from the provision of some sweetmeats or biscuits to a rice and curry meal at midday. In 1931 the Municipality of Colombo, for instance, distributed a free midday meal each to 800 students in primary schools in low-income areas of the city. Many other local bodies followed the good example of the Colombo Municipality. In 1935 when the Island faced the Malaria Epidemic, this local welfare service was turned into an anti-Malaria measure. As a follow-up on the Island-wide school medical inspections and Malaria treatment, a large number of local bodies undertook extensive feeding schemes. Meals ranging from rice and curry, bread and soup and a glass

JAYASURIYA, S. P., B. A. (Ceylon), Dip. Ed. (Ceylon), Dip.Ed. (Sydney). Presently serving as Chief Education Officer and Head of the English Unit Ministry of Education. Before his present appointment, Mr. Jayasuriya served in various other capacities. He was assistant master at Trinity College, Kandy, and after that was the Vice Principal of the Government Central College, Talatu-oya. Before his promotion to the present position he was a District Inspector of Schools.

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of milk to a cup of rice-gruel were served in various areas. This service, it must be gratefully recorded, contributed in no small measure to the quick control of the worst epidemic the Island had ever known.

The Education Department initiated an Island-wide free midday feeding scheme in 1945. The meal served under this scheme, which was the most extensive till then undertaken, consisted of bread and vegetable curry, vegetable soup, coconut sambol or jam. All Sinhala and Tamil Schools, both Government and Aided, came under this programme. This meal was given to deserving students, up to 50 per cent of the total enrolment in Central, Senior and Bilingual schools, and up to 25 per cent in Junior schools. The Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board supplied tea and sugar for a cup of tea to be added to this meal in one area. When the country faced a serious food crisis during the World War II, it was with considerable difficulty that the Education Department maintained this feeding scheme overcoming the severe shortage of flour. A summary of expenditure on this feeding scheme for the financial year 1945–1946 is given below to indicate the Education Department's financial commitment over this service.

TABLE I

Type of locality	*No. of schools authorized to feed*	*No. of schools that fed*	*Average No. of pupils fed*	*Total cost* *Rs. c.*
Municipal	95	95	11,507	149,438 60
Urban	42	42	6,474	63,667 89
Rural	4,762	4,526	507,696	5,650,388 64
TOTAL	4,899	4,663	525,677	5,863,495 13

The average cost per pupil for this year was Rs. 11.15 and meals had been served on an average of 180 days. The total cost to Government was Rs. 5,863,495.13.

In 1947 this free midday meal service was extended to cover all pupils in primary schools and some of the pupils in post-primary sections. The meal took the popular form of a snack of bread and coconut sambol, vegetable curry or jam. On the uniform feeding allowance of six cents per pupil, a loaf of bread of one pound was served among five pupils. In many schools, produce from the school garden, a good vegetable dish or a plate of yam, was often added to this meal. A separate vote was passed to cover the cost of crockery required and to pay the cooks' allowances. During the financial year 1946–1947 the number of pupils fed rose by 28 per cent and the total cost to Government rose by 23 per cent, approximately. The following table gives a brief summary of expenditure over this year.

TABLE II

Type of locality	*Cost of feeding* *Rs. cts.*
Municipal	192,955.30
Urban Council	69,071.71
Rural	6,787,388.90
TOTAL	7,049,415.91

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The feeding programme was further extended during the year 1948–1949 to cover 50 per cent of the total enrolment in Junior, Senior and Central schools. An Inspectress of Schools, Miss Elsie Solomons, was entrusted with the general supervision of the meal service with a view to improving its quality. The number fed recorded a sharp increase from 694,000 + pupils in 1946 – 1947 to 800,000 + in 1948–1949. The meal allowance per pupil ranged from 10 cents per day in the Colombo Municipality area and 8½ cents in other Municipal areas and Urban Council areas, to 6 cents in the rest of the Island. The standard meal consisted of 3 ounces of bread served with a vegetable curry or soup and a half-pint of milk in certain instances. Some schools, assisted by the Local Authority of the area or the Parent Teacher Association or both, made individual improvements to their meal services. In such schools, sometimes a full rice and curry meal, supplemented with some cereal or yam, was served. It was required that a minimum measure of 4 ounces of rice be given where rice and curry was served. The total cost to Government on the free midday meal service was Rs. 7,338,822.18 in 1948–1949. The programme remained at this level till the beginning of 1956, in which year it underwent an important change.

On 1st October, 1956, the CARE Organization of the United States of America stepped in to assist the Education Department to provide the free midday meal. As a gift from the people of the U.S.A. to the people of Ceylon, this Organization supplied the Education Department with wheat flour and milk-powder to be distributed among schools. Under this new scheme each pupil was served with a bun and a cup of milk. At the initial stage, however, this meal was limited to pupils in primary schools only.

With the expansion of the meal service, subsequent to assistance from CARE, the pattern of distribution was brought under a uniform plan over the whole Island with a view to making maximum use of the scheme. All schools were required to adhere to a common system of meal distribution, designed to eliminate waste and ensure hygienic conditions. This plan was set out in Circular No. 28/56, dated 29th August, 1956, of the Director of Education addressed to all Heads of schools. Firstly, the distribution of the free midday meal was made part of the duties of every Head of school. A uniform Island-wide scheme for marking attendance at meals corresponding to marking attendance at school was introduced in all schools coming within the free meal service. A committee with the Head of school as chairman, and an assistant teacher and a senior pupil as members, called the Food Committee, had to be formed in every school and it was the duty of this Committee to ensure the proper distribution of the midday meal. It was stipulated that the meal should consist of a bun weighing no less than two ounces and a cup of milk reconstituted from one ounce of milk-powder. The feeding time had to be shown on the approved time-table of the school. A scheme of inspection of the meal service by representative members of the community in addition to official inspection by the Education Department was formulated. Keenly interested in the service to Ceylon resulting from their gift of flour and milk, the Officers of the CARE Organization were included in the list of persons entitled to inspect the meal service in schools. The Members of Parliament, the Government Agent, the Divisional Revenue Officer, the Medical Office

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of Health, the Rural Development Officer, the Public Health Officer of the area, in which the school is situated and Officials of the Food Commissioner's Department, Office-bearers of the Parent Teacher Association of the school, and any other persons holding letters of authority from the Director of Education were authorized under this scheme to inspect school meals, without prior notice, and record observations in the school log book. Specific instructions were given to Heads of schools to arrange for smooth distribution of the midday meal under hygienic conditions paying special attention to the preparation of milk, cleanliness of the utensils used, cleaning and storing of cups and glasses used by the pupils, etc. Meticulous and detailed instructions had to be given in this manner, from time to time, by the Director of Education to ensure the proper distribution of the meal for the maximum benefit of pupils while checking all loss and waste as the scheme continued to expand. Having thus made for the best distribution of a planned meal to all pupils at the primary level in the whole Island, the Education Department left it to the wishes of parents to decide on pupils' partaking of the meal.

In February 1967 this feeding scheme was expanded to cover all pupils in the Grades 6, 7 and 8 in all schools. It was extended again in August 1967 to cover all pupils at all levels in all schools, as well as eligible pupils in Pirivenas. Thus the free midday meal service reached the maximum degree of expansion enabling all school children irrespective of age or Grade in which they studied, to have a free meal at school. In the meantime supervision of the meal service was intensified. The Food Committee was reconstituted to include (1) the Circuit Inspector of Schools, (2) the Head of school, (3) a representative from the Parent Teacher Association, (4) a senior member of the staff, and (5) a senior student. Some schools, generously assisted by the Parent Teacher Association that supplied cooking utensils, drinking vessels and sugar for the milk, and participated in the supervision, maintained high standards in the meal service.

In 1957 a total of 1,350,000+, that is, nearly 71 per cent of the total school-going population of the Island had the bun, but only 950,000+took the glass of milk, i.e., only two thirds of the number that had the bun took milk. Still, benefits of the organized feeding scheme began to show in increased attendance and in a livelier tone in schools.

A programme for popularising the milk service was soon launched. It was aimed at removing the misconception, which a fair proportion of parents had, that taking reconstituted milk resulted in stomach disorders. As a first step, the Education Department organised a Milk Week in schools in January 1959. Through public meetings, cinema shows, rallies and distribution of literature, an extensive attempt was made to convince the parents of the value of the glass of milk given in the school. As a result of several such measures, the glass of milk began to gain in popularity.

The supply of buns to schools, in general, was entrusted on a contract basis to registered bakeries close to schools and minimum standards of production were

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laid down. Where approved Rural Development Societies or registered Co-operative Societies were available to undertake this service, they were always preferred. Very rarely a school happened to be too far from any such source of supply and then the Head of school was allowed to make local arrangements by using a suitable substitute such as rusks or rottis.

The free feeding scheme faced a new problem in May 1967. The CARE Organization, owing to limitations on the supply sources in the U. S. A., reduced the quantity of flour supplied to schools. In the circumstances, the adoption of an economy measure became a compelling necessity. It appeared that the midday meal service would have to be curtailed in relation to the reduction in the supply of flour. But the Ministry evolved a different procedure which, in spite of being an economy measure, helped to enhance the benefits to pupils of the meal service. This was the substitution of biscuits for the bun. This measure completely eliminated two hardships the supply of buns had to contend with. It had been observed that the quality of the bun often fluctuated resulting in varying rates of consumption. Much supervision, repeated surprise inspections and consistent checking had to be maintained to keep a satisfactory standard in the bun supplied to schools from day to day. As each school had a different source of supply, it was by no means easy to maintain uniform standards in all schools. Where a school had to depend on a single bakery, like it or not, quality improvement became a hard struggle. And certain schools, as was mentioned earlier, being too far from any source of supply had to resort to some substitute.

The introduction of biscuits eliminated all such incidental problems. It is very much easier to have quality control over the supply of biscuits for it can be obtained from a centrally controlled source or sources which can be kept to a uniform standard. With modern packing facilities, adequate supplies of biscuits can be stored in the school itself. Should, by any chance, a round of supply were to come below the stipulated standard, it would be discovered well in time for fresh supplies to be called for.

It is noteworthy too, that this measure made it possible to overcome whatever antipathy certain parents still had against reconstituted milk. The quantity of milk-powder used to make the cup of milk is now added to the biscuit, making it more palatable. Owing to such factors the meal of biscuits has become uniformly popular in all schools. Thus a measure adopted in a compelling situation has enhanced the benefits of the free feeding scheme as a whole.

However, it was after a test project that the substitution of biscuits was adopted on a large scale. Some select schools in the Colombo South Region were taken as the testing ground. As the change was very well received by these pupils, the scheme was extended to the Districts of Nuwara Eliya, Kalutara and Batticaloa. The aim is to extend it over the whole Island, covering all pupils in Grades 1 to 9 in all schools. This target has to be reached in stages, giving time to the manufacturers to step up production. Till then the bun will continue to be given in such areas as are not served with biscuits.

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To give an indication to the reader of the financial commitments involved in the free midday meal scheme, a summary of the value of CARE flour and milk-powder used during the period 1957–1966 is given in TABLE III below. We should also note that although the two items, flour and milk-powder are supplied free by the CARE Organisation, the Ceylon Government pays handling charges both in the U. S. A. and Ceylon.

TABLE III

Year	*Prog. No.*	*Milk-powder lbs.*	*Flour*	*Value Rs. c.*
1957	1	15,682,423	—	15,343,344. 00
1958	2	—	46,794,421	17,539,521. 60
1959	4	11,996,343	—	9,248,668. 80
1960	5	—	39,541,250	17,126,952. 00
1961	7	11,376,161	—	9,183,830. 40
		—	41,248,270	15,796,881. 60
1962	9	5,197,122	—	3,944,500. 80
		—	55,968,150	23,044,843. 20
1963	10	8,027,964	—	6,008,251. 20
		—	51,155,700	19,094,956. 80
1964	12	3,746,304	—	2,795,462. 40
		—	46,961,350	15,426,614. 40
1965	14	6,036,584	—	4,386,740. 00
		—	50,673,700	16,623,620. 00
1966	15	1,332,200	—	1,404,504. 00
		—	43,376,950	16,378,699. 20
10 years		63,395,101	375,719,791	193,347,390. 40

Scholarships

When secondary education in English was conducted on fee-levying basis, the need for a system of free scholarships began to be felt. As English education, linked to economic advantages, gained in popularity in the post-Donoughmore era, piece-meal attempts were made to enable promising pupils from Sinhala and Tamil schools to continue their studies in higher English schools on free scholarships. With this in view, the Education Department initiated the Denham scholarships in 1920. These were awarded on the results of a competitive examination. Besides them, individual schools, both Government and Aided, granted scholarships supported by philanthropists or organizations. In all such instances the scholarship consisted of the exemption of the pupil from tuition and other ancillary fees normally charged in such schools.

The first Island-wide scholarship scheme, however, was inaugurated by the Education Department in 1939. Under this scheme 64 scholarships, each Rs. 200 per year in value and tenable for six years in an English medium higher school were awarded on the results of a competitive examination. The selection was distributed over the whole Island on the basis of one scholarship per Electoral District of the State Council and one for each province, with the exception of the Western Province, which was given two.

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A much wider system of scholarships was founded on the recommendations of the Special Committee on Education of 1943. It might have been believed, as in fact it was vehemently argued, that within a system of universal free education there would be no need for a scheme of scholarships. In the course of the debate that attended the recommendations of the Special Committee, the suggestion to substitute a scholarship scheme for universal free education was emphatically made. A scholarship, in this view, means the benefit of not having to pay tuition and other school fees. But what the Ministry of Education finally accepted was a very much broader concept, rooted in a realistic view of the economic strength of the community. While all education will be given free, the Ministry decided in accordance with the recommendations of the Special Committee, to further assist those pupils whose parents would find it difficult to supply other needs of schooling such as books and other materials, clothing and travel expenses, etc.

Thus the well-known Fifth Standard Scholarship scheme was inaugurated in 1946. It began with 20 scholarships but was intended to reach a maximum of 5,400 awards. These scholarships were made tenable in Central Schools with hostel facilities for both boys and girls. The feeding allowance fixed at Rs. 12.50 per month in 1946, was progressively increased to Rs. 20.00 and later Rs. 30.00. Scholars who, on valid grounds, opted not to stay in school hostels received the value of the award on a monthly basis. In the first instance, the scholarship was tenable for five years covering the Senior School Certificate examination. Subsequently, in 1951 the duration of the scholarships was extended to cover the pre-University and University Courses.

This scholarship scheme, which began with 20 awards in 1946 shot up to 3,155 in 1948—2,140 awards being held by boys and 1,515 by girls. The Fifth Standard Scholarship scheme may be described as the most extensive so far maintained.

With the growth of the demand for science education, the Ministry of Education inaugurated a new scheme of scholarships in 1958. Popularly known as Science Scholarships, these are awarded to some select pupils to follow science courses at the post-primary and university levels. In the year 1958 provision was made for 1,000 awards under this scheme. An award carries a financial coverage of Rs. 300 per year and is tenable for four years in a Madhya Maha Vidyalaya with facilities for science education. If the scholarship holder, having successfully completed the course at the Madhya Maha Vidyalaya, enters a university to follow a course in science his award is extended, with an enhanced allowance of Rs. 1,000 per year, over the entire university course.

Science scholarships are awarded on the results of an islandwide competitive examination for which all pupils below 15 years studying in Grade 8 or above in any school without facilities for science education are qualified to appear. The awards, however, are subject to a maximum income of parents stipulated from time to time.

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POLICE STATION VIEW
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The target of 1,000 scholarships set in 1958 was not reached until 1963. The financial provision thus not utilized is currently being used on an additional scheme of scholarships. These are awarded to students who, having completed the G.C.E. (O.L.) requirements for admission to the G.C.E. (A.L.) science class, in a school where facilities for further science education are not available, are subsequently admitted to the G.C.E. (A.L.) science class in a school equipped for the purpose.

A less extensive scheme of scholarships was started, also in 1958. These are awarded to pupils of outstanding achievement in sports and athletics. The awards are made on a selection plan restricted to those within the age range of 13–16 and are worked out by the Physical Education Officers of the Ministry of Education. Like the Fifth Standard and the Science Scholarships, these are also tenable in Madhya Maha Vidyalayas over a period of five years, with similar provision for extension over university education. An award is fixed at Rs. 30 per month. This scheme which was begun with 10 awards still operates at even level.

Free School Books

The distribution of free school books was begun under the District School Committees constituted under the provisions of the Town Schools Ordinance of 1906 and the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907. One of the services to schools extended by the Local Authorities was the supply of free school books to needy children. This measure was used to raise attendance at school. As accurate records of the extent of this service in different areas are not readily available we may surmise that each local body made an allocation in proportion to its financial strength.

