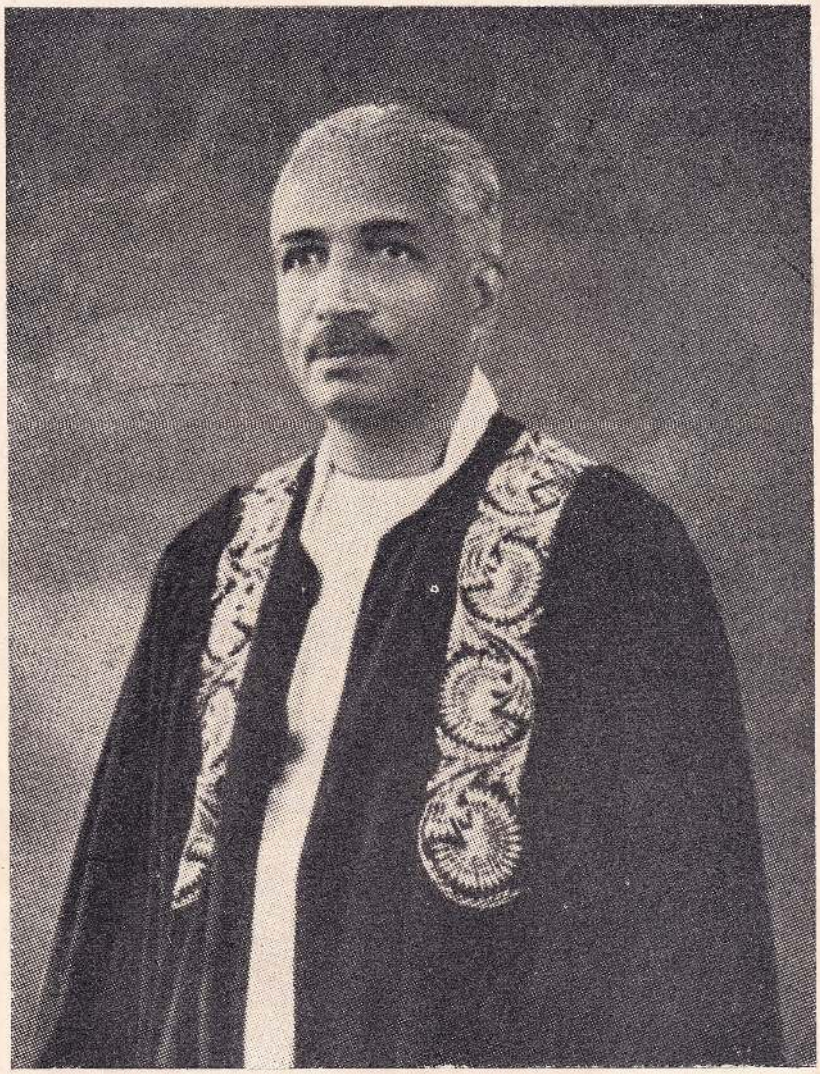
HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN CEYLON

1796-1965

K.H.M. SUMATHIPALA



C. W. W. KANNANGARA
Minister of Education
1931-47

History of

EDUCATION IN CEYLON

1796 – 1965

With special reference to the contribution made by C. W. W. Kannangara to the Educational Development of Ceylon

by

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With a Foreword by

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FOREWORD

Mr. Sumathipala has, by asking me to contribute a foreword to this book, given me the opportunity of paying a tribute to Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, one of the greatest patriots of our time.

A founder member of the Ceylon National Congress which, he argued at its inaugural meeting, " will lead the masses of our countrymen to the blessed life of political freedom and equal rights and liberties " (in a speech reproduced in S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's *The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress,* 1919 - 28. p. 189), Kannangara became a member of the Legislative Council in 1923. Within three months, a perspicacious columnist of the weekly journal, *Searchlight* (Sep. 1, 1923), congratulating Kannangara on the indication of his " aptitude for legislative duties " addressed these prophetic words to him :— " There should be no halting now that you have set yourself to the task, and dogged perseverance coupled with fearless advocacy should be your motto till you find a place in the niche of fame as one of Ceylon's patriots". Dogged perseverance coupled with fearless advocacy indeed characterised him, and any cause that was in the interests of the common people of the country was dear to Kannangara's heart and he became its ardent champion.

Kannangara became Minister of Education in 1931, and for sixteen years he strove unceasingly to throw the doors of educational opportunity wide open to the boys and girls of this country, whatever their social status, economic condition, race, caste or creed. Acknowledging the honour bestowed on him by being asked to deliver the presidential address at the Asiatic Art and Cultural Conference held in Calcutta in January 1947, he looked back, with justifiable pride and satisfaction, at his achievements as Minister of Education. He said, " ..... in spite of the fierce and most dogged opposition from a large and very influential section of the people of my land, in spite of abuse and calumny, vilification and ridicule, I have succeeded in obtaining the sanction of the State Council of Ceylon for a scheme of free education, providing for all children of the land equal opportunities to climb to the highest rung of the educational ladder, from the kindergarten to the University, irrespective of the status or financial capacity of their parents, and for obtaining for our national languages their rightful place in that scheme as an essential prerequisite for building up a free, united and independent nation "

(*Cultural Achievements of the Sinhalese*, p. 1). He had to lay down his reins of office soon afterwards, though one task remained undone. Ever since he listened to two speeches made in Ceylon by the distinguished American educator, W. H. Kilpatrick, Kannangara confessed (*Ceylon Hansard* 1927, p. 351) he had become convinced of the vicious consequences of denominationalism in education. He strove hard to make the provision of education a State responsibility and to bring all schools under the administrative control of the State. This dream of his was achieved in his life time, though not by him but by an equally courageous Minister of Education, Badiuddin Mahmud. While Kannangara stood for State provision of education, he was firmly for academic freedom. Winess the words: "The State system of education which I have supported for a considerable time and do support now should not be understood as including within its scope any kind of control or prescription of content or methods of education. In any democratic system these are matters that are left for free development by teachers" (S. P. XXIV of 1943, p. 166). If he were not bed-ridden today, he would surely administer a stern rebuke to those who destroy the teacher's freedom under cover of curriculum reform.

To very few have so many owed so much as the men and women, and the boys and girls of this country owe to Kannangara. Mr. Sumathipala deserves the gratitude of all of them for his scholarly research, through the publication of which this generation may pay its tribute to the courage and vision of Kannangara.

J. E. JAYASURIYA.
Professor of Education

University of Ceylon,
Peradeniya.
May 3, 1968

PREFACE

This is essentially a book on ' the contribution made by C. W. W. Kannangara to the educational development of Ceylon. ' The first two parts — Prologue and His life — provide the background on which the significance of Kannangara reforms should be sought.

Prologue gives in brief outline certain aspects of the History of Education from 1796 to 1931 relevant to the main theme.

His Life gives a biographical sketch which could have been shorter. Its length is purposeful. In my search for source material on the biography of Kannangara I could not find even a full length newspaper article on him. I was rather puzzled by the lack of published material on the life of a man who had been in the public life of this country for nearly half a century. He was a member of the country's legislature for nearly 30 years and a Minister of the government for over 20 of them. That alone should have qualified him for more than half a column in a newspaper. But even half a column was rarely found. He has written no memoir. Even his memory is now failing him and the piles of paper cuttings, letters &c. which he had so assiduously collected from almost his student days were unfortunately lost during his sojourn in Indonesia. Collecting material especially of his early period created difficulties. I had to personally meet most of his close relatives, many of his contemporaries (few are yet living) at Richmond, Prince of Wales and Wesley, and some of the ' politicians ' who worked with him. I searched the ' archives ' of Richmond College, Galle as well, though it is badly depleted. Many went out of their way to help me. That explains why the biographical sketch became disproportionately long.

Coming to the main theme of the book I must confess that my interest in Kannangara dates back to 1944. I was then a student of Mahinda College, Galle. I also happened to be a joint secretary (the other was Leslie L. de Mel) of the South Ceylon Literary Union which had its ' headquarters ' at Kumbalwella, Galle.

On May 20, 1944 the students of Galle held a public meeting in support of Free Education, at Vidyaloka Vidyalaya Hall. W. Dahanayake presided.[1] On September 12, 1945 a similar meeting was held at Commercial College Hall, Fort, Galle to press upon the Galle Schools to join the free scheme.[2] Both these meetings were organised

1. Jana Saktiya, June 2, 1944.
2. Ibid. September 21, 1945.

by the South Ceylon Literary Union and I had the privilege of being one of the student speakers.

In 1947 when the All-Ceylon Buddhist Students' Union campaigned for the new Education Bill I too was a participant. I happened to be a member of the Buddhist Students' delegation that went before Standing Committee 'A' on May 22, 1947 in support of the Bill.[1] One of my earliest articles to appear in a newspaper was also on Free Education.[2]

However I had no intention of selecting Kannangara as my maiden venture in educational research. The suggestion came from Professor L. G. Hewage, Head of the Department of Education, Vidyodaya University of Ceylon. I owe him much.

One objection to this study may have been the fact that he is still living. On the other hand he is now 84 and has no 'political future'. None of his close relatives are in politics. Thus a detached assessment of his work is possible though I would not claim this to be one. In fact this survey may perhaps be somewhat coloured in his favour.

This is a preliminary study only, and the emphasis has been quantitative (collecting as much material as possible) rather than qualitative (assessment of a critical nature).

The source material to this study are mainly the published papers. Unpublished departmental papers, minutes of the Executive Committee for Education and the papers of the Board of Ministers will remain closed for at least three more decades. A more complete study can only be made then.

Kannangara is at the moment a 'forgotten' man. The significance of his reforms and the burning patriotism that inspired his work are almost unknown and less appreciated. The 'mist' raised by a hostile press and the other 'vested interests' including the 'denationalised' minority against whose hybrid culture and privileges he so relentlessly fought, has been responsible for his remaining forgotten.

But there are signs that his contribution to the educational development in this country will receive greater appreciation much earlier than expected. Though the White Paper on Education of 1950[3] had nothing to say of him the White Paper on Education of 1966 pays him a generous tribute.[4]

The success of this study depends on the extent to which I may have been able to clear that 'mist'.

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1. Bees — Souvenir of the Fifth Annual Congress of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Students Union, 1947.
2. Sinhala Balaya, April 5, 1947.
3. Government Proposals for Educational Reform in Ceylon, 1950.
4. Proposals for Reforms in General and Technical Education, 1966.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Indian Representative in Ceylon during the war) is reported to have said to Kannangara in 1945, 'you would have been worshipped as a God if you were in India'. Ceylon seems (desirably) much more 'atheist'. But Kannangara's name will go down to the history of Ceylon as the man who dropped the pebble (pearl) which set in motion the ripple of social revolution in modern Ceylon which still has not found its shore.

I am greatly indebted to my teachers Professor J. E. Jayasuriya, Head of the Department of Education, University of Ceylon, who has inspired me to take an interest in the affairs of my country, for consenting to write a 'Foreward' to this book and Mr. P. Chandrasegaram, Lecturer in Education, University of Ceylon for going through the manuscript and making a number of valuable suggestions.

Finally I owe a word of thanks to Mr. S. D. Saparamadu for undertaking the publication of this book. A scholar by his own right, but being forced to spend a greater part of his time behind administrative desks, Mr. Saparamadu is now making a unique contribution to the dissemination of knowledge — especially of Ceylon History — by the publication of books which most commercial publishers may not have handled.

K. H. M. SUMATHIPALA.

"Prabāth"
Aruppola Niwāsa Uyana,
Kandy, Ceylon.
August 18, 1967.

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to D. G. Welikala (Principal), and G. W. S. de Silva (Registrar) of Richmond College, Galle for keeping old records of the College including log books and past magazines at my disposal ;

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to E. A. Goonetilleke (Schoolmate of Kannangara at Richmond College), Mrs. Theresa F. J. Goonetilleke (Pupil of Kannangara at Methodist College), and G. O. C. Cooray (Pupil of Kannangara at Prince of Wales College) for sending letters with valuable information;

to E. M. Karunaratne, Proctor S. C. (contemporary of Kannangara at Richmond College and co-political worker at Galle) for the copy of his Reminiscences (unpublished) which provided much information ;

to A. Ratnayake (President of the Senate and Kannangara's most ardent supporter in the execution of educational reforms) and late Sir Waitialingam Duraiswamy (Speaker of the State Council) for certain inside information;

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and last but not least to my wife, Bala Menike who checked the manuscript with the typescript and helped this study in various other ways.

ABBREVIATIONS

AR	:	Administration Report
CAC	:	Ceylon in Asian Culture : A paper submitted to the Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, 1947 by C. W. W. Kannangara.
CAS	:	Cultural Achievements of the Sinhalese : Presidential Address delivered at the Asiatic Art and Cultural Conference, Calcutta, 1947 by C. W. W. Kannangara.
CCM	:	Ceylon Catholic Messenger
CDN	:	Ceylon Daily News
DE	:	Director of Education
DPI	:	Director of Public Instruction
EMK	:	Karunaratne, E. M. : Reminiscences. Unpublished.
H	:	Hansard
IW	:	Interview
Ord.	:	Ordinance
PF	:	Personal Files of C. W. W. Kannangara with T. Seneviratne
SP	:	Sessional Paper
TC	:	Times of Ceylon

INTRODUCTION

C. W. W. Kannangara was born to a middle class family of nine children. His father lost his job when he was about to enter secondary education. But his early brilliance as a student ensured his education — winning the foundation scholarship of Richmond College, Galle, one of the best English Secondary Schools in Ceylon at the time.

If anybody inspired him, it was Rev. J. H. Darrell. Kannangara learnt his Mathematics under Darrell. It is really as a student of Mathematics that Kannangara won his early fame. Darrell's devotion to his religion (Christianity), his great sense of duty and his selfless nature inspired Kannangara even more than Darrell's knowledge of Mathematics and Music and his eloquent tongue.

Kannangara however was too intelligent to ape. As P. de S. Kularatne puts it, 'Of those who are not converted some as a direct result of attending these missionary schools become better Buddhists. That may be due to two reasons. It may be that they see a very good example in the Principal of the school, a good Christian, who devotes his life to the service of his religion. . . . There are others who, seeing the results of the work of Christian schools, may be violently opposed to what happens in Christian schools and begin to work against them, because they do not like the results.' 1

Kannangara was 'born' a Christian in that his mother was a devoted Christian and his father though a Buddhist had undertaken at marriage to bring up his children as Christians.

Darrell's example perhaps 'opened Kannangara's eyes'. Darrell's devotion to *his* religion may have inspired Kannangara to make a search for *his* ancestral religion. After setting up as a Proctor in Galle he devoted his free time to a study of Buddhism. He had already acquired a good knowledge of Christianity (He was a Park's scholar — a term understood as the best student of Christianity at Richmond), and this comparative study may have led to his formal embracing of Buddhism in 1917.

A stray opponent of his sometimes called him a 'political Buddhist'. But at the time he changed his religion there was only one seat for elected Ceylonese in the Legislative Council. There was no prospect of an enlarged Legislative Council till the Ceylon National Congress was formed in 1918. But even after 1918 there was no

1. H. 1945 Cols. 553 — 4.

prospect of universal franchise. No one who wanted to enter politics in 1917 would have changed Christianity to Buddhism. The restricted electorate of the time was predominantly non-Buddhist, and till 1931 it was certainly easier for a Christian to win a seat in the Legislative Council than for a non-Christian. Even in 1931 (under universal franchise) a Christian could present himself as a Christian and win in a predominantly Buddhist electorate. In fact one third of the elected members and nearly half of all members of the 1931 State Council were Christians. [1] There was no known case of a Christian losing an election because he was a Christian, till 1936. That temperament in the country was perhaps built up by men like Kannangara rather than their having taken advantage of it.

Kannangara perhaps changed religions at the time because political ambition had never yet entered his head. E. M. Karunaratne a devoted Christian and one of Kannangara's closest associates of the time unreservedly declares, 'I can conscientiously and boldly say that Willie (Kannangara) changed his religion by conviction'. [2]

Not only Buddhism, Kannangara also spent much time in learning Sinhala a language not taught at all at Richmond, at the close of the last century. He was for a national renaissance. His study of Buddhism and Sinhala shows that he was getting armed for a battle rather than collecting the spoils of a victory.

Later in his life especially after he entered the Legislative Council he saw the damage done to 'the Sinhala Cultural heritage' by the Christian schools. Thus he became 'violently opposed to what happens in Christian schools.' He had great respect for Jesus Christ. He often quoted from the Bible. He never hated Christianity. But he certainly had no respect for the so called Westernised ('West itself would not think much of their westernisation' he told the author) or denationalised minority in Ceylon. Kannangara would laugh at a man who could not speak his mother tongue fluently as much as at a man who took great pains to cultivate a foreign accent.[3] He could not think of true Christians sitting for a photograph on a Buddha Statue, venerated — rationally or irrationally — by hundreds of millions. It was not only the statue of undoubtedly one of the greatest men (to the Buddhists, by far the greatest man) that ever lived, but also a great piece of Sinhala sculpture. According to Kannangara any Sinhalaya (Buddhist or non-Buddhist) should respect his cultural heritage if he were not 'denationalised'. But men who could do so rarely came from Christian schools. It had nothing to do with the teachings of Christ. But it had much to do with the so-called Christian education that pervaded Ceylon at the time.[4]

1. C D N : State Council 1931.
2. E M K p. 6.
3. H. 1926 p. 387 and H. 1933 p. 1679.
4. H. 1935 pp. 4312 — 20.

Kannangara was a brilliant student and carried away the largest number of prizes at every prize-giving while he was a student. In 1904 Kannangara sat for his University Scholarship Examination. There was just one scholarship at the time and Kannangara could not secure it. Only 12 students in the whole island 'dared' to sit for this examination. Darrell seems to have had great hopes of Kannangara winning the scholarship. 'Disappointing results on the whole' wrote Darrell in the College log book. Darrell could size-up a pupil. In Darrell's estimate Kannangara was the ablest of his pupils.

Not only in studies, but also in extracurricular activities Kannangara excelled. He led the Cricket eleven, played for the football eleven, was a member of the debating team and made a name as an actor while at Richmond.

If Kannangara came from a 'capitalist' family he may have gone to England and passed out as perhaps a barrister-at-law. But when he failed the scholarship examination all his hopes of a University education had to be given up. As the Ceylon Daily News wrote in 1923, 'Perhaps it was fortunate for the people of Southern Province (we may now say Ceylon) that he did not win it, for in that case instead of being the champion of their cause that he has proved to be, he might have filled some less conspicuous place in some remote Kachcheri.' [1]

But later the so-called 'National' Press of Ceylon influenced apparently by the Roman Catholic hierarchy and the 'denationalised' minority made an attempt to belittle Kannangara and his achievements. In 1944 the same Daily News called him 'a small man who was denied the advantage of a good education'. (Unwittingly in this instance even the Daily News condemned the Christian education which Kannangara received). 'Some allowance must be made' the Daily News said, 'for his crudeness. Crudeness may be forgiven in a politician but clumsiness even in a good cause is the clearest proof that the man is trying to do something beyond his powers'. [2] (There were ministers in Ceylon who were less qualified than Kannangara, but did the Daily News accuse them of crudity ?).

Collette, a man who evidently did not have an abiding interest in Ceylon or her welfare, who has now migrated elsewhere for his retirement ridiculed and even insulted Kannangara with a touch of personal animosity. The Ceylon Press was proud to present his cartoons to its reading public. Collette made every effort — with the support of his employers — to present Kannangara as a 'nincompoop'. Once Collette referring to a meeting where Kannangara was supposed to have shown two scars on his forehead which bore witness to injuries on the Cricket field commented, 'We always suspected that a head

1. C D N, June 21, 1923.
2. C D N, June 27, 1944.

injury had taken place ! Eyewitnesses state, however that the damage to the ball was far greater'. [1] Ceylon Press published these with a feeling of sadistic glee.

Kannangara — judging from his achievements — was certainly no nincompoop. Even his bitterest opponent the Catholic Church never called him a nincompoop. In fact she played a compliment when the Messenger said, ' It has been suggested that the Education Minister's career has been a chapter of blunders. But there has been method in his blundering. If his tactics have been ' petty ' they have also had a clear and definite goal in view. And the grand objective planned by Mr. Kannangara has been the overturning of the time honoured denominational system of education, with the further aim of building upon its ruins his state or national system of education.' [2]

Though the Press — especially through its cartoons — attempted to paint Kannangara as a ' simpleton ' they knew that he was one man who would carry out his plans. Speaking of the free education proposal the Daily News said, ' Any decision of the State Council which leaves out of consideration the financial aspect of the proposal will merely play into the hands of the Minister of Education. He has circumvented the Board of Ministers and now endeavour to circumvent the State Council.' [3] He did circumvent the Council !

Kannangara would have had a brilliant university career — on the admission of the Daily News itself — only if the economic condition of his parents allowed it. Even his education at the Law College he had to pursue on a part-time basis, entirely because he had to earn his own living and also help his parents. He finished his Proctor's final in three years, the shortest time allowed at the time. The press may have disagreed with his reforms, but its criticisms and attacks were certainly ' crude and clumsy ' by any standard. Was it because they too were denied the advantage of a ' good education ? '

After passing out as a Proctor he commenced professsional practice at Galle, and ' success came to him from the very beginning '. [4] But he also took a keen interest in the affairs of his ' alma mater ' and the town. He was for nearly 11 years the Secretary of the Richmond College Old Boys ' Association. It was he who built up the Galle Association and the Temperance Movement in the South. He defended free of charge, some of the accused in the 1915 riots. He married rich and could have built a fortune only if he were bent that way. With his election to the Legislative Council in 1923 he came to public life and remained there till his retirement in 1956.

1. Ceylon Observer, February 8, 1953.
2. C C M, August 25, 1939
3. C D N, March 14, 1944.
4. E M K. p. 13.

His best speeches were made in the Legislative Council. He was one of the bitterest critics of the Colonial Administration, but even the Governor respected his views, because there was always substance in them.

In 1931 he became the first Minister of Education in Ceylon. Between 1931 and 38 he seems to have made a careful study of the education system prevailing in Ceylon, and the reforms necessary to bring it in line with a national renaissance. . . . His reforms began in 1938 with the presenting of the Education Bill. But his educational thought really took a concrete form only with the writing of the Report of the Special Committee on Education. His Rural Scheme if reformed more as a method of teaching rather than as a part of the content of education had immense possibilities.

His greatest contribution undoubtedly is the Free Education Scheme. Kannangara made many enemies for himself by this proposal. But his greatest quality was firmness. The more formidable the opposition was the more determined he was to face it. Once he was convinced that a certain course of action was essential, he never wavered. He executed it with a sense of determination rare among politicians. Consequences were immaterial to him.

He however had a detached sense of justice towards all individuals affected by his reforms. He was against discrimination in any form and privileges confined to any individual or group. His determination was to provide equality of opportunity to all talented children whatever their socio-economic status was. 'Circumscribed by the bonds of his village, circumscribed by the means of his parents but still a beautiful child with a splendid brain — why should that child not have an equal chance with the others,' [1] he once asked. He succeeded in creating a fair degree of equality of opportunity by providing free education on the one hand and Central Schools on the other. But he was fully aware that a greater degree of equality of opportunity could not be provided unless all the schools were taken under State management and re-organised according to the needs of various regions. This he could not accomplish as his career as the Minister of education came to an end in 1947. But free education and the dual system could not continue. Sooner or later the denominational system had to go if free education with equality of opportunity was to survive. Thus the state take over of schools was a corollary to the system of free education. The longer it was delayed the greater was the retardation in the educational development of the country.

Kannangara himself wanted a State system of public education set up with the introduction of free education in 1945. It was the

1. H. 1944 p. 925.

Legislature that wavered in its decision, and allowed the denominational grant-in-aid system to continue for another 15 years. In fact the period between 1947 and 53 can be considered as a period of reaction. But the battle for a state system of public education was really won in 1945 with the grant of free education.

Kannangara himself could not pay for his secondary education. If not for the scholarship he won, he may have never risen to the position to which he ultimately rose. He wanted to provide the same facilities to all the poor but intelligent children of this country. He wanted free education provided for the rich child too in a common school, because he did not want to perpetuate two classes in the same school. He once confessed of his experience in being relegated to the third class in the Richmond College Hostel. [1]

Free Education alone could not provide equal facilities. Socio-economic status of the parents had much to do with educational achievement. It was to off-set this disadvantage that Kannangara provided a system of scholarships to the most intelligent children of the village in his new creation — Central Schools.

The results of his reforms are seen now. As far as general education is concerned there is to-day a fair degree of equality of opportunity. This is reflected in the changes in the composition of the University student population that has taken place during the last two decades. Once, when Kannangara revealed that the denominational fee-paying system of schools had given greater advantages to the Christians to enter the University and the Public Service the Catholic Messenger ridiculed him. [2] But when one realizes that the percentage of Christians in the University had dwindled from 35% to 12% one could appreciate the significance of Kannangara's fight for justice. One could also perceive the meaning of the Christian onslaught on Kannangara. Theirs was a battle to preserve the privileges amassed under the Colonial regime.

Science education however has still to permeate into the rural society. Still the urban child has greater advantages and opportunities of becoming a doctor or an engineer. This too is likely to break up within the next decade or two.

Education also leads to economic development. Education, as often Kannangara argued is an investment in human resources without which no economic development is possible. So far in economic development the country has not been able to keep up with the population growth. But there is a growing consciousness to-day even among the common citizens of the need for economic development.

1. H. 1945 Col. 4675.
2. C C M. June 4, 1944.

With the new emphasis on industries begun about 1960 and self-sufficiency in food begun last year (1966) Ceylon with its high literacy rate is sure to reach the 'take off' period in economic development within the next few decades.

Democratic traditions are perhaps best established in Ceylon of the countries that were under Colonial rule till the end of the last war. That too is due to the expansion in general education.

When Kannangara inaugurated his system of Central Schools, E. F. N. Gratiaen sarcastically remarked at the Diamond Jubilee Dinner of St. Thomas' College, 'I understand that 6000 new Central Schools are to be opened, but I doubt that they will produce educationists or sons smart enough as those which St. Thomas' and other sister Colleges have produced.' [1] But after 25 years of existence these Central Schools to-day are competing on an equal footing with the old denominational schools. No body can deny that in every sphere — studies, sports etc. — they have been of recent times a formidable match to the older 'big' schools. They have produced their quota of administrators, doctors and engineers where facilities were provided to do so. They have produced the educationists too. Whether they are smart enough of course (being a subjective judgement) will remain a controversial point.

Kannangara himself said in 1946, 'Of course you cannot expect a Central School opened the other day to be so good as schools which are 70 or 50 years old, . . . but at no distant date they will be able to compete on equal terms.' [2] To-day even Gratiaen will agree that that prophesy has come true.

Speaking of the major reforms in education that took place in 1945-46 the Director of Education concluded, 'These changes would have been impossible without the personality and drive of the Minister of Education, the Hon. C. W. W. Kannangara, without whose force and initiative this chapter in the educational history of Lanka might have been very different.' [3]

In his Administration Report for 1947 (written in 1949) Ian Sandeman, the Director of Education wrote a Preface — the only one of its kind in these Administration Reports — on Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara in which he summed up Kannangara's work as the Minister of Education thus : 'Dr. Kannangara Ceylon's first Minister of Education, relinquished his ministerial appointment in September, 1947.

'He was Minister of Education throughout the whole Donoughmore period. . . .

1. C D N. February 3, 1947.
2. H. 1946 Col. 3589.
3. AR. DE, 1946.

' Entering on his duties with a background of scholastic experience, he was at the outset confronted with the realities of the world economic depression. . . .

' It is not possible within the brief limit of this survey to mention all the details of Dr. Kannangara's educational reforms. His Ministry divides itself into two periods, the one from 1931 to 43, the year in which the Special Committee's Report was published, and the other from 1943 to the time of his relinquishing office in 1947.

' Perhaps the most important contribution to educational progress during the first of the periods was the introduction of direct payment to teachers in Assisted Schools. . . . During this period he also fostered the spread of the Rural Scheme for boys and its counterpart, the House-craft scheme for girls, introduced the free feeding of school children, . . . and by means of his system of ' schools attached to places of religious worship ' harnessed the resources of the Buddhist temples to the educational machine and provided education to hundreds of children at a period of acute financial stringency. After the entry of Japan into the war, he threw himself into the task of food production, which he administered from his own office.

' From 1941 he piloted the Special Committee of Education through the long deliberations which culminated in its report of 1943.

' The task of giving shape to the recommendations of the Special Committee, duly ratified by the State Council, was a formidable one, but Dr. Kannangara applied himself to it with energy and was able to place the new system on firm ground before the State Council came to an end. . . .

During this long period of office two Ordinances were introduced, viz. those of 1939 and 1947. The Ceylon university was established and a new site for it selected at Peradeniya. There was hardly any sphere of education which did not undergo vast expansion and development.' [1]

Kannangara's patriotism and political integrity cannot be questioned. He became a devoted Buddhist and lived as one. He began his political career as a fairly rich man. He ended up much poorer. That alone bears testimony to his honesty.

A hostile press left no stone unturned to destroy his personality. He received all types of names. A whole cloud of dust was created around him. Sooner or later that dust will clear and this ' pearl of great price ' will glitter dazzling even his bitterest opponent.

1. AR. DE, 1947.

PART I PROLOGUE

CHAPTER 1

A MISSIONARY MONOPOLY

IN 1796 when the British East India Company took over the administration of the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon there were two systems of schools in the island.

One was the system of *Pansala* schools confined mainly to the Kandyan Kingdom, where an elementary education in Reading and Writing, with a Buddhist background was imparted. These schools were really the expression of a traditional Buddhist system of education that reached excellence in the Anuradhapura civilization; due to various historical factors the system had decayed gradually thereafter, though there were several temporary revivals under more energetic and powerful rulers, the last of whom was Kirti Sri Rajasinghe (1747-82) of Kandy.

The other was a well organised system of parish schools, Christian in atmosphere confined to the Dutch territories of the lowlands. These were based on the Calvinist tradition and were administered by the state. The curriculum of these schools was also limited to Reading, Writing and a little Arithmetic, with Christianity as one of the main subjects. Education however was compulsory from five to fifteen years and even after the fifteenth year, there was a part-time system of further education, but confined to religious knowledge only. The primary aim of this compulsory system of education was the conversion of the 'heathen' to the true religion of the Helvetic Church. Unlike the Pansala schools these were centrally controlled and inspected by the Scholarchal Commission.[1]

The British East India Company which had a temporary control over Ceylon as from 1796 to 1798 was interested neither in the religious conversion nor in the education of their subjects. So by 1798 when Fredrick North (1798-1805) came to Ceylon as the first British Governor practically all these Parish schools were in a state of neglect. North, more because of his devotion to Christianity rather than his interest

1. Palm, J. D.: The Educational Establishments of the Dutch in Ceylon: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch No. 2 1846 p. 105.

in education revived the Dutch system of Parish schools. Rev. James Cordiner, Colonial Chaplain who arrived in 1799 became the chief lieutenant of Governor North in this missionary enterprise. They together revived 163 Parish schools and even established an Academy for higher education on the model of the Dutch Seminary of Colombo in October, 1799.[1]

This revival however was short lived as by 1803 an order came from the secretary of state for a drastic reduction in the educational expenditure. Cordiner left the island 'sore at the failure of his plans' in 1804,[2] and North followed him the next year. 'With the retirement of Governor North and Rev. James Cordiner from the country a short span of educational development came to an end.'[3]

Sir Thomas Maitland succeeded North as Governor and Rev. J. T. Twisleton came in place of Chaplain Cordiner. Maitland was more interested in the political control of the colony and 'devoted all his time and energy to perfecting the administration.'[4]

Maitland's neglect of education was criticized in England and 'Lord Castlereagh wrote to Governor Maitland that his Government was being censured for discouraging Christianity and enjoined on him the necessity of promoting education.' During 1810 and 1811 the schools on the south-west coast were gradually resumed 'and the Christian Religion allowed to revive among the Cingalese.'[5]

Sir Robert Brownrigg arrived as Governor in 1812 and soon interested himself very much in the propagation of Christianity for the 'cultural assimilation' of the subject nations. Under Brownrigg, Rev. Twisleton became the superintendent of all the Parish schools. But Brownrigg's chief contribution to the educational development and spread of Christianity in Ceylon was the great encouragement he gave to the many Christian missions that arrived in successive waves during his term of office. He even welcomed an American mission which was not even allowed to land in Calcutta by the government of the British East India Company in 1812.

The eight year administration of Brownrigg saw the coming of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1812, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1814, the American Missionary Society in 1816 and the Church Missionary Society in 1818.[6]

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1. Gratiaen, L. J. : Government Schools in Ceylon 1798-1832. p. 40
2. Ibid. p.53
3. Ruberu, T. Ranjit : Education in Colonial Ceylon ; Kandy 1962 p.79
4. Ibid. p.80
5. Gratien, L. J. : loc. cit. p.25
6. Gratien, L. J. : The Founding of the Mission Schools: Ceylon Historical Association, 1926 p.1

In 1817 'an Archdeaconry in and over the British territories in the island of Ceylon, subjected and subordinated to the see of Calcutta' was established. 'By the appointment of an Archdeacon the Church of England was officially established in the island, and the Government schools were brought under this Ecclesiastical Establishment.'[1]

It was also during his regime that the Kandyan Kingdom was annexed and a rebellion against British rule crushed. The annexation of Kandy was more a conditional hand over rather than an unconditional surrender. Brownrigg had to sign a convention to take over the administration of the highlands in which he on behalf of the British Government declared "the Religion of Buddho professed by the chiefs and inhabitants of these provinces inviolable" and promised to maintain and protect their places of worship (5th clause). But after suppressing the rebellion a new Proclamation was issued in 1818. This Proclamation enabled Brownrigg to minimize to a considerable extent the commitments he had made on the relations of the British Government with the Buddhist religion (clause 16). At the same time the general protection of the Government was accorded to all religions.[2]

No missionaries however were allowed to enter the Kandyan Provinces till 'conditions became suitable for the Christian missionaries to work among the inhabitants in 1820.'[3]

Brownrigg was succeeded by Edward Barnes, first as Lieutenant Governor (1821-22) and then as Governor (1824-31). (He was away in India and England during the intervening period). Barnes looked at imperialism from an economic rather than from a political and or a 'cultural' point of view. He built roads, encouraged plantations and promoted trade. As a consequence, aspects like education were neglected; the number of government schools dropped from 109 in 1824 to 77 in 1825.[4] There is also evidence to show that he disapproved of conversion through education. He even refused to admit a lay member of the American Mission (James Garret, a printer) to the country.[5] But by this time the missionaries had spread their tentacles slowly but surely all over the island, and they had established more and better schools than those run by the Government.

W. M. G. Colebrooke arrived in Ceylon in 1829 as a Royal Commissioner to examine 'into all laws, regulations and usages of the settlements in the island and into every other matter in any way

1. Ruberu, T. Ranjit : loc. cit. p.132
2. Ibid. p.126
3. Ibid. p.204
4. Gratiaen, L. J. : Government Schools in Ceylon 1798-1832. p.36
5. Ruberu, T. Ranjit : loc. cit. p.159

connected with the administration of civil government'. There were in that year 97 government schools to 236 missionary schools. There were also over 60 Roman Catholic schools, some 600 private classes[1] and over a thousand pansala schools.[2] The numbers on roll at these schools were,

Government	1914,
Missionary	9274,
Roman Catholic	1358,
Private	8424,
Pansala	6000'

the total being 26,970.

The aim and objective of all the missionaries was the conversion of non-Christians to Christianity. Swabhasa schools served their purpose best, and very little attempt was made to expand the teaching of English. The American Missionary Society however was an exception. "They from the very early days of the mission in Jaffna, asserted the importance of teaching English. The policy was put into practice in the school system organised by this mission in Jaffna. The English missions on the other hand had not appreciated the importance of diffusing a knowledge of the English Language through the medium of their schools."[3]

There were also five English schools supported by the Government, the Seminary at Hulftsdorp (opened originally at Wolfendhal in 1799), the Orphan House at Colpetty (1802), the Dutch consistorial school (1807), St. Thomas' school (1814), and the school at Trincomalee (1815).[4]

Some of the Private classes also taught some English. All told, not more than 800 children attended schools and classes where English was taught. The five government English schools mentioned above alone had 400 of them.[5]

Thus of the 26,970 who attended school, the vast majority received only an elementary education in the swabhasa.

The Roman Catholic, private and Buddhist schools received neither support nor encouragement from the government.

Colebrooke almost immediately after his arrival started his investigations single handed when in 1830 C. H. Cameron joined

1. Ibid. p.236
2. Report of the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry (Sinhala): All Ceylon Buddhist Congress, Colombo 1956 p.6.
3. Ruberu, T. Ranjit : loc. cit. p.168
4. Gratiaen L. J. : Government Schools in Ceylon 1798-1832. p.69
5. Ibid. p.78

him. Early in 1831 they returned to England and submitted five reports on various aspects of the administration of Ceylon. They are :

(i) December 24, 1931. Colebrooke : The Administration of the Government of Ceylon.

(ii) January 31, 1832 : Colebrooke : The Revenues of Ceylon.

(iii) January 31, 1832 : Cameron : The Judicial Establishments and Procedure in Ceylon.

(iv) March 16, 1832 : Colebrooke : The Compulsory Services to which the Natives of Ceylon are subject.

(v) May 28, 1832 : Colebrooke : The Establishments and Expenditure of Ceylon.

On the question of Education Colebrooke says, " ..To aid the disposition already evinced by the natives to cultivate European attainments, some support from the government will still be required. It would be impracticable for individuals, even of the most respectable classes, to support the expenses attending the acquirement of a liberal education in Europe, and, if attainable, the advantages of affording to them the means of education in their own country are in many respects greater.

" The benefits of the measure formerly adopted by government of sending young Cingalese to Europe, and maintaining them at the English universities, were not commensurate with the expense incurred, while 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.—

" The village schools which were established by the Dutch government had exclusively for their object the conversion of the natives to Protestant Christianity ; and in the district of Colombo the number of nominal Protestants who have been instructed in these schools, or in those of the missionary societies, considerably exceeds that of any other class of the population.

" The government schools have continued to be maintained by the British government, but they are extremely defective and inefficient. They are placed under the superintendence of one of the colonial chaplains, who receives a salary of 270.l per annum as Principal of schools. Another clergyman holds the office of headmaster in the principal seminary at Colombo.

