

No. 21

other person shall on or before the 21st day of October

[சங்கீதம், உத]

கச்சேரிபோடு போயினர்.

தூனியம், எக்காவத்திலும் இவ் வகுதும் மட்டைக்கள
பாலும், வந்தேறு காகைகை காட்டாலும் அதிக தொகை
காண நெல்லு வசதினாறு. மாநிலவந்திக்கு கையிற்பு
க்ததானால் சீட்டக்கிசினிஸ் இனிமேல் வகுதி நெல்லுப்
போட இடமில்லை.

SCHOOL MANAGERS AND CIRCULAR NO. 11.

Circular No. 11, bids fair to become historic. It has earned for itself a name, and for a few years at least, any allusion to it as Circular No. 11, will be readily understood. It has given its author notoriety, though of an unenviable kind. School Managers have met as a body in Jaffa and in Colombo, and we presume in other places also, and have passed resolutions against it. And yet it would be untrue to assert that all school Managers in the island were united in condemning it wholly; while it might be safe to say that on certain points connected with it, there exists an unanimity among this class of public benefactors, that is encouraging and that augurs well for the future of our educational work.

In the first place we are all agreed that we want no hasty legislation in the Department of Public Instruction. It is the general opinion, we think, that the Acting Director has been too hasty in issuing Circular No. 11. It is not enough to say, in reply, that intimation of the purpose of the Department was given some weeks previously, in speeches made by His Excellency, the Governor, and by the Acting Director on certain public occasions. The changes are so radical that they should have been fully and fairly discussed by those most interested, for months before any definite action was taken. A general statement that English instruction should not be imparted in our schools without collecting tuition fees, and that the Headmasters of each kind of English schools (i.e. Primary, Middle and High) should be certificated, would have been accepted, we are sure, with but little or no hostile criticism. But to insist on minimum fees which in themselves are high and might better be called maximum fees, and to insist on every teacher in any English school being certificated by the Department, and that within so short a time, is altogether too radical a change.

Managers will differ as to what should constitute a schedule of minimum fees, but if after due consultation and careful, deliberate discussion, the majority agreed in accepting a scale of minimum fees, the Department could not be accused of attempting to over-ride the opinions of those who, by long residence in the island, and by varied experiences were most competent to express an opinion on this subject.

Then as to certificates, surely the large majority of Managers approve of having competent teachers in their schools, be they English or vernacular, but what is a test of competency? Is it to pass a certain prescribed examination of the Department's? Is a degree of an Indian University to be of no value? Is long and successful experience as a teacher to count for nothing? A book-worm, or one who has passed every examination with credit, may prove after all, but an indifferent teacher; while one who has learned in the school of experience and withal has tact and a natural love for the work, may enter upon a most successful career as an organizer, a disciplinarian, and an instructor. As Managers, we are not objecting to certificates; nor are we taking stand for a free English education; we are simply protesting against unwise and hasty legislation in regard to both of these very important subjects.

In the second place, Managers are, for the most part, agreed that there should be some settled policy in regard to public instruction. That is to say, we look with disfavor upon the annual crop of changes in the Revised Code. Not that we are opposed to learning new methods of teaching; not that we do not wish to improve the efficiency of our schools; but we want to feel that the Code is stable and permanent. As it is, changes are made and enforced, but before Managers can adjust themselves to the new order of things, another year rolls round and another set of fresh rules and regulations are sent out from the Educational Department to perplex and annoy long-suffering Managers. This may be progress, but if it is we prefer a little stagnation. We protest against being hampered in our legitimate work by such constant changes. Why should we not have a Code subject to no alteration or change for 5 consecutive years, or if this is too long a time, for 3 years? Then we should know what to expect, and would plan accordingly. After the expiration of the 3 years, it would be seen where changes were necessary, and they could be made after consultation with Managers with better grace and with less danger of friction.

In the third place, there should be confidence on the part of the Department in the good intentions of Managers. The Department and all the

missionary Managers at least, both Protestant and Catholic, should be working in perfect harmony. There is no good reason why they should not do so. As far as education is concerned, we have the same end in view i.e. to give the children a sound, elementary education founded on the eternal principles of justice and truth. As missionaries we go one step further and aim to teach the pupils Christian truths; and we question whether a Christian government has any right to put restrictions upon such teaching provided it is done in the spirit of fairness and kindness. But aside from this is there any good reason why the Department should distrust missionary Managers? We may be too sensitive perhaps, and fancy lack of confidence where none is intended; but it does look sometimes as if the Director feared to consult Managers as to any amendment to the Code, lest they should object so strongly that he would find it unadvisable to insist on the changes. Let us be frank with each other. The suggestion that an annual Conference be held of the Director and Managers is a good one, and we believe would tend to remove prejudice and promote good feeling all round.

NEW INDUSTRIES FOR CEYLON.

Not long ago we saw by the *Ceylon Observer* that a new industry was being agitated for Ceylon. Certain parties having travelled throughout the island and being convinced that the soil and climate in certain localities were well suited for fruit growing are contemplating the purchase of land for this purpose. The plan is to get a tract of land favorably located and to put it into oranges and lemons, we presume of various kinds. Whether any thing will come of it or not remains to be seen, but we have long been of the opinion that even here in the narrow limits of our peninsula much more could be made out of fruit growing, than is being done at present. Why should not the vine be more extensively cultivated? Jaffna town, and Mathagal on the north coast, furnish most of the grapes to be had in the peninsula. So far as we know there is but one distinct variety. The slight difference in flavor may be attributed, perhaps, to the differences in soil and cultivation. We were told that last year some attempt was made to introduce two or three varieties of the purple grape too, with what success we have not learned. We do not see why with proper care new varieties should not be successfully raised, and the area under cultivation be largely increased. Grapes always bring a good price, and are always in demand. They need more care and attention than some other fruits, but would well repay one for all his extra trouble.