At a later stage the Department of Education too supplied a limited amount of school books. These were distributed among the needy children through the respective provincial offices and Inspectors of Schools. During the period under discussion, however, the main source of the supply of free school books has been the Local Authorities. The Municipalities of Colombo, Kandy, Galle, Kurunegala, Nuwara Eliya and Jaffna have maintained extensive schemes of supplying free school books. A summary of expenditure on this service of some of them during the period 1963–1964 is given here :

TABLE IV

Municipality	*1963*	*1964*	*1965*	*1966*	*1967*
	Rs.	*Rs.*	*Rs.*	*Rs.*	*Rs.*
Colombo	.. 125,224	.. 123,571	.. 134,865	.. 185,383	.. 160,000
Kandy	.. 50,000 per year				
Galle	.. 6,477	.. 5,288	.. 4,741	.. 4,969	.. 8,566
Kurunegala	.. 12,415	.. 18,700	.. 15,639	.. 11,090	.. 11,718
Nuwara Eliya	.. 12,000 per year				

The Ministry of Education maintains a scheme of supplying school libraries with selected books and other publications throughout the year. These are added to school libraries maintained on facilities fees. Expensive books, which many schools

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would not be able to buy are often distributed under this scheme. Books published by the Education Publications Department are sent to schools in this manner. Notable publications of literary and cultural value published by the private sector are purchased and distributed among schools. Manuals on various school subjects and journals of educational value are regularly sent out to schools in need of them.

Free Medical Service

For a long time the Department of Education has, in collaboration with the Department of Medical and Health Services conducted a regular health service in the Island's schools. This service, which may not be very conspicuous under normal conditions, becomes quite prominent and extensive at times of danger like the outbreak of an infectious disease. The extensive campaign of vaccination against Polio is a case in point. The control of the Malaria Epidemic of 1935, for instance, was greatly accelerated by the measures of prevention and cure applied through the School Health Service.

The Department of Medical and Health Services has a Health Officer for the purpose of organizing the School Health Service in collaboration with the Regional Education Departments. Under normal conditions routine inspections of pupils in different schools are conducted during school time in the schools. Dental diseases, ear and throat diseases, which probably would have remained long undetected, of very young pupils have often received prompt attention on the reports of school medical inspections.

As was mentioned earlier, the Health Department conducts extensive campaigns of vaccination against Smallpox and innoculation against Tuberculosis, Typhoid, Polio and other such diseases. Hookworm treatment continues to be given under the School Health Service.

Education in health and hygiene given under general instructions must be mentioned, too. Much emphasis is laid on athletics and sports in school. Many schools have special teachers in charge of these activities. A good number of pupils receive training in First Aid under the Cadet, Boy Scout, Girl Guide and other such movements. To make pupils health conscious, an annual Health Week is conducted in schools.

The supply of free spectacles to pupils with weak eye sight is a noteworthy feature of the school health service. Special inspections of eye sight are conducted in schools from time to time. When pupils deserving attention are detected, they are supplied with free spectacles if parents are unable to purchase them.

The dental section of the school health service has developed in large measure during the last few years. Routine dental inspections are conducted in schools from time to time. Pupils needing dental attention detected at such inspections are directed to dental clinics attached to local hospitals. In several areas there are School Dent al Clinics. Such a clinic would be located in a school in a central place, enabling pupils from several schools to attend it for treatment. Such clinics maintained by the Health Department, are manned by fully qualified nurses and trained attendants. Dental surgeons visit them at regular intervals.

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Conclusion

The different programmes described in this brief survey, it will be granted, together constitute a welfare service of considerable extent involving a substantial vote. No attempt was made here to present to the reader mere accounts of such expenditure, our aim being that of giving an overall view, and indicating the nature and spirit of such activities. Nor is this, by any means, an exhaustive account of all welfare services available in the field of education in Ceylon. We have altogether left out such activities in operation at the Universities in the form of bursary systems and scholarships, etc. The full significance of the welfare services conducted by the Ministry of Education, however, should not be judged by their extent alone. What is more important is the Ministry's awareness of the prevailing need for such services although it is conducting one of the most liberally conceived universal free education systems in the world. And this awareness is grounded on a clear apprehension of the economic realities of the community and a healthy democratic concept of equality of educational opportunity. It is also noteworthy that neither lack of understanding on the part of parents nor apathy of elders hinders the process of the deserving pupil receiving such assistance. It would reach him through the agency of the school itself. Schools have been remarkably keen in getting such services extended to their pupils, which has resulted in much healthy competition. Teachers in our schools have always regarded it a great achievement, as indeed it is, to see a promising pupil win a scholarship that would lead him to higher levels of achievement. The creation of this democratic liberality of attitude in the school atmosphere is a singular by-product of the Ministry's welfare services. It has established throughout our school system the view that the young child who enters school has the fullest claims on our sympathetic attention. On a pragmatic view too, there is cause to be happy. The services of young persons of outstanding ability and talent have contributed to the task of nation building by their having risen to positions of eminence through such welfare services as scholarship schemes.

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CHAPTER 63

PUBLIC INTEREST AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

SOMARATNE WIJAYASINGHE

From the earlier chapters in this volume it will be seen that religion and education have always gone hand in hand. In any society there is always some focal point round which the organisation of that society centres ; and in the past in Ceylon this focus was provided by temple and monastery. The early history of Ceylon is inextricably bound up with the spread of Buddhism and Buddhist learning which centred around famous monasteries.

With the arrival of the western powers—first, the Portuguese, then the Dutch, and finally the British—, Buddhism and Buddhist learning received a set back. Christian missionaries, following in the wake of the armed forces of these powers, began to replace pirivenas with churches, and to set up schools, hoping through education to convert the people of the country to Christianity. The focus of social organisation began to shift from the temple to the church, from the pirivena to the schools.

The source of patronage and help in the early years of the history of the Island was the king. It was he who bestowed lands and resources on the monasteries and fostered and cherished religion and education. However, when the western powers arrived in Ceylon royal patronage had perforce to cease and the government or private agencies had to take the place of the king. Almost all through the 19th century the government tended to favour the Christian missionaries to the detriment of Buddhist learning.

From the latter years of the 19th century, however, with the expansion of public education and the stimulation of public interest in education, it was schools that became the agency of co-ordination in the land. At first it was the private agencies who would seek to promote the interests of

WIJAYASINGHE, SOMARATNE, B.SC. (ECON.), LONDON, Diploma in Public Relations, (Illinois), Presently Mr. Wijayasinghe is an Assistant Secretary at the Ministry of Education. Before succeeding to the present office, he was the Superintendent of the Official Languages Department, and previous to that, Chief sub-Editor, "Dinamina". Among his publications are "Ancient Ceylon ", " Ceylon and World History", "Ceylon and European Nations ", "Ceylon and Her Government ", "Ceylon and World Geography ", Science of Economics and the World of Economics", " Economic History of Europe", " Creation of the Modern World ". He has also translated various standard works into Sinhala.

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their particular groups. Individuals were encouraged to donate or bequeath land, buildings, or money for schools and religious institutions. Their example was followed by others.

In the course of the last few decades of the 19th century, when education was almost entirely in the hands of the Christian Missionary Societies, there arrived in Ceylon a man who was to play a great part in the resurgence of Buddhism in the Island, Colonel Henry Steele Olcott. Together with Madame Blavatsky, he was responsible for the establishment of the Buddhist Theosophical Society in India. His arrival at a time when Buddhist leaders like Mohottiwatte Gunananda Thero were taking issue with the Christian Missionary Societies, sparked off a revival of Buddhist enthusiasm. Ananda College was founded soon after in 1886—the first of several similar schools.

In the North the great Saivite and Tamil Scholar, Sri la Sri Arumuga Navalar, started a campaign to start Hindu Schools in the North.

About the same time the Muslims led by Siddhi Lebbe and others like the Hon. M. C. Abdul Rahiman were also agitating for the establishment of Mohammedan schools.

It became clear that each religious group was concerned with furthering the interests of its own religion. While the Christian Missions were receiving favoured treatment from the government, the other religious groups now began to seek the recognition of the government where education was concerned, by demanding at least the same treatment that the Christian Mission schools were receiving.

An Attempt to Obtain Local Support

In order to meet these demands there was need for more financial provision on the part of the government. At the turn of the century the government tried to enlist the support of the local bodies through legislation. The Town Schools Ordinance of 1906 and the Rural Schools Ordinance of 1907 were accordingly passed with this end in view. District School Committees were set up, on which the local bodies had representation, to make provision for education within the areas under their control. But the support hoped for was not realised. Most of the local authorities did not have sufficient financial resources to accept responsibility for providing educational facilities and the District School Committees too were directly controlled by the bureaucratic Government Agents of the various districts. The upsurge of religious fervour was not enough to bring the community into the business of education.

By the Education Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920 the government again made a constructive effort to effect a partnership between the state and private agencies, to establish a relationship with local authorities by setting up Education District Committees on which there were to be two representatives from the local bodies. Local Authorities, however, were apparently not in a position to help the central Government in other ways than by serving on these committees.

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Meanwhile the constitution of the Island had undergone significant changes and education had passed into the hands of the elected representatives of the people under a Minister and an Executive Committee for Education. A spate of educational changes followed.

In 1939 the Minister presented a bill re-enacting most of the provisions of the Ordinance of 1920. After heated discussion in the State Council the bill was passed to become the Education Ordinance No. 31, of 1939. Education District Councils were replaced by Local Advisory Committees, consisting of an officer of the Department—the Education Officer—and nominees of the Governor drawn from the various town councils. In this way it was hoped that the people of a district would have some share in the education of the children of their area. The following are the sections of the Ordinance relevant to the Local Advisory Committees :—

" 10. (1) Every Local Advisory Committee shall consist of twelve members.

(2) the officer of the Department who is authorised by the Director to enforce or execute in any area the provisions of this Ordinance and the regulations made thereunder (hereinafter referred to as " the Education Officer ") shall be a member of the Local Advisory Committee for that area.

(3) In the case of any area within the administrative limits of a Municipal Council or an Urban Council, two of the members of the Local Advisory Committee for that area shall be nominated by the Governor on the recommendation of such Council ; and in the case of an area which is specified or defined by Proclamation under Section 9 (1) (*c*) and which includes the area within the administrative limits of any Urban Council, two of the members of the Local Advisory Committee for the area so specified or defined shall be nominated by the Governor on the recommendations of that District Council :

Provided, however, that the Governor may, by Proclamation published in the Gazette, increase or reduce the number of members to be nominated under this sub-section either generally in respect of all such areas or specially in respect of any specified area ; and in any such case the number of members nominated under this sub-section shall be the number specified in the Proclamation issued in respect of that case.

(4) Such of the members of each Local Advisory Committee as are not referred to in sub-section (2) or sub-section (3) shall be nominated by the Governor.

(5) Any member of a Local Advisory Committee, other than the Education Officer, may at any time be removed from office by the Governor.

(6) Any member of a Local Advisory Committee, other than the Education Officer, may resign his seat on the Committee by letter addressed to the Director.

(7) Any member of a Local Advisory Committee, other than the Education Officer, who had failed to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee shall, unless he was absent from any such meeting on the ground of ill-health or with the leave of the Committee first obtained, be deemed to have vacated his seat in the Committee.

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(8) Every member of a Local Advisory Committee other than the Education Officer, shall, unless he earlier resigns or vacates his seat or is removed from office by the Governor, hold office for a term of three years from the date of his nomination or for such other term as may have been expressly specified by the Governor at the time of the nomination.

(9) Subject to the provisions of sub-section (3), the Governor may from time to time appoint any suitable person—

(*a*) to act as a member of a Local Advisory Committee in place of any member (other than the Education Officer) who is incapacitated by ill-health, from attending meetings of the Committee or who is granted leave of absence by the Committee ; or

(*b*) to be a member of the Committee in place of any member who resigns or vacates his seat or is removed from office by the Governor.

11. (1) At the first meeting held after the constitution of each Local Advisory Committee, the Committee shall elect a Chairman from among its members.

(2) whenever the office of the Chairman becomes vacant the Committee shall at the next succeeding meeting fill the vacancy by a like election from among its members. "

In the midst of the unrest and upheaval of the Second World War, several important events in the sphere of education in the Island took place; the University of Ceylon was born (1942), the recommendations of the Special Committee for Education were accepted and became law (1945)—" education from the Kindergarten to the University " became free, the State Council gave way to Parliament and Ceylon regained her Independence (1948). The doors of educational opportunity had at last been thrown open to all ; there was a tremendous upsurge of popular enthusiasm. The people at large were now deeply concerned with the need for education as the key that would open the door to economic freedom and success. In the endeavour to bring the rural masses to school the Department set in motion a scheme to provide a free mid-day meal to all school-going children. Some local bodies set about providing free books to needy children. Education had become not merely for the people but also of the people and by the people. The need for better provision for Secondary Education in the less developed areas was partly satisfied by the establishment of central schools in such areas. With large numbers of rural children knocking at the doors of these institutions, problems were created as regards the supply and training of teachers, the medium of instruction, the supply of text books and the like. The government addressed its mind to these and progressively set about solving them. In a short time an answer was found for each of these and now since the State has accepted full responsibility for the provision of educational facilities (1961) by nationalising schools the prospect for the future is very bright.

Enthusiasm for Popular Education

Popular enthusiasm for education was largely due to the political awakening that came in the wake of universal franchise. Men and women in rural areas who hitherto had no political significance emerged almost overnight as citizens who enjoyed equal

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rights with the privileged few; politicians who wooed the new electorate were eager to provide them with the basic educational facilities. Hence, during the first and second State Councils a tremendous enthusiasm was generated among rural masses for more and better education.

The State Council of Ceylon passed a resolution in 1944 urging the Government to declare Sinhala and Tamil the official languages of Ceylon. Although this resolution was not implemented immediately, it gave added strength to those who clamoured for recognition of the Swabhasa medium. The medium of instruction of Secondary and Higher education was still the English language. Not more than 10 per cent of the total school going population could afford to attend the English medium schools purely for economic reasons. Consequently, there remained a wide gap between the small English educated class and the rank and file of the Swabhasa educated. The Special Committee on Education which went into this question very carefully came to the final conclusion that only universal free education could bridge this gulf between the English and Swabhasa educated classes.

The Community Enters the FIeld of Education

The Director of Education, in his Administration Report on Education for the year 1954 says :

> " The traditional concept of the school has been that of a place of instruction. This is now changing rapidly to the more modern concept of the school as a community. . . . Almost all schools pay greater attention now to some form of extra mural activities. In the larger schools there are clubs and societies conducted by the students. . . . This year several schools have organised International Relations Clubs. This move has been inspired by UNESCO. . . . Games as a form of extra mural work are common to most schools in the Island . . . . Oriental Dancing and Music is now a regular feature in every School concert. United Nations Day is celebrated by an Oriental Song and Dance festival in which schools from all parts of the Island participate. Organised Group Activities such as the Cadet Movement, the Boys Scouts and Girl Guides Movement, were once confined to the larger Colleges in urban areas, but in recent years the Scout Movement has spread into Schools in the rural areas. . . . This year schools in every province joined in the Food Production and Tree Planting Campaign. They also took part in the Health Week Competition organised by the Department of Health Services. Schools had their share too in the National Savings Movement. The former isolation of the school from life outside it is gradually breaking down even in rural areas. The School is now becoming the focus of village functions and activity. Parents now take a greater interest than before in the School and almost every rural School has its Parent Teachers' Association. Some of the more energetic associations have even donated school buildings. "

With the achievement of Independence in 1948 the importance of giving the national language its rightful place was recognized by all right thinking people. The agitation for the declaration of Sinhala as the Official language of the country gained momentum

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culminating in an Act of Parliament passed in 1956. This had to be necessarily followed by a change over from English into Sinhala as the medium of higher education. Thousands of young men and young women who were debarred from seeking employment were now enabled to find employment unhindered by language barriers. This change over afforded social mobility even to the poorest student, for, now the doors were thrown open to them in the top rungs of the social ladder. To sum up, free education together with the change over from English into Sinhala not only provided ample opportunities for all sections of the nation to seek social advancement, but also created unprecedented enthusiasm for higher education throughout the entire length and breadth of the Island. The establishment of two Sinhala medium Universities, Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara, in 1958 and 1959, further strengthened this popular enthusiasm.

Old Boys' Associations

Almost from their inception, most of the older schools fostered loyalty by establishing Old Boys' Associations. These consisted of those who had received their education at these various schools and felt that the welfare and well-being of their alma mater should be fostered and cherished. Thus it has come to pass that very often a family from father to son and even to the son's son had received its education at the same school so that the flame of loyalty and affection burned brightly in their breasts. Such schools had built up traditions that seemed to belong to a number of social groups and these groups tended to band together to help the school. Old Boys would often come back to help their alma mater in games, in the provision of some amenity, by improvements to buildings and in many such ways. As many of these Old Boys were also parents of the boys in the school it often came to pass that Parent Teacher Associations were established so as to bring in the teachers. These Parent Teachers Associations were not concerned merely with the provision of amenities but with the very purpose of the school's existence—the education of the children. Problems were discussed and ways and means of solving them found. Especially in the rural areas it was found very useful to have meetings of these Associations so that what was best for a school could be found expression.