" The number of government schools nominally maintained in the Cingalese provinces is ninety. There are but four remaining in the Malabar districts, and there are none in the Kandyan provinces. The schoolmasters 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 languages 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 schoolmasters are alleged to be jealous. —

" A similar establishment of government schools was formerly maintained in the northern districts, but the school masters having become totally inefficient and neglectful of their duties, their allowances were withdrawn in 1806, and they continued their functions as registrars of native marriages, for which they were remunerated by fees. The support of government, and some pecuniary assistance, was subsequently given to the religious societies who established Christian schools in the districts. To the labours of these societies in the Cingalese and Malabar provinces the natives are principally indebted for the opportunities of instruction afforded to them since the decline of the government schools.

" It would facilitate the reform of the government schools to place the establishment 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. It would be the duty of those resident in the districts to inspect and superintend the schools in their respective divisions, and to report to their efficiency and management. The schoolmasters 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.

" If the national system of instruction should be introduced into the government seminary at Colombo, it would hereafter afford the means of providing competent teachers for the country schools; and in the meantime some respectable teachers might be selected from the retired clerks in the public offices which may be reduced, or from other descendants of Europeans who are candidates for such employment.

" 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 instruction may already be afforded. The English missionaries have not very generally appreciated the importance of diffusing a knowledge of the

English language through the medium of their schools, but I entertain no doubt that they will co-operate in this object.

" There is a small English class in the central establishment of the Church Missionaries at Cotta, near Colombo, and a larger one in the principal seminary of the American Missionaries at Batticotta near Jaffnapatam. In both seminaries, but chiefly in the latter, the students have made some creditable proficiency in mathematics and in other branches of useful knowledge, affording the most satisfactory proofs of the capacity of the natives, and of their disposition to avail themselves of the opportunities of improvement afforded to them.

" 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 acquirement in itself to the people.

" As the northern districts of the island are chiefly indebted to these missionaries for the progress of education, the benefit 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.

" In aid of the object of establishing a college at Colombo (an institution which is much desired by the principal native inhabitants throughout the island), I would recommend 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 that an English professorship should be maintained by the government. This institution, if it should be effectively supported by the inhabitants, would give great encouragement to the elementary schools, and afford to native youths a means of qualifying themselves for different branches of the public service."[1]

" In regulating the contributions for the temple lands, and in reforming the service tenures, the concurrence of the chiefs and priests could be obtained to the appropriation of a part of the (temple) revenues to the maintenance of this English seminary."[2]

" 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 the inquiries addressed to them...

" The education afforded by the native priesthood in their temples and colleges scarcely merits any note. In the interior the Bhoodist

1. Mendis, G.C. : The Colebrooke-Cameron Papers, Volume 1, Oxford University Press, 1956 p.71.
2. Ibid. p.36

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 especially anxious to acquire the English language." [1]

"I would recommend" Colebrooke says elsewhere, "that a College should be instituted at Colombo where general instruction may be afforded to pupils of all classes. A Professor should be appointed from England and the qualifications for admission of Native candidates should be a competent knowledge of the English language acquired in any of the elementary schools..... The future appointment of Natives to the Service of Government should depend upon their having availed themselves of those opportunities of instruction which would be open to them.

"With the prospect of preferment thus held out to them, a moderate charge for the expences of their education at the College they would doubtless be ready to incur, and an expectation may not unreasonably be formed that the respectable classes of the community *would unite to raise an adequate fund for a more enlarged foundation.* In this event it would be just that the Government should afford assistance when required by the grant of buildings and land at its disposal.... If a fund should be subscribed with this object the government by holding some shares might participate in the nomination of a certain number of pupils, and it would derive much advantage from the acquirement of a competent class of candidates for general employment in the Public Service, who would unite local information with general knowledge, and would eventually be capable of holding responsible situations upon reduced salaries."[2]

Colebrooke is generally regarded as a liberalist, and as a man who offered so much when in fact nothing was asked for. His recommendations, on the whole 'progressive', were really meant to co-ordinate and consolidate the work of three Governors :

i. Maitland's Political Control
ii. Brownrigg's Cultural Assimilation
and iii. Barnes' Economic development.

Politically he aimed at building a united Ceylon where the responsibility of administration would gradually pass into the hands of the Ceylonese themselves.

Economically he was for free enterprise where neither forced labour nor state monopolies would hinder development.

1. Ibid. p.74
2. Ibid. p.215

If at all he blundered it was in cultural matters. Like his counter parts in India Thomas B. Macaulay and Charles Grant he aimed at creating a class of persons who would be Ceylonese " in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. "[1]

' The education afforded by the native priesthood ' on his evaluation ' scarcely merits any note. ' He gives no details of this system but directs the reader to the replies sent by the colonial clergy to the questionnaire addressed to them, for any further information.

The replies he refers to surprisingly tells a different story. Colebrooke got most of his information on the condition of education in Ceylon in 1829 from the reply sent by the Archdeacon to his elaborate questionnaire. Replying question eleven the Archdeacon says, " ..Heathens are taught to read and write Singhalese much better by the Buddhist priests ."[2] To Colebrooke ' much better teaching ' scarcely merits any note.

Further in Bishop Heber's (Calcutta) Journal reference is made to a Buddhist college in Kandy adjoining the Lake " ..where forty priests live under strict discipline chiefly occupied in religious duties and in teaching. "[3] No doubt Buddhist education at the time was at its ebb. But Colebrooke seems too Christian to have a proper perspective of the little sacrifices the Bhikkhus were still making under very trying circumstances.

On the other hand Colebrooke not only pays high compliments to the Christian priests but also recommends that the government should close down its schools 'where English instruction may already be afforded by the missionaries. '

It will be of interest to compare the situation in Ceylon with that of Colebrooke's own country. In England at the time even children of seven to eight years were physically dragged away into factories and mines to toil there for as many as twelve to fourteen hours a day. The richer classes including the established church were openly against any education being given to the working class. ' The Education of the poor would result in discontent and rebellion ' they argued. " The poor occupied a position in society which had been assigned to them, and if they were to be labourers they should be used to their position from the very first " was the prevailing opinion among the ruling class and the Anglican clergymen.[4] There were a few

1. Macaulay, Thomas B. : Minute 1834
2. Government Archives, Colombo: Lot 19. No. 20
3. Fernando, C. N. V.: Some Aspects of Christian Missionary Enterprise in the Early British Period 1796-1830: Ceylon University Review, October, 1950 p.264.
4. Curtis, S. J. : History of Education in Great Britain : London, 1963. p.195

charity schools organised by self-sacrificing laymen, but even these could not find teachers and " in most cases the masters were drawn from the very dregs of society. Many were ignorant and brutal and much addicted to drink."[1]

Even these so called charity schools could not be continued long. " The demand for child labour became so great that children of tender years could be found work in the mills and mines "[2] and unless all members of the family worked for twelve to fourteen hours a day they could not buy their daily bread. By 1780 all the charity schools were forced to be closed as there were no children to attend them.

" The children still had one day of the week in which they were free. It was their wild and mischievous behaviour on Sundays that was the occasion of the Sunday School Movement which for the first time had the object of extending education to the poor of the whole country.[3] But even here " the influx of a large number of voluntary teachers, full of enthusiasm but with little knowledge and no idea how to teach the small amount they possessed, often rendered the instruction of small educational value.[4]

The established church opposed even this " education. " " The Bishop of Rochester in the House of Lords condemned the Sunday schools as fostering the views of the French Revolution, and some Dissenters accused Raikes (Robert Raikes who started the Sunday school movement) of being a Sabbath breaker because the schools were opened on Sundays. Opposition also came from the parents themselves. One of the person's most influenced by the movement was Hannah More who, with her sisters, left the society life of London to live in Mendip parish of Cowslip Green. She records that when she tried to persuade parents to send their children to school, they believed she was trying to secure them to sell as slaves in the West Indies. The movement, however proved stronger than the opposition. Hannah More was shocked by the ignorance, filthiness and depravity of the people in the Cheddar district. She relates that she saw only one Bible in the village and that was used to prop up a flower-pot."[5]

Colebrooke coming from England and as the representative of a government that did not spend a penny on education at the time says that ' the education afforded by the native priesthood in their temples and colleges scarcely merits any note. ' In fairness to the people of Ceylon this much can be said. Traditionally the people whether

1. Ibid. p.196
2. Ibid. p.197
3. Ibid. p.197
4. Ibid. p.199
5. Ibid. p.200

literate or illiterate venerated learning. Bhikkhus even under famine conditions not only did not oppose the spread of education but also dedicated their lives for learning and teaching. One would never witness in Ceylon a Book of the Dhamma propping up a flower-pot !

Governor Edward Barnes writes to the Commission, " In England the population is Christian and therefore it is natural that all the schools and colleges should be Christian establishments, but we have, I think very absurdly carried the same system into the schools here, where the people are generally Buddhists or Hindoos and one of the greatest defects of our school system is in my opinion, that it has got too much into the hands of the clergy. It has been considered more as an instrument of conversion of the people to Christianity than of general improvement in civilization. "[1]

That Colebrooke had the idea of creating Ceylonese in blood and colour but Christians in culture is even more clearly expressed when he recommends the government " to aid the disposition already evinced by the natives to cultivate European attainments. "[2]

He was frankly opposed to the existing system of swabhasa Parish schools and recommends the government to establish and maintain only English schools. According to Colebrooke education was not only an ' exportable commodity ' it should bring with it the whole cultural pattern of the west. Thus the schools (including the Colonial College he wanted established at Slave Island) should not only have a Christian background but they should also be the centres of its dissemination. He further recommends that ' a part of the revenue of Buddhist temples should be appropriated to the maintenance of these institutions. '

The Secretary of State for Colonies accepted most of these recommendations. Barnes who was not very sympathetic to the commission left the island in 1831 and Robert Wilmot Horton (1831-37) came in his place.

Immediately after the arrival of Governor Horton the government swabhasa parish schools were closed, thus ending a system started during the Portuguese era. In 1834 the first School Commission was appointed with Archdeacon J. M. S. Glenie as its President. Subordinate Committees were also established at Kandy, Galle, Jaffna and Trincomalee, with the respective government agents as chairmen.

The duty of the Principal Commission at Colombo ' was to superintend the school establishment generally through out the island

1. Mendis, G. C. : loc. cit. Volume II, pp.31-2.
2. Ibid. Volume 1, p.71

and to submit to the government the measures they consider it expedient to adopt for the establishment of efficient schools for the extension of education.'[1]

The new English schools established were all placed under the direct control of the Colonial Chaplain, and the first school masters were generally men holding office in the church.

'The School Commission though not giving satisfaction to any one was allowed plenty of time to prove its efficiency. . . But the clergy could not act harmoniously and they do not seem to have set an example of charity towards each other'[2] Archdeacon the president of the Commission very often clashed with the Secretary Rev. Joseph Marsh and other members did not care to attend the meetings.

In 1841 Governor Stewart Mackenzie (1837-41) abolished the School Commission and a remodelled Central School Commission was appointed in its place. The School Commission however during its seven year regime had established 40 schools, 34 of them imparting an elementary education in the English medium and the other six teaching in the Tamil medium. A total of 2062 (1808 boys and 254 girls) were enrolled in these schools.[3] In addition the government also maintained the Colombo Academy (established in 1835 as a private school by Rev. Joseph Marsh but taken over by the government in 1836 on representations made to the Governor by the Burghers of Colombo that 'the assistance of Government be given in the formation of a permanent Institution for affording to their children the means of a liberal education'[4]) which had 116 boys on roll.

The missionary enterprise however had grown much faster and by 1841 the four missionary societies had established as many as 325 schools with a total enrolment of 13,477 of whom 2903 were girls. Of the 325 schools 21 were English, 15 bilingual and the rest swabhasa. There were over a hundred Roman Catholic schools in addition which were enumerated as private.[5]

The Central School Commission appointed in 1841 was more 'representative' than the School Commission of 1834. The School Commission consisted of a few government servants and the clergy of the established church. Only the Anglican religion was taught in

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1. Ceylon Government Gazette, June 7, 1834.
2. Gratiaen, L. J. : The Story of Our Schools, Ceylon Historical Association 1927 p.9.
3. Ceylon Blue Book, 1841.
4. Gratiaen, L. J. : Colombo Academy Under Marsh and Boake : Ceylon Historical Association, 1931. p.2.
5. Ceylon Blue Book, 1841.

government schools which was a compulsory subject. The schools were really managed by the Colonial Chaplains.

In 1840 in his address to the Legislative Council governor Mackenzie proposed that the government schools were to be open to children of all denominations. The basis of education was to be the scriptures, but no exclusive tenets were to be taught, and children were to attend their parents place of worship.[1] In other words, the government schools instead of being confined to the Anglicans, should be open to all Christians irrespective of the denominational label.

The School Commission also was remodelled accordingly. It was to have representatives of all Christian denominations and thus become 'Central'. In the Central School Commission sat representatives of the Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Wesleyan churches for the first time in addition to the usual Anglican clergy and the Government officials. A representative of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council also was nominated to the Commission. This Commission which was to have no denominational character could not have the Anglican Archdeacon as President. The new President was the Colonial Secretary.

The "heathens" of course though were now in a majority in the country had no place in this exclusive Christian Club. They could seek entry to government schools, but must be prepared to get 'civilized', in the process. So any 'heathen' who dared to get an English education ended necessarily as an 'enlightened' Christian as well.

The government schools were really Chaplain's schools and on August 17, 1841 the Commission resolved that "it is the opinion of the Commission that wherever there is a Colonial Chaplain there ought to be a Boys' school and a girls' school attached to his church and that the religious instruction of these schools could be left under the uncontrolled direction of the chaplain, but that the secular education should remain under the general direction of the Commission."[2]

The Commission also was at liberty to grant aid to non-government schools on full right of inspection and examination being allowed. (No swabhasa school was eligible for this grant.) In Jaffna the missionaries concentrated on English education ; the system of aid to mission schools gained a foothold over here. The government schools in Jaffna were closed in 1842 and grant was given to missions. The mission schools however, were avowedly religious schools and the Commission even encouraged them to be so.[3]

1. Gratiaen, L. J. : Central School Commission I : Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, No. 83. 1930. p.490.
2. Second Report of the Central School Commission 1841-42.
3. Perera, S. G. : A History of Ceylon. Part II, Colombo, 1948. p.95.

In these arrangements the Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims who formed the majority of the inhabitants were left out. Without any efficient organization for education purposes they were unable to provide schools, with the result that non-Christians had either to forego English education or jeopardise their faith by attending the mission schools or chaplains' (government) schools. 'English education thus came to be associated with Christianity to the discredit both of Christianity and English education.'[1]

In 1817 with the appointment of an Archdeacon the Anglican church for all intents and purposes became 'the state religion of Ceylon'. But the government still 'continued to grant protection' as envisaged in the Kandyan Convention. The Maha Nayakas and the Diyawadana Nilame were appointed by the Governor, thus giving Buddhism nominal state recognition. Even this practice was done away with in 1847. The Legislative Council desired to incorporate the Buddhist hierarchy by an Ordinance. But the Secretary of State for Colonies objected to this and instructed the governor that 'no powerful hierarchy must be created, nor even any artificial support given to a declining religion.'[2]

On the other hand 'by letters patent of the King, Ceylon was constituted a Protestant diocese in 1845. This episcopal establishment was the state church and as such was paid for by the State.[3]

James de Alwis in editing 'Sidat Sangarawa', a grammar of the Sinhala language gave expression to the prevailing jubilation in the Christian camp in 1852 thus : 'We hope the day may yet come when the Trio of the great God will become a substitute for the Triad of Buddhism ; and when men shall in truth and in spirit worship Jehovah and .. sing praise to his name .'

In 1847 after a lapse of over 15 years the government once again decided to take some interest in the spread of swabhasa education. 'The Central School Commission took over some missionary schools (swabhasa) and began new ones for the teachers who were coming out of the Native Normal (Training) School established in 1845.'[4]

After 1847 once again the denominational quarrels started in the Commission and the Anglican chaplain refused to serve on the Committee. The Anglican Bishop resigned his membership. They objected to the Scotch chaplain MacVicar being the Secretary of the Commission. MacVicar made a voluntary surrender of his office[5]

1. Ibid. p.95-6.
2. Quoted in the Report of the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry: loc. cit. p.75.
3. Perera, S. G.: loc. cit. p.96.
4. Gratiaen, L. J.: Central School Commission I : loc. cit. p.502.
5. Ibid. p.507

and a layman (J. Fraser, Keeper of the Government Records) was appointed as Secretary.

At the end of 1847 the Government faced a financial crisis and expenditure on education was cut down to nearly half. School fees were raised, and even pupils in the new swabhasa schools had to pay fees. Many teachers were retrenched and the standards fell. " The closing of the Normal Classes, which had begun to do such satisfactory work, definitely checked the movement for improvement inside the English Schools, and led to such a lowering of standards that the Government schools of the south-west coast were, for many years to come, outclassed by the Jaffna Mission schools. "[1]

In 1852 swabhasa education became free once again, but five years later the ' Native ' Normal School was closed down, retarding the growth of a system of swabhasa schools that had begun in 1847.

' In 1859 the University of Calcutta began to hold its entrance examinations at the Academy, and soon Queen's College was begun as part of the Academy and an affiliated College of Calcutta University to prepare pupils for the higher examinations of the University.' The Queen's College may have in some respects filled the gap created by the closing of the Normal classes. But ' the Queen's College did not prove a great success, there being often only one or two students in a class,'[2]

Education was still entirely in the hands of the Christians and the Commission gave no encouragement to the non-Christians to enter this exclusive field. The temple schools which still functioned in the villages received no grant and in fact according to the regulations framed on February 5, 1861 by the Commission, schools that taught the Bible alone were eligible for a government grant.[3]

The Commission and the schools were neither efficient nor popular. The mishandling of the question of grants had left much soreness behind.[4] Roman Catholics were the first group to demand reforms in the educational system. Mgr Christopher Bonjean first Catholic Archbishop of Colombo wrote in 1860, " if for some conscientious and weighty scruples, they (Catholics) are debarred from availing themselves of Government education in the form in which it is now imparted, have they not a further claim on Government to obtain a modification of the present system, and has not government, with

1. Gratiaen, L. J.: Central School Commission II : Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Colombo Branch No. 84, 1931. p.40.
2. Gratiaen L. J.: Central School Commission III : Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Colombo Branch No. 86, 1933. p.335.
3. Report of the Buddhist Committee of Inquiry : loc. cit. p.9.
4. Gratiaen, L. J.: Central School Commission III : loc. cit. p.343.

regard to them the further duty of rendering education available to them ? Surely Government cannot wish to force upon us a system of education which our religious principles prevent us from receiving.

They cannot do it, they will not do it..... "[1]

At last action was taken, though not directly by Government. In October 1865 M. Coomaraswamy moved in Council for a Committee " to inquire into and report upon the state of education in the island ; the amount of success which has attended the working of the present system of education ; and any improvements that may be deemed advisable to make there on."[2]

This was seconded by J. Martenz.

The Colonial Secretary then moved that a Committee be appointed to make the inquiry on the preceding motion consisting of the Queen's Advocate (R. F. Morgan), the Surveyor-General (A. B. Fyers), the Collector of Customs (J. Parsons), Coomaraswamy and Martenz.

This was accepted by the Council and Ceylon's first committee of inquiry on education came into being. The report of the committee was published in 1867.

The recommendations of the committee were that :

(1) Government should open vernacular schools in all parts of the country to provide an elementary education for the general mass of the people. Fees in these schools at best be only nominal.

(2) Elementary schools with English as the medium of instruction should be abolished.

(3) Mixed or Anglo-vernacular schools should be established in every town. These schools should serve as a stepping stone to English medium (secondary) schools.

(4) Central Schools providing a practical and commercial education in English medium should be established in the provincial capitals.

(5) An industrial school should be established in a populous part of Colombo, which should also provide facilities to train teachers for the vernacular schools in the villages.

(6) Colombo Academy should continue to provide a superior education for students coming from Central and Mixed schools. Teachers for Central and Mixed Schools should be trained in the

1. Bonjean, Ch.: A Few Words on Catholic Education in Ceylon : Madras, 1860. p.20.
2. Minutes of the Legislative Council, October 14, 1865.

Academy. Queen's College which prepare students for the external examinations of the University of Calcutta should be abolished. Scholarships should be offered to the best students of the Academy to enter Universities in England.

(7) A girls' vernacular school should be opened in every Registrar's district. Girls' mixed and Girls' Central schools should also be established where necessary. Needlework should form a compulsory subject. Girls' vernacular schools should charge no fees and as an encouragement to attend these schools village girls may be offered prizes of cloths. The missionaries should supply teachers for the girls, vernacular schools.

(8) Salaries of all classes of teachers should be increased.

(9) A grant-in-aid should be given to all schools run by non-governmental agencies provided they (i) impart a good secular education; (ii) have a stable management and (iii) are open to inspection by government officials.

(10) The Central School Commission should be abolished and a Department of Public Instruction under a Director should replace it. The Director should also serve as the Chief Inspector of Schools and a Sub-inspector should be appointed to each province to assist the Director in the inspection of schools.'[1]

The recommendations of the Morgan Committee like those of the Colebrooke Commission were no doubt sympathetic to the Christian missionaries. For example they did not recommend a conscience clause as a condition for grant-in-aid. It may be noted that the Committee of five had only one non-Christian (Coomaraswamy).[2]

The pansala schools (which still functioned under great difficulties should have been eligible to receive a grant from the new Department of Public Instruction which was inaugurated in 1868.

Some of the Government Officers who submitted replies to questions proposed by the sub-committee ' suggested that Elementary Vernacular Education had better be left to the Schools usually attached to the Pansalas of the Buddhists and the temples of the Hindus.' Thomas Steele, Police Magistrate, Kandy said, "What I have seen of the method of vernacular teaching by Buddhist priests, has often appeared very praiseworthy ."[3] J. W. W. Birch, Assistant Government Agent, Hambantota expressed the same opinion: " The vernacular

1. S.P. VIII — 1867.
2. Companion to the Buddhist Commission Report : Catholic Union of Ceylon p.10.
3. S.P. VIII — 1867. p.77

schools as kept up by Government are generally next to useless, and will ever be so under such Masters as you in general find in them. In the Sinhalese Districts I think the vernacular is sufficiently well taught at the Pansalas".[1] G. F. Nell, Deputy Queen's Advocate, Kurunegala added, " I am acquainted with the Temple schools in this Province, and I consider that they are very efficient for Vernacular instruction as regards the Sinhalese language ."[2]

The committee rejected this suggestion with the remark " There is scarcely any useful knowledge disseminated in such schools, and whatever is taught in them is so interwined 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 ."[3]

If this suggestion was accepted the educational system would have taken an entirely different course. The repercussions in the political, economic and social fields one can only imagine. But the Morgan Committee though recommended a wide-spread system of elementary vernacular education for the masses, were following on the foot steps of Colebrooke and desired to perpetuate a system of education designed to create Ceylonese " in blood and colour but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. " The masses who could not afford an English education were taught to venerate English culture in the new swabhasa schools.

1. Ibid. p.97
2. Ibid. p.118
3. Ibid. p.13

CHAPTER 2

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

In January 1868 the Legislative Council accepted the recommendations of the Morgan Committee. In the same year the Central School Commission was abolished and the Department of Public Instruction came into being with J. S. Lawrie as the first Director. A survey of the progress made in education under the second Commission, would help us to contextually see the contribution of the new department.

In 1868 the population of Ceylon was estimated at 2,081,395.[1] Of this only 34,617 were in attendance at some type of school. This represents a mere 1.7% of the total pupulation. In 1841 when the Central School Commission was set up the percentage at school remained more or less the same. (1841 : Population 1,365,779 ; school attendance 21,631). Thus it is obvious that the Central School Commission could not make any headway in providing more educational facilities for the people of Ceylon.

At the end of 1868 there were in all 915 schools with a total attendance of 34,617. They could be classified as follows :

Type of School	*Number of Schools*	*Number of Pupils*		
		Boys	*Girls*	*Total*
Public	122	6054	1102	7156
Orphan	2	14	19	33
Regimental	9	721	22	743
Free	497	14412	5831	20243
Private	285	5934	508	6442

1. Ceylon Blue Book, 1869.

The free schools were really the charity schools run by the various missionary organizations. They were managed by the following church societies :

Society	*Number of Schools*	*Number of Pupils*
Presbyterian	1	58
S.P.G.	133	4951
C.M.S.	73	2722
Wesleyan	107	4106
Baptist	22	531
American	61	2412
Roman Catholic	100	5463

The attitude of the Central School Commission to religious education is seen from the fact that there was not a single school run by a non-Christian religious organization.

The recommendations of the Morgan Committee as noted earlier were accepted by the Legislative Council in January 1868 and the first Director of Public Instruction J. S. Lawrie arrived in Ceylon in February 1869.

Till June neither the governor nor the Colonial Secretary seems to have given him any directions as to his duties and responsibilities. On June 1, 1869 he sent a 'Special Report of the State of Public Instruction in Ceylon '[1] in which he writes " I am as yet unprovided with instructions in regard to the range and limits of my departmental powers, the nature of my control, direct or indirect, over the administration of the fund placed at my disposal ; in short, notwithstanding my request for 'instructions', general and financial, contained in the letter reporting my arrival last February, I am permitted to continue working in the dark ". (Nor was there an Ordinance regulating the work of the department at this time.)

The government does not seem to have taken much interest in either Lawrie or his department and " three months and a half elapsed

1. S.P. V — 1869.

without further notice being taken of the matter ". It was then that he wrote the above mentioned special report to the governor.

Lawrie's report contains 37 recommendations in all, the relevant ones for the present purpose being :—

(1) That the limits of the Director's duties, responsibility, and range of departmental powers should be exactly defined.

(7) That the principle of payment by results be adopted, involving (i) individual examination of pupils ; (ii) remuneration of teacher in the shape of a capitation payment for passes in the specified subjects of instruction ; (iii) a gradnal increase in the capitation grant per subject in the higher standards ; (iv) the use of the 'Educational Test'[1] ; (v) precautions against deception ; viz. (a) that all pupils presented for examination should have made a certain number of attendances during the year ; (b) that schools at a first examination under this system should be obliged to group themselves in a fixed number of standards according to their class ; (vi) capitation grant (without individual examination) on account of infant classes in village schools.

(8) That an examination of the existing teachers should be held in November, for the purpose of classification according to merit.

(11) That the pupil teacher system be established in lieu of the employment of adult assistants in schools.

(16) That a Normal College for the training of an efficient staff of teachers be established without delay.

(25) That agricultural classes be established in connexion with the schools of Colombo and its neighbourhood, and that the grounds of the Industrial School be devoted to the practical prosecution of agriculture under an experienced gardener.

(28) That Estate proprietors be placed on the same footing as Mill-owners in England, with reference to the education of their labourers.

Lawrie also drew up a twenty year plan to provide an adequate number of schools (about 2000) for the island.

The governor took over three more months (September 8, 1869) to convey the views of the government upon the proposals contained in Lawrie's report.

With regard to the definition of the departmental powers of the Director the reply said, " These are defined by your letter of appointment from the Secretary of State, as those of the head of a department :

1. Ibid. — Appendix B.

a definition which is well understood in Colonial administration, and which the governor believes will be found sufficient for your general guidance."

The principle of payment by results was accepted by the governor.

Lawrie really wished to test the existing teachers, discontinue the unfit, train the fit in a Normal College and appoint pupil-teachers in their place. The Governor was prepared to approve the scheme in principle but thought "it would not be practicable to introduce the change so rapidly. Even if it were practicable at once to replace the present Assistant Teachers, the Governor does not think it would be just, summarily to dismiss the whole of that class of public servants, in order to make way for the introduction of a new system. Your proposal is," the Governor's reply said, "as the Governor understands it, that the Assistant Teachers should be made to undergo an examination ; that those who fail to pass the examination should be dismissed ; that those who pass it should be brought up to the Normal School for training, and that (assuming a Normal School to be established in the meantime) all salaries to Assistant Teachers should cease from December 31, next.

"It appears to the Governor that a large number of the existing Assistant Teachers, though fairly competent for the work which they have been appointed to do, must, from age and other circumstances, be unfit subjects for training in a Normal School ; and it would not be fair, in his Excellency's opinion, to give such men no alternative between dismissal, which they have done nothing to deserve, and training in a Normal School for which they are unfitted. The proper course will be, that you should report to the Governor the names of any of the Assistant Teachers who may be unfit for their work, from age or infirmity or incompetency, as the case may be, leaving their cases to be dealt with by the Government ; and that you should also recommend for training in the Normal School such of the Assistant Teachers as you consider fit for the purpose. The remainder must be allowed to retain their appointments until they can be otherwise disposed of. In the Schools from which the Assistant Teachers are thus withdrawn, the system of Pupil Teachers can be introduced, and it can be adopted in any new schools that may be established."

The Governor was not in favour of Lawrie's twenty-year plan of development either. "The Governor considers that it would be unnecessary, even if it were not impracticable, for the Government to pledge itself to any scheme requiring from 20-30 years for its development. The number of new schools to be established annually must depend upon the funds available for the purpose", observed the Governor,

The Governor however approved the immediate establishment of a separate Normal School.[1]

Lawrie left the island at the end of the year and Walter J. Sendall succeeded him. It was left to Sendall to carry out the scheme drawn up by Lawrie. Payment by results was adopted in 1869 and a Normal School was established the next year. The Queen's College was discontinued and an English University scholarship was awarded to the best student of the Academy, as the only provision for higher education.

' Queen's College was not much of a success as an institution of higher education ' but in the last year of its existence (1868) seven students qualified for Entrance and two more passed the First Examination in Arts.[2] The first English University scholarship awarded in 1870 was won by J. Casie Chetty who entered Exter College, Oxford.[3]

1870 also saw the establishment of the Colombo Medical School with James Loos as the first principal. " It was designed to impart to the native youths a practical, sound and safe knowledge of medicine and surgery so as to enable them to engage in private practice or fill subordinate posts in the public service. "[4]

The course was considered elementary and was of a three year duration. But in 1874 the period of studies was increased to four years.

The inauguration of the Department of Public Instruction for the first time opened the door of the grant-in-aid system to the non-Christians. The necessity to teach the Bible as a condition for grant was dropped under the provisional rules drawn up by Lawrie.

The Educational facilities for Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims still continued to be bleak. For nearly six decades Christian Missionary activities were penetrating to almost every nook and corner of the country. In fact the Christian Missionaries maintained by the Ecclesiastical department of the government were guiding the rulers. They were the power behind the administration. But by 1865 for the first time Buddhists and Hindus alike had begun to realize the danger.

The first challenge to this Christian domination came from Baddegama in the South, a strong fortress of the established church.

On February 8, 1864 the Buddhists led by Ven. Bulatgama Dharmalankara Sri Sumanatissa, Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala and

1. Ibid.
2. S.P. XXXI - 1869. p.7.
3. AR. DPI. - 1870 p.292.
4. Wijerama, E.M.: The Medical College, CDN. October 3, 1966.

Ven. Migettuwatte Gunananda were meeting the Christians led by Rev. George Parsons face to face in open debate at Baddegama. This was the first of a series of great religious controversies which ultimately broke the backbone of the hitherto unchallenged missionary enterprise. The greatest of the Buddhist debaters was no doubt Ven. Migettuwatte Gunananda whose eloquence, sarcasm and wit, even his opponents admired though with a feeling of envy and frustration. Baddegama controversy was followed by four other great controversies at Waragoda (near Kelaniya in 1865), Udanwita (near Rambukkana in 1866), Gampola (1871) and Panadura (1873). Panadura was undoubtedly the greatest of them all where over 10,000 people had gathered to witness the triumph of the lion debater, Vādibhasinha Migettuwatte Gunananda Thero.[1] "His powers of persuasion show him to be a born orator", wrote Rev. S. Langden the well known Christian missionary.[2]

"He laid the foundation for a new awakening which was the beginning of the growth of a movement of cultural progress in the island which loosened the shackles of prejudice of race and creed and has brought about to-day a spirit of co-operation and mutual understanding hardly dreamt of sixty years ago," wrote W. A. de Silva in 1940.[3]

The Panadura controversy had an unexpected result. John Capper, Editor of the Times of Ceylon published a comprehensive report of the debate in the English language. This was republished in the United States of America with an introduction written by J. M. Peeples.[4] It was this booklet that introduced H. S.Olcott of America to Buddhism.

Olcott arrived in Ceylon in May 1880. His arrival was opportune in that the incipient Buddhist revival movement slowly no doubt but surely was gathering force by 1880. The movement started really in 1839 with the inauguration of the Paramadhamma Chetiya Pirivena at Ratmalana, (the oldest of the modern Pirivenas) by Ven. Walane Sri Siddhartha. Most of the Bhikkhus who met the Christian missionaries face to face two decades later were trained here. It was one of the most distinguished pupils of this Pirivena, Ven. Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala who founded the Vidyodaya Pirivena at Maligakanda, Colombo in 1873.[5] This was recognised by the Government as a College of Oriental Studies in 1878 and received a grant of Rs. 600.00

1. Dharmabandu, T. S.: Panca Maha Vadaya, 1956.
2. Ceylon Friend, September, 1873.
3. Souvenir, Diamond Jubilee of the Buddhist Theosophical Society, Colombo, 1940. p.6.
4. Peebles, J. M.: Buddhism and Christianity : P. K. W. Siriwardhana, Colomo, 1955.
5. Pagnananda, Yagirala Sri : Sri Sumangala Caritaya, Colombo.

the first of its kind to do so.[1] Ven. Ratmalane Sri Dharmaloka who founded the Vidyalankara Pirivena at Kelaniya in 1876 was also a pupil of Paramadhamma Chetiya Pirivena.

With the establishment of the Department of Public Instruction in 1869 Buddhist Sinhala schools also have started to appear. In 1880 there were four grant-in-aid schools registered directly as Buddhist. This is the first year in which the department recognised the existence of Buddhist grant-in-aid schools. Prior to this they were classified under Private aided schools.

The four Buddhist schools that received a government grant in 1880 were the Sinhala schools at Koratota, Homagama and Handapangoda in the Western Province and Walahepitiya in the North-Western Province.[2] Of these the oldest according to records was Koratota, which received its first grant in 1873.[3] Possibly the school existed as an unaided school for sometime before. Homagama school received its first grant in 1878.[4] Both of these schools were managed by Ven. Koratota Sobhita, who was better known as an organiser of anti-Christian processions.[5]

In addition to these four Buddhist schools, there were also 24 private schools receiving grant-in-aid in 1880. Of these 14 were in the Northern Province while the other ten were confined to the Western and Southern Provinces. Seventeen of these were apparently managed by non-Buddhists. The remaining seven schools were at Panadura Pattiya (two), Waskaduwa, Daluwatta, Magalle, Kaluwella and Dangedara. Of them, Panadura Pattiya (Girls), Daluwatta, Magalle and Dangedara are the oldest since their names appear in the grant-in-aid list of 1872.[6] The same list names the managers of these schools :

Panadura (Girls)	:	S. Cooray and N. Perera
Daluwatta	:	John Abeykone
Magalle	:	F. E. Gooneratne
Dangedara	:	Mudaliyar P. Dias

It is difficult to say when these schools were actually started. No doubt they existed at least for one year before they actually received their first grant. If these schools were managed by Buddhists, they were the earliest Grant-in-Aid Buddhist Schools in the island.

1. AR. DPI - 1878 p.60-8c.
2. AR. DPI - 1880 p.54 c-
3. AR. DPI - 1873 p.190.
4. AR. DPI - 1878 p.60-38c.
5. De Lanerolle, V. D.: Atitaya ; Colombo 1942. p.50.
6. AR. DPI - 1872 p.381.

The Diamond Jubilee of the Buddhist Theosophical Society souvenir issued in 1940 says, " In 1880 when the society started there were only two Buddhist schools in the island — one at Dodanduwa, conducted under the supervision of Piyaratana Nayaka Thero and the other at Panadura unde the supervision of Gunaratana Nayaka Thero. "[1] This statement stands questioned as the Administration Report for this year classifies four schools as Buddhist, none of which were at either Panadura or Dodanduwa. To the above four a few privately managed Buddhist schools also have to be added. Thus the number of grant-in-aid Buddhist schools in 1880 may have been anything between 4 and 11. As the two schools at Panadura are referred to as Buddhist schools in several sources — the girls school which received its first grant in 1872 can be deduced as the oldest Buddhist school.

The BTS Souvenir also says that the Dodanduwa Buddhist Boys' school started by Ven. Dodanduwe Piyaratana in 1869 was the first of its kind. This school however does not appear in the grant-in-aid lists of the seventies. But an Anglo-Vernacular School at Dodanduwa managed by Mudaliar J. Peiris had received a grant from the department in 1872. It has however ceased to appear in the grant-in-aid list after 1874. If this is the school started by Ven. Piyaratana (which looks unlikely) then the claim that Panadura and Dodanduwa built the first grant-in-aid Buddhist schools may be accepted. The other possibility is that the Dodanduwa Buddhist school remained an unaided school for at least a decade or two.

There was nothing new in unaided Buddhist schools. Many Pansala schools — though comparatively small — existed even at this time. In fact if not for the Christian opposition our whole educational edifice could have been built on the foundation of Pansala schools.

The department of Public Instruction immediately after its establishment was keen to revive this ancient system and the Director's Report for 1871 says, " I hope and believe that many of these pansalas might, with proper management, become the habitat of useful schools for elementary instruction in the three R's ; and among the many priests whom I met.. there were not a few sensible and intelligent men from whom assistance and work in this direction might be looked for. "[2] But nothing came out of this suggestion.

Again after nearly 15 years when the government was faced with financial difficulties the idea was revived. Director's Report for 1885 says : " Thus, though I trust that retrenchment is ended as regards vernacular education, yet it is not fair to expect much increase

1. Souvenir, Diamond Jubilee : loc. cit. p.19.
2. AR. DPI - 1871 p.390.

of help from the revenue, and other means of extension must be sought, and surely this should be in the direction of the Buddhist temporalities.

" I think, also, that much of the difficulty at present experienced in getting Kandyan children to attend school would be done away with if proper schools in connection with Pansalas could be provided. At present, over and over again I am met by Kandyan villagers with this argument — ' We do not want a government school. We have the pansala..'.

" There are no less than 1769 pansala schools, and yet they have only an attendance of only 9,701 scholars."

Pansala schools as mentioned in this report had two very modern features. In addition to a knowledge of letters they provided a midday meal and manual training.

The Director of Public Instruction also adds, " There are some very learned priests who do their duty properly and conscientiously and have very good schools. ....With proper pansala schools, I believe there would be very good attendance generally. ..I have asked the government if legislation cannot be undertaken to reform and strengthen pansala schools and finance them from temporalities. "[1]

The Director was so enthusiastic about the whole scheme that he even prepared a Code for Pansala schools. But no further action seems to have been taken in executing the scheme.