Another fruit is the orange. In some localities the oranges are of fair size and of good quality. These fetch double the prices of the ordinary fruit. The belt of country lying between Copay and Tillipally seems to be specially adapted for this fruit. But in passing along this locality, one sees only now and then a few trees in a compound, near the well. Why could not three or four acres be devoted to this cultivation by farmers owning several acres of land. The trees are never pruned and no effort is made to introduce new varieties or to try cultivating the trees. And yet such as they are, half cared for and neglected, they thrive and bear fruit and bring in quite an income to the owners. We see no good reason why the Tamils should not go in for raising this fruit—not on a large scale as is done in other countries, but with an acre or two, or more, of land.

Still another fruit that might be raised to advantage is the pineapple. These come principally from the Chavagucherry and adjoining districts. A few plants are left to grow wild under a mango tree, and that is about all the attention paid to them. Suppose one should try a five acre field, planting them in rows and cultivating well between. The difference in the size and quality would, it seems to us, more than compensate the raiser for his extra trouble. Here again we want other and better varieties and they could easily be introduced.

All these fruits need good water and perhaps the want of pure water in sufficient quantities would be the most serious drawback to their cultivation. But let the experiment be tried. One can hardly lose much by it, and it would be worth while to make the attempt.

If a railway ever comes to Jaffna, these fruits can be readily shipped to other parts of the island and even to south India. They would find a ready market, and prices would be raised.

We do not claim that foreigners can come into

the island and raise fruit to advantage. Their expenses of living are so high, that the profits would soon be eaten up. But the natives, accustomed to live on a little, and used to the climate, might with profit turn their attention to this industry. We may be too sanguine as to the possibilities in this direction, but we should like to see the experiment tried.

THE JEWS IN PALESTINE.

Several periodicals are published which claim that the Jews are very generally returning to Palestine, and that this Old Testament prophecy is being fulfilled. We read glowing accounts of the numbers that are flocking to the Holy land and of the prospects of the restoration of the Jewish kingdom. It is well for us to read both sides, and see how much foundation there really exists for these statements. A prominent divine journalist who has recently visited Palestine writes as follows:—

"The present population of the territory anciently known as Palestine is estimated at 650,000. A recent number of *The Journal of the German Palestine Society* gives the Jews in that country as 43,783, or say in round numbers 50,000. Nearly two thirds of these are in and around Jerusalem, and most of the remainder are in twelve other cities."

The Jewish population has increased considerably within the last ten years, in spite of the opposition of the Turkish Government.

But the larger part of these immigrants have been assisted to get to Palestine and supported since their arrival by contributions from without. The oldest colony, established in 1882 near Jaffa, consists of about 300 Russian Jews many of them educated, and though it has received large sums from Russia is now self-supporting. The largest colony near Haifa has 800 members. Most of these colonies occupy land granted or leased to them by benevolent individuals or societies, and few of them are now self-sustaining. Large sums of money are annually collected in Russia, Germany, England and other countries and sent to the Jews in Palestine. These Jews have little influence, if any, in the life of the country, and seem to have no plans or special desire to make their influence felt.

The lines of railroad which are to open up the country, except that from Jaffa to Jerusalem, now in the hands of a receiver, exist only on paper or in the minds of their projectors, though a survey has been made for a road from Haifa to Damascus, and a few miles beginning at the former city have been graded. We doubt if new roads will be built while Turkey retains control of the country. Taxation exhausts its resources, most of the money extorted by the government being taken away with little return of any kind."

Contrast this report with the number of Jews in New York city alone. According to the last Census there were nearly 200,000, or four times the number in all Palestine, and yet they don't attract any attention.

NEWS FROM THE WIDE WORLD.

—MADAGASCAR. The French have secured an important pass, and are driving the Hovas before them. They are now within 40 miles of the capital.

—CHINA. The British Government sent an ultimatum to China, demanding the issue of a Proclamation degrading the Viceroy of the Province where most of the disturbances against missionaries took place, and China at once accepted the terms and has decreed for life the Viceroy of the Province of Szechuan.

It is also reported that the Mandarins are doing everything in their power to nullify the Kuehng enquiry, and have released forty prisoners notwithstanding the protests of the Consul who was most grossly insulted by the Chinese soldiers for his interference.

—ARMENIA. There is considerable excitement at Constantinople owing to the arrival of a British fleet of 17 men-of-war in the vicinity.

Rioting on the 30th ult. arose through the Armenian attempting to march in procession to the *Porte* to present a petition. The Police opposed the procession and the crowd resisted. At once the Police opened fire upon them and 80 of the Armenians were killed and wounded and 500 arrests made. Rioting was renewed on the 1st inst., the Mussalman populace chasing and killing the Armenians in all directions. About 70 were killed.

Latest advices state that 200 Armenians have been killed by the Turks during the rioting.

The Armenian churches at Constantinople are crowded with women and children who refuse to leave, fearing fresh massacres. The Ambassadors of the Powers at Constantinople have protested to the *Porte* against the brutality of the Police towards the Armenian prisoners many of whom have been killed, and demanding measures for the restoration of order.