Rural Development Societies

Since Independence, moreover, with the formation of Rural Development Societies, under officials appointed by the government, the Rural Development Officers, the people at large have been brought into closer touch with the needs of the various districts to which they belong. This had had a direct bearing on education in rural areas ; for through the efforts of the Rural Development Officers the needs of schools and the school-going population have been discovered and supplied. Amenities like lavatories, playing fields, games materials, minor repairs to school buildings, and even the school buildings themselves have been constructed and handed over to the government. One might say that from these small beginnings have sprung the Shramadana Movement, which has been so enthusiastically supported by all sections of society these days, and the Work Experience programme of the Department of Education, to which reference is made in a subsequent chapter in this volume.

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Parent Teacher Co-operation

One important aspect of the community support for education was the inauguration of these *Parent Teacher Associations* in most of the well established schools. Most parents have realized that the education of their children could not be confined to the school environment alone, and that life at home had an abiding influence on the education at school. Hence, the co-operation of the school and home in the all-round education of their children was fully recognized by many enlightened parents. Most of these Parent Teacher Associations were conscious of the urgent needs of the schools and rallied round them in providing buildings, furniture, wells, rooms etc. Some of them succeeded in collecting sufficient funds to purchase adjacent lands for the expansion of the schools, whilst others have set up carpentry shops and other work-shops to impart skills to their respective school students.

In 1958 the Parent Teacher Association movement was brought under specific Regulations issued by the Department of Education. The field of activities of these was widened and the school was expected to play a vital role in the community services. The functions of the Parent Teacher Associations were brought under four broad categories, i.e., (1) Educational (2) Cultural (3) Child Care and (4) Community Services : whilst the school was called upon to serve the community, in many practical ways. A closer co-operation between the school and the community has been achieved by the new movement.

With a view to co-ordinating the activities of the different associations in a given area, provision was made for the amalgamation of these associations in a single circuit. These were called Circuit Conferences. Parent-teachers were empowered to amalgamate themselves into Regional Conferences to represent a single Educational Region. The apex of this pyramid was the National Federation of Parent Teachers Associations in which all Regional Conferences were represented. Many Circuit Conferences of these associations have regularly been held in many parts of the Island and several Regional Conferences too have been held. These Conferences have afforded an excellent opportunity for the members of the public to express their views on educational matters that have a direct bearing on the future of their children. They also provided opportunities for the spokesmen of the Department of Education to place important educational proposals before parents. The movement has made considerable progress in different parts of the Island depending largely on the enthusiasm and interest shown by the community.

School Welfare Boards

The provisions of the New Education Bill to establish School Welfare Boards is another step in the right direction to harness public support and interest in the spread of education. These Welfare Boards, when they are established will make the country realize that the schools really belong to the community and it is their direct responsibility to cherish and support these institutions so that they could efficiently perform the functions for which they have been founded.

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A New Approach

The importance of school and community relations has been increasingly realized by the Ministry of Education both in the interests of the community and those of the schools. The Work Experience Programme has brought the community and the schools together in an unprecedented manner. Hundreds and thousands of school children go knee-deep in mud in paddy fields and help the village cultivators in the weeding and the transplanting of their fields. Children also engaged themselves in the free donation of labour for the construction of access roads, and irrigation channels, sinking of wells and thatching of houses. A sense of patriotism and mutual well-being has been generated by the active participation of the students in the community development activities. Over 127,000 acres of paddy lands have been weeded by our school children during the course of 1967. Nearly one lakh of acres of paddy land have been transplanted by our school children resulting in a substantial increase in our paddy yields.

The year 1968 witnessed an important departure from the normal practice in the Educational Administration. The Hon'ble Minister of Education decided to meet all school principals throughout the Island and discuss all problems pertaining to education in their respective areas at regional conferences of Principals and Head Teachers. The Hon'ble Minister as well as the top officials of the Ministry of Education addressed these conferences on various aspects of education. Increased emphasis was placed on the subject of school discipline and school community relations as important pre-requisites for national well-being. This series of conferences afforded ample opportunities for the principals to come into personal contact with the Hon'ble Minister and the official hierarchy of the Ministry while affording him an opportunity of knowing their candid views on various problems facing education. One might conclude that a bond of common interest has been created between the educators, the education administrators and the policy makers with the common objective of providing an allround education for the growth and progress of our nation.

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UNAIDED SCHOOLS

CARLTON SAMARAJIWA

Introduction

The story of unaided schools in Ceylon is the story of a 'rise and decline,' the 'decline' having accompanied a rise in the state control of schools in the face of a growing demand for a comprehensive national system of education. Today the unaided schools number a mere 92, and have a pupil enrolment of less than one per cent of the school-going population. In their heyday, they were known by the name of 'assisted schools' and numbered over 3,000.

The majority of today's unaided schools have had a long and illustrious history going back to early British times when the Missionary school system emerged as a distinctive feature of education in Ceylon, especially at a time when direct governmental activity in the sphere of education was meagre or non-existent. They were regarded with great favour by parents, and even today in the midst of a rapidly expanding system of state schools, they continue to receive approval from sections of the population especially of the more affluent classes who can afford to pay the fees these schools levy, in a country where education is free from the kindergarten to the university. Standing as they do in a class of their own, the bigger unaided schools occupy a place of social prestige and importance.

Most of the schools which remain today as unaided schools were associated with one religious denomination or another and bore a resemblance to the public schools of England whose concern was with the 'whole man' with ethical and character building ends. Of course, the schools established in Ceylon were developed with the necessary modifications to suit the local soil and over the years they acquired a good deal of history and tradition. They have thus a reputation and an 'ethos'—possible only as a result of many years of growth and nurture. They have a sense of community—possible only when teachers and taught are welded together in body and spirit in the search

SAMARAJIWA, CARLTON, B.A.(CEYLON), Dip. T.E.F.L. (SYDNEY). Lecturer in English, Junior University College. Before his promotion to the present position, Mr. Samarajiwa was attached to the English Unit of the Ministry of Education, as a C.E.O. (English).

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for truth. They have a sense of tradition—possible only when created by a dedicated founder and continued over the years through a succession of dedicated principals committed to maintaining that tradition. What marked these unaided schools was their continuity of existence, their sense of group self-consciousness and group-mneme. And it is this quality that distinguished them from other schools and put them in a class of their own. And it is thus too that we have in Ceylon a host of well-loved names—Fraser, Highfield, Stone, Le Goc—to mention only a few; they and many others were the men (and women)behind the schools that grew under their guidance and loving care, and gained, in the process, a distinctive character and spirit of their own.

One principal, for instance, in his farewell speech to the Old Boys of his school said :

> " I learnt a lesson not to make any Ceylonese think like an Englishman just because I am an Englishman. Living and letting live is the way in which I think of everybody who comes within my scope. I never despair about a pupil . . . even if he has gone wrong for a year or two. Some of them have gone wrong but I believe there is something in the college called the . . . . spirit that can never die." [1]

Later, a Ceylonese principal who succeeded as the head of this same school said :

> " I do not make the statement, pretentious perhaps, certainly inaccurate, that we are the exact reproduction of an English public school. I do not even know if that would be desirable. But what has happened is that the English public school idea has taken root at places like . . . . and is developing in a form suitable to the conditions of this country. I believe that the idea is a sound one and that the schools that represent it here are doing the country an inestimable service." [2]

Of this same school, Sir Anton Bertram, Attorney General, speaking at the inauguration of the school at its new site, said :

> " Probably there is no school in the country which more deserves the title of Public school with a conscious corporate life than . . . . The business of those who are trained in these schools will be not only to take their own part in the life of their country but to be interpreters and representatives of their fellow countrymen." [3]

Early Stages

That there was something ' anomalous ' in a system under which funds raised by taxation were used to support a movement for changing the religion of those taxed was pointed out by the Wace Committee in 1905, [4] and that there was ' incongruity ' in having denominational bodies vying with one another in the field of educational activity was pointed out by the Bridge Commission in 1911. The former said :

> " (The system) owes its existence to the willingness of the missionaries to act as pioneers of education at a time when there was no other means of providing for the educational wants of the country. But if education remains voluntary we

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doubt if public opinion will permanently allow the payment of grants unless it is coupled with some guarantee that religious instruction shall not be given to those who disapprove it. "

The latter said :

" If the state can control education then we can say that at such and such a place there should not be more than one school. If the state were to run schools, and if facilities would be given for religious instruction, what is the necessity for some people to say : we must have a school to educate our children, and for another to say : We should also have another school for our children? "

In 1919, Governor Manning submitted a memorandum to the Legislative Council in which he said :

" The tendency has arisen so far as the Education Department is concerned to provide schools in non-Christian localities and the chances are that this tendency must in the ordinary course of affairs strengthen, and as a result assistance to schools, missionary and otherwise, will have to be withdrawn gradually." [5]

Following on this memorandum, the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 provided for the establishment of government schools in non-Christian areas and the closing down of Missionary schools in such areas by the withdrawal of grants.

State control began to be deemed necessary for the effective planning of education and for the provision of educational opportunity for all. In 1931, the Minister of Education took upon himself the responsibility of planning education on a national scale. Denominational activity was as a result curtailed and some of the missionary schools were taken over when their managers willingly handed them over to the state.

In 1934, restrictions were placed on the opening of new schools by private and denominational bodies and there were signs of increasing state control of denominational schools. A Bill on Education placed before the State Council sought

" to make better provision for education and to revise and consolidate the laws relating thereto."

The Minister of Education pointed out that state control was necessary in the interests of efficiency and economy and to counteract the ill effects of competition between denominational schools. There were instances when one locality had as many as four schools each belonging to a different denomination—Roman Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist and Church of England.

1947 Grant Regulations

Ordinance No. 26 of 1947 abolished fees in government and assisted schools and ushered in the Free Education Scheme recommended by the Special Committee on Education, 1943. Assisted schools which did not join the Free Education Scheme were allowed to become private schools unaided by government. Out of 3,079 assisted schools in 1945, the majority of which were denominationally managed only 115 assisted schools remained outside the Free Education Scheme. The schools that remained outside the Free Education Scheme became ' fee-levying private

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schools,' and the others became ' non-fee-levying assisted schools under denominational management ' and provided free education. The government grant for equipment and maintenance and the salaries bill for eligible tutorial staffs and clerical and minor employees paid by government constituted the state aid given to these schools. They were also permitted to charge not more than Rs. 5 per pupil as facilities fees per month. This fee however was not compulsory.

Positive discouragement was given to private schools by the Ordinance of 1947 which had a clause to the effect that ' in the case of denominational schools to be registered after July 1947, grants from state funds should be payable only in respect of pupils whose parents professed the religion of the proprietor of the school. '

Schools outside the Free Education Scheme were allowed to levy fees and run as unaided fee-levying private schools. But they had to conform to set standards and follow state policy regarding education. Thus the hand of the state was felt to touch the private schools in more than one way.

Compliance with the Free Education Scheme on the part of Assisted Schools was purely voluntary according to the new educational policy formulated in 1946, but a decision had to be made by these schools before 30.4.1948. Assisted schools entering the Free Education Scheme did not lose their autonomy. Schools which did not join the Free Education Scheme ceased to receive aid of any kind after 1.10.1948.

Denominational bodies viewed the new education policy with considerable suspicion. While agreeing with the principle of free education, denominational bodies looked upon the new proposals as " a step towards the ultimate secularization of schools." They entertained anxieties as to the control of their schools and complained that the equipment and maintenance grant which was allowed if they went free was too meagre to run schools efficiently.

Provisions in the Education Act, 1951

The White Paper (Government Proposals for Education Reform in Ceylon) of 1950 declared that it would mean an incalculable loss to the country if Assisted Schools remained outside the new Free Education Scheme. The attitude of Government was that they should, if they so desired, either work within the Free Education Scheme, or if they so chose, become private fee-levying schools. It was possible that some schools electing to levy fees might wish to offer a number of special places to Government which would be offered to those selected for secondary education. Government would only pay agreed tuition, and in special cases, boarding fees, for those children. To remain within the scheme, they would have to adapt themselves to the plan outlined in the White Paper. The salaries of teachers in Assisted Schools would be paid but a scheme for giving an increased maintenance and equipment grant assessed on the rates prevalent at that time which would be augmented by further grants for additional facilities such as workshops, domestic science and science laboratories was to be devised.

The White Paper also recognised that the Government had a certain responsibility to the Assisted School teacher. That was to be met by paying his salary as was

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the practice at that time, and issuing an Ordinance which gave him safeguards against the wrong type of Manager, illegal levies and so on. It also emphasised that salaries would be paid in relation to those pupils selected for the Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary types of education. Salaries were not to be provided for those engaged to teach the unselected, whether accepted by Assisted Schools on a fee-levying, partial remission, or totally free basis.

With these provisions in the White Paper, it was expected that the work of the Assisted Schools would be more closely co-ordinated with the Department of Education and that there would be closer integration in the Government's new plan for education. While ensuring integration, it was not the wish, however, of Government to destroy that 'individuality' which was so important in the life of the Assisted School.

All existing denominational schools were allowed to continue and any other denominational schools which had not been opened and were awaiting registration or which might be opened in the future were to be registered only if they conformed to the requirements of the Department of Education, and if the financial commitment resulting from such registration was within the financial resources provided by Parliament. Where the need for a new school was established on the basis of the School Survey, and the Government could not erect such a school, application for the establishment of an Assisted School by the major denomination in the locality was to be considered by Government.

All private schools and tutories were to be registered in the Education Department. The Minister was to appoint a Registrar of Unaided Schools whose duty was to keep a register of all such schools. The Government recognised the need for protecting the children of the country against private schools which did not reach a certain minimum standard as regards buildings, staff, sanitation and so on. It was also to be made an offence after a period to be announced to conduct an unaided school which was not registered or provisionally registered. If at any time, the Minister of Education was satisfied that any registered or provisionally registered school was objectionable on grounds relating to unsuitability of premises, accommodation, instruction, the proprietor or his staff, he was to be empowered to serve a complaint stating the grounds of the complaint upon the proprietor of the school. The Minister was also to have the power of enforcing and directing that an unaided school might be struck off the register.

The 1950 White Paper brought all unaided schools, assisted schools and government schools under one system in the greater interests of the nation. The Education (Amendment) Act No. 5 of 1951 which was the most important event of that year provided the necessary legislation to give effect to some of the changes envisaged in the White Paper. The legislation took the form of an amendment to the existing ordinances, viz. the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939 and the Education (Amendment) Ordinance No. 26 of 1947. The new Act also included a schedule of 19 regulations which were deemed necessary to bring the Act into operation,

" unaided, independent schools were permitted but in addition to the existing requirements, it was laid down that the education and training in such schools

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must accord effectively with the national interest and the general educational policy including the policy regarding the medium of instruction in schools. Teachers in unaided schools were permitted to contribute to the School Teachers' Pension Fund and the amendments to the existing pension rules were introduced in May 1951."

The 1960 and 1961 Acts

The Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act of 1960 gave the option to denominational schools to be run as ' non-fee-levying private schools unaided by government.' They could levy fees if 3/4ths of the parents voted in favour of charging fees. Only 38 schools exercised this option. This Act also provided for the ' take-over ' of schools whose standards were falling. Act No. 8 of 1961 provided for properties of the schools taken over to be vested in the Crown. These two Acts, therefore, constituted a historic educational measure which climaxed a movement dating back to the time when a Central School Commission was established as a first attempt towards educational planning on a national scale. The two Acts which were also hailed as measures which would democratise education and expand educational opportunities making them available to all, irrespective of class, creed or economic position, seemed in many ways to be a logical fulfilment of the momentum gained over the years by the trend towards a state controlled system of education. The state was elevated from the position of a 'subsidiser' and 'patron' to that of ' sole educational planner for the nation ' and the position which as far back as 1905 the Wace Commission described as anomalous and which, in 1943, the Kannangara Commitee described as ' having produced two types of schools—one attended by those who could afford to pay fees and the other by those whose means did not permit them to do so 'was thus radically improved. To quote the Wace Commission report :

> " There is something anomalous in a system under which funds raised by taxation are used to support a movement for changing the religion of those taxed. It owes its existence to the willingness of the missionaries to act as pioneers of education at a time when there was no other means of providing for the educational wants of the country, and we believe that all parties are grateful for what they have done. But if education remains voluntary we doubt if public opinion will permanently allow the payment of grants unless it is coupled with some guarantee that religious instruction shall not be given to those who disapprove it."

Relevant too to quote is what the Kannangara Committee said :

> " The development of our educational system has resulted in two types of schools—one attended mainly by those who can afford to pay fees and the other attended by those whose means do not permit them to do so. There is no easy transition from the one to the other so that it is impossible for the child of poor parents to proceed to higher education. Nor is the child's progress in English education terminated primarily by his ability. If he leaves at 14, 16, or 18 the explanation may be that he has reached his educational limit but it is most likely that he has reached the bottom of his father's purse or that his brothers and sisters are beginning to make calls on what remains of its contents."