The Buddhist Theosophical Society is the most eminent of Buddhist institutions, which fostered ' Buddhist Education '. Henry Steele Olcott landed in Galle, Ceylon on May 16, 1880. Born in New Jersey, U.S.A. in 1832, Olcott was a lawyer by profession. But early in life he took an interest in philosophy and religion, and with the assistance of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky a Russian lady he founded the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875. But a week after his arrival in Galle, he formally embraced Buddhism at the Wijayananda Temple.

In May, the same year the Galle Branch of the Theosophical Society was formed which later changed its name to the Galle Buddhist Educational Society. At Banewatte, Galle the first Buddhist English school was opened almost immediately after, but by 1882 it had completely collapsed due to bad management.[2]

In June Olcott moved on to Colombo. On June 8, 1880 an informal meeting was held to discuss the formation of the Ceylon

1. AR. DPI - 1885 p.73 D.
2. Ginige, J.: Buddhist Education in Ceylon and other Essays. London, p.20.

branch of the Theosophical Society. Nine days later at a residence called 'Redcliffe' in Slave Island about forty people gathered to inaugurate the Colombo Theosophical Society, which later became the Buddhist Theosophical Society (in fact a contradiction in terms) and shed all its connections with the parent body. It had its head quarters at 54, Maliban Street and at 71, Second Cross Street before moving into its permanent home at the Norris Road in 1885.

In 1880 also started the 'Sarasavi Sandarasa' a Sinhala weekly — with Weragama Punchi Banda as the first Editor — to organize the Buddhist opinion in the country. A little later the English supplement 'The Buddhist' was added into its list of publications.

On the Vesak day of 1881 the Buddhist National Fund was inaugurated at Kelaniya and within five years a sum of nearly Rs. 13,000 was collected mainly from token donations.

Like the Christian Societies of England the first educational venture of the BTS was the establishment of Sunday schools. Before the end of 1881 nine Sunday schools were functioning in various parts of Colombo. On November 1, 1886 the Sunday school in Pettah was converted into Pettah Buddhist English school — with C. W. Leadbeater as the first Head Master — which later became Ananda College.

After 1888 the BTS went all out to start more and better Buddhist schools in all parts of the country, and by the end of the century had as many as 142 registered grant-in-aid schools. The following figures show the rapid growth of the movement :

Year	*No. of Buddhist Schools*	*No. of Pupils*	*% of the pupils in all aided schools*
1880	4	246	.4
1885	8	734	1.3
1890	18	1761	2.5
1895	54	6261	7.0
1900	142	18700	15.5

In official eyes the Buddhist movement was an offspring of factious opposition which had to be crushed out of existence by repressive

measures. Such arbitrary regulations as the 1/4 mile clause (which by the way was brought into operation with retrospective effect) was the outcome of the views entertained by the department in regard to Buddhist schools.

"We need these prayers and this help to enable us to cope successfully with forces of the enemy that are spreading all around us. Buddhism is multiplying its agents and activities in opposing the progress of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ", said the Wesleyan appeal in 1899.[1]

With the dawn of the twentieth century Buddhist educational movement spread even more rapidly.

There was also a parallel revivalist Hindu movement. Hinduism like Buddhism had suffered for over three centuries under foreign rule. The revival that started in the second half of the nineteenth century owed much to a pupil of the Methodist Central School, Jaffna — Arumuga Nāvalar (1822-79). After his school career Nāvalar became a teacher of the school. There he learnt the methods, organization and propaganda of the missionaries. In fact he was employed by them as a translator and in writing Christian tracts. Realizing later that he was being used to Christianize Hindus, he gave up his work under the missionaries to spread Saivism and oppose the propagation of Christianity. He too like the Bhikkhus carried on controversies with Christians and helped to develop a modern Tamil prose.[2]

He was a great exponent of Hinduism and a great Tamil scholar. His contribution to the development of modern Tamil prose is such that he is popularly referred to as the 'Father of modern Tamil prose'.

"For thirty years of his life he made attempts to revive and diffuse Hinduism by expounding its tenents to Hindus and also by trying to establish schools. The schools were not only to be centres of developing Hinduism but also to be centres of developing Tamil language and literature".[3]

The Hindu school he stablished at Vannarponnai was the first non-Christian school to receive a government grant. "In 1872 he opened a rival English school at Vannarponnai in Jaffna in order to provide education to Hindu children in a Hindu school" says G. C. Mendis[4], but in fact Nāvalar's school at Vannarponnai received its

1. Quoted in Souvenir, Diamond Jubilee. loc. cit. p.42.
2. Mendis, G. C.: Ceylon Under the British, Colombo. 1944. p.66.
3. Chandrasegaram, P.: Policies Regarding Higher Education in Ceylon During the 19th and 20th Centuries, with Special Reference to the Establishment of the University of Ceylon. Thesis M.A. (Ed.), University of London (Unpublished) 1961 p.149.
4. Mendis, G. C.: Ceylon Under the British. loc. cit. p.66.

first grant of £48-2-6 in 1870. This was the largest Swabhasa school in the island with 260 pupils on roll and earned the highest grant among the Swabhasa schools during that year. English may have been a part of the curriculum but it continued to be listed under vernacular schools even after 1872.[1]

The opposition of the Christian missionaries to the Hindu schools in Jaffna was even stronger than their opposition to the Buddhist schools in the South. " During the last two years some applications were considered for the registration of schools under Sivite Managers. They were large schools, had existed for many years, and fulfilled every criteria required by the existing regulations. ..The protests of one of the managers (Christian) against the registration of such schools have been of a very determined kind, and he directly claims for the society which he represents the ' exclusive possession ' of the district in which his schools are situated. Indeed with reference to a school which had been in existence for nearly twenty years, he says : ' If it can be made plain that the school (Hindu) is really needed, the teacher should be required to accept Mission (Christian) management as the sole condition to receiving Government aid '. This is the comment of the Director of Public Instruction on the vitality of the Hindu Educational Movement during this period.[2]

Navalar's death in 1879 created a void in the development of Hindu education. But soon the Hindus in general felt the danger their religion faced and by 1885 a number of Hindu schools were organized.

Ponnambalam Ramanathan presenting a memorial from certain Hindu inhabitants of the Jaffna Peninsula, complaining of religious intolerance on the part of certain Christian missionary managers of grant-in-aid schools in February 1884 said, "..children who are obliged to go to these missionary schools are forced by the missionaries, under pain of fines and expulsion, to read the Bible whether they liked it or not. ..There are no government schools, either English or Anglo-Vernacular, in the Northern Province of Ceylon, and English education is imparted almost exclusively by the different Christian missionary bodies who have located themselves there. It appears that religious intolerance on the part of some of the managers has varied with varying times and circumstances, and that it has been steadily growing ever since the champion reformer of Hindus in the Northern Province — Arumukha Navalar — died in 1879.

" Hindu boys who, for want of their own English schools, resort to the missionary schools, have learnt to make mental reservations

1. AR. DPI - 1872 p.381
2. AR. DPI - 1880 p.21c

and are getting skilled in the art of dodging. The holy ashes put on at home during worship are carefully rubbed off as they approach the Christian school and they affect the methods of Christian boys while at school. I know of many cases in which even baptized boys and teachers, when they cease to be connected with such schools, appear in their true colours, with broad stripes of consecrated ashes and rosaries, to the great merriment of the people and the deep chagrin of the missionaries. There is a great deal too much of hypocrisy in Jaffna in the matter of religion, owing to the fact that the love of the missionaries for proselytes is as boundless as the love of the Jaffnese to obtain some knowledge of English at any cost. ....

" Will, then, Sir, the Government, in view of these established facts, which cannot be denied, stand aloof and see unmoved the youth of Jaffna demoralized by the hypocritical feeling engendered and maintained by the circumstances of the case and by its inability to withstand the powerful influence which the missionary has as an educational medium, or is it not the duty of the Government to intervene and put a stop to this evil ? ....

" If there is no conscience clause in the grant-in-aid code, I think the sooner a clause of that kind is introduced the better it will be for religious freedom in Ceylon. If the Government are unwilling to have a conscience clause, .. they should at all events give the inhabitants of the Northern Province the same advantages which are given to the inhabitants of other provinces. In the Western Province there are 26 English and Anglo-Vernacular Government schools ; in the Central Province there are 11 ; in the Southern Province 10 ; but there are no such schools in the Northern Province."[1]

Government did not ' intervene and put a stop to the evil ' complained of, but removed ' the advantages given to the inhabitants of other provinces ' by closing down the Government English schools mentioned by Ramanathan.

Hindus had to find their own salvation. The Saiva Paripalana Sabhai formed in 1888 directed the efforts of the Hindus not only in founding Hindu schools but also in reviving other religious activities as well. ' The Hindu Organ ' (a fortnightly paper in English and Tamil) started in 1889 gave an impetus to the work of the Sabhai. The Town High School which later became Jaffna Hindu College was founded in the same year.[2]

The following figures show the growth of Hindu schools in the nineteenth century :

1. Select Speeches of Ponnambalam Ramanathan Volume I : Colombo 1929. pp.85-8.
2. Cartman, J.: Hinduism in Ceylon, Colombo. pp.55-6.

Year	*No. of Hindu Schools*	*No. of Pupils*	*% of the Pupils in all aided schools*
1880	1	167	.3
1885	4	378	.7
1890	6	661	.9
1895	30	4600	5.1
1900	45	5000	4.2

Let us now turn to the growth of the Department of Public Instruction. Though the department was established in 1869 there was no Education Ordinance to regulate the work of the department. The provisional regulations framed by Lawrie and approved by the Governor were followed till 1879 when Charles Bruce became the Director. He says, " 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, by carrying out, with a view to secure the best possible application of the funds available, many sound recommendations which had been made, from time to time, and repeatedly without ever being put into practice. There existed no code of instructions for regulating the duties of inspectors, teachers, or any of the officials connected with the department, no geographical classification of schools, nor indeed any but a purely haphazard list of them ; no classification of teachers according to seniority or merit, no codification of the various changes which had been introduced in the rules and regulations for Aided schools. In fact I soon found that I had to work in the dark or in the perplexing light of arbitrary and often conflicting decisions.[1]

" The first measure which was consequently submitted to Government was the organization of the inspecting agency, based upon a geographical division of the island into inspectoral districts — into groups of schools for the purposes of inspection.[2]

" Another pressing duty for the proper organization of the Department was to draw up a code of departmental rules for the instruction of teachers. On June 10, 1879 I was able to submit such a code for the approval of the Government. It was based upon a

1. AR. DPI - 1879 p. 8c
2. AR. DPI - 1878 Appendix A.

mass of departmental decisions, instructions, interpretations and modifications, some of which were ignored in practice, and which as a whole had never been made accessible to the persons whom they were intended to guide and control. ... The code however contains two new provisions of cardinal importance. It makes the salaries of teachers in Government schools depend on (a) classification according to certificate of competency, (b) seniority according to this classification, (c) result payments.

" The two documents to which I have referred — my memorandum on the Inspecting Agency, and the Department Code — having provided for the organization of those branches of the Department of Public Instruction, which are under the direct control of Government, there remained the important task of issuing a code of rules and regulations for Grant-in-Aid schools to take the place of the provisional code which has been in force since the system was introduced into Ceylon. .. I lost no time in drawing up such a code based entirely upon the experience of the department during the last ten years.[1]

In 1882 William Blair became the Acting Director of Public Instruction. He found the two-mile rule (no new school to be set up within two miles of an existing one) adopted by Bruce with the new Code for Aided-schools was forcing the majority community to send their children to the existing Christian schools. The two-mile rule also created difficulties for the incipient Buddhist-Hindu Educational movement. Blair made the following observations in his Administration Report of 1882.

" Hitherto, the policy of the department on all religious questions has been one of strict impartiality — of absolute neutrality. But at no distant period it will be necessary to introduce into the Revised Code a rule with regard to religious instruction. The provisional regulations for grant-in-aid in not a few cases led to the multiplication of schools — small and feeble — rivals to each other, often doing more harm than good, and from which schools under mission management were often the greatest sufferers. When the late director prepared the present Code, he decided that, subject to certain exceptions no application for a new school should be entertained if within two miles there was an existing flourishing school, unless the average daily attendance for six months prior to the application exceeded 60. The practical effect of this rule is that, in the majority of small towns and large villages in which there are mission schools, the people are virtually compelled to send their children to mission schools, or to none. .... The complaints of the majority and their applications for government schools in districts supplied with Grant-in-aid schools are be-

1. AR. DPI - 1879 pp.8c-9c.

coming more frequent and more unfortunate, and, in my opinion, are entitled to consideration and respect."[1]

By inserting this paragraph in his annual report Blair — who acted for the Director on Bruce's departure — may have won the hatred of the missions. When the new Director H. W. Green wrote his report for 1883, he took care to contradict Blair's opinion.

" In view of Mr. Blair's recorded opinion ....previous to the present grant-in-aid system a conscience clause had been in operation in Ceylon for many years. ....The sub-committee (Morgan) was of opinion that the existence of a conscience clause had very seriously prejudiced the progress of education in Ceylon, by preventing many missionary bodies from accepting a grant-in-aid.

" The sub-committee recommended, in lieu of the conscience clause, that the Indian system introduced into that country by the despatch of 1854, should be adopted in Ceylon ; that is to say an absolute abstension from all interference with religious teaching in aided schools, in place of a conscience clause limiting religious instruction to a certain period during which the presence of scholars should be optional."[2] Thus Blair's very reasonable suggestion of a conscience clause was dropped.

By the 1880's a change in Educational Administration took place in Ceylon, as a consequence to the collapsing of the coffee boom, though it remained more a theoretical concept rather than a change in practice. The government was facing financial difficulties. Hence it decided to transfer the government English schools within the limits of municipalities and Local Boards to Municipal and Local Board Management. In fact an ordinance was passed[3] for this purpose but only Puttalam cared to take over the responsibility. In Galle the Government Central School was handed over to the Church of England and the Girls' English School to the Wesleyan Mission. The Government English School at Badulla also went into the hands of the established church.

Thus instead of the Local Authorities the schools were transferred to the Christian Missions, which the Director thought was " a better course than if the Municipalities and Local Boards had taken over all the schools which they were expected to do."[4]

In all 21 Government English Schools were either closed or transferred to missionary societies at the end of the year.

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1. AR. DPI - 1882 p.31D
2. AR. DPI - 1883 pp.25-26 D
3. Ord. No. 33 - 1884
4. AR. DPI - 1884 p.29D

The opening of the Colombo School of Agriculture in January 1884 was an important event that took place in the midst of these difficulties.

At the end of 1885 the Colombo Normal School was also wound up and three Normal Classes were attached to the Anglo-Vernacular schools at Kandy, Bentota and Udugampola in its place. The new policy of the Government was to leave English education to ' private enterprise ' and concentrate its efforts to the expansion of swabhasa education.

Even in the case of aided schools the government was now paying more attention to the swabhasa. For example the Director in 1887 reports, " One of the most important events of the year has been the decision now arrived at for the reformation of English teaching in primary and middle schools ... I have for some years advised the adopting of the recommendation of the Indian Education Commission, that English should be taught *as a language* through the medium of the vernacular ; while arithmetic, history and geography should be learned in the vernacular.

" This system is in force in Anglo-Vernacular Schools, but enough English is not taught in them.

" My idea, therefore, was to combine the elementary English schools and the Anglo–Vernacular schools into one improved system, whereby both English and the Native languages should be thoroughly taught ; and we should no longer have Sinhalese young men speaking bastard English without the ability to understand it, and at the same time unable to write a decent letter in Sinhalese as the result of English schools."[1]

The other important innovation of the period is the introduction of the Cambridge Local Examinations in 1880 and the London University Examinations in 1882. Originally the English University Scholarship was awarded to the best student of the Academy. After 1880 this was thrown open to students of all English schools and was awarded on the results of the Cambridge Senior Examination. As the numbers sitting for the Cambridge examinations increased steadily a special scholarship examination was started in 1895.

By 1890 the need for proper technical training was felt and a sum of Rs. 5000 was set apart in the estimates of the year for a technical instructor. This provision was soon found inadequate and in 1893 the Government Technical College was inaugurated to train junior officers for technical departments like the Telegraph, Railway and Surveying.

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1. AR. DPI - 1887 pp.27-8 D

In 1880 the Academy was renamed as Royal College. Science was added to the curriculum and in 1881 a chemistry laboratory was opened. Cricket also was introduced during these important years. Wesley, St. Thomas, and Richmond followed Royal in these innovations.

Lack of financial resources was the main obstacle to the rapid development of aided schools. There were hardly any endowments. The grants were low ranging between Rs. 5 and 6 per head from 1870 to 1885. After 1885 it fell even further and in 1892 amounted to only Rs. 3.30 per head. Salaries of teachers even in the English school were accordingly very low ranging between Rs. 30 and 150 at best.[1]

The Muslims were the last to join the Grant-in-Aid Schools Club. "They repudiated the Macaulayan conception of education. (That is they wanted to preserve their religion and culture at the cost of an English education.) Hence there was a period of non-co-operation with modern education. English education became closely associated with Christianity and quite naturally the spirit of non-co-operation hardened among the Muslims. They were not prepared to endanger the faith of their children even though they were fully conscious that thereby they were sacrificing their chances of obtaining government jobs."[2]

The pioneer in establishing Grant-in-Aid Muslim schools was M. C. Siddi Lebbe of Kandy. He started a boys' school in Kandy which received its first grant in 1891. Another school at Gampola was registered the next year. It was a lecture delivered by Siddi Lebbe at Maradana mosque that led to the establishment of Zahira College in the same year, which however was not registered till 1895.

The growth of government and aided schools between 1870 and 1900 is seen from the following statistics :

Year	*Government*		*Aided*	
	Number of Schools	*Number of Pupils*	*Number of Schools*	*Number of Pupils*
1870	156	8726	229	8201
1880	369	21294	833	59820
1890	436	40290	984	73698
1900	500	48642	1328	120751

1. Gratiaen, L. J.: English Schools in Ceylon 1870-1900. pp.15-6.
2. Azeez, A. M. A.: Reprints of Articles and Speeches. Volume I. pp.1-4.

The aided schools were managed by the following religious bodies.

Society	1870	1880	1890	1900
American ..	44	128	134	129
Anglican ..	82	243	285	318
Baptist ..	5	35	42	25
Buddhist ..	—	4	18	142
Hindu ..	—	1	6	45
Local Board ..	—	—	1	—
Mohammedan ..	—	—	—	4
Presbyterian ..	—	2	2	2
Private ..	9	23	26	20
Roman Catholic ..	31	202	225	336
Wesleyan ..	58	195	245	307
Total ..	229	833	984	1328

At the turn of the century there were also 32 industrial schools on which the government spent over Rs. 16,000. "Whether the work actually being done in these schools is of any real value or not, it is impossible for me to say. Nor am I quite sure that the money spent by the government upon these industrial grants might not in many cases, be more profitably spent in other ways" reports the Director of Public Instruction in 1900.[1] The sceptical way in which the director comments on them shows that they could not have been of a very high standard.

Apart from the facilities already mentioned, there was also provision for Legal Education at the close of the nineteenth century. "Under the rules of 1841 the duty of instructing students in the knowledge and practice of the law was left to private advocates and proctors in their own-chambers and the Supreme Court provided that the candidate should be eligible to stand the examination only in case he produced from his master a certificate that, during the *whole*

1. AR. DPI - 1900

of the three years covered by the articles of apprenticeship, he was *actually* employed as clerk in the proper business of proctor, and had been, during the *whole* of such period, instructed in the knowledge and practice of the law by such master. . . Notwithstanding the production of the certificate in all its strictness, the general run of students has been found to be remarkably ignorant of law and even of plain English ."[1] To remedy the defects of this system a Council of Legal Education was set up in 1873.[2] ' But it concerned itself with the preparation of advocate students only. Those who passed a preliminary entrance examination were admitted to follow the lectures conducted by the Council. At the end of the course, an examination was held. Those successful were enrolled as advocates .'[3] Thus began the present Law College. In 1889 the lecture facilities were extended to Proctor students as well.[4] And finally in 1900 the Council of Legal Education was incorporated as a legal corporation.[5]

Let us now focus attention on the growth of education during the first decade of the twentieth century. The reforms of this period begins with Ponnambalam Arunachalam's comments on the state of education in the island. In his General Report of the Census of Ceylon 1901, Arunachalam writes, " The term education is here used in a special and restricted sense. All that is usually sought to be ascertained by the machinery of census regarding education is the number of persons of each sex, race and religion who are able to read and write. This hardly reveals the true educational status of a country. But it is a measure of the efforts made by Government and by religious and other agencies to place education within the reach of the masses.

" The census under report had some new features in this respect. There were in Ceylon a total of 867, 103 persons of the school age. The Director in his last report estimates that in 1901, there were 218,479 children under instruction. Thus about three fourths of the children of school age numbering about 650,000 do not attend school either because there is no school provided for them or because there is no means of enforcing their attendance. These are facts of grave significance and need no comment."[6]

Soon attention was focussed on three aspects of education. (i) Compulsory elementary education for all, (ii) Decentralisation of school administration and (iii) Higher education.

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1. Select Speeches of Ponnambalam Ramanathan. loc. cit. pp.188-9.
2. Ord. No. 19 - 1873.
3. Ranasinghe, B. L.: Education in Ceylon since 1900, Thesis M.A. (Ed.) University of Ceylon, (Unpublished). 1961. p.60.
4. Ord. No. 1 - 1889.
5. Ord. No. 2 - 1900
6. The Census of Ceylon 1901, Volume I p.127.

The interest in the spread of elementary education is seen in the attention paid to the educational needs of (i) Rodiyas of Ceylon, (ii) Indian labourers on the estates and (iii) remote villagers of the backwoods.

In 1904 a Committee headed by Arunachalam was appointed to report on the measures which should be taken for the education of the Rodiyas of Ceylon. This was a direct result of Arunachalam's comments in the Census Report where he said, "Certain sections of the community are worse off in this matter than others. The most neglected are the Rodiyas, the outcast tribe of the highlands."[1]

The committee found that there were only 1422 Rodiyas living in Ceylon, divided among no less than 71 Kuppayamas (settlements), spread over four provinces. Their first need was a permanent and self-sufficient settlement. They should be encouraged to cultivate land and develop their traditional crafts instead of the lowly begging they were engaged in. Schools with an industrial bias could be established only when they were permanently settled.[2]

Another committee was appointed to go into the educational needs of the Immigrant Tamil 'Cooly'. There were 400,000 Indian Tamils living on the estates in 1901. Of these nearly 50,000 were of school going age. But only 1840 attended some type of an estate school in 1902. Out of 1857 estates only 43 had an excuse for a school, 29 of them managed by the Tamil 'Cooly' Mission. "Compared with other vernacular schools, these estate schools are most generously treated. They get double grant up to a certain limit. But tea plucking affords remunerative employment for children, and parents naturally prefer their earning money to learning and in the absence of any regulation for compulsory education estate schools have become possible only where the planters are generous enough to let off the school children from work an hour or two earlier."[3]

The government found it difficult to maintain schools in the scarcely populated dry zone. The village committees were assisted to open elementary schools in the Tamankaduwa, Hiriyala, Wanni and Uva. The cost of these 'Gamsabhava Schools' were met from private subscriptions, and the buildings were erected and maintained by the joint labour of all the inhabitants concerned. A few of them earned a small grant and the department took over any school that was sufficiently established.[4]

In 1905 the governor appointed a full fledged Commission under the Chairmanship of Herbert Wace to go into this whole question of

1. Ibid. p.126
2. S.P. III - 1905.
3. S.P. IV - 1905 (Also AR. DPI - 1902)
4. AR. DPI - 1904

compulsory elementary education. The Commission investigated five important aspects of the problem. (i) Within what limits is a general scheme of compulsory elementary education possible. (ii) How the difficulties arising from differences of religion are most likely to be overcome. (iii) How the localities concerned can be entrusted with more powers which will give them some voice in educational questions. (iv) How a larger portion of the expenditure can be brought into relation with funds raised locally and (v) Education of the children of the Tamil ' Coolies. '

The main recommendations of the Wace Commission were : (i) In densely populated areas provision of schools for boys should be made compulsory ; (2) Girls education should be expanded but cannot be made compulsory ; (3) Attendance should be enforced only in government schools ; (4) If compulsory attendance is enforced in aided schools as well, a guarantee that there is no conversion is very necessary. Religious instruction should be provided only during periods specified in the timetable. No religious instruction should be given to the children of unlike denominations without the consent of their parents. (5) If a compulsory system of education is to be enforced a better organization has to be set up. Administration can be decentralised by setting up (a) District School Committees under the chairmanship of the Government Agent or the Assistant Government Agent and (b) Divisional School Committees with the chief Headman as Chairman. (6) About 50% of the Road Tax can be handed over to these Committees to construct and maintain school buildings and to provide school furniture. (7) Where funds are inadequate the people of the area should provide money for a new school. (8) The state should insist that an elementary vernacular education should be given to the children of the Immigrant Tamil in the estates. But the planter can be left free to organise it in any way he wishes.[1]

The government enacted the Town Schools Ordinance, 1906 to carry out some of the proposals of the Wace Commission. This Ordinance (i) empowered the Local Boards to establish schools, enforce compulsory attendance and make by-laws where necessary ; (ii) made elementary education compulsory between the ages of 6 and 12 (6 and 10 in the case of Mohammedan and Tamil girls) in areas where government schools were available in close proximity ; (iii) prohibited religious instruction in schools run by Local Authorities (i.e. government schools) ; (iv) prohibited the naming of any school giving religious instruction as a school for compulsory attendance unless the religious instruction is given (a) during specified times and (b) only to the pupils of the manager's denomination ; (v) empowered the Director of Public Instruction to appoint attendance officers ; (vi) empowered the attendance officers to search any home with a

1. S.P. XXVIII - 1905.

written authority from the Chairman of the Local Authority and ; (vii) empowered the courts to punish any child who does not attend school either by whipping or by committing him to a certified industrial school.[1]

In 1907 compulsory education was extended to the villages as well by the Rural Schools Ordinance. Under this ordinance every revenue district was constituted as a school district as well, and a village committee area as a School Division. Each school district was to have a Schools Committee with the Government Agent or the Assistant Government Agent as Chairman.

One third of the value of the Road Tax was placed at the disposal of the Local Committee to put up and maintain school buildings and supply furniture. Attendance was made compulsory to children living within a distance of three miles from a government school. The District School Committee also should take steps to establish new schools in areas where they are needed.

Part V of this Ordinance applied to the estates. The superintendent of an estate was legally obliged to provide a swabhasa education to all the children between the ages of 6 and 10 living permanently in his estate.[2]

If we discount the Ordinance 33 of 1884, these were the first educational ordinances to be enacted in Ceylon and their importance in the development of education in Ceylon need not be overemphasised. Decentralisation of administration and the compulsion of attendance were the two principles they attempted to enforce.

The Education Act of 1902 set up Local Education Authorities in England. The idea of decentralization and setting up of District Committees in Ceylon perhaps had its origin in the English Education Act. In England the power of administering schools was handed over to the existing Local Authorities such as the Country Councils. In Ceylon there was no local body equivalent to a Country Council, hence special District School Committees dominated by Government servants had to be constituted for the purpose. What was adopted in Ceylon was the system of decentralisation prevalent in the Madras Presidency at the time. Arthur Van Cuylenburg, Inspector of Schools, Western Province was sent to Madras especially to study the system. He found that in Madras the majority of the schools were neither aided nor government, but Municipal and Local Board. " Under the Municipalities and Local Boards Acts it is compulsory for these institutions to establish and maintain schools and construct

1. Ord. No. 5 - 1906.
2. Ord. No. 8 - 1907.

and keep in repair the necessary buildings ", reported Van Cuylenburg. It was this system that was adopted in enacting the Town Schools Ordinance.[1]

The Department while attempting to decentralise the administration of government schools on the one hand also set up a Board of Education (1896) to co-ordinate the administration of the aided schools, on the other. This Board of Education consisted of representatives of the various religious bodies that managed the aided schools, " It was essentially advisory. Its duties primarily are to confer with the Director of Public Instruction upon all questions affecting schools, other than government schools and generally to assist the Director in the multifarious details which must necessarily from time to time occur where so many conflicting interests of agencies and managers are involved."[2]

In addition to compulsory education Higher Education also received some attention during this decade. The success of Vidyodaya as a centre of oriental learning encouraged the establishment of many Pirivenas in various parts of the country. In 1902 the Director of Public Instruction summoned a conference of the Bhikkhu Principals of these Pirivenas to discuss ways and means of co-ordinating their work and maintaining standards. This led to the formation of ' the Committee of Oriental Studies ' with the Director of Public Instruction as Chairman. This committee decided to hold three examinations in oriental studies : Preliminary, Intermediate and Final. The final examination was to be of a very high standard equivalent to a general degree in oriental languages.[3]

The experiment was a great success and in 1906 a similar committee was set up in Jaffna to encourage the study of Tamil language, literature and allied subjects.[4] But this committee did not create the same interest as its counterpart in Colombo and cease to function after 1912.[5]

The question of establishing a University of Ceylon also arose at this time. In 1899, due to a threat of having no local centre for the London Examinations the necessity of opening an institution of University status was felt. The government perhaps considered the idea premature, and instead of making use of the opportunity to set up a centre of higher studies, started a long correspondence with the University of London.[6] In 1902 the Senate of the University of

1. S.P. IV - 1902.
2. AR. DPI - 1897 p.D6
3. AR DPI - 1903
4. AR. DPI - 1906
5. AR. DE - 1917 p.A4
6. S.P. XI - 1904.

London ultimately decided to continue the Ceylon centre and for the time being the idea of a University of Ceylon was shelved.

In 1906 the question was renewed again with the formation of the Ceylon University Association. Most of the educated Ceylonese joined this organization and its magazine soon became a forum of much intellectual debate and discussion. This Bi-annual continued to appear regularly till 1911. The office bearers of the Association were :

President	:	Ponnambalam Arunachalam
Vice-Presidents	:	James Peiris and H. M. Fernando
Secretary	:	S. C. K. Rutnam
Treasurer	:	C. P. Dias

The Committee included such eminent men as Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and F. L. Woodward.

Immediately after the Association was formed the government offered two (Arts and Science) English University Scholarships instead of the solitary scholarship provided during the previous 38 years. But hereafter they were to be awarded on the results of the London Intermediate Examination thus cutting down the duration of the scholarship. All these years the scholarship was attached to either Oxford or Cambridge, but after 1907 most of the Ceylon scholars went to London.

The opening of the Government Training College in 1903 with E. Evans as the first Principal was another landmark of the period. A Sinhala Training School had existed from 1870 either at Colombo or in the outstations (Kandy, Bentota and Udugampola). But the new Training College was established exclusively to train English medium teachers and was to be of a much higher standard.

After enacting legislation to provide for a system of compulsory swabhasa education, in 1907 the government directed its attention on the reorganization of English schools. Most of the English schools being denominational, the Board of Education took a keener interest in them than even the department. In March 1911 the Board wrote to the Under Secretary of State for Colonies requesting for a competent officer from England to probe into the English School system in Ceylon. In compliance to this request J. J. R. Bridge, H. M. Inspector, was sent to Ceylon in June. He spent nearly ten weeks in the Island, visiting practically all the English schools. On his return to England Bridge submitted his report (February 1912) to the Under Secretary of State for Colonies. Bridge was one of the H. M. Inspectors of Schools and his report shows that he was thoroughly competent for the work he undertook.

In the first part of his report he makes a general survey of the English school system including the teaching staff and then goes on to analyse the reasons for its incompetence.

The main defect he discovered was the attempt made by most schools to teach children, in the English medium, whose mother tongue is either Sinhala or Tamil. " The accepted principle in the education world," Bridge says, " is to give the early education in the mother tongue ". But in Ceylon the mother tongue is derogatory which Bridge says is akin to an admission of inferiority. Under this system the children do not get any new ideas but only new names for old ideas. These children really do not understand what they learn, but depend on memory to keep things given in English in mind.

This leads to mechanical methods of teaching with the following harmful effects. (i) Powers of observation are left unmoved ; (ii) Powers of thinking dulled ; (iii) Imagination and interest untouched. Mechanical methods do not help pupils endowed by nature to develop in either attainment or intelligence.

Cambridge Local Examination remains the main objective of all teaching. The whole school atmosphere is atuned to this narrow aim. The sound general education that a modern school should give its pupils is neglected and the examination has become the focus of attention.

At the end of 7 to 10 years of English education, with a narrow curriculum and thoroughly examination centred, only 20% who leave school pass the Junior Local. The other 80% has only a smattering of English, often useless even for a mere clerical job.

After this thorough analysis he recommended remedies. " The English school successfully conducted will denationalize the natives. But only genuine and real denationalization is of any use. A mere veneer of Europeanization only destroys the vitality and vigour of the nationality without building anything in its place.

" More Anglo-vernacular schools will be in keeping with the demand. English school system must be for the Europeanized section (whose mother tongue is already English) and those who wish to be Europeanized for the sake of employment. But this second group must first have a vernacular primary education."[1]

While Bridge was in Ceylon another Commission was appointed " to make a general survey of the system of education now prevailing in Ceylon and to investigate in particular the present provision for secondary and Higher education." It consisted of eleven members under the chairmanship of K. Macleod.

1. S.P. XXI - 1912 p.21

The Commission submitted an Interim Report on Higher education in January, 1912. The Interim Report says that the Committee is agreed on the need for a University College and gives four reasons for its early establishment. (i) The best teachers (of the Secondary Schools) are engaged in coaching a few (1-4) pupils preparing for the London Examinations. (ii) Those who cannot afford to send their children to Europe have no facilities for higher education. (iii) The expenditure on new buildings for the Royal College and the Medical College can be utilized for this purpose. (iv) The teachers in the Government Training College can have higher academic education if a University College is established in close proximity.

The Bridge Report referred to earlier re-emphasised the same proposals.

The Final Report of the Macleod Commission was submitted only at the end of April. The Bridge Report which was available to the Commission in February no doubt influenced some of their decisions.

The main recommendations of the Macleod Commission are : (i) The medium of instruction in the four lowest classes should be the mother tongue (ii) Oral English should be introduced before reading and writing to those whose mother tongue is not English. (iii) A child coming from a vernacular school should not be admitted to an English School unless he has passed the third standard. (iv) In an English school a child should not be promoted from the fourth standard without a sound knowledge of elementary English (v) Vernacular need not be a compulsory subject after the fourth standard (vi) English schools should be classified into four grades : (a) Elementary English schools (Lkg-v) (b) Junior English schools (Lkg-viii) (c) Senior English schools (Lkg-x) (d) English Secondary schools (vi-x). (vii) Drawing should be made a compulsory subject in all English schools (viii) An Elementary School Leaving Certificate Examination should be started, and should become the minimum qualification for the government clerical service. (ix) No school should be considered secondary unless science, manual training (boys) and domestic science (girls) are included in the curriculum. (x) Higher grants should be given to better equipped schools which charge a minimum of fees.[1]

The Commission make an interesting comment on the place the Sinhala and Tamil should occupy in the curriculum of the English schools. They were rather in sympathy with making the swabhasa a compulsory subject. But of the 17 Sinhala witnesses who went before the Commission no less than 11 were against having Sinhala even as an optional subject in the curriculum.

1. S.P. XIX - 1912

This type of disposition provoked F. L. Woodward, then the Principal of Mahinda College, an eminent English educationist to declare thus : " The study of English to the exclusion of the mother tongue has become a sort of fetish in Ceylon, the all-in-all of education. English is no doubt a necessity to many for their livelihood, for commercial and professional purposes : nor without English could we in Ceylon keep in touch with the great world currents of modern culture and civilization. But is that any reason for boycotting the mother tongue in the schools, and for allowing our youth to grow up so ignorant of it as to be unable to speak or write two sentences in it correctly ? It cuts off our educated classes from sympathetic relations with, and all opportunities of influencing for good, the vast mass of their countrymen to whom English must ever remain inaccessible. . . 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.

" Empires have flourished and passed away with their languages and civilizations, but the east has still the pass-word to the common treasure of all, enshrined in a great literature of science and metaphysics written in Pali and Sanskrit, Tamil and Sinhalese : and here must be sought the way of progress in real life. But whom the gods desire to ruin, they first deprive of reason. My own view is that the mother tongue should be enforced in all English schools if the government has the real welfare of the people at heart."[1]

Not only to-day even in the early 20th century the Tamils loved their mother tongue comparatively more than the Sinhalas. For, of the ten Tamils who went before the Commission seven were in favour of giving Tamil a place in the curriculum of the English school.

Thus the Commissioners were forced by the evidence to make the swabhasa only an optional subject up to the E.S.L.C.

After 1912 the designation of the department was changed from Public Instruction to Education. Thus it is of interest to summarise the achievements of the Department of Public Instruction during its 44 years of existence, before we consider the next phase in the development of education. The following tables attempt to make a statistical representation of the progress :

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1. Woodward, F. L.: The Advantages of a Knowledge of the Mother Tongue ; The Ceylon Social Reform Society, 1906.

Year	*Population*	*No. of children in school*	*Percentage*
1871	2,406,262	38,355	1.6
1881	2,759,738	93,631	3.4
1891	3,007,789	153,843	5.1
1901	3,565,954	218,479	6.1
1911	4,110,367	359,657	8.8

Year	*Number of Schools*		Government Expenditure
	Government	*Aided*	*Rs.*
1871	180	314	238,436
1881	398	839	482,841
1891	436	971	508,361
1901	503	1407	907,596
1911	771	1964	1,707,218

There were exactly 1910 aided schools in 1910 and they were managed by the following religious organizations :

Management	*Schools*	*Pupils*
American	131	12,433
Anglican	403	32,783
Baptist	30	2,561
Buddhist T.S.	225	33,890
Friends	21	1,047
Hindu	67	8,604
Local Authorities	4	381
Mohammedan	5	650
Presbyterian	4	556
Private	217	25,814
Roman Catholic	453	54,967
Salvation Army	2	142
Wesleyan	348	29,192

Most of the schools classified as Private in the above list were either Buddhist or Hindu schools under individual managers.

Year	*Literacy in any language* *Males*	*Females*	*Total*	*Literacy in English*
1871	23.1	2.0	12.5	—
1881	29.8	3.1	16.2	—
1891	36.1	5.3	20.4	—
1901	42.0	8.5	24.7	3.0
1911	43.3	11.7	28.4	3.3

The following table gives the number of candidates presented for Cambridge Local Examinations:

Year	*Boys*		*Girls*		Total
	Senior	Junior	Senior	Junior	
1881	14	30	—	5	49
1891	59	156	7	31	253
1901	126	268	28	86	508
1911	492	575	46	136	1249

CHAPTER 3

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

AFTER the publication of the Macleod Report in 1912 the designation of the Department was changed to 'Education'.