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Next to the Free Education Scheme which helped to remove these anomalies and incongruities, the nationalisation of schools constituted the most far-reaching educational measure implemented in Ceylon. And with it the private schools met their ' decline ' ; the denominational bodies which had entered into a long and active partnership with the State in the educational enterprise were swept away from their privileged position in the educational scene and are today perforce concentrating their meagre energies and resources on managing a handful of schools which receive no aid whatever from the State. The Act for the nationalisation of schools offered the denominational bodies the option of running schools as non-fee-levying private schools unaided by government. They met the challenge and kept under their management at least the bigger collegiate schools which had been built up over the years with great sacrifices of time and money as a vital part of their commitment to ' go, teach the nation.'

The National Education Commission

The National Education Commission recommended on a vote of 15 to 4 (and one abstention) that all private schools should be taken over by the state so that they may be integrated into the national system which was advocated for Ceylon. In their Final Report, the Commission said that,

> " for democracy to be a reality all the schools must belong to the people of the country, irrespective of social or economic status and religious creed, and it would be a negation of democracy to have private schools which were necessarily exclusive by their very nature, and which necessarily had restrictive policies governing admission to them."

The Commission also made out a strong case for the nationalisation of all private schools in the interests of the successful functioning of the scheme of zoning recommended by them as a corrective to the injustice inherent in a system which denied parents who did not possess the symbols of privilege to choose the schools in their immediate neighbourhood for their children. It was, therefore, recommended that a school should serve a clearly demarcated geographical area and that every parent in the area should have the right to send his child to that school.

Private schools were shown to serve the economically privileged and it was also pointed out that they did not serve the religious needs of the entirety of a religious group. More than 99 per cent of every religious, group depended on the government schools for its religious needs and the private schools served the needs of less than 1 per cent of any religious group. Private schools therefore could not be justified on religious grounds, unless it could be argued that the economically privileged 1 per cent must have special arrangements for the satisfaction of their religious needs, and that the arrangements appropriate for the poorer 99 per cent were not adequate for the purposes of the 1 per cent.

Professor J. E. Jayasuriya who served as Chairman of the Commission answers the question, For whose good are the private schools to continue ? In one telling sentence in his book, *Some Issues in Ceylon Education :* " For the good of the few who have the means and the influence to admit their children to such schools." In

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the case of every one of these schools, the community's wealth has gone into them, and there is iniquity in making their resources available only to a limited socio-economic group, he adds. In the case of those 40 odd schools which were state-aided until 1960 many ' lakhs ' of rupees have been paid out of the exchequer over the years to each of them by way of liberal maintenance and equipment grants, and there is no justice in denying to the community at large the opportunity of using the facilities so provided. Jayasuriya also dismisses the argument that it will be an intolerable burden for the State to take over these private schools as scarcely tenable. If the State can run over 7,000 schools, why cannot it run 60 odd schools more ? he asks.

An issue that has been central in the question of private schools is their elitist character which has produced a marked class differentiation in educational provision. The elitist style of education modelled on the English public school system which these private schools are said to have provided was rendered outmoded in the face of the need to create a truly national system of education, breaking down the separation of schools on the basis of social and economic class. Separation of schools on this basis was found to make for inequalities in prestige with the wealthier pupils occupying a privileged position with regard to educational opportunities. The National Education Commission, therefore, sought to integrate the private schools, mainly denominational schools, into a national system in which all schools will be owned by the state and run by the state.

The White Paper (Proposals for a National System of Education), however, which followed the National Education Commission Report assured the private schools, according to Jayasuriya (in *Some Issues in Ceylon Education*) ' on the whole a reasonably comfortable existence.' The conditions applicable to private schools and tutories, to non-fee-levying private schools and to fee-levying private schools which the White Paper listed were derived from the legislation prior to 1960 or from the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act and the (Supplementary Provisions) Act No. 8 of 1961, so that there was basically nothing new in the conditions laid down for private schools.

The Present Position

Private schools are not entirely independent. They must be registered with the Ministry of Education and are inspected and approved by Ministry supervisory staff. Students in these schools must take the common departmentally held examinations such as the General Certificate of Education examinations. They must follow state policy governing education.

There is no doubt that these schools are continuing to play an important role in education and though free from state control in the strict sense of the term are functioning as partners in a common enterprise. But the question that is weighing heavily over the unaided schools is : What is their future ? There is no indication that they will receive any kind of aid from the state and some of them struggling to survive and maintain even minimum standards have even been compelled to invite the government to take them over. The children attending these schools do not

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receive the normal benefits their counterparts in government schools receive. For example, there are no mid-day meals for them. Nor do all private school pupils belong exclusively to upper classes. The social composition of these schools has changed in recent years and they are no longer the exclusive preserve of the ' aristocracy '. Many middle class parents who consider a good education for their children as a sound investment do send their children to private schools at considerable personal sacrifice.

Teachers in these schools too suffer certain disabilities, they are not entitled to the rights and privileges that are normally granted to government school teachers as a result of which private schools have the additional problem of attracting qualified staff. These then, are some of the trials the private schools are undergoing but they are attempting to serve a tradition whereby the Church and the State maintained a partnership over a century of education in Ceylon.

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CHAPTER 65

THE PIRIVENAS

THE VEN. KALUKONDAYAWE PAÑÑASEKHARA MAHA NAYAKA THERO

It is necessary, by way of introduction, to define the term Pirivena. What is meant by Pirivena, as mentioned in the ancient books such as the Mahāvaṁsa, is not, as many people might think, what is meant by the name Vidyodaya Pirivena, for example, of today.

The Sāratthadīpani Vinayaṭīkā says that :

" The Pirivena is situated within a Mahāvihāra surrounded on all sides by walls."

The Vimativinodani Vinayaṭîkā says that :

" The Pirivena is a separate dwelling place for the monks situated within a Mahāvihāra and surrounded by walls."

In the chapters of Anuttanatthadipani, where the etymology of the word Pirivena is discussed, it is said that :

" The Pirivena, herein, is a private dwelling place " and also " The Pirivena is a dwelling place of the teacher (preceptor)."

From these quotations it would thus appear that the word Pirivena means ' a dwelling place for monks.'

The noun ' pirivena ' has its roots in the Sanskrit verbal stem ' *vena* ' (of the Bhāvadi conjugation), meaning the *process of thinking* and includes in its connotation ideas like ; ' state,' ' knowledge,' ' thought,' ' contemplation,' ' comprehension.' In this work the word Pirivena is defined as ' a place where the monks come to learn, ponder over, and examine the Doctrine.'

In the Saddharmālaṇkāra the same idea is given :

" Having made to lodge in the dwelling place known as *Salvasa Pirivena* in the Tissamahavehera."

PAÑÑĀSEKHARA, VEN. KALUKONDAYAWE, Maṅgala Dharmakirti Sri Tripitaka Vāgiśvarāchārya. Āgama Chakkravarti (Vidyodaya University) Sammāna Pandita (Oriental Studies Society of Ceylon). Principal of Vidyodaya Pirivena, Colombo. The Ven. Kalukondayawe Paññasekhara Maha Nayaka Thero was formerly the Professor of Pali and Prakrit at the Vidyodaya University of Ceylon. His published works include nine edited works of Buddhist Texts, Translations of 15 Sutras, and" History of Newspapers in Ceylon ", 5 volumes already published, 20 more volumes of the series in the course of preparation. He is a regular contributor to the Press.

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In the Ummaggajātaka it is stated that :

" The Buddha, having listened to the discussions, taking place in the assembly of monks and living in the *Gandakili Pirivena* (perfumed chamber), left the perfumed chamber which was for his personal use only."

In the Dharmapradīpikāva and the Maṅgalasūtra Sannaya we find the following :

" The Buddha, having risen from the pulpit and going to the bathing place called, Risiyutkoṭi, and wearing the bathing garments, bathed himself in the pure, cool waters therein and then wearing fresh robes, and covering himself elegantly, enters the Gandakili Piriveṇa (perfumed chamber) and, seated for a moment on the prepared seat, alone enters into Samāpatti."

Here we note that the chamber where the Buddha resided is called the Piriveṇa.

In the Saṅyuttanikāyaṭṭhakathā it is said that :

" Monks living in a piriveṇa (monastery) should plant trees like the palmyrah, the coconut, and others, and look after them."

This would indicate that a Piriveṇa is a monastery.

In the Tissamaharāma-sannasa we find the following :

" The Tisramrad Mahaveher, donated by the great King, Kāvantis, and named after him, is adorned by three hundred and sixty-three piriveṇas."

and in the Visuddimagga Dibbasota Dhātukathā it is said that :

" The cubic extent of the inner room, outer room, house, piriveṇa, monastery, feeder village, district, etc., right up to the Universe itself, should be reckoned in this ascending order of two (inches), four (inches), etc."

From the first of these two quotations it would appear that the word *piriveṇa* means a cubicle erected for the benefit of monks ; and from the second that the piriveṇa is larger in size than a house.

In the Chullavaggapāli-Senāsanakkhandhaka we find the following :

" When counting the sleeping places, some may be missed out, therefore count the monasteries (vihāras) ; when counting the monasteries, similarly, some of them may be missed out, therefore count the piriveṇas."

which would seem to indicate that a pirivena is a dwelling place for monks larger than a vihara.

The Early Piriveṇas

Thus, it may be assumed that the Piriveṇa, originally, was a place where the monks came to learn, ponder over, and examine the Doctrine. In later times they came to be known as educational institutions such the Śri Ghanānanda of Wattala, the Padmawathie of Kāragala, the Sunethrādevi of Pāpiliyāna, the Vijayabā of Toṭagamuva. Thereafter, although the Venerable Moratoṭa Śri Dharmakkanda Nayaka Thero, the Venerable Attaragama Rājaguru Bandāra, and the Venerable Koratoṭa Śri Dharmārāma Nayaka Thero, who were reputed scholars both in the

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up country and in the low country, engaged themselves in teaching the Dhamma in these educational institutions founded by them, these institutions were not known by the name Piriveṇa.

The Venerable Galle Medhankara Nāyaka Thero, who was the disciple of the Venerable Koratoṭa Dharmārāma Nāyaka Thero, and the Venerable Induruwe Sumangala Medhankara Nāyaka Thero who was a pupil of the former and who held the incumbency of the Purāna Maha Vihāra of Pelmadulla taught the Doctrine there. Among their pupils the Venerable Walane Śri Siddhārtha, the Ven. Waskaduwe Śri Subhūti, and the Ven. Dodampahala Śri Medhankara were the reputed scholars, well versed in the Doctrine. The Venerable Bentara Attadassi, the disciple of the Venerable Koratoṭa Nāyaka Thero and his pupil Yātrāmulle Śri Dharmārāma made the Vanawasi Vihāra at Bentara an educational institution and engaged themselves in educational activities there. The most reputed among these scholars was the Venerable Walane Śri Siddhartha and the institution founded by him was known as Ratmalānē Paramadhammachetiya. None of these institutions was called Piriveṇa. The distinguished ones among the pupils of the Venerable Walane Śri Siddhartha were the Venerable Hikkaduwe Śri Sumangala, the Ven. Ratmalānē Śri Dharmāloka and the Ven. Batuwantudawe Śri Dewarakkhita. These erudite scholars were able to spread the fame of Walāne Nāyaka Thero far and wide.

In December, 1873, the Venerable Hikkaduwe Śri Sumangala founded the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa with seven lay and clerical pupils. The Vidyodaya Piriveṇa was the first modern educational institution of Ceylon that came to be known by the name Piriveṇa. It is also said that the contemporary scholars entered into a controversy over the propriety of the word Piriveṇa, being used to denote an educational institution. But before long these arguments subsided and it was the consensus of opinion of all the contemporary scholars that an educational institution where oriental learning was imparted be known by the name of Piriveṇa. The Venerable Ratmalānē Śri Dharmāloka founded the Pāliyagoḍa Vidyālankāra Piriveṇa in the year 1875. At the beginning it was not called by the name Piriveṇa. It was known as a Śāstraśālā (hall of learning.) But everyone knows that at a later stage it came to be known as a Piriveṇa. Since the inception of the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa, the clergy were taught the Dhamma (Doctrine), Vinaya (the Code of Discipline), Logic (rhetorics), Poetics, and the Languages, Sinhala, Pali, and Sanskrit, while the lay pupils were instructed in Logic, Rhetorics, Poetics, Sinhala and Sanskrit, and specially Arithmetic and the study of Indigenous Medicine. Though other subjects were introduced into the curriculum very recently, these subjects comprised the curriculum of the Piriveṇa at that time. It appeared that the Vidyālankāra Piriveṇa and other Piriveṇas established later followed the same curriculum.

Since the very inception the Piriveṇas enjoyed autonomy and were not under any form of Government control. Every teacher was a monk and they received no remuneration for their services in cash or kind. The teacher, living according to Buddhist tenets, and following the traditions of the teachers of old in this country dedicated their time and services to the propagation of the Doctrine and education. The generous and religious minded Buddhists treated the monks with the four-fold requisites.

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The first prize-giving of the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa was held in the year 1876. His Excellency Sir Henry William Gregory, the Governor of Ceylon, who was the chief guest on that occasion directed that an annual grant of Rs. 600 be given to the Piriveṇa as a gesture of appreciation by the Government for the noble services rendered in the cause of learning. This is the first instance where a donation was given to an institution of Oriental studies during British rule.

Subsequently, His Excellency Sir Arthur Gordon, the Governor of Ceylon, increased the same grant by another Rs. 400 and thus the annual grant of the Piriveṇa became Rs. 1,000. Mr. E. B. Denham, a former Director of Education, deserves pride of place in the history of the Piriveṇas of Ceylon. He suggested that English should be taught in these institutions and increased the grant by a further Rs. 1,000. Thereafter the annual grant of the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa became Rs. 2,000.

According to the records available, the Paramadhammachetiya Piriveṇa of Ratmalāna was the next to be founded after the two Piriveṇas—Vidyodaya and the Vidyālankāra. It was established in 1887 as the first branch of the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa. By the year 1913 the following Piriveṇas were established : Saddharmagupta of Dombawela, Sadānanda of Doranegoda, Sudharmadinna of Matara, Agrabodhi of Weligama, Pravcanakara of Kahandava, Vidyānanda of Nittambuwa, Śailantāyatana of Bentota, Śri Sunanda of Beliatta, Saddharmālankāra of Ratnapura, Dharmavijaya of Kalutara, Dharmadūta of Heneratgoda, Vidyākara of Walalgoda, Vijayānanda of Galle, Sudharshana of Kalutara, Ānanda of Kitulampitiya, Sudharmākara of Pinwatta, Sasanavardhana of Mirigama, Saraswathi of Veyangoda, Śri Sadharmodaya of Panadura, Heṭṭāchala of Galle, Paramadharma-Nivasa of Boralesgamuwe, Sambali of Galle, Vidyawardhana of Ranwalagoda, Vijayawardhana of Kataluwa. The establishment of these numerous Piriveṇas bears testimony to the fact that from remote times the Saṅgha of this country dedicated their lives to the protection of the Dhamma and learning without reward from the government and also safeguarded the ancient traditions and sacrificed their time, energy, and the wealth of the respective Vihāras towards this cause.

State Aid

While the lesson of sacrifice taught in Buddhism was thus exemplified by the enterprise undertaken by the seats of oriental learning without State assistance, the Director of Education, Mr. E. B. Denham, a foreigner of great benevolence, impressed by the good work done by the Piriveṇas provided every Piriveṇa in the Island with an annual grant of Rs. 400 and also appointed an Inspector to inspect these institutions. The first one to function in this capacity was Mr. W. A. Samarasekara, the well-known scholar, who was earlier a monk at the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa.

During the period of the Honourable Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara as the Minister of Education additional sums of Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 1,500 were sanctioned for Vidyodaya Piriveṇa and the annual grant given to the Piriveṇa was increased to Rs. 4,500. Further increases were made to this amount from time to time and the annual grant became Rs. 37,500. According to a Legislative Enactment during the period of

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Dr. Wijayananda Dahanayake as Minister of Education the annual grant given to any Piriveṇa was increased by 50 per cent. Thus the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa was able to receive an annual grant of Rs. 55,500.

The Vidyalankara Piriveṇa too continued to function for a long time without any government aid. This was not difficult during that time, for no teacher serving in any institution of oriental studies received anything by way of remunerations. Besides, the honour attached to a teaching post at the two Piriveṇas induced the contemporary oriental scholars to devote freely their services to the institution. Sir Don Baron Jayatilake has expressed with justifiable pride on various occasions that the Vidyalankara Piriveṇa where he received his own education continued to function as an autonomous institution without any government support. Though the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa did receive a government grant, it was not subject to any state legislation. Later the Vidyalankara Piriveṇa too agreed to receive an annual grant from the government and by the year 1959 it was Rs. 45,000.

A Significant Change

In 1958 the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa had completed 85 years and the Vidyalankara 83 years. The standard of the education of the two Piriveṇas was now generally regarded as on par with the standard of that of a University. Hence, in the year 1958 Dr. W. Dahanayake, the Minister of Education, recommended to the Cabinet that the two Piriveṇas should be granted the status of Universities. This recommendation was accepted by the Cabinet. Instead of granting this higher status, two new Universities by the names of the Śri Laṅkā Vidyodaya University and the Śri Laṅkā Vidyālankāra University came into existence in the year 1959. It was clear from the public pronouncement, that the Cabinet, inclusive of Dr. Dahanayake, did not originally intend to start the two new Universities. Discussions in these circles revealed beyond doubt that the government's intention was, without creating new campuses in buildings elsewhere, to expand the present precincts of the two piriveṇas, Vidyodaya and Vidyālankāra, to provide for a higer level of education through these two new Universities and at the same time to protect Buddhist civilization ; to expand the study of Pali and Sanskrit and the Piriveṇa syllabuses of instruction by including provisions for research ; to promote the traditions of Piriveṇa education so that Oriental studies would flourish in an atmosphere where both the Dhamma (Doctrine) and the Vinaya (Discipline) which had hitherto assisted in maintaining discipline in the country would be of prime importance.

But these expectations did not bear fruit. For nearly a century the two ancient Piriveṇas had been held in the highest esteem in the sphere of oriental studies here and abroad. A prominent place was given to the study of the Tripiṭaka in both the Piriveṇas. The scholars of high eminence of today in Pali and Sanskrit did receive this scholarship at these two institutions.

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With the establishment of the Vidyodaya University in 1959 the Ven. Kalukondayave Pannasekera Nayake Thero was appointed as the head of the Piriveṇa. In the opinion of the first Vice Chancellor of the University and those who associated with him both among the laity and the clergy, the raising of the Piriveṇa to University status was a great achievement. They believed that the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa would continue along with the newly created University. This became clear from the fact that in order to establish the new University a major portion of the Library of the Vidyodaya Piriveṇa, a part of its equipment and a fund of Rs. 15,000 collected by the old pupils had to be utilized.

Those who drafted the University Bill had in view that with the establishment of the new Vidyodaya University, the old Piriveṇa of historical importance could no longer exist as it formed the nucleus of the new University, instead of which a new Piriveṇa with only the lower classes could be formed and affiliated to the University. The State also showed the same view, for the request made by the State that if the Piriveṇa was to continue, it should be registered as a separate institution confirms this. It was not necessary to abolish the 87-year old premier institution of oriental studies in the Island for the establishment of the two new Universities in terms of the University Act. Further, there was no need to re-register the Piriveṇa.

According to the traditional system of teaching, every pupil monk should be taught the three-fold Buddhist canon, (Sutta, Vinaya and Abhidhamma Pitaka), including Grammar, Rhetorics, and Prosody, Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit. But not all the monks who received their education in the Piriveṇa wished to study deeply the traditional subjects of the Dhamma, Vinaya (Discipline), Sanskrit, Pali and Sinhala, and join the ranks of great scholars. Their desire was to acquire a general knowledge of these University requirements and obtain the Bachelors' Degree as a means to employment.

As a result of these efforts an attempt has been made in the direction of bringing young 'Sāmanēra' monks and teaching them in the traditional system of education with instruction in the code of discipline for monks. These young monks and their preceptors had to enter into an undertaking not to appear for University or similar education till they completed their Piriveṇa career. There are four classes organized on this basis.

A class for the study of the Tripiṭaka under the direction of well-known scholars of the country in this field was started at the beginning of the following year. This is a three-year course. In the year 1947 the government passed an Act to give financial grants to the piriveṇas according to the pupil strength. According to this, Piriveṇas are classified as primary and senior secondary. The three-year course of the piriveṇa should include three principal compulsory subjects and at least three optional subsidiary subjects. In a secondary piriveṇa the pupils should be taught the three principal subjects for not less than three years and not more than six years. The principal subjects are Sinhalese, Pali, Sanskrit, Logic with Philosophy, Etymology, Prosody, including Literary Criticism, Rules of Poetry and History; while the secondary optional subjects are English, Tamil, Hindi, Geography, Physiology, Hygiene and Economics.

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The grant payable to Secondary Pirivenas according to daily attendance of students is as follows :

Attendance					*Amount* Rs. c.
From	15	to	24	.. ..	960 00
„	25	„	49	.. ..	1,440 00
„	50	„	74	.. ..	2,440 00
„	75	„	99	.. ..	2,880 00
„	100	„	129	.. ..	3,360 00
„	130	„	159	.. ..	3,840 00
„	160	„	189	.. ..	4,320 00
Over	190			.. ..	4,800 00

The grant payable to primary pirivenas according to daily attendance of pupils is as follows :

Attendance		*Amount for Principal Subjects* Rs. c.		*Amount for Secondary Subjects* Rs. c.
15 to 24	..	600 00	..	1,500 00
25 „ 49	..	900 00	..	1,500 00
50 „ 74	..	1,500 00	..	3,000 00
75 „ 99	..	1,800 00	..	3,000 00
100 „ 129	..	2,100 00	..	4,500 00
130 „ 159	..	2,400 00	..	4,500 00
160 „ 189	..	2,700 00	..	6,000 00
Over 190	..	3,000 00	..	6,000 00

In terms of the Gazette Notification issued by the Hon. the Minister of Education, Dr. W. Dahanayake, on 7th August, 1959, the following amendment was included in the Code of Regulations for the Pirivenas published in 1939. These additional subjects are included, i.e., Buddhism, Archaeology, Ayurveda as principal subjects and Government, Economics, Mathematics, General Science, Astronomy, and Astrology as secondary optional subjects.

I have made special mention of these two Pirivenas in this chapter for they have been rendering immense service in the sphere of Oriental Studies for nearly a century in this country. The number of registered Pirivenas in the Island is 231, of which 125 are Junior Pirivenas, 27 are Senior Pirivenas, and 79 affiliated to these Universities. I may mention here that it is the considered opinion of the heads of these institutions to continue the same services in the future.

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CHAPTER 66

ESTATE SCHOOLS

V. Sankaralingam

From about 1830 the British opened up coffee plantations in the hilly regions of Ceylon. This economic enterprise required a large, mobile and cheap labour force. Such a labour force was not available in Ceylon but there was cheap labour in neighbouring South India. South India, also being under the British rule, a labour force was brought from there and thus started the labour immigration from South India. By about 1880, a leaf fungus destroyed the coffee plantations ; however, tea plantations took the place of the coffee plantations. Further, during the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century, rubber plantations were started in the middle and lower elevations of the hilly regions. These tea and rubber plantations required a large amount of labour and large scale immigration of South Indian labour continued.

The labour immigration from South India was mainly for the purpose of employment on the tea and rubber plantations. The labour for these plantations had to reside on the plantations known as ' Estates.' Local labour did not like to leave their traditional villages and migrate to the estates ; hence the resident labour on the tea and rubber Estates have been mainly South Indian immigrant labour.

The Government was actively concerned with the various aspects of welfare of the immigrant Indian estate worker and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries enacted a number of social welfare measures for the exclusive benefit of this type of worker. Legislation requiring estate authorities to provide educational facilities for the children of estate labourers was first made under Part V of Ordinance, No. 8 of 1907[1] which came into operation by Proclamation of June 8, 1908. The same principles with minor amendments, were embodied in Ordinance, No. 1 of 1920[2] which came into operation only on 1st January, 1924. Both

SANKARALINGAM, V., B.Sc. (London), Dip. Ed. (Ceylon). Presently Mr. Sankaralingam is a Regional Director of Education. Before succeeding to his present position Mr. Sankaralingam served the Department of Education in several capacities as Inspector of Schools, District Inspector of Schools and Chief Education Officer.

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Ordinances provided for the compulsory education of children (of labourers employed on the estates) who were between the ages of six and ten. It was also the duty of the Superintendent of every estate " to appoint competent teachers, and to set apart and keep in repair a suitable School Room. "

Legal Provisions

Part V of the Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 which deals with ' Estate Schools ' is given below :

30. (1) Parts II, III and IV of the Education Ordinance shall not apply to an estate on which there are more than twenty-five children between the ages of six and ten of labourers employed thereon.

(2) Whenever it appears that the children of such labourers can be more conveniently educated by means of the Schools of the Education District within or near which such estate is situated, the Governor may, by order in the Government Gazette, exempt such estate from the operation of this part of this Ordinance, and direct that it shall be subject to parts II, III and IV thereof.

31. Two or more estates may, with the sanction in writing of the Director, combine for the purpose of providing a common School under a joint Manager for the instruction of the children on such estates.

32. It shall be the duty of the Superintendent of every estate to provide for the vernacular education of the children of the labourers employed on the estate between the ages six and ten, to appoint competent teachers, and to set apart and keep in repair a suitable School Room.

33. (1) No child between the ages of six and ten shall be employed on any work upon any estate before the hour of ten in the morning.

(2) It shall be the duty of every Superintendent to take effective measures for securing the observance of the provision of this section and any Superintendent who shall fail so to do shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred rupees.

34. (1) The parent of every child between the ages of six and ten, such parent being employed as a labourer on the estate, shall cause such child to attend the estate school during the hours prescribed by rules made by the Executive Committee of Education.

(2) Any parent who fails to comply with the provisions of this section shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding ten rupees, or, in default of payment, imprisonment of either description for any period not exceeding fourteen days.

35. (1) It shall be the duty of the Superintendent to supply the School Teacher with the information necessary to allow of such teacher keeping a register showing the names and ages of the boys and girls, being the children of labourers employed on the estate between the ages of six and ten.

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(2) It shall be the duty of the School Teacher to keep such register and also to keep an attendance register showing the presence or absence of such child on every day on which School is held.

(3) Such first named register shall be corrected or renewed as or before the tenth day of each month, and shall be open to inspection as hereinafter provided.

(4) Any Superintendent or teacher who acts in contravention of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of an offence, and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding twenty rupees, or to imprisonment of either description for any period not exceeding one month.

36. The Director shall from time to time cause estate schools to be inspected, and on such inspection the Superintendent, who shall have at least three days' clear notice of the inspection, shall afford the inspection officer all reasonable facilities for inspecting the registers herein before required to be kept and the children on the estate.

37. (1) Whenever provision has not been made to the satisfaction of the Director for the vernacular instructions of the children on any estate and for the supply of a suitable School Room, the Director may issue a notice to the Superintendent calling upon him to make provision for the vernacular education of the children or for a School Room ; and if such notice has not been complied with to the satisfaction of the Director within six months from the date when it was given, the Governor may authorize some person to enter upon the estate and erect a suitable school room thereon and to provide suitable instruction for such children.

(2) The cost of erecting and maintaining a School Room and of providing instructions for the children shall from time to time be certified by the person so authorized, and shall be recovered in the manner provided by " The Medical Wants Ordinance, No. 9 of 1912 " for the recovery of money payable under section 10 of the said Ordinance.

(3) The provisions of sections 34, 35 and 36 of this Ordinance shall apply to a School established under this section.

Regulations Governing Estate Schools

Estate Schools are given assistance by the Government and this has been provided for in the Code of Regulations for Assisted Vernacular Schools. The relevant Regulations are given below :

Clause 22—Estate Schools which satisfy the conditions laid down for Vernacular Schools may be registered as such.

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Clause 23—Estate Schools which do not satisfy the conditions laid down for Vernacular Schools are subject to the following regulations :

(*a*) The building must, in the opinion of the Director, be a satisfactory one, and must have a floor space of 10 square feet for each child on the School Register.

(*b*) Bench and desk accommodation and adequate equipment must be provided for each child on the School Register.

(*c*) A competent teacher or teachers must be employed.

(*d*) The registers must be correctly and properly kept.

(*e*) The minimum session must be of two hours' duration, and no class must be held after 4 p.m. provided however, that a session between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. may be held for pupils over 10 years of age.

(*f*) In order to qualify for grant, the average attendance of eligible pupils must be at least—in boys' and Mixed Schools—15 ; in girls' Schools 10.

Clause 58—Estate Schools which are not registered as Vernacular Schools and which fulfil the conditions laid down in Clause 23 will be paid grant at the following rates :

(*a*) Attendance grant : Rs. 11 per unit of average attendance for the year. The average attendance is obtained by taking the mean of the monthly average attendances.

(*b*) Result Grant : Rs. 6 per each child presented for examination at the annual inspection provided the percentage of passes in all subjects is not less than 80.

Rs. 5 for each child presented for examination at the annual inspection provided the percentage of passes in all subjects is less than 80 and not less than 65.

Rs. 4 for each child presented for examination at the annual inspection, provided the percentage of passes in all subjects is less than 65 and not less than 50.

Provided that the grant paid to any Estate School shall not exceed the expenditure incurred on the approved salaries of teachers and an additional sum for the maintenance of the School not exceeding Re. 1 per unit of average attendance of eligible pupils. Provided also that if the assessed grant exceeds the expenditure incurred, then only the amount of the expenditure incurred will be paid.

Result Grant will not be paid unless at least 75 per cent. of the average attendance of pupils have been presented for examination at the Annual Inspection.

Result Grant will not be paid unless at least 75 per cent. of the average attendance of pupils or 75 per cent of the number on roll on the day of the annual inspection, whichever is less, have been presented at the Annual Inspection.

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Clause 59—No grant will be payable in respect of the following pupils in Estate Schools :

(*a*) Pupils below 5 years or above 18 years of age.
(*b*) Pupils in excess of the floor space allowed, i.e., 10 square feet per pupil.
(*c*) Pupils for whom no desk or bench accommodation is provided.
(*d*) Pupils presented for examination in a standard which they have already passed.

According to Clause 22 quoted above, every estate had a right to establish a school like the ordinary schools in the country and get the normal grant. But only one estate established such a school and the rest had schools of the type described in clause 23 quoted above. It is this type of schools that are commonly known as *Estate Schools* and numbered a little over nine hundred. When in 1905 the labour law raised the age of a child who could work on an estate from 10 to 12, the compulsory school going age on estates changed from 6 to 10, to 6 to 12. Children of ages above these are generally called working children on estates.

Organisation of Estate Schools

The Estate Schools get a block grant of money from Government based on attendance and results and take on the responsibility of educating the estate children and of the maintaining of the standards defined in the regulations quoted earlier. While the minimum hours of work for a normal school is 5 hours, the minimum for an estate School is 2 hours. Therefore, an Estate School has to follow a limited curriculum of studies. The grant paid to an Estate School is also much less than that paid to a normal school. Though the minimum for an Estate School is 2 hours, most of the Estates run their Schools for periods between 3 and 4 hours. The times generally are from 8 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The sessions for working children are from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. because they attend school after working on the estates. It is gratifying to note that most of the estates spend much more than the grant they get from Government and provide more hours of work, quarters, and more pay for the teachers, and free books for the children.

The Curriculum, etc.

The curriculum in an Estate School is limited to five subjects : Reading, Writing, Number, Speech, Games and Drill. Needlework is taught to girls wherever possible. The subject ‘ Speech ’ is meant to cover the other subjects that are taught in a normal school such as Health and Social Studies. Because of economic conditions and the urge to work and earn, many of the children resident on estates leave school at the earliest opportunity. Therefore the highest class in the Estate Schools has remained at the fifth standard. In a very few cases, sixth and seventh standards have been held with permission. However, enterprising pupils have even walked very long distances and attended neighbouring town or village schools and continued their studies. From Estates in the neighbourhood of towns, a large number of Estate children have been attending Town Schools as in Badulla, Bandarawela, Nuwara Eliya, Hatton, Nawalapitiya, Gampola, Pussellawa, Kandy, Wattegama, Matale, Dehiowita, Ratnapura, Balangoda and Matugama. They study up to the highest classes available.

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Subsequent Changes in the Law

Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 was replaced by Ordinance No. 31 of 1939[3] which did not make any significant change in the laws with regard to Estate Schools. Ordinance No. 26 of 1947[4] which amended the 1939 Ordinance after the introduction of the free education scheme initiated radical changes in estate education and is the present law governing Estate Schools. Some of the important changes are :

(i) Compulsory School going age of 6 to 10 years being changed to 5 to 12 years. This was later changed in 1951 to 5 to 14 years.

(ii) Estates being required to set apart on the estate a school building, land for garden and playground and Head Teachers' quarters.

(iii) The estate to permit the Education Department to establish and maintain a Government School on the premises set apart.

The present law in regard to the education of children of parents resident on estates is given in part VI of the Ordinance No. 26 of 1947. The relevant sections of the law are the following :

Part VI—Estate Schools

34. (1) This part of this Ordinance shall, subject to the provisions of sub-section 2, apply to every Estate on which there are more than twenty-seven children who are not less than five and not more than fourteen years of age and whose parents are resident on that estate.

(2) What the Director certifies in writing that the Children resident on any estate referred to in sub-section 1 can be conveniently educated in any School other than a School established and maintained under this Part of this Ordinance, the Governor may be ordered to publish in the Gazette to declare that this Part shall not apply to such estates ; and where such Order is made in respect of such estate, the provisions of the other Parts of this Ordinances shall apply to the education of such children.