Some of the less important recommendations of the Bridge-Macleod Reports such as the starting of the English School Leaving Certificate Examination (1914) and the introduction of the Cambridge Examinations in place of the Cambridge Local Examinations (1916) were carried out. But the major proposal of the establishment of an institution of higher education was meeting controversy after controversy. The unseen hand of the vested interest and the reaction were apparently at work. There were many who wished to confine University Education to the social class who could afford to send their children to England.

The Roman Catholic Church desired to establish a separate University College of their own. Archbishop A. A. Coudert and the regional Bishops in a joint letter to the Governor written on September 2, 1913 say, "We cannot conscientiously consent to the necessity with which we are threatened to send our Catholic boys (girls ?) to the proposed University College for their higher education.

"It is a fundamental of the Catholic Church that the claim of a right, on the part of any persons or government, to educate Catholic youth under systems of non-Catholic education, whether elementary, secondary or higher is incompatible with her own inherent right and duty which she possesses by her Divine Commission, of watching and guarding the education of Catholic youth of all classes. She cannot therefore give her assent to any form of monopoly in education which excludes her from the free exercise of this right."

Consequently they put forward the claim of having a Catholic College affiliated to the University College, that is to say, they asked for the right to impart in a Catholic College the instruction which will be given in the University College, together with such financial support, conditions, and guarantees as will be required on the part

of the government to put the students of the affiliated Catholic College in a position no way inferior to that of the students of the University College.[1]

The Governor (Robert Chalmers) did not accede to the demand for financial support and the agitation died down.[2]

The next question that had to be settled was the University in England to which the Ceylon University College be affiliated. After a period of indecision it was decided to seek affiliation with the University of London. Then the war intervened, and the question had to be postponed till the end of the hostilities in 1918. The first concrete step in establishing a University College was really taken only in 1920, when Regina Walawwa on the Thurstan Road was purchased by the government. In January 1921 the University College was formally opened with E. Evans as Director and a first batch of 115 students.

Let us now turn to the development of other institutions of higher education. Of the large number of Pirivenas now in existence Vidyodaya alone received a government grant until 1915. In that year Ananda Pirivena, Kitulampitiya and Parama Dhamma Cetiya Pirivena, Ratmalana received grants for the first time. By 1917 there were as many as 62 Pirivenas of recognised reputation clamouring for a place in the Committee on Oriental Studies. Hence in 1918 the Committee was converted into 'The Society for the Promotion and Encouragement of Oriental Studies.' An Inspector of Pirivenas was appointed for the first time in 1919.

By 1919 there were 51 registered Pirivenas. 'The largest number of registered Pirivenas were in Galle and Matara Districts which had always been centres of Buddhist and Oriental learning'[3] 1919 also saw the appearance of the Journal of the Oriental Society. Suriyagoda Sumangala Thero, a member of the standing Committee of the Society was given a scholarship of £300 per annum for two years at Oxford, contributed half by the Government and the other half by C. A. Hewavitarane. This was the first occasion on which a Bhikkhu had entered an English University as a student.

In 1919 'it was definitely laid down that the government was not prepared to finance new schools opened by bodies which do not represent the predominant religion in the district. It was felt that public money should be devoted rather to increased expenditure on government undenominational schools, or schools in which the children with few exceptions belong to the denomination conducting

1. S.P. XVI - 1915 p.3
2. Ibid. p.2
3. AR. DE - 1919 p.A5.

the school than in assisting in the multiplication of schools conducted by different religious and rival agencies.[1] In accordance with this policy the government took over 13 schools and closed down eight more schools in 1920.

The year 1919 also saw the inauguration of the School Medical Service.

Though by 1919 education had made many strides there was still no comprehensive law on education. Even the Department of Education was not legally constituted. In fact it was this short coming that led the first Director of Public Instruction, Lawrie to leave the Island. But the government does not seem to have taken that incident seriously. Hence Ceylon had to wait over half a century to see a legally constituted department of education. In 1919 a Bill was introduced in the Legislative Council and was passed in February the next year. This was described as ' An Ordinance to make better provision for education and to revise and consolidate the law relating thereto ' and was commonly referred to as the Education Ordinance of 1920. But in fact this was not executed till 1924.

The Ordinance consists of six parts :—

Part I deals with the Department of Education, the Director and Officers.

Part II constitutes the Board of Education which was advisory and nominated by the Governor. The Board was empowered to make regulations which were to be called " the Code ". The Code would regulate the establishment of schools ; the courses of studies ; discipline ; inspection ; the duties of the managers; the qualifications, Salaries, appointments removal etc. of teachers ; the duties of attendance officers ; the training of teachers ; school fees etc. But the Code has to be confirmed by the Governor and approved by the Legislative Council before it commands the power of law.

The Board also could tender advice on any educational matter.

Part III deals for the first time with the controversial question of religion in schools. It lays down a conscience clause after nearly 125 years of evangelization. It declares that (i) No applicant shall be refused admission into any school on account of the religion, nationality, race, caste or language of such applicant. (ii) Religious teaching shall not form a part of the instruction to be given at any government school. (iii) Religious education cannot be a condition for admission to assisted schools. (iv) Religious education should be given only at the beginning or end of the school session and any

1. AR. DE - 1919 P.A.10

student may be withdrawn by his parents or guardian from such observance or instruction without forfeiting any of the other benefits of the school.

This conscience clause however was negative in nature in that it did not prohibit the teaching of an alien religion, but only made it possible for the parents to withdraw their children if they so want. How many parents had the courage to do so is a question that is worth investigation.

Part IV makes provisions for decenttralisation of school administration and the establishment of education Distrcts and District Committees.

(i) A Municipality, Local Board area or an Administrative District brought under the Ordinance becomes an educational district as well. (ii) In every such district a District Educational Committee is set up (iii) They are empowered to make by-laws pertaining to compulsory education of children between 6 and 14 years of age (6 and 10 in case of Muslim and Tamil girls) living within three miles of a school. (iv) The Director of education allocates money among the District Educational Committees for the purposes of erecting and maintaining buildings, fencing and supplying of furniture.

This was an expansion of the provisions made for decentralisation by the Rural schools Ordinance of 1907.

Part V provides for the education of the children of the labourers in the estates. The Superintendent is made legally responsible for the swabhasa education of children between the ages of 6 and 10 living on the estates. No child within this age range can be employed in any estate work before 10 a.m. thus providing a minimum of two hours of schooling per day.

Part VI deals with general topics such as penalties for various offences under the law. This ordinance repeals all the earlier ordinances pertaining to education. (see Ordinance No. 1 of 1920.)

Before we summarise the developments that took place after the Education Ordinance of 1920 let us see the educational statistics as they stood in 1921.

Year	*Population*	*No. of Children in school*	*Percentage*
1921	4,504,549	404,430	9.0

Year	No. of Schools		Government Expenditure Rs.
	Govt.	Aided	
1921	971	2120	4,032,202

There were 2120 aided schools in 1920 and they were managed by the following religious organizations.

Management	No. of Schools	No. of Pupils
American	111	11805
Anglican	370	34902
Baptist	33	3685
Buddhist	431	65405
Friends	22	1434
Hindu	94	12467
Mohammedan	14	1334
Presbyterian	5	886
Private	231	19382
Roman Catholic	516	64876
Salvation Army	6	493
Wesleyan	287	27012

Candidates presented for the Cambridge Examination in 1921:

Boys		*Girls*	
Senior	*Junior*	*Senior*	*Junior*
741	1002	68	150

After 1920 greater interest was shown in the welfare of the teachers. In 1925 a salaries scheme for teachers in aided schools was introduced for the first time. The method of calculating the annual grant also was revised in keeping with these new salary scales.

In 1927 these salary scales were further improved bringing the teachers in aided schools in par with their counter parts in the government schools. Same year saw the introduction of a pension scheme for teachers, thus giving them economic relief in retirement.

Refresher courses and conferences of teachers also were organised to improve the knowledge of the subjects and to introduce new methods of teaching. The first all-island Teachers' Conference was held in Jaffna in 1917. Thereafter these became a regular feature.

While these changes were taking place in the sphere of general education, the University question flared up into a national controversy. At the beginning of the academic year (1921-22) R. Marrs assumed office as the first Principal of the University College. In 1915 Governor Chalmers had decided that the new University should be a unitary and teaching institution.[1] The founders of the College intended to found and knew that they were founding the University of Ceylon.[2] Marrs was very keen to convert the College to a full fledged autonomous university on the lines indicated by Governor Chalmers.

In 1922 a sub-committee of the College Council inspected the possible sites in Colombo and decided on the open crown land to the south of the Buller's Road as the best site for the University. It had 95 acres which was considered more than adequate at the time. Governor Manning and his Colonial Secretary also inspected this site and 'found it most suitable for establishing a University'. Thus he reported to the Secretary of State the desirability of erecting the

1. S.P. XVI - 1915 p.2.
2. Prospectus, University of Ceylon. 1944-46 p.18.

buildings on that site in preference to the triangle (Thurstone Road Site) and asked for permission to set apart Rs. 3,000,000 out of the surplus balances for the purpose. Both these proposals were approved by the Secretary of State. In March 1924 the Legislative Council voted a sum of Rs. 3,000,000 to a University building and development fund. In moving this money vote Cecil Clement, the Colonial Secretary described the Buller's Road site as 'admirable'. In voting this three million rupees the Legislative Council did in fact approve the Buller's Road site. In August 1924 Governor Manning in dissolving the old Legislative Council said, " This Council has voted Rs. 3,000,000 for the building and development fund of the Ceylon University and the Government has set aside an area of 95 acres for the University site."

After the money was voted the plans were drawn. The University Council considered the plans in full detail and recommended that the government should be requested to allot a further sum of Rs. 1,500,000 to the University Fund. In April 1925 the Legislative Council voted this additional sum which again was approved by the Secretary of State. By passing this money the new Council also approved the scheme.

Final plans of the Convocation Hall, Administrative Block, and the Arts and Science Blocks were drawn by architect Reid who was especially got down for the purpose. In November, 1925 the plans were submitted to the new Governor, Hugh Clifford, who formally approved them.[1]

On the academic side the preparation for University status was complete by 1924 and it was thought that only the perfection of detail would be required before the University was established in 1926.[2] Governor Manning in opening the new Legislative Council in October, 1924 expressed the hope that the University would be completed during his term of office.

Meanwhile Marrs prepared a draft University Ordinance to be placed before the Legislative Council in early 1926.

In January, 1926 Arthur Fletcher became the new Colonial Secretary. Immediately after a controversy arose over the question of the location of the University. Who instigated this controversy ? What ever the motives there were two men behind this whole strategy : Arthur Fletcher and D. R. Wijewardhane. Whether Fletcher used Wijewardhane and his Press to delay the establishment of the University or Wijewardhane influenced Fletcher to change the site cannot now be ascertained. But available evidence leads to either of these possi-

1. H. 1927 p.1567-
2. Prospectus : loc. cit. p.18

bilities. That there is a ' guilty conscience ' somewhere is also evident from H. A. J. Hulugalle's ' The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardhane '. Hulugalle describes Fletcher as a charming and admirable Colonial Secretary in one place[1] but does not mention his name at all in connection with the University controversy.[2] According to the Index however Fletcher's name should have appeared thrice in the description of this controversy.[3] Apparently the name was deleted after the Index was prepared, and Why?

Wijewardhane campaigned against the Buller's Road site through his Press and influenced others to do so.

Ponnambalam Ramanathan an ardent supporter of the Buller's Road site detailed the happenings of 1926 thus : " In January, 1926 a new Colonial Secretary, Mr. Fletcher had arrived in Ceylon and became greatly interested in the question of the site at the instance of a gentleman who submitted a memorandum signed by himself and another, in which they two advocated the desirability of building a new Queen's House on the Buller's Road site and shifting the University to some place out of Colombo. (This memorandum was signed by D. R. Wijewardhane and S. C. Paul). In consequence of this memorandum, and its mention in the Finance Committee, and in consequence of some members of the Finance Committee expressing themselves in favour of the proposals in the memorandum Governor Clifford called for the papers on the subject. (It was Wijewardhane's brother-in-law A. F. Molamure who raised this question in the Finance Committee in April 1926). The papers submitted to him from the Colonial Secretary's Office were obviously incomplete." [4]

Governor Clifford, who in 1925 had approved the Buller's Road site was ' won over ' to the Anti-Buller's Road camp by a two pronged strategy : (i) Misinforming him by Fletcher and (ii) Suggestion of a new Queen's House by Wijewardhane.

Governor Clifford fell for it. He called a conference of the unofficial members at Queen's House in May 1926 and told them that nothing had been done with regard to the establishment of the University and wanted them to submit a ' coherent scheme ' as he called it.

Thus ended five years of planning by Marrs and the inauguration of the University of Ceylon was indefinitely postponed. " But for

1. Hulugalle, H. A. J.: The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardhane, Colombo, 1960. p.170.
2. Ibid. pp.189-211.
3. p.197, 198 and 200.
4. H. 1927 p.1564.

the fact that there was a change in the government (a new Governor and a new Colonial Secretary) the agitation would never have started and but for the open sympathy shown by the Governor and his lieutinent it would have died a natural death " concluded James Peiris another supporter of the Buller's Road site.[1]

Immediately after the Queen's House Conference the Governor appointed a site Committee with M. T. Akbar as Chairman. " He was a close friend of Wijewardhane who seems to have had a voice in choosing the names of other members of the committee. They were A. F. Molamure, D. B. Jayatilake, W. Duraiswamy, W. E. Wait and Herman Loos.[2]

The site Committee reported in November, 1926 and recommended Uyanwatta in the Dumbara Valley as the best site for the new University. (Later developments revealed the fact that this was really a delaying tactic).

The supporters of the Buller's Road site had pointed out the following advantages in a Colombo site : (i) The Museum, Museum library and the Zoological collection for Arts and Science students (ii) A large and well equipped hospital for Medical students (iii) Law courts and the Law library for Law students (iv) Large engineering and commercial establishments for engineering, commerce and Economics students.

The site Committee enumerating the advantages of Dumbara said : (i) School of Agriculture, Botanical Gardens and the Agricultural Library at Peradeniya. Ceylon is an agricultural country and hence agricultural studies are more important to Ceylon than most others. (ii) A duplicate Zoological Collection can be attached to Uyanwatta. (iii) University students would ordinarily require only a limited library, hence the Museum library was of no particular advantage (iv) Kandy also had a large hospital and (v) Law students can take their whole course away from the Law Courts.

Further they argued that it would cost five lakhs of rupees to fill in the marshy portion of the Buller's Road site, so as to make the 95 acres suitable for building purposes or playing fields. The cost of levelling the Dumbara Valley site they thought would be negligible.

Buller's Road site will cost they said between 7-9 million rupees made up of the cost of buildings (4.5-6.5 millions) and the value of the land (2.5 millions). Buller's Road site was crown land it was true but the value of the land had to be added as a part of the cost. In Dumbara the land did not belong to the government, but acquisition, they thought, would cost much less.

1. Hulugalle, H. A. J.: loc. cit. p.198.
2. Ibid. p.199

" We attach the greatest importance to the residential side of the University and that this aspect of the problem has been treated as only of secondary importance in the Buller's Road Scheme. To compel 180 students to live each in a cubicle of 15 ft. by 12 ft. within close reach of a marsh and to allow the other students to go back to their homes as soon as the lectures are over and to roam at large in the city are unthinkable ", the committee reported.

Apparently compelling the students to reside at the campus in a cubicle of 180 square feet or allowing them to go home after lectures were equally undesirable propositions. The committee wished to have a ' unitary ' University closely resembling either Oxford or Cambridge.

Ratmalana site which they inspected was found to be uninteresting flat. Peradeniya site they rejected because it had a factory which had to be paid for, and the levelling of the land would cost a great deal.

Uyanwatta, which they selected was the best site because it was neither flat nor hilly ![1]

Marrs, the Principal of the College commenting on this report said, " The Buller's Road site was selected by a Committee, and from the day of its selection the site controversy ceased to exist and no rumour of doubt or difficulty reached the Council's ears. I am ignorant of the direction from which the impetus came to the sudden revival of the controversy. But it may fairly be claimed that the selection of the Buller's Road site was not the outcome of ignorant or misguided enthusiasm as the site Committee suggest."

" It is fair too, to draw attention to, certain examples of inacuracies of statements, misapprehensions, undue emphasis of particular points in the interest of a particular thesis, and omission of relevant statements or quotations which might materially affect the judgement of the reader.

" Thus the Committee might have recognised with due appreciation the fact that the type of University which Ceylon is to have was decided upon some eleven years ago when Lord Chalmers recommended a single unitary and teaching University of Ceylon, and might have escaped the solecism of crediting to the ' unitary ' type, features of an ideal university which derive their chief inspiration not from a unitary University but from the multi-collegiate university of Oxford and Cambridge. "[2]

Though the site committee recommended the Uyanwatta site, later they themselves found that there was a better site at Aruppola on the Kandy side of the Mahaveli.[3]

1. S.P. V - 1927.
2. S.P. IX - 1927.
3. S.P. XXVIII - 1927.

Thus the site committee was really interested in dropping the Buller's Road site rather than selecting a better one. That is why one has to doubt the bona fides of the Anti-Buller's Road group. " There were no sinister motives behind the agitation for a site near Kandy " says Hulugalle.[1] But what was the result of this unfortunate controversy. (Lake House also now admits that the controversy was unfortunate.)[2]

The establishment of the University was postponed indefinitely ; the cost of levelling the land and erecting the buildings has reached prohibitive limits ; the returns from this vast investment has been discouragingly low and the poor child has found University education too costly in spite of free tuition. None of the dreams of the site committee have still been realized, and in fact they have been building a University more in the air than in the Dumbara Valley. To-day three students reside in a cubicle smaller than 180 square feet and thousands roam the streets.

They attempted to quote from the Sadler Commission Report (Calcutta) to prove the advantages of a site outside the capital city. But one of the reasons given by the Sadler Commission against the removal of the University of Calcutta away from the city was that ' if the University was removed from the city another University will spring up within the city."[3] And that is what has now happened in Ceylon. Not only was a part of the University forced to remain in the inconvenient sites on the Kynsey Road and Thurstone Road (in spite of costly buildings at Peradeniya) but also the Buller's Road site was lost for ever.

Wijewardhane opened the controversy under the general headline in the Ceylon Daily News : " should Ceylon have a shoddy University ? " Ceylon of course has avoided the shoddy University at the Buller's Road site and has now her new Grand Stand University, but at the Race Course.

Before this chapter is concluded there is one more landmark in the educational history to be considered. That is the Macrae Commission Report.

In February 1926 A. Canagaratnam moved a resolution in the Legislative Council that a Commission be appointed, ' to inquire into and report upon the present system of education in Ceylon '. Same year a Commission consisting of 14 members with the Director of Education as its Chairman was appointed by the Governor.

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1. loc. cit. p.190
2. Ferguson's Ceylon Directory 1965, Colombo p.1192
3. Calcutta University Commission Report 1919, Volume II. p.382.

The terms of reference were : (a) What measures should be adopted in order to extend the scope of education in vernacular schools; (b) How is it practicable to make Sinhalese and Tamil the media of instruction in the schools of Ceylon. (c) What steps should be taken to improve the teaching of oriental languages in English schools.

Later two resolutions moved in the Council by W. A. de Silva (Provision should be made for a training in their religion for all children attending government and assisted schools where compulsory attendance is enforced) and the other by S. Rajaratnam (Introduce legislation which shall make it penal for any one to teach in any school any religion other than that of the parents to children under 19 years of age) were referred to the Education Commission.

William H. Kilpatrick, the author of the Project method and a disciple of John Dewey arrived in Ceylon while the Commission was sitting. The commissioners rightly invited him to address them on the subject of education. Referring to the denominational system of schools prevalent in Ceylon at the time Kilpatrick said : " There appeared to be a tendency to divide the population of Ceylon into permanent groups with the danger that each group may become suspicious of others. The tendency of dividing schools by the labels, Hindu, Buddhist or Christian is most unfortunate. Such a tendency served only to accentuate the divisions in the population into permanent groups with separate interests. It is quite intelligible and natural for the people of a country to group themselves according to their religions, but the schools should act as the medium for bringing the various groups together. One of the greatest functions of a primary school in Ceylon is to serve as a unifying influence where the labels of different religions ought to disappear. The prospect of a country developing through its schools into a series of non-co-operating groups is a serious matter which the Commission ought to carefully consider. The more a country advanced in communication and politically the less such divisions should appear in the social structure."

Thus he was advocating the state take over of assisted schools nearly forty years ago. But unfortunately Kilpatrick could not convince our Commission !

The main recommendations of the Macrae Commission were : (i) that the schools of Ceylon should be regarded as a basis of union between different communities ; (ii) that the distinctions of race and caste (not religion !) should not be recognised and that the Education Ordinance be amended to make the policy of the department clear in this respect ; (iii) that with regard to religion in schools it was essential for government to maintain an attitude of neutrality, and that the preservation of such neutrality could best be maintained by the refusal to subsidize, either directly or indirectly religious instruction in any

school ; (iv) that the by-laws for compulsory education should provide 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 ; (v) that the government should establish schools in areas where there are no schools and where there are children for whose education no provision exists as a consequence of recommendation (iv) ; (vi) that it shall not be required as a condition of any child being admitted into or continuing in a school that he shall attend or abstain from attending any Sunday School or any place of religious worship or that he shall attend any religious observance or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere ; (vii) that all schools in Ceylon should provide facilities for teaching pupils in their mother tongue ; (viii) that instruction in the vernacular languages should be compulsory for all pupils at the earlier stage of their school career, whether that vernacular were English, Sinhalese or Tamil ; (ix) that as a considerable body of information was still required upon the problem of bilingualism, the Department of Education should prepare a scheme by which a second language could be introduced into schools in a carefully graded and increasing manner and that the effects of such a ' sliding scale ' method should be compared with the method at present used in Ceylon which involves an abrupt change in the medium of instruction ; (x) that in a country like Ceylon with at least three common languages, the pupil has to be fitted for a social organization which employs these languages by the best possible educational methods ; and while the education system should aim at securing for pupils a competent knowledge of the languages of the country, it should do so without at the same time forfeiting any of the traditional or intellectual advantages to be secured from a close contact with the language of childhood ; (xi) that Muslim children can take Arabic as the second language and provision may be made for this ; (xii) that the subject of Arabic be included as an optional subject in the Teachers Certificate Examination and that Muslim teachers should be encouraged to take this examination so as to qualify them to teach Arabic ; (xiii) that if vernacular is made compulsory and transfer to English provided as recommended earlier and if the recommendations were taken as a whole no serious consequences would result if education up to the end of the primary stage (standard V) were free whatever the medium of instruction was ; (xiv) that the supply of an adequate number of properly qualified teachers to meet a system of education which ultimately aimed at being bilingual throughout the whole country would remain the most urgent problem for many years before the Education department and that immediate steps should be taken to deal with this major requirement ; (xv) that in the case of English and Burgher children who attend government or assisted primary schools, government should consider the advisability of providing facilities for further free education up to

ESLC either by remission of fees in the case of government schools or by scholarships in the case of assisted schools ; (xvi) that a bilingual system had greater advantages than the unilingual system.[1]

Any one going through these recommendations would see that (a) the first two were only pious hopes devoid of any significance in practice ; (b) the third to the sixth only details the position that already existed with regard to religious instruction and suggests nothing extraordinarily new ; (c) the seventh to the fourteenth were desirable provided a good knowledge of English is guaranteed ; (d) the fifteenth was a well thought out gift to the English speaking minority and (e) the last was another theoretical statement, unless one knows the type of bilingualism the commission had in mind.

In a country where the medium of administration and higher education (academic and technical) remained English, to provide free education in the mother tongue can best be described as a South African policy. This would have given all the top administrative and professional jobs to the English speaking minority and led the others along a blind alley in the name of their mother tongue.

With the change of the system of government in 1931 these recommendations were not carried out in the way they were proposed.

The year 1929 also saw the publication of the first University Commission Report.[2] This Commission under the Chairmanship of Walter B. Riddell was appointed to draw up the necessary academic and administrative details of the University of Ceylon still struggling to be born. But with the Dumbara Valley remaining as dead as ever, the recommendations of this Commission also remained a dead letter.

1. S.P. XXVIII - 1929
2. S.P. IV - 1929.

PART II HIS LIFE

CHAPTER 4

FORMATIVE YEARS

CHRISTOPHER William Wijekoon Kannangara was born on October 13, 1884 at Randombe a suburb of Ambalangoda. His father John Daniel Wijekoon was a 'native' of Loolbaddawa off Ittapana in the Kalutara District. Christopher's mother was Emaly Wijesinghe of Weebadu Walawwa, Wawala, Hikkaduwa. He had his education at the Wesleyan High School, Ambalangoda and at Richmond College, Galle. He later practised as a lawyer at the Galle Bar and represented the Southern Province in the 1920 Legislative Council, and Galle District in the Reformed Legislative Council of 1924, and the Galle constituency in the first State Council elected in 1931, after the Donoughmore Reforms. Thus he has more than one claim to the Southern Province.

Christopher's father John Daniel, born in 1846 in the Pasdum Korale had his education at the Colombo Academy and entered the Government Clerical Service in 1867. At this time Clerical Service was a coveted position to which only a very few Sinhala Buddhists could aspire. John Daniel was one of these very few. In time he was promoted to the post of Deputy Fiscal, Balapitiya. It was while at Balapitiya that he met his future wife, Emaly who was a devoted Anglican.

John Daniel was a Buddhist by birth but had to seek baptism to get married in the church, which was the fashion of the day among the higher social circles. Baptism however did not make him a Christian. He was intensely devoted to his wife, but developed almost a hatred towards her church. The children were baptised — a condition of church marriage—and were brought up as Christians.[1] John Daniel was also a Sinhala Scholar for his times and learnt prosody under Don Hendrick Samarakoon of Opata.[2]

The marriage of Emaly to Daniel took place in 1879 and five children — three boys, Charles, Chatwyn and Christopher and two daughters, Nancy and Lilian — were born of that marriage. The sixth child died at birth in 1890 and the mother followed a few days

1. Eriagama (Mrs.) J. B.: IW, December 4, 1965.
2. Kannangara, J. D. W.: Kav Mini Sayura, 1913, Verse 391.

later. This unexpected and sudden death created a deep impression in the minds of the growing children specially in young Christopher who was only six years at the time.

John Daniel decided to get married again. Daniel Obeysekera, Proctor S.C., J.P., and Police Magistrate of Balapitiya was a family friend of the Kannangaras. They were good neighbours who had helped them in their bereavement. It was understandable that he turned to Ellen, the daughter of Obeysekara for a second wife. The marriage took place in 1892 and Ellen became a second mother to the five children.

Christopher had developed a deep affection to his step-mother that he reacted against the stern qualities of his father. This perhaps explains why Christopher developed habits and qualities often in direct opposition to his father's. Christopher became kind and considerate to all whom he associated, he never felt a sense of bitterness even under shocking defeats, and cultivated a conscientious feeling of justice and fairplay. Alcohol was anathema to him and in later years became a great advocate of temperance. On the other hand Christopher's love of Sinhala poetry and Ajuta both came from his father.

Through his second wife, John Daniel begot four more children— Letitia, Harry, Jimmy and Angelin — but all the nine of them grew up as they were of one mother.[1]

Just before Emaly died Christopher was admitted to the Wesleyan High School, Ambalangoda. This was the oldest Wesleyan English school in the south established in 1869 but did not flourish after the Buddhist revival and was closed down during the economic depression of the early thirties. Christopher's brother Chatwyn was already attending school and they had a third companion who was a boarder with Kannangaras.[2]

In 1897 John Daniel was interdicted from government service. Records left by him tell us the reasons for his interdiction and later dismissal from government service, which came as a terrible blow to the family. Charles, the eldest son was a boarder at Richmond College, Galle.[3] Chatwyn and Christopher had to be sent elsewhere for higher education. But father was deprived of his sole income.

John Daniel writes, " I was deprived of my office in 1897, including pension and all prospects on the recommendation of the then Government Agent and Fiscal, Galle, for very trifling derilection of my duties in not depositing a sum of rupees fourteen in time — a three days

1. Eriagama (Mrs.) J. B.: loc. cit.
2. Ibid.
3. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I.

delay. As misfortune would have, it interrupted my useful career and service under government for thirty years, and blasted all my prospects.[1]

Kannangaras were not rich in the sense of being capitalists. After John Daniel was dismissed from government service family income fell practically to nothing. Charles who was studying at Richmond College ' obtained an appointment under government in the clerical service '.[2] Later he was promoted to the Ceylon Civil Service. Charles' employment perhaps helped them somewhat to tide over the immediate difficulties.

John Daniel's knowledge of prosody and astrology was used and developed to the full during his forced retirement.[3]

He wrote three books of Sinhala verse which were later published. His first book *Ovā Mutu Hara* was published in the first decade of this century, the second *Kav Mini Sayura* based on the *Saccankira Jataka* appeared in print in 1913 and the last *Vedabba Jataka* dedicated to Governor William Henry Manning was published in 1921. These works also show beyond doubt that he remained a Buddhist all throughout his life inspite of his church marriage.[4]

If 1897 was a bleak year for the father, for young Christopher it opened up a great future. Wesleyan High School at Ambalangoda had its tri-annual prize giving in 1897, and James Horne Darrell the new Principal of Richmond College, Galle was invited as the Chief Guest. Darrell who arrived in Ceylon in September 1896 after a brilliant academic career at Cambridge was considered an eminent educationist at the time.[5]

While distributing the prizes Darrell's attention fell on a dark little boy of 12 carrying away a number of prizes. He was young Christopher. When Darrell left the school he had left instructions with the Head Master to present this boy for the Richmond College Scholarship Examination.[6]

In a few months Christopher was at Richmond Hill answering his scholarship Test. This was a day which Christopher remembered in vivid detail for many years, and in 1906 he recounted the day's happenings thus : " I first had the blessed experience of coming in contact with the Rev. J. H. Darrell, M.A. when I took up the papers that he set in Mathematics for the award of the Foundation Scholarship

1. Personal Records of J. D. W. Kannangara with T. Seneviratne.
2. EMK - p.3
3. Eriagama (Mrs.) J. B.: loc. sit.
4. Kannangara, J. D. W.: Vedabba Jataka 1921.
5. Mendis, L. A. and De Pinto, J.P. Rev. James H. Darrell, 1906. p.8.
6. Eriagama, (Mrs.) J. B.: loc. cit.

at Richmond College. I still can recollect him as he appeared to me that day. His words still shrill in my years, and the kindness he showed me I gratefully acknowledge. His own study desk he put at my disposal and towards dusk he came and asked me whether I had done my papers. 'Yes', said I, with fear and trembling for he was my examiner. But I left his room with admiration and love, for he called his *muttu* and asked him to drive me down to the station in time for the train."[1]

Christopher won the foundation Scholarship which entitled him to free board and lodging at the college Hostel in addition to free tuition. This Scholarship was open to all boys under 13 years of age of the Southern Province and his success was undoubtedly a credit to himself and his school.[2]

He came into residence at the Richmond College boarding house at the beginning of 1898. His eldest brother Charles was already at Richmond[3] and this made orientation quite easy for Christopher.

Christopher was popularly referred to as Willie by his schoolmates at Richmond. 'He was a brilliant student and devoted as much time as possible to his studies.[4] At the end of 1898 he was promoted to Form VI (Standard VIII).[5] Next year he passed the Cambridge Local Junior Examination with a distinction in Mathematics, and was placed in the Second Class Honours list. The total number of candidates who sat for this examination in 1899 was only 197 of whom 106 passed and Christopher came ninth in order of merit.[6]

In 1901 he passed the Cambridge Senior Examination[7] but sat once again in 1902 (perhaps with the intention of achieving Honours) and passed[8] reaching distinction level in Arithmetic and Mathematics.[9] In Arithmetic his name appeared at the top of the Ceylon list[10] and also the British Empire list[11] which qualified him for a Prize awarded by the Director of Public Instruction for the best achievement in the Cambridge Local Examination.[12]

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1. Kannangara C. W. W.: A Tribute, in Mendis L. A. and De Pinto, J. P.: loc. cit. p.44.
2. CDN, June 21, 1923.
3. EMK p.3.
4. EMK p.3
5. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I (December 20, 1898)
6. AR. DPI - 1899 p.D10
7. AR. DPI - 1901 p.D32
8. AR. DPI - 1902.
9. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I (August 26, 1903).
10. CDN, June 21, 1923.
11. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: Brief sketch of Life of the Hon. C. W. W. Kannangara, in CAS. p.10.
12. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I (August 26, 1903).

In 1904 Christopher took up the University Scholarship Examination and came the seventh in order of merit of the twelve candidates who sat, but secured the highest mark in the English Essay. G. K. W. Perera of Ananda College won the scholarship this year. Darrell was disappointed at the failure of Christopher and made an entry to this effect in the College Log Book.[1]

Though board, lodging and tuition were provided free Christopher faced great difficulties in providing himself with books and clothes.[2] It was the endowed scholarships that came to his rescue. 'Each year he won practically every available prize' and scholarship at College.[3]

He won the Senior Park Scholarship in 1900, 1902 and 1903 awarded to the best student in scripture which entitled him to a grant of sixty rupees per year. In 1901 he won the Jubilee Scholarship (Fifty rupees) awarded to the best English scholar. Gunawardhene Mathematical prize he carried away thrice in 1900, 1901 and 1903. He won the Old Boys' Essay Prize (1903), the Principals Good Conduct Prize for Boarders (1900) and General Proficiency awards (1900 and 1901) in addition to a host of minor awards and prizes.[4]

E. M. Karunaratna a contemporary of Christopher writes 'as a student he was brilliant, and invariably was the first in his Form. His great friend George Amarasinghe was the second in order of merit. Both were very efficient and proficient, particularly in Mathematics and allied subjects. They, of course had the great privilege and advantage of learning those subjects from Darrell, the only Wrangler in the island at that time.'[5]

Ceylon Daily News paying a tribute to Christopher's 'indomitable character, courage and fastness of purpose' says "His school career is sufficient index of his persevering character. He received his early education in the Ambalangoda Wesleyan High School and had he been a little less painstaking would perhaps have ended his school career there. But early in life those qualities that have now raised him above his fellows began to manifest themselves."[6]

In the playing field Christopher had an equally distinguished career. "He was captain of the College Cricket team and won his Colours at Football."[7] "He played with success for the College

1. June 20, 1904.
2. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. May 11, 1966.
3. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.10
4. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I (August 26, 1903).
5. EMK p.4.
6. CDN June 21, 1923.
7. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.10

Cricket Eleven, usually as an opening batsman with a perfect defence."[1] Very often he used to go in first and was the last to get out or the one to remain unbeaten. He keeps on poking every ball but rarely he went on to double figures."[2] " I distinctly remember him in one match going in first, and carrying out his bat but his score was less than 20. He was an excellent fieldsman ", writes his team-mate E. M. Karunaratna.[3]

He also had the distinction of leading the College Eleven at the first encounter between Richmond and Mahinda in 1904, which later became the ' Battle of Galle ' the biggest sporting event of the south. It is interesting to note that the two teams in 1904 consisted of both teachers and pupils.[4]

Christopher also was an able debater and a talented actor. " He was a prominent member of the College Literary Association, the Boarders Literary Club and the College Social Union. He was a keen and impressive debater though it must be mentioned, with reluctance that his voice unfortunately very often let him down ".[5]

There were no inter-school debates in those days. The most important event of the year for the Literary Association was the debate between day-boys and the boarders. Christopher represented the Boarders. ' Though vigorous he never had a pleasant delivery ' reports the scribe.[6]

During Darrell's time the ' Merchant of Venice ' was put on the stage. Darrell himself trained the actors. The principal roles were filled by Darrell himself, Christopher and a few others.[7]

At the Masters meeting held on December 21, 1900 Christopher was elected a member of the prefecture.[8]

The tone of the school was Darrell's first concern. He set a very high standard of integrity himself, sought the aid of the staff and made the Senior boys responsible for the discipline of the school.[9]

Christopher was one of Darrell's best pupils, and a free scholar selected by him. If Darrell won Christopher's admiration, there was no doubt Christopher won Darrell's affection in abundance.

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1. EMK p.3.
2. Goonetilleke, E. A.: letter of April 4, 1966.
3. EMK p.3.
4. Weerasinghe, G. D.: Biggest Social Event of Southern Ceylon : CDN. March 3, 1966.
5. EMK p.8
6. Richmond College : The Jubilee Souvenir 1876-1951 pp.51-3.
7. Ibid. p. 54.
8. Richmond College : Log Book, Volume I (December 21, 1900).
9. Richmond College : The Jubilee Souvenir 1876-1951 pp.8-9.

After presenting himself for the University Scholarship Examination in 1904 Christopher planned to enter the Law College. But one day in April 1904 Darrell summoned Christopher to his office and addressing him solemnly said, " Christopher, Richmond has given you much in the form of knowledge, character and wisdom. Now it is your turn to return a part of it to Richmond."[1] Christopher did not have the courage or the strength to reject this request. So on April 20, 1904 Christopher Kannangara was appointed to the tutorial staff of Richmond.[2]

' He was entrusted with the Senior Mathematical work and soon gained recognition as one of the best Mathematics Masters of his time '.[3] ' He worked hard for the school, and was responsible for many students obtaining brilliant results at the higher examinations.'[4] He was offered more advantageous positions in Colombo as a teacher of Mathematics, but preferred to serve his alma mater.[5]

Kannangara now became a devoted lieutenant to Darrell and with the other members of the staff (some of whom were his own classmates) helped the Principal to enhance the already growing prestige of the College.

He was a resident Master residing in the College Boarding House. " One of Darrell's policies was to appoint to the staff senior Old Boys in whom he had confidence. They were all his direct pupils. He knew their strong points and their weak points. As a result of this policy a good number of his bright pupils were appointed to the Tutorial Staff, from about 1900. One prominent result of this policy was the well known fact that under Darrell's guidance and leadership and the devoted work of his staff, particularly of his old pupils, Richmond came to be universally acknowledged as one of the leading educational institutions of the island. "[6]

E. M. Karunaratna recalls an incident that took place while Kannangara was a member of the Staff of Richmond. " There is something worthwhile recording in regard to the second class Teachers' Certificate Examination, conducted by the government in 1904.....

There were as far as I remember 12 subjects, and to obtain a pass, one had to pass in all the subjects, gaining at least 40% in each subject. In total aggregate, however, the candidate had to obtain at least 50% for a pass. On this occasion, ten members of the Richmond

1. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. November 21, 1965.
2. Richmond College : Log Book Volume I.
3. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.10
4. EMK. p.5.
5. CDN. June 21, 1923.
6. EMK p.5

Staff were candidates. Among them were Willie (Kannangara) and George (Amarasinghe) who had been on the staff from the beginning of that year, 1904 and myself.

" So far as I remember the examination was held in September, 1904, and about 50 candidates from Southern Province sat. The venue was the Hall of the All Saints School, Fort, Galle. The Presiding Examiner was Krickenbeck, Chief Inspector of the Department of Education. This Examination was held in four centres, including Galle, the others being Colombo, Kandy and Jaffna. The results appeared in the Government Gazette, early in December 1904. About 30% of the candidates had passed the Test in the other three centres but ' mirabile dictu ' *all* had failed in the Galle Centre with the exception of one who happened to be myself. Naturally the news created a sensation. Neither our Principal, nor the members of the staff could understand the failure of particularly Willie (Kannangara). Willie was furious, and gave full expression to his state of mind in strong language when he and I discussed the situation, in his private room in the Boarding House. Willie told me seriously that he could not possibly have failed in Reading or in class Teaching. He expected high marks in both those subjects. As regards School-Management, he said he answered all the questions very well, and deserved about 80 to 90% of the marks. . . Seriously speaking, I all along thought that the failure of candidates like Willie was probably due to an error. I asked Willie, who was brooding over the result, to speak to Darrell quietly in his study, and request him to ascertain from the Director of Education in which subject or subjects, he had failed. Darrell himself, who was quite surprised at the prominent failures promised to write officially to the Director of Education.

" The Director sent a reply in a few days saying that the matter was receiving attention and that a further communication will follow. Within a week a second letter was received by Darrell in which the Director disclosed that, by an unfortunate oversight and error, Krickenbeck's clerk, who prepared the schedule of marks forwarded to the Director, had failed to double the marks of the candidates in Reading. The examiners had allotted to the candidates marks out of a maximum of 50 ! Willie had obtained 35, which in the schedule, should have appeared as 70%, but he was credited only with 35%. The Director wrote to Darrell, apologising for the unfortunate error, and assured him that an amended Pass List will appear in the next gazette. . . . . According to the amended Pass List six members of the staff, including Willie had passed the test very creditably.

" Both as a student, and as a senior member of the staff, Willie set a very high example not only to his friends, and students, but to all who came in contact with him. He always worked on the principle

that example was better than precept. ..He exerted deservedly a lot of healthy influence not only on the boys, but also on his colleagues on the Staff.[1]

At his last Prize Giving in 1905 Darrell reported, " Of the general tone of the school, I can speak favourably. We work hard for the intellectual advancement of the boys but our chief emphasis is on character and manliness. No boy passes through these class rooms without having set before him and pressed upon him the best aims and highest ideals of life ; I see a marked improvement in our Senior boys as a whole. To the Masters and prefects I am indebted for their support and ready service."[2]

Darrell did not live to address the next Prize Giving. " In June, 1906 most unfortunately an epidemic of typhoid fever broke out in the Boarding House. The illness spread rapidly, and special sheds had to be constructed to accommodate the increasing number of patients. ..The College was closed, and those of us who had not yet been infected were under strict quarantine regulations on medical advice.."[3]

As was his custom Darrell tended the sick boys. ' Morning and night the Principal went round, doctored them, nursed them, and in some cases fed them.'[4] ' He contracted the disease himself.... His energy spent so liberally for the school he loved failed him and he died on July 12, 1906 at the age of 34. Next day his remains were buried in the cemetery at Dadalla '.[5]

Highest tributes were paid to the memory of this great teacher. In the opinion of Highfield, Principal of Wesley College Darrell was the greatest teacher and Principal that ever came to Ceylon.[6]

Kannangara one of his most distinguished pupils paying his grateful tribute in 1906 wrote : "The ' anti-native ' feeling that we generally find in Europeans holding responsible positions in the Island never had its seat in him. He unlike others, instead of being quick to disparage and find fault, was only too ready to correct, counsel and lead us in the right.

" Soon after I entered Richmond College I had to appear before him as a defaulter. The master reported me for missing my Shakespeare lesson, and for the first time I came under the influence of our Principal's sterner qualities. He detected the demon of laziness

1. EMK pp.5-8.
2. Richmond College : The Jubilee Souvenir 1876-1951 p.9.
3. EMK p.9.
4. Mendis, L. A. and De Pinto, J. P.: loc. cit. p.11.
5. Richmond College : The Jubilee Souvenir 1876-1951 p.10
6. EMK p.4.

coming over me and instantly whipped it out by threatening to take away my Scholarship. The threat, however severe I may have deemed it then, had the desired effect. . ."[1]

W. J. T. Small succeeded Darrell as the Principal of Richmond. Kannangara saw his opportunity to leave Richmond and join the Law College. He stayed back at Richmond only because he could not disappoint Darrell. As the school term closed on December 17, 1906, Kannangara tendered his resignation. A log entry made by Small, the new Principal on that day says, " The College loses a good Mathematical Master in Kannangara."[2]

Though Kannangara's intention in coming to Colombo was to enter the Law College, he could not do so without financial backing. Thus he was forced to seek employment in a convenient place from where he could pursue his legal studies on a part-time basis.

Kannangara found no difficulty in finding part-time employment, as he was well known by now (at least in educational circles) as a teacher of Mathematics. In fact he received more than one offer, and he joined Prince of Wales College, Moratuwa. " It was an endowed college and had no financial problems. It could pay its teachers well. It was founded and endowed by Charles de Zoysa and his son-in-law J. G. C. Mendis was the Principal at the time ".[3]

Prince of Wales " received Kannangara with open arms and so arranged the time table as to suit him, after the lectures at the Law College. The fact is that those who had been trained under the great Darrell, and had worked with him on his staff, were in great demand at the leading Colombo Colleges."[4]

He was appointed the Senior Mathematics Master of the College in January 1907 but he could serve the place only one year.

In 1907 government decided to raise Moratuwa to the status of a Local Board, and the elections were held at the end of the year.[5] J. G. C. Mendis, the Principal of Prince of Wales also entered the contest. His opponent was a physician Hugh de Mel. Kannangara did not approve Mendis' entering local politics. But Mendis was adamant and on the polling day he expected his staff to man his booth. (College premises).

1. Kannangara, C. W. W.: A Tribute : in Mendis L. A. and De Pinto J. P.: loc. cit. p.44.
2. Richmond College : Log Book. Volume I.
3. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. November 21, 1965.
4. EMK. p.12.
5. Ferguson's Ceylon Directory 1908.

During this 'early stage of democracy' treating of voters was legally permissable and commonly practised. Mendis expected his teachers to do the serving and the canvassing of voters. Two teachers—Kannangara and H. D. S. Gunasekara — however refused to take part in this election 'assignment', though their moral support was with their Principal. But Mendis was displeased with the attitude of these two teachers. Kannangara took his salary at the end of the month and bade farewell to Prince of Wales.[1]

Twenty years later he recalled this episode in the Legislative Council thus : " I know of an instance where a certain manager or the Principal who invariably acted for the Manager wanted to stand for election for a Local Board seat. Two or three self-respecting teachers thought that he should not have come forward for that Local Board seat, but every member of the staff was made to understand that they should loyally support the Principal for the seat. On the date of the election all the voters of that place were summoned to the College premises and they were treated there to a very hearty meal and the 'loyal' teachers served these voters with rice and curry. With regard to the two or three teachers who refused to do likewise the Principal said " It was better that these demigods leave my college ". I know Sir, one teacher did immediately leave the college. He had no body to appeal to ".[2]

Kannangara served Prince of Wales only one year, but it was a memorable year. G. O. C. Cooray, one of his pupils recalled, " Kannangara was my class teacher in 1907. He was also the Mathematical lecturer in the Senior forms. At that time he was a law student who used to attend lectures at the Law College during his off periods. Kannangara was a strict disciplinarian. He was a good teacher and a kind hearted friend of the boys."[3]

On leaving Prince of Wales Kannangara joined the staff of Wesley College, Colombo, as the second Mathematics Master. But after his regular classes were over at Wesley " he also taught Mathematics at Methodist College, Kollupitiya with great success and acceptance. My wife was his pupil at Methodist College" writes Karunaratne.[4]

Theresa F. J. Goonetilleke another pupil of Kannangara at Methodist College writes : " I was a pupil at Methodist College and Kannangara was a law student and came to teach standard VIII, Cambridge Junior and Senior girls Algebra and Geometry twice a week."[5]

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1. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. November 22, 1965.
2. H. 1928 p.735.
3. Cooray, G. O. C.: Letter of April 16, 1966.
4. loc. cit. p.12.
5. Goonetilleke, Theresa F. J. : Letter of April 13, 1966.

At Wesley he came to be acknowledged not only as a good Mathematician but also as an able teacher.[1] Among his pupils was Oliver Goonetilleke who later became the first Ceylonese Governor-General of Ceylon.[2]

In July 1908 Kannangara passed his Proctors' Intermediate Examination and two years later (July, 1910) he passed his Proctors' Final Examination and qualified to practice as a lawyer in Ceylon Courts.[3]

Towards the end of 1910 he bade good bye to Wesley and " came down to Galle once again, and commenced professional practice as a Proctor and Notary.[4] His whole career from that time has been one long record of public service.[5] He specialized in Civil work and Notarial work, and in a very short time acquired a reputation for unimpeachable integrity, soundness of opinion and hard work.[6] By 1912 he had well established himself as a safe and sound Civil lawyer who already commanded a fairly extensive and lucrative practice at Galle. He built up a reputation especially for partition action.[7]

The troubled times of 1915 found him boldly defending the innocent and helpless men who were incarcerated for no fault of their own. He appeared free of fee on behalf of some of the accused in the Sinhala-Muslim riots of 1915 and stepped on the threshold of national life.[8]

While practising as a lawyer he once again took a deep interest in the activities of his old school, in sports, social and religious activities of the district and the national and political life of the country. In 1911 he was unanimously elected the Secretary of the Old Boys Association[9] which post he held till 1920 with remarkable success.[10]

Kannangara also was a member of the Committee of the Galle Cricket Club[11] and the Galle Gymkhana Club. He was also a good Billiard player and patronised the Billiard Table at the Lower Bar of the New Oriental Hotel. During week-ends he may go to Nagoda, twenty miles off Galle to the home of aunty D. A. Jayasinghe to play 'Ajuta', his favourite card game.[12]

1. CDN. June 21, 1923.
2. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW November 22, 1965.
3. The Journal of the Ceylon University Association. Volume II - pp.136 and 354,
4. EMK. p.12
5. CDN. June 21, 1923.
6. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.11
7. EMK. p.13.
8. Palansuriya, Sagara : Ape Attange Vitti.
9. Richmond College : Log Book. Volume I (December 19, 1911).
10. EMK. p.12
11. CDN. June 21, 1923.
12. De Saa Bandaranaike, (Mrs.) A. R.: IW. May 21, 1966.

He was the Honorary Secretary of the Galle Reading Room and Library Committee and the Galle Poor Relief Committee, the Vice-President of the Sinhalese Young Men's Association, Galle and the General Secretary of the Temperance Union.[1] The Temperance Union was a federation of many Temperance Societies he organised in various parts of the District assisted by a few other selfless workers. It succeeded in inculcating among the people habits of sobriety and temperance.[2]

During the influenza epidemic and the outbreak of plague in 1916 he bore a heavy share of the burden of relief work, often at the risk of endangering his health. Again during the rice crisis (during the First World War) his mathematical mind came to the assistance of the provincial authorities and a system of rationing devised by him was gratefully accepted by the Galle Municipal Council. He was in full charge of the rationing on his own system in Kaluwella Ward.[3]

Kannangara soon felt that he could not engage fully in his social work without a sound knowledge of Sinhala, his mother tongue. He had already got a grounding in Sinhala from his father, but " it was not taught as a subject at Richmond during the period when he was a student ."[4] He regularly attended a Buddhist temple in Galle to study Sinhala and Pali.[5]

In a couple of years he learnt sufficient Sinhala to speak fluently and to write grammatically. Like his father he also mastered Sinhala prosody which soon became a pastime. Karunaratna writes : ' Wille was a born poet, specially in the mother tongue. It is perhaps not known to many that he used, very often, to compose fine arresting verses on various subjects and topics.'[6]

It was also during this time that he became deeply interested in the study of Buddhism. In 1917 his younger brother Harry died at the age of 22. This was a heart-breaking shock to the other members of the family. Christopher Kannangara was well versed in Buddhism by this time. In this bereavement it was the teachings of the Buddha that brought consolation to the family, and the whole family—except sister Lily—formally embraced Buddhism almost immediately after Harry's death.[7]

" Many friends of mine have inquired from me whether it was a fact that Willie became a convert to Buddhism, for political reasons,

1. CDN. June 21, 1923.
2. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.11.
3. CDN June 21, 1923.
4. EMK p.18
5. Eriagama, (Mrs.) J. B.: IW. December 4, 1965.
6. loc. cit. p.16
7. Eriagama, (Mrs.) J. B,: IW, December 4, 1965,

just before he contested a seat to enter Parliament," writes Karunaratna. " This suggestion is quite unworthy of the great and unselfish patriot C. W. W. Kannangara. We are all quite aware that some persons change their religion for political reasons, others for the purpose of contracting a marriage with a party of another religion. I can conscientiously and boldly say that Willie changed his religion by conviction. He was a Christian, very well versed in the Bible. He used to quote very often Biblical phrases and sentences in his public utterances and even in Parliament. I remember his winning the Senior Park Scholarship at College, a Scholarship that is annually awarded to the best candidate in the scripture written test open to boys in the higher forms.[1]

Kannangara's entry to Politics was almost unexpected. In 1911 for the first time an island wide election was held to select an Educated Ceylonese to the reformed Legislative Council of that year. The vote was restricted to a few thousand English educated Ceylonese spread over the island. Ponnambalam Ramanathan and H. Marcus Fernando were the two contenders. " At a crowded Public meeting of the residents of the Southern Province, held at Galle to support the candidature of Ramanathan, a working committee was elected with Kannangara as Honorary Secretary. On the polling day Ramanathan was elected for this newly created historic seat by a very large and thumping majority."[2] In 1917 Kannangara again supported the candidature of Ramanathan for the same seat against J. S. Jayawardene. Ramanathan retained the seat and became a close friend of Kannangara.

It was Kannangara who took the initiative in forming the first Political Association in Galle — The Galle National Association — in 1917. At its inaugural meeting Kannangara himself was elected as its first Secretary, a post he held till he entered the Legislative Council in 1923.[3] By dint of sheer hard work and perseverance he brought it to the front rank of political societies in the island.[4]

C. L. Wickramasinghe the Acting Secretary submitting the report of work to the Annual General Meeting of the Association held at the New Oriental Hotel, Galle on July 31, 1923 said : " You elected Kannangara as your Secretary at the last general meeting but on his election to the Legislative Council he felt he should be unfettered in representing a whole province and also avoid even the semblance of shaping the policy of this association and sent in his resignation. The same was accepted on June 25, 1923, and the present Acting

1. EMK. p.16
2. EMK. p.12
3. EMK. p.12
4. Jayawardhana, D. L. M.: loc. cit. p.11

Secretary was asked to act in his stead for the rest of the year. In reviewing the work of the year the first thing that struck us was the thoroughness and the methodical and ungrudging manner in which Kannangara has carried out his duties as Secretary and the high standard which he has set to his successor."[1] After Kannangara's resignation the Association died a natural death, showing to what extent its energy depended on a single man.[2]

The first exclusively Ceylonese Association to take an interest in the political development of the country was the Ceylon Agricultural Association formed in 1869. This took such a political colouring that in 1884 it was renamed the Ceylon National Association. A second Association — The Ceylon Reform League — was formed in 1916. These two associations jointly called a conference to form a single powerful National organization sufficiently viable to fight for constitutional Reforms culminating in National independence.

Invitations went to all provincial organizations of political character and on December 15, 1917 a total of 144 delegates met in Colombo. P. Arunachalam and D. R. Wijewardene were elected President and Secretary respectively. Kannangara led the delegation from Galle. At the conference a memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies was adopted asking for certain reforms in our constitution but failed to form an integrated organization.

A second Conference was held on December 13, 1918 leading to the formation of the Ceylon National Congress. P. Arunachalam was re-elected to preside over this ' inaugural ' meeting of the Congress. Several resolutions were adopted, the eighth calling for " the formation of a permanent organization for the purpose of co-ordinating public opinion and political thought and work in Ceylon by periodically convoking a representative Congress and carrying out its resolutions.'

Kannangara supporting this resolution said, " Very liberal reforms should be introduced into our constitution ; our Legislative and Executive Councils should be enlarged ; there should be elected majorities in our Councils, more popular control of Municipal Councils, larger employment of Ceylonese in the more responsible and higher branches of the Civil and other public services, larger grants for education, greater support and encouragement to agriculture and local industries, abolition of the inequitous and inequitable poll-tax are a few of the more important matters that require our attention. ..A permanent Congress must be formed on a constitutional basis and it will be the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night which will lead the masses of our countrymen to the blessed life of political freedom and equal rights and liberties.[3]

1. Morning Leader, August 2, 1923
2. CDN. September 22, 1924.
3. Bandaranaike, S. W. R. D.: The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress, 1919-28. p.189.

The first session of the Ceylon National Congress was held on December 11, 1919 at which Kannangara spoke in support of the first resolution calling for Reforms of the Constitution and Administration.[1]

In 1920 the Legislative Council was reformed providing a majority of seats for the unofficials for the first time. At the second Annual Sessions held on December 18, 1920 Arunachalam Sabapathy, second Tamil nominated member in the 1917—21 Legislative Council proposed that " this Congress recommends participation in the elections under the Order-in Council unsatisfactory as it is, in order to utilize the opportunity now assured to the Congress of shaping the new Constitution and of working for the early realization of the full Congress demands on reform." F. R. Senanayake seconded. Kannangara opposed arguing that Congress should not recommend participation if the Order-in-Council was unsatisfactory.[2] Kannangara also served in the Executive Committee of the Congress as the representative of the Galle Association from its inception.[3]

On July 8, 1922 a further memorial on the question of Reform was submitted to Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for Colonies. Kannangara was the twentieth of the sixty signatories.[4]

A Third Memorial was sent to the Secretary of State requesting for more fundamental changes in the constitution on May 23, 1923 signed by the Committee of the Congress including Kannangara.[5] It is these two memoranda that led to the Reforms of the Legislative Council during the end of the latter year.

Ceylon Daily News summing up his career in the Ceylon National Congress during its first five years of existence said : " Kannangara has been an ardent Congressman and at every session took a prominent part in the deliberations of Congress, being entrusted with very important resolutions. He boldly opposed the acceptance by the Congress leaders of the 1920 arrangement to work the reforms for one year and has made fearless speeches on the subject from the Congress platform ".[6]

On December 4, 1922 at the age of 38 he married Edith Weerasuriya daughter of Gate Mudaliar J. C. Weerasuriya of Kandy. By 1923 Kannangara was mature in every respect for political leadership.

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1. Ibid. p.209
2. Ibid. p.274
3. PF (List of Committee Members)
4. Bandaranaike S. W. R. D: loc. cit. p.423
5. Ibid. p.528
6. June 21, 1923.

CHAPTER 5

IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

On April 13, 1923 O. C. Thillakeratne, the Member of the Legislative Council for Southern Province met with a serious railway accident at Wellawatta station.[1] Once identified he was rushed to hospital but died on the 17th morning. This tragic death created an unexpected vacancy in the Legislative Council. The nominations for the by-election was fixed for May 23, 1923.[2]

The people of Galle appealed to D. G. Gunawardhana, the President of the Galle Association to stand for election. But he disliked the humdrum of politics. The mantle fell on the Secretary of the Galle Association — Kannangara. Voters of Galle appealed to him to come forward as their candidate. Kannangara was at the height of readiness for an eventuality of this nature and immediately consented.[3]

Nominations were duly received by F. Bartlett, Government Agent, Southern Province and there were two candidates in the field — Kannangara and David de Silva.[4]

The first election meeting in support of Kannangara was held at Dharmasoka College Hall, Ambalangoda, immediately after nomination, which was well attended. Kannangara speaking at this meeting put his claims for the votes of Ambalangoda. He said " I was born, bred and educated at Ambalangoda and Balapitiya. I was taught my ABC by T. O. Fernando a respected citizen of Ambalangoda and had the foundation of my education laid by Charles Silva and John Wesley Perera all three being names of persons held in high esteem throughout the district ".[5]

After this the enthusiasm flopped as David de Silva lost heart almost at the inception of the campaign and for all intents and purposes withdrew from the contest. No withdrawal was publicly announced but privately " intimated his supporters of his withdrawal from the contest ".[6]

1. CDN. April 16, 1923
2. Ceylon Government Gazette, May 4, 1923.
3. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. November 21, 1965.
4. CDN. May 24, 1923.
5. CDN. May 25, 1923
6. CDN. June 19, 1923

Out of a total population of 671,358 in the Southern Province (1921) only 7,723 could vote as franchise was restricted on property and literacy qualifications. A candidate in addition had to have a knowledge of English. Before 1924 the residence qualification applicable to voters also applied to the candidates.[1]

The poll took place on June 18, 1923, at nine centres spread over 2000 square miles and only 25% of the qualified to vote actually registered their preference. The results were announced at noon on June 19, 1923 and as expected it was a landslide victory for Kannangara.[2]

C. W. W. Kannangara	.. ..	1969
David de Silva	.. ..	115
Majority	.. ..	1854

On June 21, 1923 the Ceylon Daily News paying a tribute to the new Councillor said in its second editorial, " It will be readily admitted that the Southern Province electorate could not have chosen a more suitable Representative. ...He has what is practically the unanimous support of the electorate."

On June 28, Kannangara attended the Council sessions and made an affirmation in place of the normal oath of allegiance on taking his seat.[3]

His period in this Legislative Council was confined to little over a year. The two issues for which he fought in this Council were (i) Free passages for Ceylonese Government servants and (ii) Temperance.

The European government servants were granted leave and free passage by the government for furlough to Europe at regular intervals. But this privilege was denied to the Ceylonese, even to those who were married to Europeans. Kannangara incessantly fought for the extension of this right to the Ceylonese as well.[4]

When the government decided to allow tapping of trees in dry areas in 1923 Kannangara protested ; ' The idea of the temperance workers in closing down taverns is not so much that of stopping the drunkard from drinking, as that of keeping away the rising generations from the temptations of liquor. If trees are allowed to be tapped, whether in exceptional circumstances or not, in dry areas, the object of government in trying to promote temperance among the people is obstructed thereby.[5]

1. Ferguson's Ceylon Directory, 1925. p.509
2. CDN. June 20, 1923
3. H. 1923. p.204.
4. H. 1923 see eg. p.381.
5. H. 1923 pp.625-6.

'Marmaduke' a columnist of 'The Searchlight' paying a compliment to his success in the Legislative Council wrote : "Within the comparatively short time that you have occupied a seat in the Legislative Council you have given indications of your aptitude for legislative duties. . .There should be no halting now that you have set yourself to the task, and dogged perseverance coupled with fearless advocacy should be your motto till you find a place in the niche of fame as one of Ceylon's patriots."[1]

The Council was dissolved on August 29, 1924, and nominations were fixed for September 12. The Council itself was reformed and the number of territorial seats was increased from 11 to 23. The scheme of reforms was published on February 16, 1924 alloting three seats to the Southern Province. The demarcation of the constituencies was however left in the hands of the Governor.[2] Two days after the Gazette notification Kannangara received the following letter from advocate Francis de Zoysa :

"I have decided to stand for the Western Division of the Southern Province which in all probability will be the portion to the North of Galle from Gin Ganga to the Bentara Ganga. I suppose the Central Division will suit you best and you will also appreciate my partiality for the Western Division."[3]

Southern Province consisted of three Revenue Districts — Galle, Matara and Hambantota ; the Governor decided to consider each of them a constituency,[4] although on the basis of population Galle District had as many people as the other two Districts put together and nearly two thirds of the voters.

The Governor's division of the Province did not solve the problem as both were adamant in contesting the same seat (Western Division,) and two ardent Congressmen faced a bitter struggle in which one would get eliminated. The Congress Committee met at Horana, where James Peiris made a speech in which he laid down the following general principle : "When a man had done good work, when he had done nothing to forfeit confidence of the people, and when he was still representative of the people, he thought it was not fair for any other person — unless he has some policy divergent to the policy of the sitting member — to come and oppose him."[5]

Francis de Zoysa like Kannangara was born in the Galle District, but he had left his village over twenty years ago and was permanently settled in Colombo. There was one other seat he could have contes-

1. September 1, 1923.
2. Ceylon Government Gazette, February 2, 1924.
3. CDN. September 23, 1924 (letter of February 18, 1924).
4. Ceylon Government Gazette, February 21, 1924.
5. TC. September 23, 1924

ted — Negombo. But D. S. Senanayake had decided to contest it, against whom De Zoysa's chances may have been rather bleak.

F. R. Senanayake, D. S. Senanayake's elder brother took a keen interest in fixing a seat for De Zoysa, possibly without a contest. The story as related by C. L. Wickramasinghe, a supporter of Kannangara is as follows : " Soon after the Order-in-Council was proclaimed he was invited one afternoon by some of De Zoysa's friends to meet him at the hotel in Galle, and on his going there he was informed that it was the intention of De Zoysa to avoid a contest with Kannangara and provide Kannangara with an uncontested seat and for this purpose F. R. Senanayake had gone to Matara and Hambantota. Senanayake returned late in the evening and informed those present that there were likely to be contests both at Matara and Hambantota and suggested the desirability of Kannangara going to Hambantota. He (Wickramasinghe) pointed out that Kannangara was not present and there was the possibility of his not consenting to this arrangement. Later about 8 p.m. he (Wickramasinghe) accompanied the gentlemen who came from Colombo to Kannangara's."[1]

Kannangara completed the story from there thus : " That day I came back home, to Kaluwella where I found Senanayake, De Zoysa and Wickramasinghe waiting for me. I asked them what happened at Tangalle. Senanayake said that there was going to be a contest in any case whether at Tangalle, Matara or Galle. I said that if there was going to be a contest it is easier for me to fight in my home than in other people's homes."[2] This lighted the fuse for one of the bitterest elections fought under restricted franchise.

Nominations were received by the Government Agent, Southern Province on September 12, 1924 at Galle Kachcheri. There were two candidates — Kannangara and De Zoysa — and a poll was fixed for September 27.[3]

Of a population of 400,000 only 9,593 had the vote, and most of them were concentrated in the Urban centres. The public meetings were held in towns like Galle and Ambalangoda and were well attended. The supporters of De Zoysa led by F. R. Senanayake argued that during the last 25 years there had been no movement in the country for the uplifting of the people and of the welfare of the country in which De Zoysa had not done his little bit and done it very well indeed ; his career at the Bar had been as brilliant as his services on the public platform of the country ; electing him to the Galle seat was a fitting reward for the continuous labours De Zoysa has put in, on their behalf ; he was a lover of constitutional agitation and did not believe

1. TC. September 23, 1924
2. TC. September 23, 1924
3. CDN September 13, 1924

in working for the right of the people with battle axe in one hand and a bomb in the other ; he was the superior candidate, and could serve the country better ;[1] there was absolutely no special reason why he should stand for the Negombo District ; he was not a tool in Senanayake's hands and that if he had accommodated Senanayake's brother he was unworthy of their support ; he believed that the Europeans, Burghers, Mohammadans, Tamils and Sinhalese must stand on the same footing and enjoy equally the rights of British citizenship ;[2] with all his experience and profound knowledge of law and his rare gifts of the power of debate it would be a great pity and an injustice if his offer to represent the people was not accepted.[3]

Against Kannangara they said that he was not a native of Galle District, although he happened to be born there, for his ancestors were in Kalutara ; the notion that he had done a great deal was a fallacy although he may have attended every wedding and funeral in the district ; he was only a parish pump politician ; he was a Buddhist candidate and that his political creed was to drive out the three P's, ' Para Jatiya, Para Bhashawa and Para Anduma '[4] ; he was not the sitting member because the old council was at an end[5] ; he was a danger to the country and that he became a Member of the Legislative Council as a freak of the residence qualification, under the 1920 constitution which had now been removed.[6]

Kannangara did not have speakers of a national level to address his meetings. All his speakers and supporters were men of the district. They conceded that both candidates in the field (on the strength of the past services) were worthy of council seats. But they argued that they had to elect a man to represent the special wants of a particular district.

Kannangara was a man on the spot whereas De Zoysa had abandoned his native heath some twenty years ago and settled down in Colombo. He was now practically a stranger to the Galle district.[7]

Putting forward the case for Kannangara they said that he believed in total abolition and practised it ;[8] the people had more to be grateful to Kannangara than De Zoysa ; Kannangara had sacrificed a practice which was the envy of many ; he was the sitting mem-

1. Morning Leader. September 15, 1924.
2. CDN. September 15, 1924.
3. TC. September, 15, 1924.
4. Morning Leader, September 15, 1924.
5. CDN. September 15, 1924.
6. CDN. September 25, 1924.
7. CDN. September 16, 1924.
8. Morning Leader, September 19, 1924.

ber ; when they had a person living in the Galle district who could represent them, and had done it so well, it was not right for outsiders to come there ; the real reason why Kannangara was said to be inferior might be that he had no rich relations and influential cliques behind him [1]; the removal of the resident qualification only meant that if they had no suitable candidate they could get one from outside ; Kannangara had worked hard as Secretary of the Galle Association and it was only due to his efforts that there had been a political awakening in Galle ; and that he was sincere in his convictions and was courageous enough to act up to his convictions.[2]

They picked out F. R. Senanayake for special attack. He was accused of misleading De Zoysa to contest Galle, while his brother D. S. Senanayake entered the Legislative Council uncontested as the representative for the Negombo district. (i) It was a shame that the power and might of Colombo had come in battalions and there was an invasion ; (ii) There was nothing wrong in the Congress Committee. But there was another Committee within the Congress Committee, that wanted to distribute seats ; (iii) Pilimatalauwe made Cannasamy King so that he might become King himself afterwards. But now there are others doint it — Kings of their brothers ; (iv) they certainly sympathised with De Zoysa for no other reason than that he was led as a lamb to be slaughtered and his blood would cry out vengeance against those who were responsible for the mischief, chief among them being that great capitalist from the Western Province, F. R. Senanayake who had the audacity to come to their province and try to play the part of Dictator — a veritable invasion of the Southern Province, the Galle District in particular by a coterie of capitalists and second rate lawyers from the Metropolitan Bar ;[3] (v) De Zoysa was well-known in the Negombo district. He was admittedly superior to D. S. Senanayake and F. R. Senanayake had stated that he would support a candidate even against his brother. Under these circumstances could there be anything wrong in asking him why he did not go to Negombo ;[4] were some of the attacks pointed at F. R. Senanayake.

Polling took place on September 27,1924 as scheduled and the results were announced at 2 p.m. the following day by T. B. Russell, Government Agent.[5]

C. W. W. Kannangara	4,177
Francis de Zoysa	2,310
Majority	1,867

1. CDN. September 22, 1924.
2. TC. September 23, 1924.
3. CDN. September 22, 1924
4. TC September 23, 1924
5. CDN. September 29, 1924.

Kannangara won his second election with a comfortable majority. Nearly 68% of the electorate had polled, a heavy poll under restricted franchise.

The new Council consisting of 47 members met on October 15, when members took their oaths or were affirmed[1]

Kannangara remained a member of the Legislative Council till its dissolution in 1931 to make way for the State Council established under the Donoughmore Constitution. During these seven years, there were a number of national issues on which he expressed his independent opinion and fought hard for their acceptance. The more important among them were: Temperance, making of adultery a Criminal Offence in Ceylon, Abolition of Capital Punishment, more Religious holidays for Buddhists, Revision of salaries of Public Officers, Discrimination against Ceylonese and certain castes in Government Service, Favourable Treatment towards Certain Groups, Police Brutality, Waste and Inefficiency in Government Departments, Kalutara Railway Disaster, Income Tax and Constitutional Reforms.

Supporting temperance Kannangara said "Several years ago, Sir, the Government dumped down a number of taverns, .. all over the Island with the blessings of some of the representatives of the people. When there was a general outcry against these, a certain right or privilege was granted to the people — the right of local option. But what is the government doing now ? .. About three years ago there were about six taverns and foreign liquor shops in the town of Galle. The local option workers closed the whole lot at one poll. But what did the man on the spot do ? Immediately there was an application for a second class hotel licence in the town he granted it. The consequence was that all those who went to the liquor shops and taverns are now going to that hotel. There is absolutely no way now of reducing the consumption of liquor... Government says that it is the greatest temperance organization in the Island ; but what it gives with one hand it takes away with the other. The closure of taverns is followed by the grant of licences to hotel-keepers, thereby nullifying all the good results achieved by temperance workers."[2]

In 1926 A. W. Winter of Baddegama applied for a licence for distilling spirits. The members of the Winter family have been growing sugar for nearly a century. In the earlier days the industry paid its way, but in 1920's the price of sugar fell so low that it became impossible to run the industry without some external help. He decided to utilize the waste matter and the molasses for the purpose

1. H. 1924 (Oct-Nov) p.3
2. H. 1925 p.201

of producing alcohol and applied for a licence. Opposing the granting of this licence Kannangara said " This motion is based on an application from Winter, which seems to be a sugar coated pill with a large amount of rum in it. .. The granting of this licence will be more a curse than a blessing, and we are already having a sufficient curse with alcoholic drinks, such as arrack, toddy and all kinds of imported stuff. .. If this licence is granted, we will be giving the people a new drink, which, if my information is correct is very injurious."[1]

At the end of 1925 A. F. Molamure (Kegalla) moved " that in the opinion of this House the Government should take early steps to amend the Ceylon Code on the lines of the Indian Penal Code making adultery a criminal offence in Ceylon."[2]

Attorney-General opposing the motion on behalf of the Government said that adultery has not been made an offence in any country of the British Empire except in India.

Kannangara answering him said, " If the Attorney-General looks at the actual state of affairs among the Kandyans or the low-country Sinhalese, he will find that from ancient times their morals have been much better than the morals of those people who say that they are very much more civilized. That we should follow a law Sir, simply because it prevails in other parts of the British Empire is an utter absurdity. When we ask for constitutional reforms we are told that we must go step by step, and that we cannot get at once such a constitution as is possessed by England. But when we ask for the protection of our homes and for the protection of the purity of our homes, the chastity of our wives, our mothers, and our daughters and sisters, then we are asked to follow the law of the British Empire. I say, No."[3]

Kannangara also expressed his opinion against Capital Punishment when he said " I am going to support this motion on two grounds. If one is present at a sessions of the Supreme Court one will find that there are a large number of murder cases, and that there is extreme difficulty in getting a jury. On the ground of conscientious objection, gentlemen are allowed to excuse themselves ; and, in this country, the majority being Buddhists, they cannot according to their conscience, bring in a verdict of guilt against a murderer if he is going to be hanged because that will involve the taking away of life. Therefore, amongst Buddhist jurors it is difficult to get a correct verdict. If a man is to be imprisoned for 20 years instead, conscientious Buddhists will not find it difficult to bring in a verdict of guilt.

1. H. 1926 p.307
2. H. 1925 p.844
3. H. 1925 p.852

"The other ground on which I would support this motion is that once a sentence has been carried out it is irrevocable. ..I think there was a case where Her Majesty Queen Victoria sent a reprieve to a man out here — Sardiel, the highway robber I believe, it was — but the reprieve reached Ceylon a day after the man was hanged."[1]

In 1966 all Poya days were made public holidays in Ceylon. But forty years ago only Vesak poya was granted as a public holiday. Kannangara was one of the earliest to raise this issue in the Legislative Council.

"The provisions regarding public and bank holidays are given in Ordinance No. 4 of 1886. In that Ordinance section 4 states that all the Sundays shall be *dies non*, and in Schedule A a list is also given of the days that shall be holidays in this Colony. There are fifty-two Sundays, and each of them happens to be the Sabbath day of the Christians. So that the requirements of the Christians are very amply provided for, and if you look over the Schedule A you will find that ample provision is made for the commemoration of the birth of Christ. In this schedule four days December 24 - 27 are given to the Christians to commemorate the birth of Christ. Then again January 1, has a religious significance and January 1 and 2 are holidays.

Then Sir, the intervening days, from December 28 - 31 were also made holidays. ..in the year 1917 to satisfy the craving of some members of the Government service that they should have a continuous stretch of at least ten days as holidays.....

"Then as regards the passion and the resurrection of Christ four days are given as holidays. .. Members of other religious faiths also have holy days, days that they have kept apart as holy for hundreds and hundreds of years.....

"I shall try to point out the scanty provision made for the Buddhists. The Buddhists are given a holiday only on Vesak day. .. That is not sufficient. A man who takes *sil* on that day will be unable to go to work the next day. I submit that at least three days are necessary for the due observance of rites and practices connected with this day.

"From ancient times the Buddhists have observed four holy days every month — the Poya days. Those days are observed by the taking of sil.....

"I shall now come to another day sacred to the Buddhists. The *Poson* festival falls on the full moon day in the month of June. That day to the Buddhists is second in religious significance only to the Vesak day. .....The full moon day of *Esala* falls in the month of July.

1. H. 1928 p.105

On this day there are several events that are commemorated.....Then I come to the full moon day of *Durutu* which falls in February..... This day is also held in great religious respect by the Buddhists.

" Therefore, Sir, we would ask that some proper and adequate provision be made for the Buddhists as well as for those of other religious faiths to commemorate their holy days and to go through their religious practices just as much as the Christians do — and rightly so — on their holy days."[1]

The second reading of a new Public Holiday Ordinance was taken up in October 1929. Kannangara once again pressed for more religious holidays for Buddhists. He said, " I am sorry to say that if the Buddhists should in any matter try to ask for their rights it is always flouted in their face that they are trying to rake up religious disputes in this Island. .. There are only seventeen holidays (other than Sundays) for the year, and fourteen of those are provided for the convenience of Christians, while the other three are given for the convenience of three religious communities. .. If the Honourable the Attorney-General realized that there was any kind of justice in the demand that was made the other day, he should have taken the courage in both his hands and altered the schedule. But I find that the same schedule is provided in this Ordinance.

" Holidays are granted not only for the convenience of the officials, but also for the convenience of the people. Now the great majority of the people of this country are Buddhists ; but this country is a country of minority rule and it looks as if none but Christians can insist on justice being done to them. .."[2]

Buddhists had only one public holiday — Vesak — till 1928 By the new Ordinance which was passed on February 9, 1928 ' The fullmoon day of the Sinhalese month of *Poson* and the day following the full-moon day of the Sinhalese month of Vesak'[3] were added to bring the total to three. It was the result of a consistent agitation carried on by Kannangara in the Legislative Council for nearly four years.