35. (1) Subject to the provisions of sub-section 2, the owner of an estate shall set apart on the estate premises consisting of :

(*a*) a building which conforms to such standard as may be prescribed and which is to be used for educating the children on the estate who are required to attend School under section 38.

(*b*) a habitable house for a married head teacher, and

(*c*) an area of uncultivated land not less than one acre in extent situated in the vicinity of the aforesaid building and suitable for use partly as a school playground and partly as a school garden.

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(2) The owners of two or more estates may, with the written sanction of the Director, jointly set apart on any of these estates such premises as are referred to in sub-section 1, for the purposes of a common school for the children on these estates who are required to attend School under section 38, and where such premises are so set apart, the owner of such of these estates shall be deemed to have adequately complied with the provisions of sub-section 1.

(3) Where the owner of an estate has failed to comply or is not deemed to have complied with provisions of sub-section 1, the Director may, by written notice served on the person for the time being in charge of the estate, direct the owner to conform to these provisions within such period, not less than six months, as may be specified in the notice ; and where such notice is served on the aforesaid person and the owner commits default in complying with the notice, the Director or any person authorized by him may enter the estate with such assistance, servants, implements and materials, and do such acts and take such measures, as may be necessary to make good the default of the owner.

(4) The amount of the expenses incurred by the Director in causing any act to be done, or any measure to be taken on an estate under sub-section 3, shall be deemed to be a debt due to the Crown from the owner of the estate and shall be recovered accordingly.

36. (1) The owner and the person for the time being in charge of an estate shall permit the Director to establish and maintain a Government School on premises set apart on the estate under section 35.

(2) Where a Government School is maintained as premises set apart on an estate under section 35, the Director shall pay to the owner of the estate rent at such rates and at such times as may be prescribed.

(3) The owner of an estate shall keep in repair any building or house in respect of which the Director pays rent under sub-section 2. Where any necessary repairs to such building or house are not effected by the owner, the Director shall, by written notice served on the person for the time being incharge of the estate, require the owner to effect these repairs within such period, not less than two months, as may be specified in the notice; and where such notice is served on the aforesaid person and the owner commits default in complying with the notice, the Director shall cause these repairs to be effected and shall deduct their cost from the rent payable to the owner.

(4) So long as the Director pays rent under sub-section 2, in respect of premises set apart on an estate under Section 35, no action or proceedings for the ejectment of the Director of any person authorized by the Director from these premises shall be instituted in or entertained by any court.

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P. PA.. JASINGAM
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37. Where a Government School is maintained on premises set apart on an estate under section 35, no person shall, without the written permission of the Director use any part of these premises for any purpose other than a purpose of that School.

38. Where the parent of a child not less than five and not more than fourteen years of age is resident on an estate, he shall cause the child to attend school.

39. The owner and the person for the time being in charge of an estate shall permit the Director or any person authorized by the Director :

(*a*) to enter, inspect or occupy any premises set apart on the estate, under section 35, or,

(*b*) to transport by vehicle any person or article into or out of these premises or,

(*c*) to enter the estate and exercise the powers conferred by sub-section 3 of section 35.

40. (1) A person who contravenes the provisions of section 38, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one rupee, and in the case of a continuing offence, an additional fine of fifty cents in respect of each day on which the offence is continued.

(2) The owner or the person in charge of an estate who contravenes the provisions of sub-section 1 of section 36 or the provisions of section 39, and any person who contravenes the provisions of section 371 shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred rupees or to imprisonment of either description for any period not exceeding three months.

The regulations relating to these estate schools were introduced as Schedule to Education Amendment Act 5 of 1951 and they are quoted below :

41. The following shall be the standard to which a building which is to be set apart for a school by the owner of an estate under section 35 of the Ordinance must conform :

(*a*) The building must be capable of providing not less than ten square feet of accommodation for each of these children on the estate who are required to attend school under section 38 of the Ordinance.

(*b*) The building must be so constructed as to admit sufficient light and air.

(*c*) The interior of the building must be adequately protected from wind and rain.

(*d*) The building must not adjoin or form part of any other building except the house of a teacher.

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15. Where a Government School is maintained on premises set apart on the estate under section 35 of the Ordinance, the rent which the Director shall pay to the owner of the estate in respect of each year shall not exceed an amount calculated at the rates of seventy-two cents for each of the number of pupils on the roll of such school. The rent for each year shall be paid at or before the end of that year.

The Present Position

Action was taken by the Education Department to enforce the provisions of this new law and 24 estate schools have been taken over and are being conducted as Government Schools. The balance 879 estate schools are continuing to function as assisted schools and receive financial assistance from the Government.[5]

REFERENCES

[1] Education Ordinance No. 8 of 1907

[2] Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920

[3] Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939

[4] Education Ordinance No. 26 of 1947

[5] Sessional Paper XVII,—1962—*Final Report of the National Education Commission*—The Government Press, p. 17

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CHAPTER 67

THE PRESENT— A PERIOD OF REFORM AND RECONSTRUCTION

D. M. Hettiarachchi

Introduction

During the last quarter century radical changes of a far-reaching nature were made, which resulted in a great awareness of the importance of education among all sections of the population. The Amending Ordinance No. 26 of 1947 as discussed in an earlier Chapter introduced the free education scheme, added religious instruction to the curriculum of government schools and initiated the change of the medium of instruction in schools from English to national languages.

The use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction broke down the barriers between the ' English ' educated and the ' Vernacular ' educated, inspired zestful creative activity in the arts and letters and helped in the development of the national ideal.

Recent Changes in the Schools System

In 1960 and 1961 by two Acts of Parliament the Government assumed full control of the education that it financed. The first, known as the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act, No. 5 of 1960 brought all Assisted Schools (excluding a few which opted to become private, unaided and non-fee-levying) under the management of the Director of Education, and by Act, No. 8 of 1961 provision was made for vesting the properties of such schools in the Crown.

The following table indicates the number of Assisted Schools which were thus vested in the Crown :

Buddhist	1,181
Roman Catholic	688
Non-Roman Catholic	446
Hindu	310
Muslim	24
Total	2,649

HETTIARACHCHI, D.M., B.A. (Honours) London, M.A. Education (Edinburgh). Deputy Director-General (Elementary Education) in the Ministry of Education. Formerly Director of Education. Mr. Hettiarachchi has held a number of appointments in the Department of Education in various capacities for a long period.

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The free education scheme and the Central Schools system made opportunities for higher education leading to the University available to young people in rural areas. After the introduction of the free education scheme the number of English schools and their enrolment increased as the following table indicates :

Year 1945	*Government*	*Assisted*	*Total*
No. of English Schools	39	303	342
No. of pupils in English Schools	8,121	92,195	100,316

Year 1950	*Government*	*Assisted*	*Total*
No. of English Schools	289	358	647
No. of pupils in English Schools	94,959	164,397	259,356

The increase of 159,040 in enrolment in English schools represents a rise of over 150 per cent during the first 5 years.

The pupil explosion in schools is reflected in the enrolment figures set out below :

1945	802,291
1965	2,124,6C8

This is further reflected in the numbers of candidates who sat for the S.S.C. Examination in 1945 and the G.C.E. (Ordinary Level) in 1967.

1945	14,518
1967	255,000

With the take over of denominational schools and training colleges the volume of administrative work increased. To meet the situation the Education Department was partially decentralized on 1st October, 1961, giving greater powers to the Assistant Directors in charge of the Provinces and the Education Officers in charge of District Offices.

Weaknesses of the Prevailing Educational System

The consequences of the imperfect and lop-sided education policy which had given exaggerated emphasis to sedentary work and literary learning began to be keenly felt at this stage. Very many pupils became averse to practical training and occupations and after the completion of secondary education were virtually unemployable in productive work. This waste of man-power potential gave the policy makers a shock of disappointment and disillusionment. The imbalance between the educated youth and employment opportunities is the outcome of the theoretical and academic education pattern pursued so far, which bears little relation to the rural agricultural economy of the Island. Hundreds of rural youths, who might otherwise have taken to their hereditary occupations, were uprooted from their surroundings with prospects of university education and employment. But they were disillusioned when they found that white collar jobs for which alone their education shaped them were hard to find.

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Education Commissions

During the years 1960-63 the entire education system of this country was closely scrutinized by three successive Commissions of Inquiry, namely :

(i) National Education Commission,

(ii) Technical Education Commission, and

(iii) Universities Commission.

After studying their recommendations the Government has already enacted the Higher Education Act and has also placed before Parliament a comprehensive Education Bill to establish a National System of Education which will,

(i) be in keeping with the national and cultural aspirations of the people,

(ii) be geared to the economic, technical and development needs of the country, and

(iii) will ensure equality of educational opportunity to all children irrespective of race, religion or social status.

The keynote of the recommendations of the Commissions referred to above is " differentiation "—the provision of a wide variety of institutions to cater for the diverse abilities and aptitudes of children. The very high enrolment ratio and its significant increase during recent years, particularly at the top levels of the compulsory school-going age group has been recognised by the Commissions. The enrolment in the Senior Secondary stage has increased by 81 per cent and in the G.C.E. (A.L.) by 13·4 per cent. This very rapid increase has brought in its wake the other major educational problem—the imbalance between the number of educated youths and the avenues of employment.

The National Education Commission had recognised the importance of gearing education in the main to the economic needs of the country. In the new system it envisaged, the primary school for the age group 5-11 will disappear and a Basic School to cover the age group of compulsory education, i.e. 5–14 will replace it. The first few years of the Basic School will have a special curriculum based on activities so that it may not be a place of instruction, but an instructive environment, with a curriculum conceived in terms of activity and experience rather than knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. The Basic School curriculum and the addition of a subject called " Work Experience " are an indication of the new trends of thinking in education, that even the general basic education should not be divorced from some experience of productive skills. The objective of this change is to develop and foster correct attitudes and skills in the growing children. The principle of combining education with productive labour is a very important one. It is gratifying to note that the country has already accepted this new concept as an essential part of the curriculum. The children who leave the Basic School may join a school for craftsmen, technical or agricultural. Those who remain in the normal school may enter into one of the four different curricular streams in accordance with their aptitudes. These

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four streams will have a common core of subjects and a student who enters one stream may change over to another stream if he chooses to do so. The four types of curricular streams are—

(1) Agriculture
(2) Engineering
(3) Science
(4) Arts

The full courses are of a four year duration. At the end of the first two years a student will sit for the G.C.E. (O.L.) and may branch off into the Technical school of the technician level in commerce, agriculture, etc. Those who continue in the school and follow successfully the two year course in the G. C. E. (A. L.) classes will enter institutions of higher education such as the Universities, Junior Universities, Colleges of Technology or similar institutions. Such in outline is the proposed unified system of national education. It is hoped that this system of education will correct the imbalance that exists in the present system and usher in an era of progress and economic freedom.

Government Policy on Education—White Paper Proposals (1966)

It is quite clear that the pattern of education operating at present bears little relation to the country's economic structure. The new system envisaged in the recommendations of the Commissions referred to above has yet to be evolved. A basic revision of the education policy of the Government has been long overdue. The Honourable Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs has, therefore, made certain proposals for reform with the following fundamental considerations in mind :

(1) Correcting the many imbalances that have developed in the field of education.

(2) Formulating educational programmes with a new orientation in priorities and approach, priority being given to the inclusion of programmes that bear on production and economic development.

(3) Planning for the development of the individual as an integral part of the society.

(4) Associating the teacher, who occupies a pivotal position in the educational system and on whose quality the character of education depends, in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of educational plans.

(5) Providing adequate and efficient machinery for due attention to be paid to the views and observations of all citizens on all issues in education.

(6) Providing every child with 8 years of general education not as a luxury, much less a privilege, but as a basic necessity for work, for human effectiveness and fulfilment.

(7) Diversification of education at the appropriate level so that the wide variety of skills and talents necessary for national development will be supplied.

(8) Building a strong and well organised administrative set-up which is of vital importance to an efficient system of education.

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The proposed national system of education will include compulsory elementary education, diversified secondary education and further education. For this purpose, schools will be classified as follows :—

(1) Schools providing Elementary Education
Kanistha Vidyalayas

(2) Schools providing Secondary Education
(*a*) Local Practical Schools
(*b*) Junior Technical Schools (Agriculture, Fisheries, Trades and Crafts)
(*c*) Jyestha Vidyalayas
(1) Agricultural Sciences
(2) Fisheries
(3) Practical Sciences
(4) Biological Sciences
(5) Arts and Law
(6) Commerce
(7) Home Economics

(3) Schools for providing further education
(1) Local Practical Schools
(2) Evening Schools.

Reforms in the Administration

Judging from the education pyramid alone it may be said that Ceylon, next to Japan, has the best developed education system in Asia. The total number of schools has increased from 7,295 in the Financial Year 1956-57 to 9,585 in the Financial Year 1967-68. The number of pupils in these two years was 1,873,328 and 2,588,502 respectively. The number of teachers increased from 56,019 to 89,382. In view of the rapid expansion of education, decentralisation of administration which had been a long felt need was made effective from 1.10.1966. The Education Department broke up into 15 Regions, each under a Regional Director who was vested with all the powers of a Head of Department. The administration of the Regions was co-ordinated by the Permanent Secretary who is also Director-General of Education. The Permanent Secretary and the Director-General is assisted by Senior Assistant Secretaries. In this manner the administration of the 15 Regional Education Departments, comprising 24 Education District Offices, was reorganised from 1.10.1966. In the school too there has been a change in the administrative set up. Coupled with simple increase in numbers there has been at the secondary level astounding changes. At the secondary level for example, we have in less than a generation moved from the concept of secondary education for a rather small segment of our school population to the concept of secondary education for all. In order to meet the ever increasing expansion of education, it has been found

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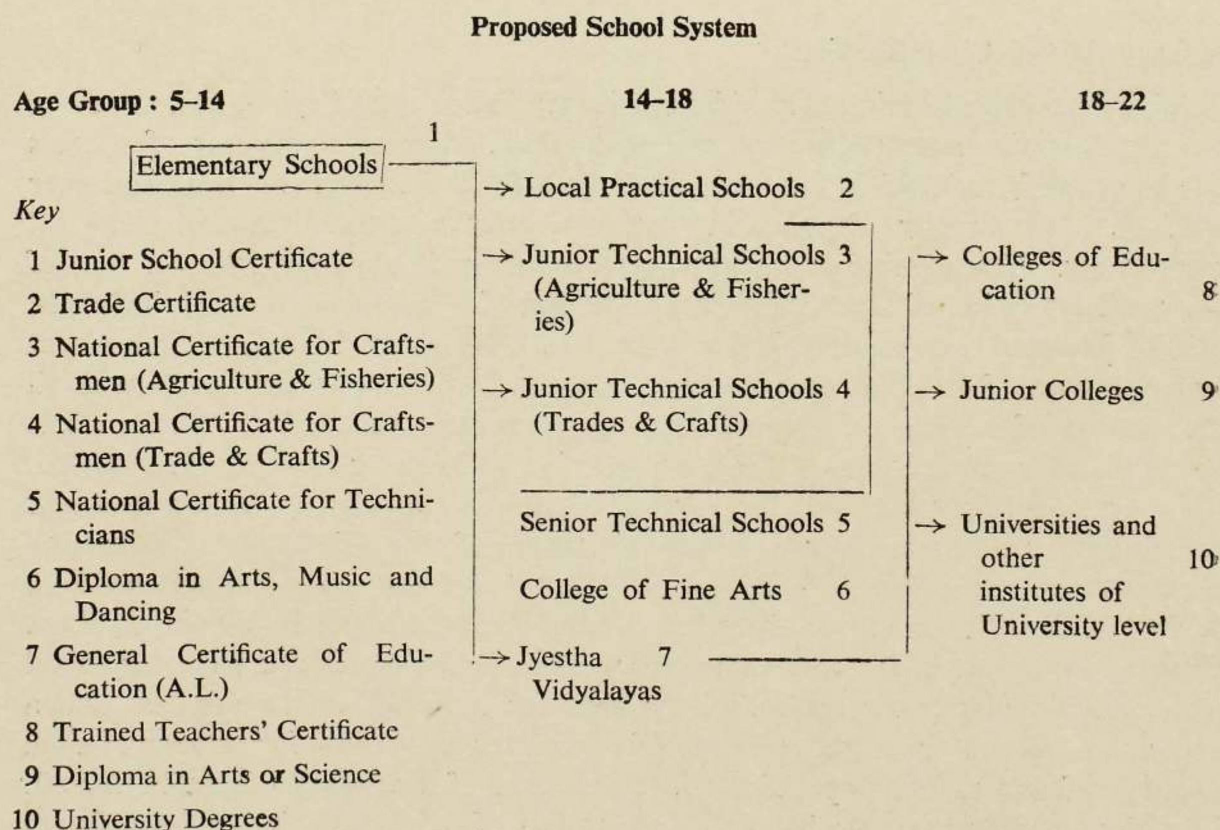
necessary to appoint Deputy Principals and sectional Supervisors to assist the Principals in the administration of large schools. The educational future has to be thought of in terms of the dawning of a new era in which the role of the administrator and supervisor will be of prime importance. In the future these positions will be crucial, without able men and women in these posts, imbued with the right concepts, lifted beyond themselves by enthusiasm, and trained to a new level of excellence in their jobs, there is not much chance of education meeting the challenge which must be met.