He consistently expressed himself against the high salaries paid to the European officers and the other privileges such as free passages granted exclusively for them. He said in 1926, " For the last ten years or so the Personal Emoluments have gone up from something like Rs. 13,000,000 to about 51,000.000 Sir I feel like asking the question whither are we tending at this rate of increase ? If nearly 50% of the revenue is going to be spent on Personal Emoluments what is going

1. H. 1925 p.244
2. H. 1926 p.1330
3. H. 1928 p.141

to happen ? Supposing a man who has a coconut tree wants a plucker to pluck nuts, is he going to pay the plucker half the income of the nuts ? "[1]

If Kannangara opposed the high salaries and other privileges provided for the top rungs of the government service he fought for a better deal for the lower rungs. Presenting the case of the minor headmen for a regular pay he moved, " that in the opinion of this Council, Government should take immediate steps to provide the minor headmen of this Island with adequate remuneration by way of a regular pay or allowance for the services rendered by them and to consider the question of a gratuity scheme for them on retirement."

Sponsoring the motion Kannangara said, " The general public are very anxious to see that the work of the headmen is done well. For that purpose it is necessary that a headman should be a man of character, intelligence, large-hearted, liberal-minded, and that he should have the physical fitness, social position, and local influence necessary for this office. Men with these qualifications cannot be attracted for Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 a year."[2]

There were many times when he raised the issue of discrimination against Ceylonese in government service. In 1926 he said " it is well known to the general public, and very often references to it will be found in the newspapers also, that the Medical Department is full of colour bars and prejudices in the matter of appointments. .. It is well known that there are certain appointments to which only certain sections of the community are appointed. I might instance the case of the Port Surgeonship of Colombo, the Judicial Medical Officership of Colombo, and the District Medical Officership of Nuwara Eliya. To appointments like these only certain sections of the population have a claim and others have none."[3]

Even as late as 1926 the government was perpetuating the caste system at least in certain departments. Exposing this discrimination in the government service Kannangara asked, " Are candidates seeking admission to the Prison or Police Department or any other Government Service in this Island required to state their caste? If so, will the government be pleased to order the immediate discontinuance of this practice ? "

The Colonial Secretary answering this question said, " The answer is in the negative, except as regards the Police Department, the Railway Department and certain posts in the Medical Department.

1. H. 1926 p.1284
2. H. 1926 p.1373
3. H. 1926 p.120

As regards the Railway Department, the practice will be discontinued. As regards the Medical and Police Departments, the Government proposes to continue the practice."[1]

The dismissal of Stephen Seneviratne was another case of open discrimination practised at this time by the Government without the slightest regard to public opinion. To tell the story in brief " Seneviratne was one of sixty applicants for the post of Assistant Government Assessor. He had had a distinguished career at Cambridge ; he had been called to the Bar at the Inner Temple, and was practising his profession in Colombo when he was selected for this post. That was in October, 1926. Three or four months after his appointment E. G. Eastman (Government Assessor) went on leave and Seneviratne was appointed to act for him. Things were going on smoothly in the department so long as Eastman was at its head. In early 1929 he retired and a new Assessor A. Kirk was appointed. Seneviratne in 1929 submitted a number of confidential memorandums either to the Government Assessor or to the Head of the Department, commenting upon what he considered to be irregularities in the department. Seneviratne was dismissed without even charges being framed against him."

Opposing this dismissal, Kannangara said " What is at the bottom of the whole matter is that Seneviratne was not loyal to A. Kirk (new Government Assessor). when I say that Seneviratne was not loyal to Kirk, I mean that he did not keep quiet when Kirk and R. Schokman (an Inspector in the department) were making the assessment in connection with the Galle road widening. .. The Assistant Government Assessor was never consulted, and he only got to know about some of the assessments from outsiders, from perhaps the lawyers who appeared at the inquiries. Then what did Seneviratne do ? He tried to save the reputation of the department. .. In order to save the reputation of the department, in order to save Government money, he sent up a memorandum to Kirk addressed to him confidentially and stating that the public were dissatisfied with the assessments. .. Seneviratne evidently thought, that it was his duty if there was anything wrong going on in the department — and people were freely talking about bribery and corruption and dishonesty in the department with regard to valuations — to write that confidential letter. .. Later on Seneviratne was asked to withdraw the memoranda, and it was said that his conduct towards Kirk was disloyal. What is the disloyalty ? That he did not shut up and keep quiet when things were going wrong in the department — that he brought to the notice of the Government that the general public were dissatisfied with the assessments. ..

1. H. 1926 p.1157

"Has the Government ever called upon Seneviratne to explain his conduct ? No, the Government has never done that, and the Colonial Secretary says that it is not on any of those grounds but on the ground of inefficiency that this officer has been dismissed. .. What is inefficiency ? .. Efficiency is perhaps to help other people to do questionable things ? If your superior officers do something wrong you should shut up and keep quiet. That is efficiency!"[1]

The following day the Governor decided to appoint a Committee of the Executive Council consisting of the Attorney-General,the Hon. K. Balasingham and the Hon. A. F. Molamure to examine this question.[2]

The report of this Committee was tabled in the House in February 1931. The Committee could not come to a unanimous decision on the question of reinstating Seneviratne. In the opinion of E. S. J. Jackson (Attorney-General) "it would not be desirable that Seneviratne should be reinstated in the Government Service". Molamure concluded, "in my opinion Government was not justified in dismissing Seneviratne for the reasons alleged in the reports, and he should be reinstated." Balasingham took a middle position by recommending that Seneviratne be employed in a suitable capacity (in another department) in the public service.[3] The Government accepted the opinion of the Attorney-General Jackson and assented to Seneviratne's dismissal.

Kannangara was not to be silenced by this decision, and almost immediately after the report was published he moved in the House, "That this House views with great disappointment and alarm, the refusal on the part of the government to abide by the decision of the Committee, appointed by the Governor at the instance of this Council, to inquire into and consider, whether Stephen Seneviratne should be reinstated in the Public Service or not ; condemns the action of the Government in ignoring the assurances given to the Legislative Council, by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary on behalf of the Government on February 26, 1930 ; wishes to place on record its disapproval of such action, and urges the Government immediately to reinstate Mr. Seneviratne in the Public Service in accordance with the findings of the Governor's Committee and Government's pledges.

"That this Council further resolves that a copy of the foregoing resolution be forwarded to the Secretary of State".[4]

Kannangara made a long speech accusing the Government of breaking a pledge made in the House. The Colonial Secretary found

1. H. 1930 p.386
2. H. 1930 p.409
3. S.P.I - 1931 p.8
4. H. 1931 p.125

it hard to justify the attitude of the Government, and the acting Governor had to take the " unusual step of coming to the House informally to address the Councillors," on the decision of the Government. He in fact had to admit the charge made by Kannangara that the Government had failed to keep its word.[1]

Kannangara made another long reply at the end of the debate on his motion establishing the fact that it was a case of wrongful dismissal. The motion was passed by a large majority. All the unofficial members present voted for the motion except two — G. A. H. Wille (First Burgher Member) and C. E. Hawes (European Rural Member). Even the nominated unofficial members — A. C. G. Wijekoon and C. E. de Vos could not defend the action of the Governor.[2] In spite of it all, Seneviratne was not reinstated !

Another issue on which Kannangara fought hard in the Legislative Council for justice and fair play was the Kalutara Railway disaster. On March 12, 1928 at about 8 o'clock in the night two trains collided off Kalutara killing 27 persons and injuring 52. " A wave of indignation and a feeling of anxiety passed through the country at this serious collision."[3] The next morning in the Legislative Council the Colonial Secretary assured the House of " a very full inquiry into the matter." The Governor lunching at Trinity College, Kandy on the same day gave the same assurance.

On the 14th a communique was issued by the Government that a full and public inquiry into the disaster would be held and Treasurer W. W. Woods (Chairman), M. J. Cary, G. A. H. Wille and D. B. Jayatilaka were appointed as a Committee to go into this matter.

Within a week " a very serious change took place in the mentality of the Government ". As Kannangara put it " although at the start the Government promised a commission it was trying its utmost to find an excuse for not allowing that commission to function ".[4]

No inquiry was held till the end of June.

Kannangara said " It looks as if the Government for some reason or other was trying its utmost to fool the public... The reorganization of the railway came into force in November 1924. .. I opposed it to the very last both in the finance Committee as well as here, but I was defeated. Then when the railway started working under these new conditions we were all under the impression that there was nothing wrong. .. Now Sir, after the reorganization has been working for

1. H. 1931 p.144
2. H. 1931 p.232
3. H. 1928 p.799
4. H. 1928 p.875

two years, there occurs this terrible disaster accompanied with so much loss of life. The Colonial Secretary said that our railway was doing very well, and that is the very reason why when we have such a tremendous disaster the like of which we never had before, we should institute some inquiry and find out why in a railway that was doing so well this terrible disaster should have occurred. It is not a case of one man blundering. .. All along there were no accidents before the reorganization scheme came into force. Perhaps the safety Regulations were such that when one man blundered the other man did not blunder : the other man carried out his duties so well that a disaster is averted and there is no collision, there is no accident. If two people blundered there was a third man to set things right, but when a number of safety Regulations are broken by five or six men, there must be something rotten in the system. .. Here it is not one but a series of breaches of rules. .. the dying deposition of Driver Bennet was not recorded. .. There are certain other aspects of this case that show that the matter requires further investigation. .. " We must ask unanimously that the promise made to us be kept by the Government and that there should be no fooling about ".[1]

Kannangara also was one of the few Councillors who consistently advocated an Income Tax. Ceylon charged no Income Tax during her colonial era. A Taxation Commission was appointed in 1925 and the Commission in its Final Report recommended the levying of an Income Tax.[2] In February, 1930 H. J. Huxham, Income Tax adviser introduced ' an Ordinance to impose a Tax upon Incomes.'[3] The European community in general and the Government Servants in particular were known to obstruct this ordinance. Kannangara supporting the bill said, " I do not think that the Government servants of the Colony will be so unreasonable as to oppose this measure which was proposed many years ago, a measure that we have voted in favour of from Congress platforms, a measure that public men have brought to the notice of Government during the past so many years. At that time it was the most equitable form of taxation, but when you have to pay then it becomes the most inequitable tax.....

" Now we are asked : " Why rush it ? " It is never too early to do the right thing. This tax was asked for, years ago. It was postponed perhaps because Government wanted at that time to protect some people from paying the tax. But when the Government finds that no longer can they go on raising money by indirect taxation, the representative of the Government says that this is the only way by which they can get the money required. .....

1. H. 1928 p.875
2. S.P.IV - 1930 p.5.
3. H. 1930 p.508

" Now we are faced with a deficit, and how is the Government to be carried on ? It is an utter impossibility unless you have this one form of equitable taxation which you find in every civilized country. .. I would ask the people who are opposed to it to pay and look happy and look happy and pay."[1]

The second reading was passed but 15 of the ' people's representatives ' voted against it.[2] The most interesting reversion however took place at the third reading, when no less than 24 unofficial members voted against and the Ordinance was rejected. Three members (K. Balasingham, S. Rajaratnam and G. R. de Silva) who voted for the ordinance at the second reading voted against it at the third reading. Only six elected members (E. R. Thambimuttu, C. W. W. Kannangara, D. B. Jayatilaka, F. A. Obeysekere, D. S. Senanayake and G. A. H. Wille) voted for the ordinance on both occasions.[3]

One final issue in which Kannangara took a great interest and an individualistic stand was the Constitutional Reforms. When the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission were made public a spate of resolutions were brought before the Legislative Council requesting amendments and modifications.

The main recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission was " the substitution for the existing Legislative Council of a State Council which would deal with administrative as well as legislative matters ; the decentralisation of control from the existing Colonial Secretariat and the arrangement of the Government into ten groups in charge of ministers, of whom seven would be elected members of the Council, the remaining three, to be called Officers of State ; and the association with each of the seven elected ministers in the administration of his Department of a standing Executive Committee of the State Council.

" On the assembly of a new Council the members would proceed to divide themselves into these seven Executive Committees, each of which would select its chairman for appointment by the Governor, the chairman so appointed being Ministers referred to above and individually responsible with their Executive Committees, to the Council for the direction and control of the Departments. .."[4]

Kannangara opposing these reforms said, " We are not enamoured of a constitution of this type. We say that this is a constitution that cannot be worked."[5]

1. H. 1930 p.876
2. H. 1930 p.942
3. H. 1930 p. 2250
4. Donoughmore : Report of the Special Commission on the Constitution : Ceylon 1928. p.149.
5. H. 1928 p.1502

Arguing for full responsible government he added, " I will now deal with some of the objections to the grant of full responsible Government. One objection given by the commissioners is that the population is not — homogeneous. I wish to know whether even in England, Scotland and Ireland there have not been differences of race, language and habits between the Jews, the Scotch, the English and the Irishmen. Even to-day there are differences of language, of custom, of habits and of race. What about the bitter struggle between Protestants and Roman Catholics ? .. That was the situation in England. .....The same thing has happened in Canada, and the other self-Governing Dominions. These differences of race, creed and language did not prevent the introduction of responsible government into those countries.

" A further argument used against us is the lack of education. What was the percentage of literates in England, what was the percentage in Canada when they got responsible Government ?

" The people of this country are against the committee system. In fact they are not for anything except full responsible Government," concluded Kannangara.[1]

The extension of franchise was another important recommendation of the commission. They said, " the present property, income and literacy qualifications for the franchise should be abolished and the franchise should be extended, subject to minor reservations, to all men over 21 years of age and all women over 30 years of age who (a) apply to be registered as electors, (b) have resided in the Island for a minimum period of five years."[2]

A. F. Molamure moved that " this Council accepts the recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission as regards the extension of the franchise subject to the following amendments : (a) that in the case of females the age for qualification as a voter should be 21 and not 30 ; (b) that in the case of non-Ceylonese British subjects a literacy qualification should be added to the proposed five years' residential qualification, or in the alternative the qualification should be that the applicant to be registered as a voter should (i) have resided in the Island for a period of one year, (ii) be possessed of immovable property of the value of Rs. 500. (iii) or be in the receipt of an income of Rs. 50 per month, (iv) and be able to read and write one of the languages of the Island e.g. English, Sinhalese or Tamil.[3]

Supporting this resolution Kannangara said " Indian labour is being recruited at such a rate as to become a serious menace to the people of this country.

1. H. 1928 p.1510
2. Donoughmore : loc. cit. p.151
3. H. 1928 p.1623

" It is possible for me to give statistics. .. The total population of this Island on December 31, 1927 was 5,288, 792. In 1921 the total population was 4,504,549. The increase in the population between 1921 and 1927 was — 784,243. Now, if we consider the increase of immigrants over emigrants for that period, which comes to 354,395 we will see what the actual increase in the population was for that period. That should enable us to judge the rate at which the immigrant labour population in this Island is increasing ; that should enable us to find out the rate at which the population of the country, the permanent population is increasing. And that population includes Indians who are permanently domiciled in Ceylon. For those six years the increase in the immigrant labour population is 354,395 and tht in the permanent population only 429,848. So that, when we say that there is a danger of the permanent population of this Island being swamped by migratory labour, it is perfectly true.

" If these people are given the vote, what will be the result ? ..... What have the Commissioners recommended ? They have recommended that from 70 per cent to 90 per cent of this population should be given the vote. What will happen now ? There are 885,000 immigrant labourers in the Island, and they will be able to return ten members to the Council, if they voted bodily. But if they are so distributed as to be able to influence the return to Council of certain particular members, they will be in a position to return not ten members but twenty or even thirty or forty members."

" Do our Tamil friends think that because there is no chance for the Indian labourer to flourish in the North there is not the Indian labour menace in the Central, the Uva, and the Sabaragamuwa Provinces ? Cannot they realize what we feel, that the permanent population will be swamped by migratory labour ".[1]

The sole intention of Molamure's resolution was to restrict the voting power of the Indian labour. This is very clear from the speeches in support of the resolution. The supporters were mainly Sinhalas. The Tamil members with the assistance of the other minorities opposed this resolution successfully. Of the minorities only E. R. Tambimuttu voted with the Sinhalas. Of the Sinhalas only C. H. Z. Fernando (Chilaw) voted against the restriction of franchise to the non-Ceylonese.[2]

A compromise had to be arrived at. Again it was Tambimuttu who came to the rescue. He proposed an amendment to limit the franchise of both Ceylonese and non-Ceylonese to literates of over 21 years of age. Ultimately it was this amendment that was accepted—

1. H. 1928 p. 1806
2. H. 1928 p.1889

thus the 'representatives of the people' voting against Universal Suffrage which the Donoughmore Commission so willingly granted.[1]

Kannangara who all along supported universal suffrage, perhaps felt a little guilty for having been forced by circumstances to vote against this progressive recommendation. In a personal letter addressed to Herbert J. Stanley, the Governor he explained his position thus : " In view of a possible misunderstanding that might be created in the mind of Your Excellency and the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies regarding the views and attitude of the territorially elected Sinhalese members of the Legislative Council in connection with the recent debate on the question of manhood suffrage, I beg to submit for your earnest consideration the following facts :

" 1. That most of us used our utmost endeavour for several days to bring about a satisfactory settlement and proper understanding on the grant of an effectual limited franchise to the ever increasing number of non-domiciled dumb-driven recruited labourers, and other foreigners in our midst.

" 2. Had we succeeded in these attempts we would have given an unqualified vote in favour of manhood suffrage to the permanently settled inhabitants of this Island.

" 3. On the failure of all attempts outside the Council, and even at the last moment in the Council itself to avert what we in common with the very large majority of the people of Ceylon, consider a real and grave menace to the Ceylonese, especially the Kandyans and the poorer classes in the Low-Country, we were obliged to vote in favour of the amendment of the Honourable E. R. Thambimuttu, member for Batticaloa District imposing a literary test for the purpose of preventing the swamping of the electorate by non-domiciled persons having no interests in the welfare of the country or, as stated by the Commissioners themselves, no abiding interest in the country.

" 4. Our real attitude was indicated in our speeches, viz. if we succeed in our endeavour to grant to non-Ceylonese only a limited franchise, then we strongly support an unrestricted franchise for all Ceylonese above the age of 21 years, but, if we are out-voted and defeated in our attempt, as we actually were in Council, then for the purpose of limiting the number of non-Ceylonese voters we are obliged to vote in favour of the device of a literary test, at least until such time as we can by legislation restrict the ever-advancing tide of immigration and recruited labour into this country."[2]

Kannangara voting against manhood suffrage had other repercussions as well. He was the Vice-President of the All-Ceylon Trades

1. H. 1928 p.1894
2. PF. (copy of letter of November 18, 1928)

Union Congress led by A. E. Goonesinha. The Ceylon Labour Union, the political wing of the Trades Union Congress had demanded and made representations before the Special Commission in support of manhood suffrage. [1]

The Trades Union Congress had to take disciplinary action against their Vice-President. On November 21, 1928 the General Council of the Congress met at Consistory Buildings, Pettah and passed the following resolution : "That the Honourable C. W. W. Kannangara be suspended from the Vice-Presidentship of the Trades Union Congress and that he be recommended to the open sessions of the Congress for expulsion from the All Ceylon Trades Union Congress."

A. E. Goonesinha who presided, proposing the resolution said, " In the matter of votes for the Indians, they could not as a party go against the principles of the Labour Party by denying the rights of citizens. But to-day they found as opposed to that a set of people going about preaching that only those Indians who draw Rs. 50 should be given a vote, not the poor labourer. To the poor labourer, those so-called great nationalists said, no vote should be given.

" Kannangara had taken a very abiding interest in the affairs of the Congress since its inception, but in voting against manhood suffrage he went directly against the Labour Party. As Vice President of the Trades Union Congress he had no right, no business to do that. It was disloyal, and he should be dealt with immediately."[2]

While these motions on the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission were being debated the Secretary of State for the Colonies sent a message to the Legislative Council in which he said, " It will be recognised that the recommendations of the Commission were framed after full and anxious inquiry during which all interests were given an opportunity of being heard. In my opinion the recommendations must be regarded as a whole, and while no doubt modifications in detail will be necessary when effect is being given to them, I should not be willing to accept any amendments in principle which would destroy the balance of the scheme."[3]

On October 10, 1929 the Secretary of State sent a despatch indicating the ' modifications in detail ' which he was prepared to accept, and requested the Council to ' pronounce its decision in regard to the scheme as a whole.'[4]

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1. First Sessions of the All Ceylon Trades Union Congress : October 26 and 27 1928. Resolutions.
2. CDN. November 22, 1928
3. H. 1928 p.1912
4. S.P. XXXIV - 1929 p.24

Following the instructions of the Secretary of State the Colonial Secretary (B. H. Bourdillon) moved, "that in the opinion of this Council it is desirable in the interests of Ceylon that the Constitutional changes recommended by the Special Commission on the constitution with the modifications indicated in the Secretary of State's despatch of October 10, 1929, should be brought into operation."[1]

This led to a protracted debate in the course of which Kannangara said, "I oppose this motion. .. We have had the statement made that if we do not accept this scheme, the powers that we have are going to be taken away. The powers we have will be taken away if we get up in our seats and say, "What are we to do ? We cannot do anything else but accept this scheme." But if we have sufficient courage to say, "we have our rights," then no English Government will take away rights that have been once granted. ..... A Labour government is in power in the United Kingdom, and they have declared that they are out to grant self-government to India and to Ceylon. .....

I wish to say this, that there are some people who seem to think that it is only by accepting this motion is it possible to prove that they mean well by the country. Other men are called traitors. .. Is this, Sir the gratitude that we get for the service that we have certainly with all our heart, with all our might, with all our soul rendered to the country. .. It may be that I belong to the Sinhalese community or it may be as the President-elect of the Ceylon National Congress — (G. E. de Silva) has suggested, that perhaps I have not a drop of Sinhalese blood in my veins. .. It may be that if we now go to our constituencies we will be defeated. .. But we will have one satisfaction, the satisfaction of having done our duty. No man should be insensible to public opinion in discharging a public trust. .. But he should listen also to that still small voice whose approval will make our walks serene by day and our pillows smooth by night. And I shall do nothing else ; I shall not waver one bit. I shall do my duty according to the dictates of my conscience. .....

"I shall cast my vote for the rejection of this proposal, because I consider that the Committee System cannot be worked ; because I am firmly of opinion that if we stand together and ask for something better, we must get it."

The motion was passed by a narrow margin of two votes — 19 voting for and 17 against. Eleven official members present declined to vote.

The communal alignment was interesting. All the Tamil (except one) and Muslim members were against the Donoughmore Reforms. All the Sinhala (except two) and European unofficial members were

1. H. 1929 p.1655

for the reforms. Burghers were divided N. J. Martin voting for and G. A. H. Wille voting against. The two Sinhala members who voted against were E. W. Perera and Kannangara. E. R. Thambimuttu was the solitary Tamil to vote for.[1]

In addition to the debates in the Legislative Council, Kannangara took a keen interest in the work of the National Congress. To him the Congress was one organisation that had to be protected and strengthened at any cost. He saw that Ceylon's path to freedom lay in the ability of the Congress to unify the various communities that went to make the Ceylonese nation.

When A. E. Goonesinha inaugurated his Labour Party on October 15, 1928, Kannangara was also invited to be a member. Declining this invitation he replied, " I am entirely in support of labour and shall always try to do my best for the labourer, and also help in securing all necessary legislation for his support and protection and for the vindication of his rights. But I cannot break off from the Ceylon National Congress or aid in the disintegration of that body to which the whole Island is indebted in every way and to which we owe undivided allegiance and unstinted support. .."[2]

The eighth annual sessions of the Congress was held at Mahinda College Hall, Galle on December 17 and 18, 1926. Kannangara acted as the Chairman of the Reception Committee. In welcoming the President-elect E. W. Perera and the fellow delegates to the capital of the Southern Province he said, " There was born hard by the outskirts of that city one cold wintry morning a babe that was destined to be the saviour of his people. When his people were in dire distress and no man was sure of his life, when the terror of Marital Law was flitting across the land, when anybody could have been shot at sight, there was one true son of Lanka, who risked the perils of the ocean and of the enemy's submarines, who crossed the seas to lay their case at the footsteps of the throne of the King, and that brave son of Lanka — they had elected as President of this years' Congress.[3]

There is one more incident to be referred to before this chapter is closed. Ponnambalam Ramanathan was nominated to the Legislative Council as the representative of the Tamils in 1879. He completed fifty years of national service in 1929, though he was not a member of the Council all throughout that period. Eminent citizens of the

1. H. 1929 p.1816
2. PF : (copy of letter of October 11, 1928).
3. Bandaranaike, S. W. R. D.: loc. cit. pp.741-2.

Island joined themselves into a Ramanathan Jubilee Committee to commemorate the year by putting up a statue of this distinguished leader. At the inaugural meeting the following were elected office bearers :

President	:	James Peiris
Vice-President	:	C. W. W. Kannangara
Secretaries	:	R. Nadaraja and R. A. de Mel
Treasurer	:	H. T. Premachandra

' Searchlight ' a weekly journal published an article — ' Fifty years a Leader ' — in appreciation of the attainment of the Golden Jubilee of the Grand Old Man of Ceylon. James Peiris considered the article as an attack on the Congress, on the Sinhala leaders and on him personally, and in a speech from the platform of the Town Hall, he called the article ' scurrilous '.

On June 18, 1929 Searchlight published another article— Sir James Raises a Smokescreen ' — in reply to the speech made at the Town Hall. Apparently some of the material in the article was supplied by Nadaraja, the Secretary of the Jubilee Committee.

James Peiris resigned from the Presidentship of the Committee,[1] and wrote a letter to Kannangara in which he said " We will be wanting in self-respect if we serve on the Committee. .. I believe that many Sinhalese members of the Committee have already resigned ".[2]

Kannangara allowed the heat to die down and replied James Peiris after a lapse of nearly three weeks. In this reply he said:

" (i) The Secretary has committed wrong and been willingly or unwillingly responsible for libel on you and the other Sinhalese leaders, but he has also apologised to you ;

" (ii) Sir Ramanathan deserves grateful recognition of his services to us ;

" (iii) Sir Ramanathan has not been responsible for the action of the Secretary ;

" (iv) However much the members of the Committee may feel the great wrong done to you and others by the Secretary is it fair that they should resign from the Committee and thereby punish (a) the

1. Searchlight, July 2, 1929.
2. PF : (letter of July 3, 1929).

general public who entrusted them with a serious and responsible duty, and (b) Sir Ramanathan whom they undertook to honour by lending their services as members of the Executive Committee :

"(v) Will not our resignation widen the existing differences between the Tamils and the Sinhalese at a time when they should unite for the cause of the country."[1]

Good counsel prevailed and the Committee functioned smoothly to carry out the work entrusted to it. In February, 1931, Kannangara himself was elected the Chairman of the Committee.[2]

The Legislative Council was dissolved in April, 1931 and the new State Council met on July 7, opening a new chapter in the life of Christopher Kannangara who was then a mature man of 47.

1. PF : (copy of letter of July 21, 1929)
2. PF : (copy of minutes of meeting of February 11, 1931).

CHAPTER 6

IN THE BOARD OF MINISTERS

In 1930, when Ceylon was on the threshold of a new era, Kannangara was elected President of the Ceylon National Congress. This was the twelfth year of its existence. The annual sessions were held at the Town Hall, Kandy on December 12, 13 and 14.

E. A. P. Wijeratne, Chairman, Reception Committee welcoming Kannangara to the Hill capital said, "Mr. Kannangara is a worthy successor to the phalanx of the great men who had held this exalted office. On his ability, sincerity and restless energy and above all in the genuineness of his humility we place our hope."

In delivering his Presidential address Kannangara paid glowing tributes to James Peiris and Ponnambalam Ramanathan. Speaking of the new era that was dawning he said, " Problems of vast magnitude and far reaching effect are awaiting solution : Income Tax, Immigration, Ceylon University, Local Government, Drink, Agriculture, Irrigation, Industries, Land Settlement, Personal Proprietorship, Mass Education, Unemployment, Workmen's Compensation, Crime Prevention, Mortgage Bank, Retrenchment, Power Development and several others. These require the services of the best brains in the country. The opinions of such men should be correlated and the Congress should act as a party with one policy to achieve the best results. That policy should be framed and dictated by men actuated by the same noble aspirations to reach that promised land of full responsible government."

Speaking of Income Tax he added, " A political crisis of the first magnitude was precipitated last Tuesday (December 9, 1930) by the decision of the Legislative Council to side-track and postpone the coming into operation if at all, of the Income Tax Ordinance which had passed through the Council at its second reading. The opponents of Income Tax, it was to be said to their credit worked their campaign in a manner so thorough and far reaching as to elicit the admiration of the whole of Ceylon. Work such as that was capable of accomplishment only with the power of the almighty rupee, and a good portion of that rupee, which was going to be taxed, flowed freely in the protection of the vested interests that have withstood this form of taxation successfully during the past 28 years.

"The system of taxation prevailing in the country was indirect and well-recognised to be unfair, unjust and inequitable. It violated all the upto-date causes of taxation and bore very heavily on the poor man. Practically every civilized country in the world had an Income Tax very often in addition to several other taxes."

In conclusion he asked all true sons of Lanka to look across the ocean and see how noble and heroic sons of India were dying and suffering in jails and penal settlements for the sake of Bharata Matha. "What sacrifices and for what purpose," he exclaimed.[1]

Four months after these Congress sessions the Legislative Council was dissolved and May 4, 1931 was fixed as the Nomination day for the first elections under universal suffrage. The number of territorial seats was increased to 50. Galle District which Kannangara represented in the 1924 Legislative Council was divided into three electorates : Galle, Balapitiya and Udugama (and a small section was added to a fourth — Weligama). Kannangara handed in his nomination papers for the Galle constituency. The other candidate was S. H. Dahanayaka.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian leader visited Ceylon in the midst of the election campaign and Kannangara had to busy himself with a public reception in the South. The reception was held on May 20, at Matara over which Kannangara himself presided.[2]

The election campaign began towards the end of May with a meeting organised by the Ratgama Association at Devapathiraja Vidyalaya. Both candidates were invited. P. R. Gunasekara presided. The candidates were asked to explain their policies.

Dahanayaka who spoke first said that he was against the levy of an Income Tax, but would fight for the establishment of a pension fund for the poor and unemployed. He wanted legislation for minimum wages for workers. He did not consider the establishment of a University as an important issue but would fight for wider Municipal franchise and elected Mayors.

Kannangara explaining his policies said that he was for Income Tax. With the introduction of Income Tax he would move for a radical change in the present system of taxation which told heavily on the poor. It would be his endeavour to introduce poor relief measures in Ceylon, the introduction of a system for securing land for the landless, wider medical facilities, convalescent homes and model tenements for workers.

He had always been working to secure a system of education, that had, as its aim, the realization of the national destiny of the

1. CDN December 13, 1930
2. CDN May 21, 1931

country. He would see that in the future, the country's education programme was patriotic in character.[1]

In this election D. S. Senanayake supported Kannangara. Speaking at a meeting in Galle, Senanayake said that if there was one man in Ceylon who should have been returned unopposed it was Mr. Kannangara.

At the same meeting S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike said that if he were asked to select five men to represent the whole country in a Council he would unhesitatingly select Mr. Kannangara as one of them.[2]

Dahanayaka also held several meetings. At Dodanduwa he criticised the conduct of D. S. Senanayake and Bandaranaike two prominent members of the National Congress for supporting Mr. Kannangara, when he himself was a member of the Congress[3].

At Galle Dahanayaka charged Kannangara with ingratitude. He (Dahanayaka) had rendered more help to Mr. Kannangara in the elections for the Galle seat in the year 1924 than any one of his other friends. But Mr. Kannangara forgot this soon after entering the Legislative Council. When the seats were allocated, the first thing Mr. Kannangara should have done was to ask him to contest the Udugama seat or should have himself contested that seat allowing him to contest the Galle seat.[4]

There were 33,734 Registered voters in all. Polling took place on June 13 and 21,384 or 63% of those registered, cast their votes. The result announced on June 15 was :[5]

C. W. W. Kannangara (Red)	14,009
S. H. Dahanayaka (Green)	7,369
Majority	6,640

The general election was not fought on Party lines. Three party organisations, namely the National Congress, the Liberal League and the Labour Party were interested, but they did not nominate candidates and their leaders did not restrict their support to members of their own parties. The President of the Congress during

1. CDN May 27, 1931
2. CDN June 2, 1931
3. CDN June 5, 1931
4. CDN June 9, 1931
5. CDN June 16, 1931

the election year was Kannangara and the leader of the Liberal League was his erst-while (1924) opponent Francis de Zoysa. In this election De Zoysa contested Gampaha and lost once again.

Of the elected members 16 belonged to the Congress and 10 to the Liberal League. Labour Party led by A. E. Goonesinha had 3 councillors.

The Council met on July 8 to elect the seven Executive Committees. The Committees met on July 9 and elected their Chairmen, who became the Board of Ministers. Kannangara was elected the Chairman of the Executive Committee of Education by a majority of five votes. His rival G. E. Madawala (Narammala) secured only one vote. In fact except for an uncontested return (Agriculture and Land) Kannangara was elected with the largest majority.[1]

The very first public function to which Kannangara had to attend after been elected as the Minister of Education was the inaugural meeting of the National Reform Society. The meeting was held at Ananda College on July 24, 1931. The society was formed to promote and encourage (a) the dress reform movement ; (b) the study and use of the national languages ; (c) simplicity and thrift in the life of the people and (d) the production and use of local commodities.

Among the conveners were G. P. Malalasekara, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, Susanta de Fonseka, W. A. de Silva, D. T. Devendra, P. de S. Kularatne, A. Mivanepalana, C. Suntheralingam, S. A. Wickramesinghe and Kannangara.

One of the resolutions passed at the meeting was that a dress reform is essential and that in the evolution of a national dress the cloth for men and the saree for women should form the basis.[2]

Let us now turn to Kannangara's work in the State Council. Under the Donoughmore system there was no collective responsibility as such. But Kannangara generally avoided criticising the work of other ministers. Because he adhered to this principle during his whole period as the Minister of Education he made comparatively fewer speeches in the State Council (except on questions of education) than in the Legislative Council.

On Reform of the constitution however Kannangara expressed his views unhesitatingly. Kannangara and E. W. Perera it should be recalled were the only two Sinhala Legislative Councillors who voted against the acceptance of the Donoughmore Reforms and when Perera (Horana) moved a series of resolutions on the Reforms of the constitution in 1932 Kannangara came out in support.

1. CDN : State Council, 1931. Colombo.
2. PF : (leaflet)

Speaking on the motion, " that this Council claims the exclusive control of the public purse" he said, " various members stated that they did not know what were the difficulties of this constitution ; that some of them were misled into a very compromising situation. Hansard of 1928 will give the lie direct to these statements. All difficulties were anticipated and fearlessly indicated in the numerous motions adopted in 1928. Those who rejected the scheme (Donoughmore Reforms) were burnt in effigy, and now, even those who are trying to work the scheme are burnt in effigy.

" The greatest advocates of the scheme say that they were deceived. .. I would ask them to think of the present. If we want to manage our own affairs we must have control of the Public Purse. .. So far as the control of the purse is concerned under this constitution there is certain expenditure that can be called votable expenditure. There is certain expenditure that is non-votable. There is non-votable expenditure that must be incurred by us. .. It is the people's money. If the people's money cannot be controlled by the people's representatives, then in that case, there is no constitution whatsoever. I would ask for the representatives of the people complete control over the purse. So that as regards non-votable expenditure it should be passed on to the people's representatives..."[1]

In order to give effect to the resolutions moved by Perera and accepted by the Council, the ministers submitted a memorandum to the Governor to be forwarded to the Secretary of State on April 21, 1933. The memorandum demanded (a) the removal of the officers of state and their substitution by Ministers and Executive Committees of the Council ; (b) the strengthening of the position of the Board of Ministers by enabling them to initiate and carry out their financial policies ; (c) alteration in the method of election of ministers ; (d) the reconstitution of the Public Service Commission ; (e) the deletion of the provision for obtaining the prior sanction of the governor in the case of bills, motions, resolutions or votes affecting officers in the Public Service ; (f) the curtailment of the special powers of the governor.[2]

On November 1, 1933 D. B. Jayatilaka (Kelaniya) moved " that this Council accepts the proposals for the reform of the constitution embodied in the memorandum submitted to the governor by the Ministers and forwarded by His Excellency to the Secretary of State."[3]

Kannangara speaking on this resolution said, " The Donoughmore Commissioners when they desired to entrust the people of this country with responsibility for policy, financial policy and for complete internal management of their affairs said that they could do it but that there

1. H. 1932 p.1606
2. H. 1933 p.2716
3. H. 1933 p.2542

were certain sufeguards necessary. The people of this Country were untrained in ministerial work and therefore they could not be entrusted with that responsibility, except with certain safeguards. . .

" But what has happened in practice ? The governor fixes the salaries of the public servants (including new entrants) as he likes and increases the cadre as he likes. The Attorney-General (Legal Secretary) has concluded that power vested in the governor to ensure the maintenance of efficiency of the public services, and that all questions as to the necessary staff and their emoluments and conditions of service were fundamental principles and that it was the duty of the governor to maintain those principles. . .

" The Financial Secretary comes down to this Council and advises the Council to throw out the proposals of the Board of Ministers !

" You cannot satisfactorily work this constitution in its present form any longer. It is becoming absolutely impossible.

" The whole country seems to be clamouring for improvement, or the adoption of another system at least.

" You may try to amend the constitution as it is in this little respect and in that little respect. But the Board of Ministers find that that is not the proper thing to do, that that will not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people, that that will be unworkable. ' Gilt the farthing if you will, but it is a farthing still '.[1]

The resolution was passed 34 voting for and 15 against.

But unfortunately that memorandum had two riders attached to it by the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce (Peri Sundaram) and the Minister of Communication and Works (H. M. Macan Markar). They did not agree with all the reform proposals of the majority of the Board. The governor said, " You are not a united Board. I must have a homogeneous Board representing matters to me."[2]

Then the matter was put off for the new Council.

At the end of 1935 the first State Council was dissolved. The nominations were fixed for January 15, 1936. Kannangara decided to change his constituency.

First he sounded Dedigama as a possible constituency, but later shifted his attention to Matugama because his ancestral village Loolbaddawa was within that constituency.

1. H. 1933 p.2671
2. H. 1938 p.733

On January 15, not less than five candidates handed in their nomination papers for the Matugama seat. They were Kannangara, R. H. Wijemanne, Hinton Seneviratne, W. B. F. Perera and S. Suriyagoda.

Kannangara's opponents said that he was driven away by the voters of Galle and had now come to Matugama. Kannangara replying said, that for his services in the Legislative Council the people of Galle presented him with a gold chain and a medal. Will the people of Galle drive a man by giving him presents.

D. B. Jayatilaka speaking in support of Kannangara at Tebuwana said, " Kannangara is not a novice in politics. The people of Matugama must be fortunate to have such a person to represent them. It would be an honour to the constituency to be represented by such an able politician."[1]

Not many public meetings were held by any of the candidates in this election but convassing was done by visiting homes whereever it was possible.

A special correspondent of the Ceylon Daily News writing an election feature ' Round the constituencies ' said in February " When Kannangara shifted his attention to Matugama many thought that he was running the risk of losing his seat. He had already flirted with Dedigama but there he found himself jilted. Yet, from the impression I gathered in the Matugama constituency, he has made much headway in winning support. The fight here is said to be between Mr. Kannangara and Mr. Wijemanne with Mr. Suriyagoda as the dark horse. The Minister of Education is reported to have won over the Estate backing while his cause is also being pleaded by Congress spokesmen among the villagers.

" Mr. W. F. B. Perera another Kalutara lawyer, is looked upon as one who will be an also-ran. But Mr. Hinton Seneviratne, who is the man of the place, is expected to receive a respectable percentage of votes. The fact that five candidates are scrambling for this seat makes it difficult to essay a correct forecast, but withal, Mr. Kannangara seems to have the best chance. That is if his rivals fail to prove to the voters that a runaway from one constituency who was flirting with another and hopes to come to roost in a third, is hardly the best candidate to support."[2]

The polling took place on February 27, and the result was announced at the Kalutara Kachcheri by F. C. Gimson, Assistant Government Agent just after midnight the same day :[3]

1. CDN January 27, 1936
2. CDN. February 7, 1936
3. CDN. February 28, 1936

C. W. W. Kannangara	(Green)	13,318
S. Suriyagoda	(Red)	8,859
Hinton Seneviratne	(Grey)	3,405
R. H. Wijemanne	(White)	1,862
W. F. B. Perera	(Brown)	1,052
Majority		4,459

The new State Council met on March 17, 1936 to elect the Speaker (W. Duraiswamy) and on March 18 to elect the Executive Committees. On March 19 Kannangara was re-elected as the chairman of the Executive Committee of Education, by a majority of 6 votes. His rival A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South) received only one vote.[1]

In the State Council occurred two incidents which focused attention on the need for reforms.

On November 3, 1936 D. B. Jayatilaka (Kelaniya), Minister of Home Affairs moved a supplementary estimate to improve the salaries of the Police Officers.[2]

On May 18, 1937 the estimate was brought up again (this time by the Financial Secretary) under article 22 of the Ceylon (State Council) Order in Council of 1931, which dealt with Bills, motions, resolutions or votes of paramount importance to the public interest.[3]

The observations of the Financial Secretary on the estimate said, " His Excellency the Governor considers that it is a matter of paramount importance .. and the Secretary of State for the Colonies who has been consulted, takes the same view." But the Council had to decide on the estimate one way or the other before the Governor could certify the expenditure under article 22. The Council decided not to take a decision. N. M. Perera (Ruanwella) moved 'that the debate be adjourned', and the Council passed the adjournment.[4]

It was brought up again on June 1, 1937 and .G. E. de Silva (Kandy) moved 'the adjournment of the debate'

C. H. Collins, the Financial Secretary said, " I can only conceive that this motion for adjournment of the debate is intended to obstruct the process of discussion. Under standing order 30, I will ask you Sir, to rule that that motion (adjournment) should not be put."

1. CDN. The State Council of Ceylon, 1936. Colombo. p.17
2. H. 1936 p.2815
3. Ceylon (State Council) Order-in-Council 1931. p.10
4. H. 1937 p.1107

The Chairman (Susanta de Fonseka) said, " I cannot hold that this motion to adjourn discussion of this motion is an abuse of the rules of the Council. .. I think it is open to the House by every constitutional method known to it, to assert its own decisions and to prevent those decisions been over-ridden ".[1]

The Colonial Government was not prepared to give in.

At the end of 1937 H.M. the King on the advice of the Secretary of State for Colonies promulgated the Ceylon (State Council) Amendment Order in Council 1937, repealing Article 22 and substituting a new article, empowering the governor to enact forthwith, as a Governor's Ordinance, a Bill containing such provisions as he may consider necessary.

This was published in the Government Gazette Extraordinary of January 18, 1938 and the very next day H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle) moved, " that this Council emphatically protests against the action of the Secretary of State in advising H.M. the King to promulgate the Ceylon (State Council) Amendment Order-in-Council, 1937, without giving this Council and the country an opportunity of expressing their views and respectfully requests H.M. the King to repeal this Order which is calculated to curtail the powers and privileges granted to this Council and the Country under the Ceylon (State Council) Order-in-Council, 1931, and has undermined the confidence of the people in British justice and fairplay."[2]

Speaking on this motion Kannangara said, " On April 27, 1936 the Executive Committee of Home Affairs approved this supplementary estimate (increase of salaries to Police Officers). On June 1, 1936 it was sent up to the Board. The Board was not prepared to pass it and it made certain suggestions and sent it back to the Executive Committee.

" Now on June 30, the Executive Committee again by six to one approved it, not with suggestions made by the Board of Ministers. They insisted on their proposal and said that if these increments were not given, the efficiency of the department would be affected. ..

" So far as the Board of Ministers is concerned in this matter, but for the fact that the Executive Committee insisted that it should be done because it was essential for the efficiency of the department, the Board would have turned it down. ..

" When the elected members of the Council (the Executive Committee) think like that, when inspite of the repeated protests by the

1. H. 1937 p.1324
2. H. 1938 p.74

Board of Ministers the Executive Committee thinks that this is absolutely essential for the proper discharge of their duties by the departments under them, what else Sir, can we expect ? .. I do not try to justify the amending Order-in-Council. No Sir, I will be the last man to do that, and if it is a case of fighting, Sir, you will perhaps find that those people who do not shout will fight the hardest. ..

" I would appeal to the House, Sir, that we should make a united effort by means of conferences or other means to remove from our constitution all these unsatisfactory features. Let us try to get the old British Parliamentary model and for that we want united action and agreement among all the Ministers. With that end in view, Sir, the Board of Ministers will place before this House reform proposals and let us arrive at some sort of agreement."[1]

On June 13, 1938 the Governor Andrew Caldecott sent a Despatch to the Secretary of State on the Reforms of the Constitution.

On March 9, 1939 the proposals came up before the Council for consideration. In this debate Kannangara advocated : (i) Restricting the franchise of the Indians only to those who are permanently settled in Ceylon; [2] (ii) complete territorial constituencies[3] and non-return to any form of communal representation ;[4] (iii) abolition of the Committee system ;[5] (iv) an independent public service Commission[6] and (v) curtailment of Governor's powers.[7]

But before the reforms could come the State Council had to fight to preserve even the rights they had gained under the Donoughmore Constitution from Beurocratic encroachment.

On January 3, 1940 the labourers of Mooloya Estate, Hewaheta went on strike, under the leadership of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party. This apparently led to some unrest and on January 10, Govindan a labourer was shot dead by the Police.

On January 23, the State Council resolved, ' that this Council requests H.E. the Governor to appoint immediately a Commission of Inquiry as recommended in the Police Inquiry Committee Report of 1928 in connection with the shooting of Govindan, a labourer at Mooloya Estate, by the Police on January 10, 1940 ; and pending an

1. H. 1938 p.735
2. H. 1939 p.1479
3. H. 1939 p.1698
4. H. 1939 p.2322
5. H. 1939 p.2465
6. H. 1939 p.2543
7. H. 1939 p.2593

Inquiry by such Commission, this Council is of opinion that steps should be taken to have all criminal proceedings instituted in connection with this incident postponed."[1]

C. Coomaraswamy C.C.S. was issued a Commission to inquire into the shooting.[2]

On January 25, the Minister of Home Affairs wrote to the Inspector-General of Police, " In view of the State Council's decision, you are requested to instruct the superintendent of Police, Central Province, not to oppose any application for the postponement of the three cases now pending before the Magistrate's Court at Kandy."

P. N. Banks, the Inspector-General of Police refused to carry out the Minister's instruction on the ground that " it will seriously affect the morale of the Police Force."

The Minister considered this " a deliberate disobedience of orders issued," and reported him to the Governor. The Governor however upheld the action of the IGP on the ground : (i) that under the Police Ordinance ' the administration of the Police in this Island be vested in the IGP, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents of Police, Inspectors, Sergeants and Constables' and, (ii) that the Minister's order was unconstitutional as it is not passed by his Executive Committee and approved by the State Council and Governor."

Jayatilaka replying to this said, " if it is sought to maintain that because certain statutory powers are vested in Police Officers, therefore they cannot be controlled, no direction can be issued to them by any authority — then every Public Officer clothed with some statutory authority might claim the right to defy, disobey instructions issued to them by anybody, whether it be an Executive Committee or anybody else. If that is the case, what would be the result ? The government of this country as presently constituted would be very effectively torpedoed. .....

" My opinion is, a serious situation has arisen, and unless this Council takes adequate steps by a united effort, this country will instead of going forward, go backwards fifty years politically ".[3]

On February 27, D. S. Senanayake, (Minuwangoda) Minister of Agriculture and Lands tendered his resignation as a protest, and a few hours later the other six Ministers (Jayatilaka, Kannangara, W. A. de Silva, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, J. L. Kotalawala and G. C. S. Corea) also sent in their resignations.

1. H. 1940 p.38
2. H. 1940 p.410
3. H. 1940 p.460

Kannangara had no idea of returning to the Ministry (at least not so soon as he did) when he sent in his resignation. On February 28 writing to L. Mc D Robison, the Director of Education he said, " I suppose you are aware that the Ministers resigned yesterday owing to a grave political crisis. It is my duty relinquishing my portfolio which I have held for a continuous term of about 9 years to express to you my very deep appreciation of the cordial relations that have existed between us right through this long period. Education has been the target of constant public criticism but you have born your share well during these many years in the true spirit of a ' public servant '.

" You and your staff have discharged their duties well and to my satisfaction. Please convey to your officers my heartfelt thanks for the ready and willing co-operation given to me as Minister."[1]

The Director in his reply said, " I very much appreciate your kind letter of to-day, and I deeply regret the circumstances which have caused your resignation.

" The department has had a very happy nine years under your control. You thank us for our co-operation, but co-operation has been natural with such a sympathetic Minister.

" I hope that it will not be long before you resume your old position, in which, I need hardly assure you, you will receive our continued support and co-operation."[2]

The governor however informed of his inability to vary his decision, and on March 5, 1940, sent a message to the Council in which he said that ' if the Home Minister's communication to Mr. Banks had been an instruction it would have been unconstitutional in the minor sense that the Home Minister had not placed it before his Executive Committee and in the major sense that it concerned the conduct of proceedings before a court of law. He appealed the Councillors to subject the situation to calm, wise and dispassionate review in order that nothing inimical to the country's interest may be done as a result of misapprehension or precipitancy."[3]

On the same day Jayatilaka moved " that this Council condemns the ruling of His Excellency the Governor in upholding the action of the Inspector-General of Police in refusing to carry out the instructions issued to him by the Minister of Home Affairs regarding the postponement of the criminal cases instituted in connection with Mooloya Estate incident as a grave infringement of our Constitutional Rights

1. PF. (copy of letter, February 28, 1940.)
2. PF. (letter of February 28, 1940)
3. H. 1940 p.479

and decides not to participate in working the Constitution until such rights are restored."[1]

The motion was debated for six days. R. H. Drayton, the Legal Secretary said, " It is perhaps the most serious charge that could be brought against the Governor."[2]

" I would like to mention that " D.S. Senanayake said " when the Board of Ministers resigned they resigned not because they had any intention of carrying on a non-co-operation campaign. .....They found that the situation was impossible.

" We resigned because we felt that it was not possible for us to carry on if every decision had to be considered by the committee. ... We felt that in the everyday business of the various departments it was not possible to get committee decisions on every little matter, and in those circumstances we could not carry on."

The governor to ease the situation conceded that Ministers could issue orders taking responsibility with regard to the Committee.

Senanayake added, " He (the Governor) is willing to continue the practice that has been in force, namely, the Minister taking responsibility with regard to his committee and then acting. That would make the position easy and the constitution workable. .. In those circumstances we feel that we can assume office."[3]

Kannangara speaking last on behalf of the ex-Ministers said " The time has come when there should be a clear definition of what is of major importance and what is of minor importance, of what should be left to the Executive Committees and the Ministers and what should be brought up before the State Council to be submitted to His Excellency. The point is that now, after going through all these matters, the Ministers have been able to persuade His Excellency that this is a question that should be left for decision by a Select Committee of the State Council. ..

" In these circumstances the ex-Ministers have agreed to take office and leave this matter to the members of the State Council to appoint a Select Committee and come to a settlement."[4]

The debate was adjourned on March 15 without a decision been taken and when the House met again on April 2, the Ministers had assumed office.

1. H. 1940 p.489
2. H. 1940 p.617
3. H. 1940 p.665
4. H. 1940 p.673

Three years after the governor's despatch of 1938 on constitutional reforms the imperial government gave the Board of Ministers an assurance " that the position should be further examined and made the subject of further consultation by means of a commission or conference. This cannot be arranged under war conditions, but the matter will be taken up with the least possible delay after the war."

Two years later — ' as it is in the general interest to give greater precision to the foregoing statement ' — H.M. Government made the following declaration (1943). " The post-war re-examination of the reform of Ceylon's constitution, to which H.M. Government stands pledged, will be directed towards the grant to Ceylon by order of His Majesty-in-Council of full responsible government under the Crown in all matters of internal civil administration."[1]

The declaration was communicated on May 26, 1943 and on June 8, Senanayake on behalf of the Ministers said " The Board of Ministers have given careful consideration to the Declaration by His Majesty's Government on constitutional reform. It is in essence an undertaking that if the Board can produce a constitution which, in the opinion of a Commission or Conference, satisfies the conditions set out (in the declaration), and if that constitution is subsequently accepted by three-quarters of all the members of the State Council, His Majesty-in-Council will put that constitution into operation. . . We are proceeding to frame a constitution in accordance with our interpretation "[2]

On February 2, 1944 the ministers submitted their constitutional scheme to the governor to be forwarded to the Secretary of State.[3]

On July 5, 1944 the Secretary of State made a statement ' that H.M. Government have decided to appoint a Commission to examine the ministers' proposals.

The ministers on their part decided ' to decline to take any part in the deliberation of the proposed commission ' and on August 18 withdrew their constitutional scheme.[4]

On November 24, 1944 the State Council passed " that this Council directs the ministers to introduce forthwith a Bill providing for a constitution of the recognised Dominion Type for a Free Lanka."[5]

In the meantime the Secretary of State for colonies appointed the Soulbury Commission " to visit Ceylon in order to examine and discuss

1. H. 1943 p.831
2. H. 1943 p.962
3. S.P. XIV - 1944
4. S.P. XII - 1944
5. H. 1944 p.2707

any proposals for constitutional reform in the island." .. They landed in Ceylon on December 22, 1944.[1]

On January 19, 1945 S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (Veyangoda) moved the first reading of a Bill intituled "An Ordinance to provide a a new constitution for Ceylon." Kannangara supporting this Bill said, " I would ask hon. Members, even the members of the minority communities who are trying to hark back to the ancient days to support this Bill. I would tell the members of the European community ' you cannot fight for one kind of freedom west of the Red Sea and for another kind of freedom east of the Red Sea. That cannot be '. The principle that actuated them in Europe must also actuate them in the East. One set of principles cannot be applied to the European countries and another set of principles to Ceylon. It is the misfortune of all dependent people that acceptance of their fitness to manage their affairs depends upon the verdict of the rulers. You cannot go merely by the verdict of the rulers ; they will never say that you are fit. Fitness to manage our own affairs must be gauged by the position of the people of this country. Of course, it is very difficult for anybody who has power to part with that power."[2]

On March 22, 1945 the Bill was finally passed by 40 voting for and seven against. All the Sinhala and Muslim members present voted for while all the Europeans and Burghers present voted against. The Tamils were divided — Nalliah, Rajakulendran and Vytilingam voting for, Natesan, Pereira and Tyagaraja voting against and Mahadeva declining to vote.

In 1942 he added to the statute book ' An Ordinance to provide for the establishment and maintenance of National Museums in Ceylon, and to declare the Colombo and Kandy Museums to be national museums.[3] He also supported the establishment of a Zoological Garden by the Government as 'it would be of the greatest value to Ceylon as an institution for scientific research, as an educational institution and as a great attraction to residents and passing tourists.'[4]

Kannangara was also an ardent supporter of Swabhasa, both as the medium of instruction and as the medium of administration.

In May 1944 J. R. Jayawardene (Kelaniya) moved, " that with the object of making Sinhalese the official language of Ceylon within a reasonable number of years this Council is of opinion : (a) that Sinhalese should be made the medium of instruction in all schools ; (b) that Sinhalese should be made a compulsory subject in all public

1. Soulbury : Report of the Commission on Constitutional Reform 1945 p.3
2. H. 1945 Col. 1147
3. H. 1942 p.1366
4. H. 1936 p.621

examinations ; (c) that Legislation should be introduced to permit the business of the State Council to be conducted in Sinhalese also ; (d) that a Commission should be appointed to choose for translation and to translate important books of other languages, into Sinhalese ; and (e) that a Commission should be appointed to report on all steps that need be taken to effect the transition from English to Sinhalese.

T. B. Jayah (Nominated) moved that sections (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the original motion be deleted and confining the motion only to subsection (e), that is appointment of a Commission to report on the transition from English to Sinhalese.

V. Nalliah (Trincomalee-Batticaloa) moved an amendment that the words "and Tamil" be included right through the motion, wherever the word 'Sinhalese' occurs.

Nalliah's amendment was accepted by Jayawardene the mover of the resolution and the house, (only B. H. Aluvihare (Matale), F. H. Griffith (Nominated), J. W. Oldfield (Nominated), A. Ratnayake (Dumbara), A. R. A. Razik (Nominated), Dudley Senanayake (Dedigama), U. B. Wanninayake (Puttalam) and G. A. H. Wille (Nominated) voting against) while Jayah's amendment was negatived. Twelve members voted for Jayah's amendment, and there was one Sinhala member among them, D. S. Senanayake.[1]

On September 20, 1945 Bandaranaike moved "that (a) a select committee of the State Council be appointed to consider and report on the steps necessary to effect the transition from English to Sinhalese and Tamil with the object of making Sinhalese and Tamil the national languages of the country ;

(b) the committee consists of the Legal Secretary, Kannangara, Jayah, Jayewardene, S. Natesan (Kankesanturai), and Ratnayake ;

(c) the committee have power to send for persons, papers and records ; and

(d) that the committee have power to report from time to time.

This was accepted with an amendment that the word 'official' be used instead of 'national'.[2]

At the first meeting of the committee held on September 25, Jayewardene was elected chairman.

The committee submitted its report on October 9, 1946 in which they recommended that 'ten years hence, from January 1, 1957, English shall cease to be the language of administration, and Sinhalese and Tamil shall take its place".[3]

1. H. 1944 p.745
2. H. 1945 Col. 6574
3. S.P. XXII - 1946 p.42

Kannangara was the Minister of Education for 16 years, Minister of Local Government for another 4 years and he served in the Legislature of the country for a period of 28 years in all. But he has never been to Europe. In fact he has never been beyond the confines of South East Asia. On December 23, 1943 he for the first time left the shores of Ceylon, and was away in India for a short period of less than one month.[1]

At the end of 1946 he again visited India, this time in connection with the tenth Anniversary celebrations of the Calcutta Art Society. A Conference on Asian Art and Culture was held over which Kannangara presided.

The Conference was held from December 27 to 31, 1946 at the Calcutta University. Kannangara delivered the presidential address on the second day in the course of which he said " My humble service, if I may so call it, pales into insignificance when compared with the self sacrificing labours, the distinguished attainments and high culture of the mighty intellects of this land of philosophers, poets, pandits and politicians and of other great countries of the Orient represented in this great and historic gathering.

" That being so, can it be that my selection to take the chair at this notable and distinguished assembly of eastern culture represents a recognition of any outstanding contribution of my own towards the growth or the spread of Asiatic culture ? I realize, only too well, how inadequate has been the measure of my personal achievements in that respect. .. Why then am I here ?

" You yourselves furnished the answer in your invitation to me when you referred to one thing I have done where I may lay claim to some credit with a certain measure of pride and satisfaction ; that is that in spite of the fiercest and most dogged opposition from a large and very influential section of the people of my land, inspite of abuse and calumny, vilification and ridicule, I have succeeded in obtaining the sanction of the State Council of Ceylon for a scheme of free education, providing for all children of the land equal opportunities to climb to the highest rung of the educational ladder, from the Kindergarten to the University, irrespective of the status or financial capacity of their parents and for obtaining for our national languages their rightful place in that scheme as an essential prerequisite for building up a free united and independent nation ".[2]

On this trip Kannangara also addressed large gatherings at the Maha Bodhi Society, Calcutta and at the Indian National Congress, Benares. He also visited Visva Bharati and Nalanda.[3]

1. H. 1944 p.164
2. CAS pp.1-2
3. CDN January 7, 1947.

In March 1947 Kannangara again visited India (New Delhi) as a member of the Ceylon delegation to the Inter-Asian Relations Conference. The Conference was held between March 24 and April 2, 1947. Addressing the Conference on " Cultural Problems that Asia Faced ' he said " This historic gathering of distinguished representatives from each and every Asian land, in this city of many hallowed memories, can truly be considered as a culminating point in the awakening of the people of Asia, and it is a matter for gratification that Ceylon — famed in Asian history and legend — has been able to take in it the part to which she is entitled by reason of the role she has filled in the history of the culture of Asia as a whole."[1]

Giving a talk at the Y.M.C.A., Colombo on the Inter-Asian Conference on his return Kannangara said, " The delegates represented one third of the globe and three fifths of the world's population, Japan was invited to the Conference and they would have sent their delegates but the U.S.A. did not allow them to do so.

" The objects of the conference were to find out what post-war world had in store for those 31 countries which had been exploited in the past.

" If they were going to be left to themselves according to promises, then the question arose how they were going to get on. So far as economic and industrial welfare was concerned they were faced with ruin, unless they discussed matters with each other and decide upon a course of action with each other in unity.

" The Eastern countries which had a culture that went back to thousand years must unite. They could say ' hands off to the people who sought to exploit them ' — that was the thing at the root of the Conference."[2]

In 1942 Kannangara received a honorary doctorate at the first convocation of the University of Ceylon.

The State Council was dissolved in July, 1947 and the country faced a general election under a new Constitution granting complete internal self-government.

1. CAC p.2
2. CDN April 29, 1947,

CHAPTER 7

THE LAST PHASE

THE Commission on constitutional Reform consisting of Lord Soulbury, J. F. Rees and F. J. Burrows appointed by His Majesty—

" to visit Ceylon in order to examine and discuss any proposal for constitutional reform in the island which have the object of giving effect to the Declaration of His Majesty's Government on that subject dated May 26, 1943. . .

— landed in Ceylon in December, 1944.[1]

" The Commission was certainly going to make a report, and that report was bound to carry great weight and to have a decisive effect on the future of Ceylon. The Ministers as the responsible elected government of the country, representing the largest element in the population, could hardly be content that the case for their carefully considered proposals should go by default ; yet they could not go back on the very firm stand they had made against the terms of reference of the Commission.

" The problem was solved, as most problems can be, by tact, common sense and courtesy. The Ministers' draft though formally withdrawn, had been published in September 1944 and its contents were common knowledge. Ministers could not give evidence officially to the Commission, but they could and did meet with the Commissioners informally and socially, and there were plenty of opportunities for private discussion and exchange of views. . . They had not wanted the Commission, but they had to have it. So they made the best of it and did what they could to make sure that the Commission's report would be based on the fullest and most accurate information. Confident in the justice of their claims, they trusted to the facts to speak for themselves".[2]

Kannangara referring to these unofficial exchange of views between the Commissioners and Ministers said, " When the Soulbury Commissioners were here, they wanted to see some of our schools.

1. Soulbury : loc. cit. p.3
2. Jeffries, Charles : Ceylon : the Path to Independance, London 1962 p.94.

They went round with me and saw some of the schools.[1] Being an educationist himself he was surprised at the facilities that have been afforded specially to the Muslim community.[2] .. The Commissioners visited the home gardens of the children ; they questioned the children. I was not there. I remained behind in the resthouse and told the Commissioners 'Please go and find out things for yourselves'.[3]

The Commission spent some fifteen weeks in Ceylon, travelling up and down the country, holding public sessions in Colombo, taking part in innumerable private discussions. On April 7, 1945 they left the Island and reached England two days later.

The report was presented to Oliver Stanley (Conservative), Secretary of State for the Colonies on July 11, 1945.

In general, the recommendations amounted to giving Ceylon a constitution which, in all its essentials, reproduced the form of the British Constitution, its usages and conventions, and a full and ample measure of self government. But it fell short of full responsible government as (i) the Crown retained the right to legislate for Ceylon by Order-in-Council under special contingencies, (ii) the governor was empowered to appoint the Chief Justice and the Judges of the Supreme Court and the members of the Judicial Commission and the Public Service Commission, ' acting in his discretion ' and (iii) certain kinds of Bills could be reserved by the Governor-General for Royal Assent.[4]

The recommendations were considered by George Hall (Labour), Secretary of State for Colonies as a change of government occurred in July 1945 in England.

The British government accepted the recommendations in principle, after consulting D.S. Senanayake, the Leader of the State Council who was invited to England for this purpose.

On his return he put the case for acceptance of the reforms so powerfully, that the State Council passed the motion for acceptance by 51 votes to 3.[5]

With the acceptance of a cabinet form of government a political party system became a necessity. At the end of 1945 Ceylon had four Political Parties, three of them — Lanka Sama Samaja Party, Bolshevik Leninist Party of India (Ceylon Section), and the Ceylon Communist Party — were Marxist and did not aim at a British type

1. H. 1945 Col. 4667
2. H. 1945 Col. 1144
3. H. 1945 Col. 4671
4. Jeffries, Charles : loc. cit. p.96
5. H. 1945 Col. 7102

of Two-Party democracy and the fourth — the Labour Party — was too small to make its existence felt in the country. There were also several communal organizations — the Sinhala Maha Sabha to which Kannangara belonged, the Tamil Congress, the Ceylon Indian Congress and the Muslim League — which were not based on Political Philosophies as such. The Ceylon National Congress (unlike its counter part in India) had become too weak by this time to give any effective leadership to an emerging free country.

In 1946 most of the sitting members of the State Council banded together to form the United National Party. " It is non-communal and non-sectarian. Its membership is open to all electors irrespective of caste, creed or community, who desire to maintain our cultural and other national glories and are prepared to subscribe to the Party's policy for the maintenance of the present economic system with an ample measure of progressive social reform."[1]

The party was inaugurated on September 6, 1946 and Sinhala Maha Sabha decided to merge with the new Party. Kannangara himself was not in favour of this merger and wished the Sinhala Maha Sabha to remain a Party by itself but abided by the majority decision.[2]

The new House of Representatives (under the Soulbury constitution) had 101 seats of which 95 were to be elected. A Delimitation Commission divided the Island into 89 constituencies (5 of them multi-member) to elect the 95 members.[3] The old Matugama constituency was broken into two — Matugama and Agalawatta. Kannangara's ancestral village Loolbaddawa was in the Agalawatta constituency but he decided to contest the new Matugama seat.

Nominations were received on July 26, 1947 and there were three candidates in the field : Kannangara, UNP (Star), Wilmot A. Perera, Independent (Elephant) and Don Robert Munasinghe, Independent (Lamp).[4]

The United National Party itself was not very popular. Their stated policy was to maintain the *status quo* and the dislike the people had for the British administration now turned on them. But there was not a united opposition party and it was inevitable for the UNP to gain the largest number of seats.

The UNP contested 77 seats and the second largest Party the LSSP contested only 28 seats.[5]

1. Jayasundara, U. A.: The United National Party : in Party Souvenir, 1949. p.19.
2. Kannangara, C. W. W.: IW. November 22, 1965.
3. SP XIII - 1946
4. CDN July 28, 1947.
5. CDN: The Parliament of Ceylon, 1947. Colombo.

"I received very little party support. In fact the leader D. S. Senanayake failed to appear on any of my election platforms" claimed Kannangara when the writer interviewed him in November, 1965. "I had to depend mainly on my achievements in the educational sphere. Dr. E. W. Adikaram (a campaigner for free education) was my main speaker" he added.[1]

Addressing a meeting of a students federation at Matugama, Adikaram said that he had never worked in the political field, but in the case of Mr. Kannangara he had come up to work for him as the issue was not a political one but one which would have far reaching consequences. The students were vitally interested in Free Education and it was up to them to guard its future which was synonymous with the return of the Minister of Education to Parliament.[2]

Wilmot A. Perera received 'left' support. The Lanka Sama Samaja Party came out in support of him. They claimed that Free Education was the result of their agitation in the Council and outside it.

Answering this claim at Ovitigala, Kannangara said, "that the routed enemies of Free Education, who had been away after losing all their hard fought fights were now trying to kill its author in an ambushing encounter and gain by strategy what they failed to achieve in open battle.

"Several persons including sama samajists and their camp followers were claiming to be the sponsors of Free Education and the latest announcement in a pamphlet was that Dr. N. M. Perera brought up Free Education issue in the State Council.

"Quoting from the proceedings of the Executive Committee of Education he pointed out that his committee had sanctioned it in 1934 while Dr. Perera entered the State Council only in 1936."[3]

If, Kannangara was opposed by the 'left' because he was a UNP candidate, he was opposed also by the extreme 'right' because he was the author of Free Education. "The UNP was 'the old gang', a gang which had been in power for eleven years and had therefore accumulated a fund of distrust. There was, too, a substantial volume of opinion to the right of the UNP which had no representation save among some of the independent candidates."[4]

Roman Catholic Church supported the UNP in most electorates. But at Matugama the Catholics opposed the official UNP candi-

1. IW, November 22, 1965.
2. CDN. August 8, 1947.
3. CDN. August 8, 1947.
4. Jennings, W. Ivor : The Ceylon General Election of 1947 : in Ceylon University Review. July 1948 p.149.

date. Rev. Fr. Francis Tambimuttu writing to ' the Catholic Herald ' expressed fears that the privileged position of the Christians in Ceylon would be destroyed if men like Kannangara came into power.[1]

To whom did the Indian Tamil Vote (12%) went at Matugama? The aim of the (Ceylon Indian) Congress was to reduce the power of the UNP Government so as to make it more amenable to pressure from the Government of India. Also, the Indian labourers were economically akin to ' the masses ' which the left wing parties claimed to represent. It is clear that in the low-country areas bordering the hills the Indian vote was cast against the UNP even though in one case, that of Matugama the Congress officially supported the UNP candidate.[2]

Did Kannangara get the Indian vote though he obtained the ' official ' support of the Ceylon Indian Congress ? W. Ivor Jennings analysing the election results says " this may be the exceptional case where the estate labourers did not obey their leaders "[3]

" Matugama provides no exception, for Mr. Wilmot Perera had very strong left-wing support. It seems that in the Kelani Valley, the Kalutara rubber area and the low hills of Sabaragamuwa the Indian vote was generally left-wing " adds Jennings.[4]

According to a report in the Ceylon Daily News, Wilmot A. Perera also issued a pamphlet with pictures of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and himself surmounted by the Indian Tri-colour.[5]

" Kannangara as Minister for Education had made many friends and also many enemies. He had nursed his own constituency with assiduity. . . But his opponent Mr. Wilmot Perera, had strong local influence. He was supported by the left-wing parties who had no candidate of their own. The enemies of Mr. Kannangara as well as the opponents of the UNP did their best to help Mr. Perera "[6] The outcome was that there was a record poll (81%) on September 11, 1947. The result was announced at the Kalutara Kachcheri the following day :[7]

Wilmot A. Perera	19,753
C. W. W. Kannangara	16,139
D. R. Munasinghe	1,091
Majority	3,614

1. Quoted in CDN August 8, 1947.
2. Jennings, W. Ivor : loc. cit. p.149.
3. Ibid. p.160
4. Ibid. p.156
5. September 12, 1947.
6. Jennings, W. Ivor : loc. cit. p.160
7. CDN September 13, 1947.

Kannangara was not perturbed by the defeat. He neither castigated the voters nor did he rush to 'retire' from politics. His supporters filed two election petitions challenging the election of Wilmot A. Perera, but neither of them succeeded.[1]

The defeat however created personal problems. Kannangara when he entered politics in 1923 was a considerably rich man, but after 24 years of political life he was left without a means of livelihood. He even did not own a house.[2] As a minister he received a salary, but once that was withdrawn he had practically no income or investments. Building up a legal practice once again at 63 was out of question. He had to depend on a political future.

In August 1948 when R. A. de Mel was unseated from Colombo South on the findings of an Election Judge, Kannangara sought UNP nomination for the bye-election. He himself was living at Colpetty which came within this electorate.[3] The Nomination Board met at 'Temple Trees' on September 20 but nominated T. F. Jayewardene as the party candidate for Colombo South and requested Kannangara to do 'all he could do to further the interests of the party and the country by supporting the candidature of the nominee of the party'.[4]

Kannangara remained a loyal member and a Vice-President of the ruling party till he retired from politics. But he was not in the Legislature when Ceylon received her independence in 1948. He was undoubtedly in the forefront of the fight for freedom. Writing on the achievement of freedom Kannangara said, "No trail of murder, internecine war-fare, rapine, bloodshed or brutal violence marred the path that led to this consummation. It was all achieved by peaceful means, lawful agitation and sound statesmanship on the part of a series of leaders culminating in the Honourable Mr. D. S. Senanayake, the present Prime Minister. . . .

"If we are to take our rightful place in this new world of liberty, equality and justice to all irrespective of class, creed or social status, we must strive for our moral heritage our manners, our uses, our laws, our customs and our traditions for which our past heroes laboured not in vain. A religious revival should accompany political freedom.

"Let us eradicate the causes that impede the successful progress of our country and enable our people from the highest to the lowest to enjoy in ample measure the five great freedoms which we have placed in the forefront of our programme, namely, Freedom from

1. CDN October 3 and 4, 1947.
2. Lankadipa, August 4, 1952.
3. PF (Copy of letter, September 16, 1948)
4. PF (Letter of U. A. Jayasundara, Organising Secretary, UNP; September 21 1948).

Fear, Freedom from Want, Freedom from Unemployment, Freedom from Disease and Freedom from Ignorance, and let all citizens of good-will and understanding join in enabling the UNP to accomplish this noble task within the shortest possible time."[1]

In February 1949 T. B. Jayah, the Minister of Labour and Social Services appointed Kannangara as the Chairman of a Committee " to inquire into and report on the Introduction of legislation to regulate terms and conditions of employment of Mercantile employees."

The committee submitted its report on April 26, 1950 in which they recommended the introduction of legislation to govern the terms and conditions of employment of mercantile employees in respect of (i) salaries, (ii) working hours and weekly holidays, (iii) sick leave, (iv) a central provident fund, (v) security of service, (vi) health and sanitation and (vii) indebtedness.[2]

By the time the report was submitted M. D. Banda had replaced Jayah as the Minister of Labour and Social Services (Jayah went to Pakistan as Ceylon's High Commissioner in early 1950). Jayah had undertaken to pay a lump-sum fee to the Chairman of the Committee. But even after submitting the report Kannangara was not paid. " After being driven from pillar to post for a couple of months I finally saw the Honourable the Minister of Finance in his own home" writes Kannangara, " and it was then I learnt for the first time that the Honourable Minister of Labour had on his own without any reference to me had decided that I be paid Rs. 2,500 as my fee. He said, however, that I could be paid only Rs. 1,000 as there was no more money in the Treasury in that particular vote. I said I would not accept it as I did not wish to be insulted and treated like a beggar for work done for Government. He then told me he would have to ask for a supplementary vote.

" On August 5, 1950 I received a cheque for Rs. 1,000 as an honourarium for the work done by me. I returned the cheque the same day as I expected the undertaking of the former Minister the Honourable Mr. T. B. Jayah, to pay me adequately, to be kept by the present Minister, but he failed to do so."[3]

In October 1950 Kannangara was appointed as Consul-General for Ceylon in Indonesia. It was a Grade III appointment in Class A of the Overseas Service of Ceylon. In fact this was the lowest grade possible for the Head of a Mission.[4]

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1. Kannangara, C. W. W.: Freedom Gained, What Next : in UNP Independence Day Souvenir, 1949. p.47.
2. SP. XV - 1951
3. PF (copy of letter, August 6, 1950)
4. Overseas Service Minute : Ministry of External Affairs, Ceylon.

Kannangara had taken an interest in the Indonesian War of Independence in 1945 and had an admiration for its leadership.[1] Indonesia was a topic discussed at the Pan-Asian Conference of 1947 in which Kannangara himself took part as one of Ceylon's delegates.

On December 27, 1949 the Dutch conceded Indonesian Independence and in late 1950 the Prime Minister of Ceylon thought that it was time for Ceylon to establish relations with this country of growing importance and great possibilities. Kannangara went there as Consul-General on October 10, 1950. He was there for 17 months but had no official residence. He put up in the (Room 153) Hotel des Indes, Djakarta and concentrated in building up friendly cultural relations between the two countries.[2]

In 1951 he came back twice to Ceylon for brief holidays, in February and November. In November when he returned to Ceylon Bandaranaike the leader of the Sinhala Maha Sabha had resigned his portfolio and had crossed over to the opposition. As Kannangara was a long standing member of the Sinhala Maha Sabha many expected him to resign his Consular appointment and join Bandaranaike. But Kannangara did not leave the UNP.

In 1951 and 1952 Kannangara held two Independence Day receptions at Hotel des Indes. They were organised in the form of ' Cultural Shows '. The attractive invitation card printed in 1952 carried photographs of a Kandyan Dancer and a Sigiriya Fresco. On the top of the card in bold type was printed ' Sri Lanka ' and below it ' King Ravana's Lankapura ' a phrase familiar to Indonesians.