Reforms in the Structure of Education Envisaged

Education planning as envisaged in the White Paper proposals has taken serious notice of the possible lines of developments that the country should follow in order to gear education to national needs and aspirations. The neglect of peasant agriculture and food crops, the exclusive dependence on an export economy, the lack of vocational and scientific training in the education imparted, the expansion of population to explosive proportions, the imbalance between the number of educated youths and the avenues of employment, the lack of local capital for industrialisation—these were the heritage of Colonial rule which have to be corrected by radical and dynamic changes in the structure of education. The proposed changes in the educational structure are reflected in the diagram given below :

Proposed School System



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Work Experience

A new programme in education was initiated soon after the present Minister of Education assumed office. This is ' work experience, ' a full account of which is given under the same heading in Chapter 81. The principle underlying this programme is inculcating in the minds of the pupils the ideal of the dignity of manual work which had hitherto been neglected. This will serve to give the necessary practical bias to our education so as to gear it to the national economy. The ' work experience' programme has become an integral part of our school curriculum. It is encouraging to note that the community at large as well as the school going population at all levels have realized both the vocational significance and the social value of ' work experience.'

Educational Planning for Development

The manpower resources of a country are determined by a variety of factors. In Ceylon 42 per cent of the population is at present under 14 years of age and 68 per cent is under 25 years. Ceylon has therefore a young population and it is unique in this respect. In 1953 it was found that only 37 per cent of the total population at that time was gainfully employed. According to a report on " Sex and Age Patterns of Participation in Economic Activities " published by the United Nations the percentage of gainfully employed is 42·5 for Asia and the World. The percentage for Ceylon is therefore low. The sample surveys carried out in recent times reflect an unhappy decrease in the percentage of the gainfully employed persons to 30·5 per cent. Persons within the age group of 15–64, by and large, supply the bulk of the manpower needs of the country. The percentage of the population in this age group is about 55 per cent which is about 10 per cent less than the average in the developing countries.

There are other factors which are responsible for the low participation in development programmes. As a result of Free Education and the use of the national languages as the medium of instruction about 34 per cent of the children between the ages of 15–19 are at school, resulting in a decrease in participation in labour.

Manpower problems in Ceylon have two aspects. There is a surplus of labour in traditional employment sectors. On the other hand there is an acute shortage of technical skills both at the craftsman and technician levels. These inter-related problems arose from the educational system of the recent past. The basis of educational development envisaged is therefore concerned with the objectives of providing gainful employment to the unemployed and supplying the craftsmen and technicians that the developing economy of the country needs.

In 1961 the Commission of Inquiry on Technical Education assessed the additional annual requirements of trained skills in the various fields as follows :

Category	*Number*
A. *Engineering and Industry*	
(*a*) Technologists	250
(*b*) Technicians of all types	1,000
(*c*) Craftsmen of all types	5,000

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B. *Agriculture*

(*a*) Scientists (Technologist grade) ..	..	25
(*b*) Agricultural Technicians ..	..	700
(*c*) Trained farmers.. ..	..	12,000

C. *Commerce*

(*a*) Managers and Executives ..	..	200
(*b*) Sub-Managers and Supervisors	..	200
(*c*) Vocational grades ..	..	2,000

The organisation, development and supervision of a multi-purpose, multi-lateral senior secondary schools system and the establishment of a vocational-technical programme capable of meeting the man-power requirements for socio-economic development of the country in the decades immediately ahead may be regarded as the most pressing educational reform needed. The successful overall planning of education has been achieved by giving priority of attention to the design of curriculum specifications so that they serve socio-economic needs. Another noteworthy feature is the preparation and distribution of Course Guides for use in schools with a view to ensuring uniformity in the content and standards of instruction. The Education and Research section of the Ministry is vigorously implementing a programme for the improvement of science teaching in schools which is fundamental to agricultural development. The educational programme designed to prepare students who would eventually supply the country's needs in the field of Engineering and Industry, Agriculture and Commerce is the responsibility of the Deputy Director-General of Technical Education and he is assisted by a Director in each of the fields. Reference has already been made in other chapters to the various activities in these fields of education. Quantitatively this programme is steadily entailing the gradual change of the 85 per cent enrolment in Arts classes and 15 per cent in non-Arts classes at the G.C.E. (O.L.) in 1964 to approximately 60 per cent Arts and 40 per cent non-Arts at the present time. This programme has also entailed the establishment of increasingly large numbers of science laboratories, agricultural programmes, wood-work and metal-work work-shops, home-science laboratories and curriculum reforms in these fields.

With a view to reorganising higher education, the Higher Education Act, No. 20 of 1966, was implemented with effect from 1st October 1966 and a National Council of Higher Education was established. The Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara Universities, which had hitherto been confined to male students, were opened to female students also. In 1967 the Colombo section of the Ceylon University was converted into an independent University. Steps have also been taken to establish five Junior University Colleges at Dehiwala, Galle, Kegalla, Kuliyapitiya and Palaly with a view to providing higher education on a vocational bias. The Publication Division of the Official Languages Department and the School Text-books Section of the Education Department were amalgamated and a new Department of Educational Publications was established in 1967. This Department has published school text-books so far. With a view to teaching agriculture in all the schools and giving education an agricultural bias, steps were taken in 1966 to train teachers in batches of 650 in 14

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agricultural schools for periods of six months. As a part of the food drive, 10,000 acres of school garden have been cultivated under food crops, and students in practically all schools in the country participate in work experience campaigns in the fields of agriculture, industry and social service as was mentioned earlier. It is generally accepted that the main hope for a developing country like Ceylon lies in the optimum development of its human resources. Educational planning has taken note of this broad objective of education leading to the development of people with appropriate balance in knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The Teaching Profession

The teacher-tradition of ancient Ceylon has been discussed elsewhere in this volume. The teaching profession today offers great opportunities to young people who desire to be of service to the youth of today and the citizenship of tomorrow and in whom there is an urge to be leaders among men. Probably in no other sphere of education will the changes needed to meet the crisis in education be greater than in teacher education. We have had a teacher shortage for over a decade and probably will have difficulty in securing an adequate supply of appropriately qualified persons. A noteworthy feature of the current administration is the appointment of trained teachers to Infant Classes and the equitable distribution of the available personnel among the schools throughout the Island. Yet another feature which supplies a long felt need is the implementation of a policy direction that every competent English Teacher should be required to teach English.

The following categories of teachers are in service today :

Category	Number
Trained Graduates and Graduates	6,481
Trained Teachers	34,011
Certificated Teachers	19,819
Uncertificated Teachers	17,454
Pupil Teachers	6,311
Teachers in Training	5,306
	89,382

It is clear that this new age and its demands on education will require a higher level of academic and professional qualifications from our teachers not only in their initial preparation but also through in-service training programmes. Hence it is noteworthy that the present administration has adopted the in-service training programmes of teachers as a regular feature.

It is an obvious fact that the quality of education depends largely on the quality of teachers who indeed play a key-role in the education system. Even from the ancient times Ceylon society had recognised the father, the mother and the teacher as the three agencies responsible for developing the full personality of a child—physical, intellectual and emotional. The school conducted by efficient teachers has to guide and direct the development of the child so that he may with ease fit himself into the industrial society of today. If the large teacher community of our country undertook

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to inculcate the ideals of self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control in our youth it would initiate a process of revitalization in the education of the youth as well as themselves.

Promotion of Educational Research

The development, evaluation and revision of the curriculum is a continuous process and is essential to the promotion of better standards of teaching. The enrichment of school programmes and the reorientation of content and methodology to meet the changing socio-economic needs of the country depends on curriculum development. Hence this work is given much emphasis by the Ministry of Education and it has been entrusted to teams of specialists in various fields of study who work with the close co-operation of and collaboration with a large number of practising teachers.

At the Primary school level, the content of teaching was subjected to close scrutiny by a number of selected committees, composed of representatives of Teacher Training Colleges, teachers of long experience and several members of the Inspectorate. The teaching of mother tongue, number concepts, religion, environmental activities and aesthetic activities and an integrated programme for providing the pupils with combined experience relevant to the above areas as a whole, received great attention. Revised syllabuses, instructional material for teachers and teaching specifications were prepared and made available to teachers during the period 1960 to 1963. School text-books were prepared later on the basis of the material.

The Headmasters in the various education circuits working under the guidance of the Circuit Inspectors made good use of the material provided to make necessary modifications to suit the particular environmental needs of their areas with the result that each area has teaching specifications of its own. This has enabled the Circuit Inspectors of Schools to follow up these programmes with a fair amount of evaluation work.

Teaching of First Language in the Secondary School

Despite the importance that the mother tongue gained as a result of its being used as the medium of instruction at all levels of education very little had been done to improve standards of teaching it till the question was examined by the Secondary Education Division of the Ministry.

The inquiry was conducted on the following lines :—

(1) A critical scrutiny of the examination syllabuses to ascertain how far they promote the study of the functions of language.

(2) An analysis of the past examination papers to assess how far they have been designed to test language abilities and skills of the pupils such as comprehension and interpretation, etc.

(3) An analysis of the mark scored by the G. C. E. (O. L.) candidates of successive years to study the distribution.

(4) A study of some sample examiners' reports to seek information on general and specific points of language ability.

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(5) Reviewing some of the popular texts in use from the point of view of their content, teaching devices, design and any special features, etc.

(6) Evaluating the qualifications and professional competence of language teachers and a study of teaching procedures.

(7) Analysing the results of a test on language skills.

The findings of the Committee which were thoroughly diagnostic, revealed a number of significant problems particularly in relation to the teaching of the first language at the G. C. E. (O) Level :

(1) The problems resulting from the multiplicity of examination syllabuses (A, B and Practical) and their lack of relevance to the character of the living language.

(2) Problems of language teaching that arise from the differing language practices of diverse schools of thought.

(3) Availability and adequacy of text-books and reading material.

(4) The relationship between the spoken and the written forms of language.

(5) Handwriting—absence of a uniform standard for evaluation.

(6) Lack of correlation between the teaching of language and the teaching of other subjects.

(7) Problem of the influence of South Indian literature on the Tamil Language.

The third phase of the Committee's work consisted of a series of inter-connected yet independent programmes which were very productive of good results, some of the most important of these programmes took the following forms :—

(1) Determination of the content of a two year course—in comprehension, in communication, in reading, in study of style, in the mechanics of writing and preparing a graded scheme for teachers.

(2) Standardizing the rules of grammar, spelling and word spacing.

(3) Issuing a set of instructions for guided reading and writing, indicating specific steps for progressive improvement in the two aspects.

(4) Preparation of a Ministry pamphlet on the lines of the British Ministry pamphlet on language teaching for wide circulation with a view to bringing about a degree of uniformity in language practice.

(5) Organising regular discussions and seminars on language teaching arranged in collaboration with the Regional Directors.

(6) Reorientation of the G. C. E. (O. L.) Examination Syllabus in language, prior notice being given to schools, in consultation and collaboration with the Commissioner of Examinations, based on the results of new and more objective question papers in Sinhala and Tamil administered to random sample schools.

(7) Action for progressive improvement of teaching based on the results of experiments and suggestions of teachers and for periodical evaluation of Island-wide standards in the subject.

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The final outcome of the programmes is the Revised G. C. E. (O. Level) Syllabus in Sinhala and Tamil which would become effective from 1968. Teachers of language have hailed the new syllabus as a definite contribution to effective first language teaching which falls in line with the latest language teaching trends. Detailed instructions to teachers have also been prepared in addition to the text books to be used. An explicit statement embodying the well considered decision of experts from various schools of language practices and of different schools of grammar, will soon be made available to all teachers, writers and others interested and will, in future, form the basis of uniform language practice.

The Teaching of English

Before 1945 English was the preserve of a privileged minority. A knowledge of English was considered a badge of distinction but only about 5 or 6 per cent of the population learnt it. It was also a passport to a career and so the higher rungs of the administrative and professional ladder were occupied by the English educated minority. When English was made a compulsory second language by statute, it ceased to be the monopoly of a privileged few. It came to be taught to all pupils from Grade III upwards. It is appropriate at this point to comment on the often heard complaint of falling standards in English. There is indeed no reason for complacency about the proficiency of our students in English. But what is not sufficiently appreciated is the fact that the linguistic social context in which English is taught has changed radically over the past twenty years. Its learning is no longer restricted to a small group of people and the purpose for which it is taught are no longer the same as they were in the past. English is needed today as a tool of knowledge in the fields of science, medicine, technology, industry, and commerce as well as in the general cultural field. The validity of attempting to assess standards in English today when it is taught as a second language by applying the same criteria that were valid when English was the medium of instruction for a select few is indeed open to question.

The switch-over to the national languages as media of instruction and the statutory requirement for the compulsory teaching of English created special problems. First, there was the serious shortage of professionally qualified teachers with adequate training in the techniques of teaching English as a second language. Indeed, the pedagogical implications of teaching English to non-native speakers of the language were not sufficiently understood and English continued to be taught as if it were still a first language. Even those teachers who had a sound command of English owing to their background and early training in English with a predominantly literary bias still followed conventional teaching procedures. The realisation came slowly that the teaching of a " specific " second language to learners whose mother-tongue is a " specific " first language called for a change of techniques and approach and that the learning problems were due mainly though not exclusively, to the linguistic differences between the target language and the first language of the learner. The situation was aggravated by the fact that, paradoxically, many English teachers who were educated in the English medium did not have a sound knowledge of one of the national languages.

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The change of the language policy in education necessitated an enormous increase in the number of teachers required for English. The past twenty years have seen an unprecedented quantitative expansion of English teaching personnel. In 1960 there were approximately 8,000 teachers of English ; by 1968 this number has risen to approximately 17,000. This quantitative increase has not been paralleled by a corresponding qualitative expansion and this in turn has created training problems for English as a second language particularly in view of the fact that there has been a substantial increase in the number of English teachers recruited from among those who have themselves learnt English as a second language.

The compulsory teaching of English as a second language to all pupils has also led to a re-defining of objectives. The most widespread objective in teaching English today is to develop the reading skills that will enable our students to benefit from the vast storehouse of knowledge that is available through the medium of English.

Since English is compulsorily taught but not compulsorily examined either at ' O ' level or ' A ' level, Arts students in general have little incentive for its study. The Science student, however, provides a refreshing and encouraging contrast. It is the experience of English teachers that Science students, by and large, show greater interest in learning English than the Arts students and are sufficiently well motivated. This is borne out by the results of a survey carried out in 147 schools in 1966. 37·1 per cent of Science students in ' A' level classes had a satisfactory proficiency in English while the corresponding figure for Arts students was 4·65.

Aganist the background outlined above the Department of Education took two significant steps in 1960 in order to develop and co-ordinate the English teaching programme.

(*a*) It established a separate Unit in the Department to deal with problems relating to the teaching of English.

(*b*) It obtained the services of an UNESCO consultant to advise on a suitable programme for the effective teaching of English as a second language and for the training of teachers for the purpose.

The teaching of English in the Primary school received high priority. Schemes of work together with instructional material for teachers were prepared under the guidance of Mr. Allan, Adviser in the teaching of English, whose services were made available to the Department of Education by the UNESCO under U.N. Technical Assistance Programme. At the same time group discussions with teachers of English, demonstration lessons and week-end seminars on the teaching of English were organised throughout the country by the members of the English Unit of the Department.

A new step taken to improve the professional competence of the teachers of English was taken by holding an examination in English Proficiency for the assistant teachers of English and thereafter by conducting classes for those who did not come up to the standards expected of them.

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The appointment of twenty Inspectors of English whose main functions are to supervise the teaching of English at school level, to provide in-service training at the Regional level and hold group discussions and seminars during the vacations, is another step taken to raise the standard of English in our schools. The annual output of these two Teachers' Colleges falls far short of the demand for professionally qualified teachers of English. A third Teachers' College was, therefore, established at Peradeniya in 1965 for training more specialist teachers of English. The first batch of trained teachers, numbering 119 left this College in December 1966. The number of specialist trained teachers of English available each year is in the region of 350 and since 1959 approximately 1,700 teachers have completed specialised courses in English Methodology—1,230 for Sinhala medium schools and 470 for Tamil medium schools. There has been increasing collaboration between the English Unit and the staff and trainees of these Teachers' Colleges. The staff of these Colleges have all of them received overseas training in English as a second language.

The rate of formal training could not possibly keep pace with the quantitative expansion in the cadre of English teachers. It will take a very long time for all untrained teachers in service to gain admission to the specialist Training Colleges. In this situation in-service training programmes were the obvious answer and such courses were started by the English Unit in the four principal towns of Colombo, Kandy, Jaffna and Galle in 1961. Recruitment for the courses was done by the Regional Administration and was limited to 125 teachers at each centre. Classes were held in one mid-weekly session of three hours duration for 30 weeks.

A very large number of untrained teachers of English work in rural areas where working conditions are unfavourable and communications difficult. Lack of transport facilities prevent many of them from attending the in-service training classes functioning in the provincial towns. To meet the needs of these teachers the English Unit devised an informal training programme which was workable in remote rural areas. Teachers were organised into local training groups at the circuit level, each group met once a fortnight—in some instances once a week for a two hour session under a group leader. The programme was supervised by the local Inspector of Schools. The meetings were devoted to criticism of demonstration lessons with live classes followed by discussions. This formed the core of these informal training courses. Occasionally, senior teachers, lecturers in Teachers' Colleges and officers of the Ministry were invited to talk to group members on selected areas of English Methodology. These study groups have been supplied with books on English Methodology. In 1967 there were 84 study circles of this kind and a hundred of them have been planned for 1968.

In order to disseminate information regarding teaching techniques and material for English, the English Unit has regularly held a series of week-end seminars in provincial and district towns for practising teachers of English. An integral part of these two-day seminars consisted of criticism lessons and discussions on such vital matters as the planning of lessons, the use of text-books and supplementary reading material, the implementation of the specifications in the Departmental Syllabus and Scheme of Work for English, the effective teaching of English to large classes with mixed ability groups and the preparation and use of teaching aids.

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Residential vacation courses of two to three weeks' duration have been an annual feature of the Departmental programme for the in-service training of English teachers since 1961. In each year the August vacation course has been conducted in collaboration with the British Council in Ceylon which has provided specialist personnel and also part of the funds for the course. The number of residential vacation courses has increased from one during the August vacation in 1961 to 7 per vacation—April, August and December in 1967. The majority of these courses have been designed to deal with the problems of English Language teaching in Grades 6 and above. The course programmes have provided for the theory and practice of the English Language as well as for demonstrations and discussions of teaching techniques, methods and approaches. For the two courses in 1960 and 1961 it was possible for the Department to obtain the services of foreign personnel, among whom were Dr. J. A. Noonan and Dr. W. R. Lee, through the good offices of the British Council in Ceylon. The high level of continuous and regular attendance, approximately 100 teachers in residence at each centre, is clear evidence of the usefulness of these vacation courses.

A Journal for Teachers of English

A News-letter for teachers of English was started in March, 1960, with contributions from local teachers and overseas personnel connected with the teaching of English as a second language. This News-letter was intended to serve as a forum of discussion on matters of linguistic and pedagogical interest. Three issues were published but lack of funds held up the publication of further issues. The journal, however, was revived in 1967 with a subsidy from the Asia Foundation and is now published once a term under the title " English for our Schools."

Syllabuses, Schemes and Text-books in English

A considerable amount of work has been done in the preparation of suitable teaching material and teachers' guides. Since 1961 a determined effort was made to co-ordinate the English teaching programme with a view to improving standards and maintaining uniformity. One of the first responsibilities of the newly established English Unit, was to prepare a detailed Syllabus of Instruction and Scheme of Work for English from Grades 3 to 8 and for 'O' level classes. This was done by a select committee consisting of practising teachers, training college lecturers and Ministry staff. The committee worked in association with the UNESCO Adviser and the new syllabus and Schemes of Work were made available to schools in printed form in 1963.

Teaching of English in the Secondary School

In order to review the work done in the field of English teaching it would be useful to refer in general terms to the place of English in the Island in the past, the quantitative and qualitative changes that have taken place and the administrative and implementational problems arising therefrom.

Until 1945 there were, broadly speaking, three kinds of schools—the English schools where all the subjects were taught through the medium of English, the Anglo-Vernacular or Bilingual schools where the medium of instruction was either Sinhalese

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or Tamil with English taught as a subject and the Vernacular schools where Sinhalese or Tamil was the medium of instruction. After that date the national languages were introduced as the media of instruction in all schools and English was made a compulsory second language (by law) from Standard (now Grade) 3, that is from 8 years of age. The use of the national languages for instructional purposes was progressively extended until by 1960 all ' A ' level Arts students were receiving their education in their first language and English continued to be taught to all students from the age of 8.

Teachers for English

Since its establishment in 1960 the activities of the English Unit have been directed mainly towards the training of teachers for English as a second language with particular reference to the elementary grades (3 to 8). It is now estimated that out of a total of approximately 17,000 teachers of English not more than 25 per cent have had systematic, formal training in English Methodology either in Teachers' Colleges or at the University.

Special courses in English Methodology were introduced in the Teachers' Colleges at Maharagama and Palaly in 1959. Recruitment for these courses is by means of a special competitive examination. The duration of the course is two years and the number of specialist trained teachers of English leaving these two institutions has steadily increased from 66 in 1959 to 325 in 1967.

Mathematics in Grades 1–5

Hitherto Mathematics teaching in Grades 1–5 has been almost exclusively confined to the teaching of Arithmetic. Apart from the restricted content, the methods of teaching that are currently in use are, in general, not in keeping with recent developments in the theory of learning. Action has been taken in 1968 to initiate a programme of revising the Mathematics curriculum of the Elementary School. The programme envisages not only the enrichment of the content by the inclusion of appropriate content from other branches of Mathematics but also a change in the methodology which may well transfer to other areas of the curriculum. In initiating the programme, the Ministry has been very fortunate in securing the advice of Dr. Geoffrey Mathews, Director, Nuffield Mathematics Project.

As a first step, a project is underway to evolve a group of people who could form the nucleus of the curriculum-design staff. The material for field trial is expected to be produced next year. These will be tried out in selected pilot schools, after the necessary amendments and modifications, the material will be made available for use in all schools.

Mathematics in Grades 6–8

Revision of the Mathematics curriculum at this level was started in 1964. The decision that text books in selected areas be produced by the Government gave an additional impetus to this programme. The revision was to be undertaken with a view to introducing Mathematics into the curriculum of those schools—the large majority—which offered only Arithmetic. The curriculum material was so prepared

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that teachers who have studied only Arithmetic will be able to make effective use of it after following an adequate in-service training programme. In keeping with these decisions Revised Syllabuses and detailed Schemes of Work for teachers for Grades 6 and 7 have been completed and have been in use since 1966. The material for Grade 8 is nearing completion. A Revised Syllabus for the G. C. E. (Ord. Level) Examination in Mathematics, Specimen Question Papers and Schemes of work are under preparation.

Pupil Text Books for 6th and 7th Grades based on the revised schemes of work have been prepared. A programme of in-service training was initiated in 1965, with the inauguration of a Master Teacher Service.

With the decision in 1966 to produce Course Guides for each curriculum area in Grades 6 to 8, a preliminary revision of the scheme of work that had been produced up to that time was done. A more systematic revision will be undertaken with the development of the Grade 1–5 programme.

Course Guides for Grades 6 to 8

A Pilot project at Grade Six level was tried out in 1967 in 171 schools which included one school from each of the 171 circuits in the island. The schools selected were representative of all types of schools—urban, rural and semi-urban, large and small, Boys' Schools, Girls' Schools and Mixed Schools. Detailed teaching specifications on each of the school subjects, in the form of Course Guides were prepared separately for each term by specially selected committees of practising teachers of long experience. This material was tried out in a number of schools, improved on in the light of feed-back material, and used in Grade 6 in the Project Schools in 1967.

Term end tests were conducted and the results were analysed. Intra-Regional and Inter-Regional results were compared with a view to ascertaining

(1) whether the performance of rural school children were significantly different from that of the urban school children.

(2) whether the performance at the three successive tests showed any significant consistency.

The results conclusively proved that there was hardly any difference between the performance in urban schools and in rural schools except in the Second Language—English and that there was steady improvement throughout the three terms in almost all regions.

In 1968, this material is being used in Grade 6, throughout the Island, while Course Guide material prepared for the three terms separately for Grade 7 is being tried out in the 171 Project Schools. This plan of action will be continued to cover Grade 8 in 1970. In this manner by 1970, Course Guide material will be used in all the schools at Grades 6 to 8, thereby ensuring equality of opportunity to all pupils.

Attainment Tests

The material used in three term end tests which comprised about 50 items in each paper has been subjected to close study. Items have been analysed to ascertain

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the validity of each item. Field trials of selected items will be held shortly and it is hoped that at least a few attainment tests with norms will be constructed in due course.

Teaching of Science and Mathematics in the Secondary School

The following data are indicative of the pace of development of the Science and Mathematics Programme during the last decade :

Development of Science Education Programme

	1958	1967
No. of G. C. E. (O.L.) Science Schools ..	125 ..	539*
G. C. E. (O.L.) enrolment for Science/Mathematics	6,000 ..	52,877*
No. of G. C. E. Adv. Lev. Science Schools ..	50 ..	146*
Adv. Level enrolment Science/Mathematics ..	2,100 ..	11,123*
Adv. Level enrolment for Mathematics ..	740 ..	4,617*
Provision for Science equipment	150,000 ..	3,500,000
No. of Science Trained Teachers	90 ..	1,028
No. of Maths. Trained Teachers	150 ..	720
No. of Science Laboratories taken up for construction	10 ..	50
No. of Science Laboratories functioning ..	175 ..	566
Total provision in the estimate for Science Education	3,200,000 ..	20,000,000
No. of Science Teacher training institutes available ..	2 ..	3 (includes Science training college which is under construction)
Trained Teachers out put	25 ..	120
Field Science supervisory staff	3 ..	23
Science Equipment Production Unit ..	Nil ..	1 (being established)
Science Store	No definite arrangements ..	1 well established
Science Museum and Planetarium for the popularisation of Science	...............Nil ..	established
Detailed Teaching Specifications in Physics, Chemistry and Biology	...Unavailable ..	Designed, published and being implemented in approximately 539 schools at G.C.E. (O. L.)
Pupils doing Science at 'O' Level Approximately as a percentage total 'O' Level enrolment	4 ..	18·7
Pupils doing Science at 'A' Level as a percentage of total 'A' Level enrolment	Not available ..	7·2

* As obtained from 1967 October School Census returns.

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The revised teaching specifications in Physics, Chemistry and Biology were introduced to a selected number of schools on a trial basis in the year 1963. Further, In-Service Training Programmes were organised for approximately 110 Science Trained Teachers with a view to enabling the Science Teachers concerned to interpret these schemes appropriately. Lists of equipment designed in 1957 were revised in terms of the needs arising from the revised schemes and action was initiated to supply these items to the trial schools.

In the yeai 1963-64 there were 293 schools with Science Classes at the G. C. E (Ordinary Level) of which 122 schools had facilities for the teaching of these subjects at the G. C. E. (Advanced Level). During the period 2 In-Service Training Programmes were organised for the training of approximately 150 Science Teachers (Sc. Trained and Sc. Assistants) prototype examinations were designed consistent with the New Teaching specifications in Science. In December, 1963, a conference on the teaching of Science was organised at the University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Education Liaison Committee. At this conference, where many distinguished Science Educators from several Commonwealth Countries participated, Ceylon's curricular revision programme in Science came in for significant comment.

In the year, 1964-65, provision of a sum of Rs. 250,000 was made for the construction of a Science Equipment Production Unit at the New Science Training College site at Pattalagedera, Veyangoda. Considerable assistance was obtained from USOM for this Project. The amount released from the PL—480 funds for the first phase construction of the buildings was approximately Rs. 1,000,000.

In the year 1965, a pilot test was held in a selected number of sample schools, to ascertain the effect of the new scheme of work in Science, on pupil achievement. Results of these tests were analysed and the sample group of pupils is being followed up, with a view to ascertaining the validity of these tests in predicting future performances. A further stage in the extension of the Science Lab. Construction Programme was commenced during the period and additional Science Equipment to the value of approximately Rs. 2,000,000 was provided to several schools, during this period. An In-Service Training Programme for approximately 100 Science Trained Teachers was organised during the period. In December, 1965, new testing techniques consistent with the new schemes of work were introduced at the G. C. E. (Ordinary Level) Examination. During this period there were approximately 45,700 pupils following Science Subjects at the G. C. E. (Ordinary Level), while there were approximately 7,000 pupils following Science Subjects at the G. C. E. (Advanced Level). A further group of children, approximating 130,000 was provided with facilities for studying General Science in the 6th, 7th and 8th Grades. During the period, curriculum revision work was extended to the field of Mathematics.

In the year 1965-66, an In-Service Training Programme for approximately 100 Science Trained Teachers, and a Teacher Educator's Seminar were organised in collaboration with the British Council, and the Ministry of Overseas Development in London.

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A group of 6 leading Science Educators from U. K. who had played leadership roles in the Nuffield Science Teaching Project assisted the local personnel in organising these programmes. During this period action was initiated to obtain UNICEF assistance for the Secondary Schools Science and Mathematics Development Programmes on a long term basis.

In December, 1966, the construction of the Science Equipment Production Unit was completed and handed over to the Ministry of Education. In January, 1967, Asia Foundation machinery costing approximately Rs. 150,000 was installed to commence production after the recruitment of staff.

In the year 1966–67 UNICEF equipment and material, costing approximately Rs. 800,000, was obtained for use in the Secondary Schools Science and Mathematics Development Project. During this period a further collaborative programme in In-Service Training and Teacher Education, was organised with assistance from the British Council, where approximately 100 Science Trained Teachers and 30 teacher educators participated. Action has been initiated to extend these collaborative programmes for a few more years, depending on the emerging needs. During this period a part of the production unit staff was recruited, and production of Science Equipment was initiated on a pilot scale. Three additional Circuit Education Officers in Science were recruited during the period with a view to further strengthening the field supervision programme in Science. Further, 50 Science Laboratories were approved for construction during the period, and equipment and material costing approximately Rs. 2,000,000 were distributed to several science teaching locations.

Exploratory work in relation to curriculum revision in the field of Physics, Chemistry and Biology, for implementation at the Advanced Level was commenced during the period, and action has been initiated for the construction of a Curriculum Development Centre, at the Race Cource, Colombo, costing approximately Rs. 2,500,000. The establishment of the Curriculum Development Centre, would enable the extension of curriculum revision work to other areas of the curriculum.

The second part of the first phase of the UNICEF assistance programme is under implementation at the moment, and equipment and machinery costing approximately Rs. 700,000 is expected shortly. Science Teacher Vacation Course and a Teacher Educators' Seminar were held in August, 1968, in collaboration with the British Council and the Ministry of Overseas Development in London. Further, action has also been initiated to organise, a seminar on the evaluation of Chemistry, in collaboration with the International Union of Applied and Pure Chemistry, where leading examiners from many parts of the world are expected to participate.

Further, Science Equipment and material costing approximately Rs. 2,000,000 has been ordered for distribution to approximately 500 schools, during 1968–69. The effect of the new scheme of work in Science on pupils' achievement has been encouraging, nevertheless, an attempt is being made to effect a further stage of revision, in the light of feed back information obtained from field supervisory staff.

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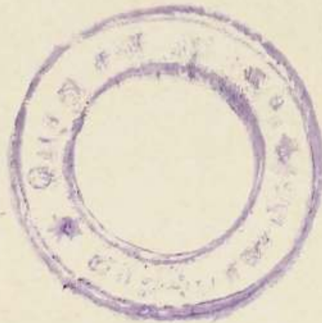
During the last 3 years, approximately Rs. 20,000,000 has been spent every year for the maintenance and development of the Science Education Programme in the Ceylon school system. This amounts to approximately 5 per cent of the current total commitment on education. The Science and Mathematics Development Programmes have made significant progress, particularly during the last decade, and these developments have been both quantitative and qualitative, a feature which is consistent with current trends in Educational Development.

Conclusion

There has been a great and inspiring awakening in our society to the need for education at all levels. Thus we have already achieved a fundamental requirement for the success of any education policy. We have a comprehensive and extensive schools system that has made education, financed and administered by the State, available over the whole Island. But, as was shown in the foregoing account, there has been inherent in the evolution of our education system, as bequeathed to us by three centuries of foreign rule, several deficiencies and imbalances that have given rise to serious and grave economic, sociological and cultural problems. To the solution of these the Honourable Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs has had to address his mind. During the brief period of the last two years he has instituted, as was detailed above, a multiple programme of far-reaching reform. He has re-organised the Ministry of Education on a functional basis to deal with the problems of re-structuring, expansion and co-ordination.

A feature of this policy is the determination to check and remove any wayward growth in our education system and integrate it into the country's economic structure. Fostering of national culture against the background of spiritual values inculcated by religion, and the promotion of patriotic citizenship are its other principal features. These will continue to receive due emphasis and the work of reconstruction and expansion continue to be geared to a phased programme of development in the economic, cultural and religious life of the nation.

Presented By,
P. PA[illegible]JASINGAM
POLICE STATION VIEW
CHAVAKACHCHERI



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