The ' Cultural show ' included (i) Sri Lanka Song; (ii) King Rajasinghe's Queen and Dascon; (iii) Ayurvedic physicians song; (iv) Kafrinna Dance; (v) Sri Lanka Film and (vi) the National Anthem.[3]

Referring to these receptions in the House of Representatives (after Kannangara had relinquished his Consular post) W. Dahanayake said " I think it is utterly useless to have a Consul-General in Indonesia. We have not heard even from the press of the activities of the previous Consul-General (Kannangara). All that we have heard of is that he had in the past held a number of functions which had ended with the singing of the National Anthem, ' Namo Namo Matha '."[4]

Kannangara said in defence " I went there as Consul-General on October 10, 1950, and I was there for 17 months only and at that time

1. H. 1945 Col. 7257
2. H. 1952 (Volume 12) Col. 2238
3. PF (Invitation Card)
4. H. 1952 (Volume 12) Col. 686

not very much about Ceylon was known in that place. I do not want to boast about my own doings but, gradually, there were established good relations between Ceylon and Indonesia. In fact in the Colombo Plan Exhibition (1952), the best Pavilion came from Indonesia. . ."[1]

Kannangara did not have to stay in Indonesia long. On March 22, 1952 Ceylon's first Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake died. On March 26 Dudley Senanayake was appointed as Ceylon's second Prime Minister. The Parliament was dissolved on April 8 and April 28 was fixed as the Nomination Day. On April 20, Kannangara returned by air for 'consultations' with the new Prime Minister.[2]

He was given UNP nomination to the Agalawatta seat and there were four other candidates in the field: A. P. Jayasuriya (SLFP), S. A. Silva, sitting member (LSSP), W. H. Bodhipala (Ind.) and B. D. Mutukuda(Ind.).[3]

A. P. Jayasuriya the SLFP nominee was a friend of Kannangara when they both worked together in the Sinhala Maha Sabha. When Kannangara returned from Indonesia just before the election, Sri Lanka Freedom Party made an attempt to enlist him as one of its candidates.

Speaking at Hewessa, Kannangara said, " The welfare, stability and prosperity of the country were secondary considerations to Mr. Bandaranaike, whose primary motive was to secure for himself the Premiership at any cost. He is so anxious to become the Prime Minister that he made an attempt to cross over even earlier, but I persuaded him to be a little more patient. . . .

" Unfortunately when I was away in Indonesia that event, Mr. Bandaranaike crossing over took place. . . ."[4]

Bandaranaike answering these allegations of Kannangara said, " I had no dispute with the UNP regarding the Premiership. I seek no personal glory by becoming the Premier. I left the UNP because I realised that no useful purpose will be served by the UNP and the UNP has failed to solve the pressing problems of the country."[5]

The polling took place on May 26, 1952 and the results were announced the next day:[6]

1. H. 1952 (Volume 12) Col. 2238
2. CDN. April 21, 1952
3. CDN. April 29, 1952
4. CDN. May 13, 1952.
5. CDN. May 20, 1952.
6. CDN. May 28, 1952

C. W. W. Kannangara (Chair)	...	13,659
S. A. Silva (Star) ...	...	6,627
A. P. Jayasuriya (Elephant)	...	3,480
W. H. Bodhidasa (Key)	...	3,240
B. D. Muthukuda (Lamp)	...	440
Majority	...	7,032

The elections were over on May 30, 1952 and the UNP won an absolute majority—54 seats. On June 1 Dudley Senanayake formed a new Cabinet of 14 ministers in which Kannangara held the portfolio of Local Government. He was also appointed the Chief Government Whip. Though Local Government was a new field to Kannangara—as a mature politician (at 68)—he was not completely unfamiliar with it.

At the end of 1952 the Commissioner of Local Government reported. " Never in the history of local government was there a year in which almost unlimited freedom was accompanied by financial assistance granted without restrictions."[1].

By 1952 there was a great shortage of housing in urban areas. This was partly due to the Rent Restriction Ordinance of 1942 which had discouraged the landowners from putting up houses. The shortage was most felt among the middle and lower classes. The government itself had to undertake the building of more houses.

Kannangara gave his first attention to the question of Housing and slum clearance. In September 1952 plans for the formation of a Housing Corporation was prepared.[2]

In December the minister submitted two proposals to ease the housing shortage to the Cabinet: (i) to exempt new houses built after 1952 from the operation of the Rent Restriction Ordinance and (ii) to set up a National Housing Corporation.[3]

In January 1953 new houses built after 1952 were relieved of rent restrictions with the intention of encouraging the private sector to build more houses.

The year 1953 was however one of unsettlement and stress in local government. He had already dissolved the Kolonnawa Urban Council (on September 26, 1952) and in the early part of 1953 two more Urban Councils were dissolved for mismanagement of funds,

1. SP. XXIII - 1953. p.4.
2. CDN. September 6, 1952.
3. Lankadipa, December 4, 1952.

maladministration or neglect of duties. Panadura U.C. was dissolved on April 24, 1953 and Nawalapitiya U.C. on May 15.[1] The latter half of the year saw even more unsettlement.

On July 20, 1953 the price of rationed rice was increased from 25 cents a measure to 70 cents a measure.[2] The people protested by a day's ' hartal ' on August 12, 1953.

The Colombo Municipal Council and the Moratuwa Urban Council were controlled by ' leftists ' at the time and acted in sympathy with the hartal. This resulted in the suspension of the Colombo Municipal and Moratuwa Urban Councils under provisions of emergency legislation, a course of action unprecedented in the history of local government. On September 13, 1953 the Moratuwa Urban Council was dissolved on account of wilful neglect of duties.[3] This action led to much criticism both inside and outside the Parliament.

Dudley Senanayake tendered his resignation due to ill-health on October 12, 1953 and John Kotalawala succeeded him as the new Prime Minister. The press of Ceylon made every effort to keep Kannangara out of the new Cabinet but Kotalawala renominated him for appointment as the Minister of Local Government.

By this time Housing had become an important problem and the responsibility for Housing was handed over to a new Minister of Housing, Kanthiah Vaithianathan.

When Kotalawala decided to drop Lalita Rajapaksa and G. G. Ponnambalam from the new Cabinet (they held the portfolios of Justice and Industries respectively in Dudley Senanayake's Cabinet), Times of Ceylon wrote, " Following the serving of notice on the Minister of Justice Sir Lalita Rajapaksa, who has since left the cabinet, and the Minister of Industries Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, who is not yet out of office, the fate of at least three other Ministers is in the balance. These are P. B. Bulankulame Dissawe (Land and Land Development), Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara (Local Government) and Mr. E. A. Nugawela (Health)."[4]

A few days later ' the Times of Ceylon ' again commented, " the dismal record of the Minister of Local Government both as Education Minister and as Minister in charge of Housing left no alternative to the Premier but to entrust the housing problem to a new Minister, Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan".[5] Backing these Editorial remarks by

1. S.P. XXII - 1954 p.4.
2. AR. Food Commissioner, 1953 p.9.
3. S.P. XXII - 1954 p.3.
4. Sunday Times, October 16, 1953.
5. TC. October 20, 1953.

Letters to the Editor ' (some anonymous) the same paper published, " I think in the circumstances the Premier should have had the courage to drop Mr. Kannangara as he did the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Industries. The public would have applauded his action and it would have helped him to reduce the number of his Cabinet Ministers."[1]

The Ceylon Observer campaigned for the removal of Kannangara and A. Ratnayake (Home Affairs).[2] But Kotalawala ignored the campaign of the Press, which perhaps had little to do with public opinion.

On December 11, 1953 Kannangara advised the Governor-General to appoint N. K. Choksy (Chairman), E. W. Kannangara, P. Ramalingam and D. S. Jayewickrama as a Commission to (i) examine the nature and scope of Local Government in the island to-day; (ii)investigate whether any changes in such government are needed and, if so, to determine the nature and extent of the changes; and (iii) report and make such recommendations as they consider necessary, with regard to the following matters: (a) the functions, powers and duties that should be exercised by the various types of local authorities; (b) the nature and extent of the supervision and control which the central government should have over local authorities; (c) the ways and means of providing the revenue required by local authorities for the proper discharge of their functions; and (d) the appointment, conditions of service, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary control of employees of local authorities.[3]

In March 1954, Kannangara also acted as the Leader of the House in the absence on leave of J. R. Jayewardene. Two other events in which Kannangara took part during the year were: (i) the acceptance by the cabinet on January 28, 1954 of the Treaty Series No. 1 of 1954—Proposals relating to persons of Indian origin in Ceylon framed by the Prime Ministers of Ceylon and India in New Delhi on January 18, 1954 and (ii) the Royal visit (H.M. Queen Elizabeth II and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh) in April 1954. When all the ministers including J. R. Jayewardene appeared in ' Sherwani '—the new official dress adopted during the Kotalawala regime—for the official photograph with the Queen, Kannangara alone kept to his old attire of cloth and banian.[4]

On May 15, 1954 Kannangara left for Burma as a member of the Ceylon delegation to the inaugural ceremony of the sixth Buddhist Council at Rangoon. The delegation included Dudley Senanayake, M. D. Banda, G. P. Malalasekara and H. W. Amarasuriya.[5]

1. TC. October 27, 1953.
2. Ceylon Observer, October 20, 1953.
3. S.P. XXXIII - 1955
4. Lankadipa, April 26, 1954.
5. CDN. May 27, 1954.

Another important event of the year was the appointment of a cabinet sub-committee to plan the Buddha Jayanti celebrations in 1956. The committee included A. Ratnayake (Chairman), J. R. Jayewardene and C. W. W. Kannangara.[1]

In association with the plans for the Jayanti—a million rupee fund was inaugurated at a 'mammoth' meeting held at the Colombo Town Hall. Kannangara congratulating the Lanka Dhammaduta Society for the very laudable task undertaken by them said "the enthusiasm shown by the younger generation of Buddhists in the country towards the rennaissance of the Buddha Dhamma and missionary work is a very encouraging feature."[2]

On November 24, 1954 Kannangara went to India to lay the foundation-stone of the International Buddhist pilgrim centre at Sanchi in Bhopal.

He was received at Calcutta by I. D. Jalan, Minister for Local Government in West Bengal on November 26. He reached Sanchi on November 30. The Press Trust of India reported, "Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara Ceylon's Minister of Local Government paid homage to the relics of Sariputta and Mahamoggallana—the two principal disciples of Lord Buddha—at Sanchi to-day.... The relics which were on view since November 25 will be ceremonially restored to their permanent resting place in the underground chamber of the new vihara at Sanchi later in the night.

"This evening Mr. Kannangara laid the foundation stone of the rest house for pilgrims visiting Sanchi. At the ceremony Mr. Kannangara described Buddhism as the 'binding chain' between India and Ceylon which could never be broken."[3]

"Dr. S. D. Sharma, Chief Minister of Bhopal welcoming Mr. Kannangara to Sanchi on behalf of the people of the State said that culturally as well as linguistically India and Ceylon were very near each other."[4]

At the end of 1954 'Courier' writing on 'People and Politics' in the Ceylon Observer said, "There is one elder statesman whose continuous service in the legislature, many M.P's feel, should be recorded and recognised suitably. He is Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara.... The now aged politician has sat in the legislature of the land for an unbroken period of 25 years from 1922-47 and re-entered it two years

1 CDN. June 30, 1954.
2. Ceylon Observer, September 7, 1954
3. Ibid. December 1, 1954.
4. CDN. December 2, 1954.

ago. He is also one of the few surviving among the old brigade of the age of James Peiris, Ramanathan, E. W. Perera, Baron Jayatilake and D. S. Senanayake."[1]

In 1955 Kannangara paid his attention to the preservation of the sacred city of Anuradhapura. His intention was to shift at least the business quarter to the new town thus clearing the area surrounding the Sri Maha Bodhi before the Jayanti. This hope however did not materialize.[2]

The other outstanding events of 1955 so far as local government is concerned were: (i) the adoption of a new scheme of salaries for local government service employees,[3] and (ii) the publication of the Report on Local Government by the Choksy Commission.[4]

The Report was published at the end of 1955 and it was being considered by Kannangara when Parliament was dissolved on February 18, 1956 and elections were fixed for early April, Kannangara was 72 years of age at the time and did not seek re-election. But, he continued in the 'care-taker' cabinet till April 12, 1956 the day on which S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike was swept to power at the head of the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna which won an absolute majority. The UNP could retain only 8 seats.

Kannangara retired from politics with the fall of the Kotalawala government, after being in active politics for 40 years, of which 28 were spent as a member of the country's legislature. He was a minister for over 20 years. But he continued to take an interest in education and served as a member of the National Education Commission of 1961.

In March 1963 the Parliament decided to grant a lump-sum gratuity of Rs. 10,000 to Kannangara in view of his services to the nation in the cause of education, (without gathering anything for himself). On November 5, 1965 parliament again approved an all inclusive pension of Rs. 500 per mensem (non-statutory pension awards granted by resolution of Parliament).

S. M. Rasamanickam (Paddirippu) supporting the grant of a pension said " He is one of those statesmen, may I say, who has devoted a good portion of his life to the welfare and well-being of the people of this country."[5]

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1. Ceylon Observer, November 13, 1954.
2. TC February 3, 1955.
3. SP XX - 1956.
4. SP XXXIII - 1955.
5- H. 1965 - (Volume 63) Col. 2457.

PART III HIS THOUGHT

CHAPTER 8

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

" In popular parlance 'culture' refers to good manners, proper etiquette, or to the refinements of artistic taste. In social sciences the term means something far more fundamental than this."[1]

Edward B. Tylor, a British anthropologist defines culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, as ' that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. '[2]

" Culture might be defined" says A. L. Kroeber, long recognised as the dean of American anthropology, " as all the activities and non-psychological products of human personalities that are not automatically reflex or instinctive. That in turn means, in biological and psychological parlance, that culture consists of conditioned or learned activities (plus the manufactured results of these); and the idea learning brings us back again to what is socially transmitted, what is received from tradition, what is acquired by man as a member of societies".[3]

Kannangara invariably used the word ' culture ' in its sociological or anthropological sense. He of course agreed that " no culture has appeared or developed except together with a religion: . . . the culture will appear to be the product of the religion, or the religion the product of the culture".[4]

Kannangara's thought on culture and education falls into a three-point sequence:

(i) the great culture the ancient Sinhala-Buddhists developed;
(ii) the gradual decaying of that culture under Western influence and it being replaced by more and more alien traits. Missionary education has been the instrument of this change;

1. Young, Kimball : Sociology : New York. 1942 p 35.
2. Primitive Culture; Volume I ; London 1873 p. 1.
3. Anthropology : Culture Patterns and Processes : New York, 1963. p. 61
4. Eliot, T. S.: Notes Towards the Definition of Culture. London. 1950,P.15.

(iii) the need for a revival, not in its ancient form but as a synthesis of what is worthwhile in the two cultures (European and Sinhala) into a new eclectic pattern with an individuality of its own. If Christian missionary education has been the instrument of building an alien culture, a renaissance could also be brought about only by developing a national system of education which could counteract what is undesirable in the European culture and what is archaic in the Eastern.

Speaking of ancient Sinhala Buddhist culture Kannangara said, " Our culture derives ultimately from the cultural heritage of Jambudvipa. There flourished the ancestral tree from which we obtained our seed. . . ."[1]

The use of the word Jambudvipa is significant because it is not the India of to-day. Martin Wickramasinghe clarifies this in his essay ' Sinhalese culture: is it a replica ? ' thus: ' The popular notion that the ancient Sinhalese borrowed their culture from Hindu India is not strictly correct. They borrowed cultural elements from Buddhist India, which now does not exist. '[2]

Buddhism—the basis of Sinhala culture—was brought from India. The Sinhala methods of agriculture and irrigation, art and architecture, customs and manners all had an Indian origin. Kannangara says, " Ceylon—or Tamraparani, as it was known in the earliest times—was colonised by a people of Aryan speech from North India at the very time that one of the greatest spiritual and cultural movements in the history of mankind was transforming the ancient civilization of the land and making its influence felt over the whole of Asia and beyond. I mean the rise and spread of Buddhism, which faith was propagated in the island through the missionary zeal of the great Asoka. The acceptance of Buddhism by the Sinhalese people in the third century B.C. and the zeal which they manifested in its cause gave shape to the subsequent course of the history of the island and decided the manner of its cultural evolution."[3]

" The (cultural) seed fell on rich soil, and derived nourishment from sources till it in time produced a glorious efflorescence with a beauty, a character, a personality of its own, unique in many respects."[4]

" The various architectural and artistic motives which the early Buddhist missionaries introduced into the island were developed by

1. CAS. p.4.
2. Aspects of Sinhalese Culture : Colombo, 1958 p. 12.
3. CAC. p.3.
4. CAS. p.4.

the Sinhalese, stamping them with their own individuality, until they arrived at an efflorescence which in certain instances surpassed the heights they attained in the land of their origin. The Sinhalese stupas, for instance, out sized any of their class in ancient India and the system of irrigation was developed in Ceylon to such a high pitch in very early times that certain parts of the mother country appear at times to have received lessons from her in this branch of human endeavour."[1]

In this respect the position of Ceylon was analogous to that of Japan. " Japanese sought for Chinese civilization at various times, and absorbed and assimilated it with skill, yet always managed to give the borrowed product a distinctive national individuality, until now and then it would have been difficult to assert that the teacher still remained more advanced than the pupil."[2]

Though most of what is Sinhala culture was borrowed from India, in time the borrowed traits became an integral part of our culture. " Once acceptance is made the source is played down and forgotten as soon as possible. So it comes about that a large proportion of every culture was not spontaneously developed by it, but was introduced from outside and fitted into it, after which the people of the culture were no longer much concerned about the fact of introduction. Probably the greater part of every culture has percolated into it."[3]

" The Sinhalese culture and civilization, so enriched and ennobled, spread further afield, into Burma and Siam and distant Indo-China and even to China and Japan and to lands of the Western hemisphere."[4]

Ceylon during the Anuradhapura period and to a lesser extent even during the Polonnaruwa period was one of the ' higher centres of civilization '. It is in these higher centres that the most numerous inventions and the most generally adoptable advances are made on the whole. As these inventions and advances tend to spread, they will however spread most slowly to those societies which are most remote or most difficult to reach.

During this ancient period England was in a peripheral or marginal position and " the rude barbaric ancestors of the British nation were dyeing their bodies with woad and covering their nakedness with leaves of the forest. The people of Ceylon on the other hand were living in prosperous cities and enjoying the benefits of a splendid civilization, under the just and beneficient rule of an illustrious monarchy of their own. . . .

1. CAC. p.3.
2. Kroeber, A. L : loc. cit. p. 228.
3. Ibid.
4. CAS. p. 4

" At a time when the now great nations of the west were sunk in barbarism, or had not yet come into existence, Ceylon was the seat of an ancient kingdom and religion, the nursery of art, and the centre of eastern commerce."[1]

According to Kannangara however the greatest contribution of the Sinhalas was the preservation of Buddhism. He says, " the most important element of that culture was the religion of the Sakyamuni which was sent to us by the great Emperor Asoka in the third century B.C., through his own son the Arhant Mahinda. . . . Thus was inaugurated the most glorious chapter in the annals of our race."[2]

" While, in India itself, influences from outside as well as developments from within profoundly changed the original aspect of Buddhism, in its doctrines as well as in its ritual, the people of sea-girt Lanka preserved the original scriptures as well as the practical observances; and according to Ceylon tradition, when Indian Buddhists at a later stage desired to obtain knowledge of these they had to come to the great viharas of Anuradhapura to receive instruction therein. Thus we find Buddhaghosa coming to Ceylon from India in the fifth century of the present era and translating into Pali the commentarial literature which then existed in Sinhalese. . . .

" The development of the Mahayana form of Buddhism, which was destined to make great conquests in China, Japan, Tibet and Indonesia, was of momentous significance in the cultural history of Asia and in this great movement too, Ceylon had a considerable share. The chief disciple of the great Nagarjuna — Aryadeva, who was himself . . . one of the ' eight suns which illuminated the world '—is said to have been a scion of the Sinhalese royal family. . . . The eminent Tantric Amogha, who went to China in A.D. 719 and revisited India and Ceylon in 741 A.D. elaborated his doctrines in this island.

" The developments in art which took place at different periods in India made their influence felt in Ceylon. The earliest sculptures found in the island contain motives reminiscent of the art of Bharut and Sanchi and Andhra school, in particular, exerted great influence on the development of Sinhalese sculpture. Several specimens of Andhra reliefs have been discovered at various places in Ceylon. . . . Pallava and Gupta schools, in their turn, gave inspiration to Sinhalese artists in the creation of masterpieces which to-day receive the fervent admiration of discerning critics."[3]

After making an analysis of the cultural influence wielded by India on the Sinhalese he goes on to mention their adhievements. " Let

1. CAS. p. 5
2. CAS. p. 4
3. CAC. p. 4

us not also forget the qualities which the Sinhalese exhibited in solidifying their power in the land, qualities which have won for them the admiration of many nations—their knowledge of and the manner in which they practised the arts of peace, the patient endurance they showed in the turmoil of their daily lives, the diversified talent and the great skill they displayed in almost every branch of human industry and energy, in irrigation, in agriculture, in trade, in manufactures, in metal work, in engineering, in the cultivation of the fine arts, in their literature. Of our language it can be said that, perhaps with the exception of Chinese, no other living language shows such unbroken continuity over so long a period."[1]

" In literature, too, Ceylon contributed its share to the sum total of Indian achievement. Apart from the products of Sinhalese literature, whose appeal must necessarily be limited to the inhabitants of the island, Sanskrit literature is indebted to the Sinhalese poet Kumaradasa for the Janakiharana, an epic mentioned in the same breath as the works of immortal Kalidasa by so discerning a literary critic as Rajasekhara."[2]

" For a period of over 2,000 years the development of the Sinhalese language can be unerringly traced with the help of its documented records both lithic and otherwise. It is most fortunate in its literary remains of the past; no Indian vernacular can, for instance, show any literary fragments comparable to the poetical compositions inscribed on the gallery at Sigiriya, some of them going back to the sixth century. Here we have the *ipsisima verba* of the poets, absolutely unamended by editor or critic, as happens generally in the case of ancient literary works. In spite of the ravages of time and very frequent disturbing changes in our political circumstances and book-burnings by fanatic kings, sufficient productions have survived from the pen of our writers both prose and verse forming a no mean heritage.

" The position with regard to our plastic arts has been even more satisfactory. We have a record of painting and sculpture which in its continuity of development up to the day with a sufficiency of examples to enable us to trace its progress is almost unparalleled elsewhere in Asia.

" The history of music and drama is however sadly deficient; of dancing, only slightly better."[3]

" The history of Lanka can be traced back with unerring certainty throughout a period of over twenty-four centuries, throughout nearly

1. CAS. p. 6
2. CAC. p. 5
3. CAS. p. 6

2,500 years, and even still further back, if need be, till it is well-nigh lost in impenetrable mists of hoary antiquity, in the dim twilight of fable and of fancy.

" Although the primitive history of Ceylon is enveloped in fable, yet, says an eminent scholar of our own day, there is perhaps no other country in the world that can provide a similar unbroken record of continuous achievement. . . .

" Ours is a record of which any nation, not merely a small nation like ours with a few millions of people but any nation, great or small, can well be proud."[1]

Kannangara took a great pride in the cultural achievements of the Sinhalas, and the land of the Sinhalas. He says, " The stupendous religious edifices, more than two thousand years old and in extent and architectural interest not second even to the structures of Egypt, and her vast irrigation works attest to the greatness and antiquity of her civilization.

" Her rich products of nature and of art, the beauty of her scenery (said to be among the loveliest in the world), her fame as the home of a pure Buddhism have made her from remote times the object of interest and admiration of contemporary nations."

" Merchants, sailors and pilgrims have in diverse tongues left records of their visits which confirm in a striking manner the ancient chronicles in the possession of which Ceylon holds a singular position among Asiatic lands.

" If the celebrity and wide renown of the land which was their birth-right and heritage could reflect on them any sort of lustre, the Sinhalese had it in ample measure. Their land was a land of wonder and admiration to the various nations of the world.

" It was and is still to-day believed to form part of the Hebraic Ophir and Tarshish, from which King Soloman's navy supplied him with ' gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks '.

" The ancient Brahmins of India called it the ' resplendent land ', making a kind of paradise of it and imagining that beings of an angelic nature dwelt therein.

" To the Greeks it was the ' land of the hyacinth and ruby ', as also ' Taprobane ' by which name it is described by Ovid, Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy and others.

" And we know that the early navigators of Europe, as they returned dazzled with its gems and laden with its costly spices, propagated the fable that far to seaward the very breezes that blew from it were redolent of perfume.

1. CAS. pp. 4-7.

'To the Chinese the land of the Sinhalese was known as the 'Island of Jewels', to the Siamese as 'Tewa Lanka' or Divine Lanka.

"To the Buddhist poets, it was 'the pearl upon the brow of India' and to the inhabitants of Hindustan it was Sri Lanka (the resplendent) the name which it still bears among us Sinhalese to-day.

"... To the followers of Islam it was the cradle of the human race, the new Elysium assigned to the exiled parents of mankind, Adam and Eve, to console them for the loss of Paradise."[1]

The Buddhist culture that Sinhalas developed diffused from Ceylon to lands beyond India. "Burma and Ceylon have been profoundly influenced by each other's culture. When in the eleventh century, Vijayabahu of Ceylon wanted to restore Buddhism to its pristine position after a period of stagnation under Chola rule, it was to King Anawrahtha of Pagon that he appealed to assist him by sending hither a number of learned monks and sacred writings.... Burmese monks who visited Ceylon in the twelfth century and received the ordination here returned to their own land and founded a Sinhala Sangha there....

"When Thai people, in the thirteenth century, founded a Kingdom and adopted Theravada Buddhism as their national faith, it was to Ceylon that they looked for guidance in organising their religious institutions. A learned hierarch was invited from Ceylon and received with great honours. Under his guidance, the Siamese Buddhist Church was modelled on the lines of the Sangha in Ceylon."[2]

"The annals of China testify to the intercourse, commercial as well as cultural, which existed in olden days between that land and Ceylon. The accounts left by the Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hien, Hiuen Tsiang and others are well known. These pilgrims included Ceylon in their itinerary and carried to their native lands, religious books, sacred relics and images from this island....

"In the days when the light of Buddhism was flickering in the land of its birth, those who were anxious to follow the doctrines of the great Teacher came to Ceylon and received hospitality at the hands of the Sinhalese people.... Religious teachers from Ceylon, too, made attempts to revive Buddhism in the land of its birth....

"With the lands of Western Asia, too, Ceylon had frequent contacts, mainly of a commercial character. But commercial contact without some influence culturally is hard to imagine.... The Sinhalese Kings exchanged embassies with the Caliphs of Baghdad and it is

1. CAS. p. 5
2. CAC. pp. 5-7.

interesting to mention in this connection that among the antiquities recently unearthed at Ruwanwelisaya, . . . were found nine gold coins of the Abbasid Caliph-al-Muti (946-74 A.D.)."[1]

Speaking of the common features in Asian culture Kannangara said, " It would be useless to treat Art as an isolated phenomenon apart from the life of the people who made it. It is a tremendous field but there are certain features in it which make the task of surveying it somewhat easier. Among the most notable of these features is the presence of a certain fundamental unity of conception which seems to underlie all Asiatic art. This unity was largely if not almost wholly due to the influence of Buddhism; the part played by Buddhism in the unification of Asiatic culture is only now beginning to be recognised. For at one time or another the whole of Asia came under the benign sway of the religion of Sakyamuni and the great encouragement given by that religion to the development of all knowledge is well-known."[2]

Referring to the system of education that prevailed during the time of the Sinhala Kings he said " We had in our land a system of schools attached to our temples whereby every child had facilities offered to him of going through an education in uniformity with our religion, our culture, our language and our traditions."[3]

" Right through so many ages, so the records inform us, every child in the island was educated. It was given an elementary education perhaps not in such costly buildings, and perhaps not in such a thorough style. But we had scattered all over the island the pansalas and in practically every pansala there was a school."[4] " The medium of education in these schools was the mother tongue. . . . Education was not compulsory, but it was given free. This education that prevailed for about 2,000 years was absolutely free."[5]

Thus after tracing the sources, the development and diffusion of Sinhala-Buddhist culture Kannangara gives the causes that led to its gradual decay.

The gradual replacement of this culture by a Western pattern began with the coming of the Portuguese.

Asian nations according to Kannangara had much in common,[6] and any diffusion of traits among them did not damage the pattern of the Sinhala-Buddhist culture. In fact mutual borrowing among

1. CAC pp. 5-7
2. CAS. p. 7
3. CAS. p. 2
4. H. 1932 p. 2633
5. H. 1944 pp. 843-7
6. CAC. p. 8

Asians was a common feature all through the ages till the advent of the Europeans. The western culture that came with the Europeans in the 16th century had many alien and harmful features. These features instead of enriching the pattern that already existed and growing into a modern synthesis, destroyed the very foundation on which the Sinhala-Buddhist edifice was built.

Kannangara referring to this dangerous phenomenon said, " Few Asian peoples have been in the habit of looking towards the West for inspiration in matters cultural as have the Sinhalese been during the past century or two. The incessant struggle which this small nation has had to wage for three centuries with successive European peoples, beginning with the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century, who came hither for commercial and territorial gains, and the loss to the British, in 1815, of the last vestige of independence, resulted in the decay or disappearance of the institutions which fostered the national culture."[1]

" The maritime districts of this country were overrun by the Portuguese in the year 1505. It is a well known fact that they destroyed all the temples and the literature and everything Buddhist; and of the temple of the great Sri Rahula (Vijayabahu Pirivena, Totagamuwa) not one stone has been left upon another."[2] They did great damage to the system of pansala schools."[3]

" Then what happened ? They established their schools. They went on. The Dutch succeeded them in the year 1656. They established their parish schools. . . . They went on with their conversions. They relegated Sinhalese to a nook, to a position of inferiority, out of which it has hardly been able to rise. It is very difficult to rise if you are once condemned. Dutch became the court language in 1658. Sinhalese was destroyed. Everything Sinhalese went; all the traditions, the customs, the manners, the language, the religion, everything went."[4]

This statement of Kannangara reminds what a chief of the Digger Indians had to say of their culture to Ruth Benedict. " In the beginning " the chief said "god gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from this cup they drank their life. They all dipped in the water, but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. It has passed away. " Benedict comments, " There were other cups of living left, and they held perhaps the same water, but the loss was

1. CAC. p. 1
2. H. 1944 p. 847
3. CAS. p. 2
4. H. 1944. pp. 843-7.

irreparable. It was no matter of tinkering with an addition here, lopping off something there. The modelling had been fundamental, it was something all of a piece. It had been their own."[1]

Kannangara continuing his narration of the ' Story of the Sinhala culture ' said, " The British to whom the whole Island was ceded in 1815 under a solemn treaty violated the terms of the treaty and practically completed the destruction begun by their predecessors. In place of the pansala schools the new rulers established a system that well suited their requirements. To begin with, an English school of fairly high standard was established at Colombo, specially meant for the sons of the chiefs who were able to pay for their education. They were to become loyal and trustworthy Christian citizens fit to be entrusted with the administration of the country for their British masters. A few more English schools, were later provided in provincial towns for those who were able to pay. They turned out for the most part teachers, clerks and other government servants of the lower grades. These schools, strange to say, were closed down after some time. For the rest of the people were established a few so called vernacular schools where no fees were charged and which provided a rudimentary education in the mother tongue that led them nowhere.

" Christian missionaries were also invited from abroad by the Governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies to establish schools and carry on their religious propaganda amongst the ' heathens ', who had become subjects of the British Crown. They came, they saw and they conquered. Fee-levying English High Schools were started and maintained by them with subsidies in the shape of Government grants. Besides these, they also established with financial support from the Government the so-called vernacular free schools similar to those conducted by the Government, but primarily meant for purposes of conversion. It was the prime duty of the Government that took over the administration of the country from our King to provide the children of the soil with educational facilities without interference with their religious beliefs. This can be judged from what was described above, the Government not only hopelessly failed to do so, but found it convenient to hand over to others, who, on their part, were by no means unwilling to take on the burden. . . . We cannot however, be blind to the almost irreparable damage they did to our religion, our culture and traditions by their attempts through their schools to foist upon the country and the people a system that was completely alien to our native genius and outlook. As a result of this pernicious system we were like a house divided against itself. One section of the people, the most influential and the most highly placed, though small in number, yet wielding the greatest power in the

1. Patterns of Culture : New York, 1950. p. 19.

public services and in the learned professions, looked for their inspiration to the West and the ideals of Western civilization, scorning the achievements of their ancestors, their history, their culture and their traditions."[1]

" We have divided the population into two sections one superior and the other inferior—one trousered and the other ' clothed '. . . . We have two classes of society in this country divided by English education.

" The affluent, the rich, the influential, those that can afford to pay attend one kind of school imparting the higher education which is given in a foreign tongue. They have to pay for it. It is well worth paying for. Why ? Because the official language of this country is English, because no one without a knowledge of English can fill any high post."[2]

" Though the English educated adopted certain Western traits they only helped to promote and popularise a shoddy and cheap form of hybrid culture ."[3] " They look down upon the other people as people not worthy of consideration, as people who cannot disinterestedly consider a subject."[4]

"The liquor traffic as it exists in Ceylon to-day, is largely the product of Western civilization. In the days gone by in Ceylon during the times of Kandyan Kings, a drunkard was a rare bird, and drink was considered a crime. In support of the aversion that people in Ceylon had to drink " Kannangara says, " I wish to cite what D'Oyly has written in his reference to the Kandyan Law: ' The use of spirituous liquor is contrary to the express precept of their religion and those practices have been prohibited by the Kings within the last 50 or 60 years as being sinful and productive of profligacy, quarrels and other crimes. '

" Now that was the state of affairs and I would also wish to refer to a minute made by Governor Sir William Gregory as early as 1872. Addressing the legislative Council he said: ' There is one subject on which I cannot be silent, and that is the extension of drunkenness throughout the island. English rule has given to Ceylon many blessings which the inhabitants are ever ready to acknowledge, . . . but we have at the same time extended a curse throughout the island, which weighs heavily on the other scale, namely drunkenness."[5]

1. CAS. p.2.
2. H. 1944 p. 847.
3. Wickramasinghe, Martin : Aspects of Sinhalese Culture. loc. cit. p. 6
4. H. 1944. p. 851
5. H. 1927 p. 1486

Governor Gregory while admitting that drunkenness came from the West, also claims that the English rule brought ' many blessings '. Kannangara was prepared to acknowledge that Ceylon had progressed economically and technologically along certain directions under English rule.[1] But he says, " Very little of what really is of significance, in the great culture of the west was imbibed and assimilated by the Sinhalese. The so-called educated Sinhalese of a generation ago resembled, in his intellectual and cultural equipment, a tree forcibly removed from the soil in which it has been accustomed to grow but had failed to take root in the soil in which it had been placed a new."[2]

Referring to the curse-drunkenness—the English rule had brought Kannangara said 'Liquor has destroyed the vitality of our nation'.[3]

" But a people cannot completely cut itself adrift from its cultural moorings, however much it may try to do so, and the memories implanted in the national consciousness during twenty centuries of civilized existence cannot be eradicated by the experience, however intense it may be, of a century or two.[4] The great majority numerically over 90 per cent. of the population, yet sadly lacking in the worlds goods, down-trodden and weak, clung to the heritage of religion and culture bequeathed to them by the ancestors of their own race."[5]

" It was while the cultural life of the vast majority of the people of Ceylon was in this condition that the great awakening of the poeple of Asia started during the closing decades of the last century and, steadily gaining momentum, became fully manifest in the opening decades of the present century. . . .

" It was not long before the effect of the awakening of Asia was felt in the island of Ceylon. Its geographical position, if not for any other reason, could not keep it isolated from the main currents of thought in the rest of Asia and the national awakening in Ceylon followed very much the same course as it did in India, within of course a more restricted sphere. . . . In the process of this national awakening, in Ceylon, too, the struggle for political emancipation went hand in hand with that for cultural self-realization, so much so that it can be said that the one movement cannot be understood without reference to the other. . . . It will thus be necessary for her to look to India and other Asian countries for many matters cultural, for which hitherto she looked to Europe. . . .

" Some among us, who had gone to the extreme limit of Europeanisation, were even perverted enough in mind to look down

1. H. 1945 Col. 2881
2. CAC p. 1
3. H. 1924 (Oct — Nov) p. 134
4. CAC p. 1
5. CAS p. 3

upon other Asian people, for the reason that they were loth to give up their national ways of life. But now that a new era is dawning, in which we will have to re-orientate our cultural outlook, it will do us good to remind ourselves of the many things which the different nations of Asia have in common, in their religions, languages, literature, art and music. It is to be hoped that due emphasis will be laid on this cultural unity of the various peoples of Asia in the education of the youth, particularly in the teaching of history, paving the way for mutual understanding and cordial relations among them."[1]

Kannangara always felt that a national revival in Ceylon could not succeed in isolation. The process of mutual borrowing of the ancient times had to be re-established under new conditions.

The first revival movement in Ceylon that had its beginning in the ' religious controversies ', Kannangara thought was more a reaction rather than a revival.

As mentioned earlier education in Ceylon was entrusted to Christian denominational bodies by the government. " These bodies utilized the opportunity afforded to them, not only for imparting education, but also for purposes of evangelization; and the moment that was discovered by the people of this country who were not Christians they started a campaign in opposition to the campaign that was carried on by the Christian bodies. Hence there have been various associations formed by Hindus, Buddhists, etc. And there are also private gentlemen who have come into the field of education."[2]

The Hindu and Buddhist schools started in the latter part of the 19th century merely imitated the already existing Christian schools and could not bring about the expected cultural renaissance.

" The search for renewed order in education is conditioned, first of all, by the search for renewed order in the culture; that just as the latter presents many marks of instability, so too does the former; and that one main reason for genuine concern among leaders of education to help the student find his bearings again is that the culture has helped him to lose them. The one question, nevertheless, that almost no leaders have pursued relentlessly is whether they can ever hope to crystallize a unifying and dynamic principle of integrated education so long as they fail, as they are failing, to construct that principle upon and from the order of culture—upon and from groups, races, nations living and working in concentric circles of relationship; upon and from the institutions that, within each culture, function on rising levels of authority and scope; upon and from the temporal and thus historical development of these relations and levels."

1. CAC pp. 2-8
2. H. 1940. p. 437

This proposition of Theodore Brameld[1] was not followed by our early revivalists (even by the more recent ones). The 'revivalists' were not prepared to attack the root-course of decadence of Hindu-Buddhist community—westernisation. The 'revivalists' in fact were more westernised than the masses whom they tried to revive. The 'revivalists' themselves belong to the 'sponsored elite' and were a part and parcel of it. They had lost their cultural bearings, and in the name of 'revival' they were in fact attempting the impossible task of helping the masses to lose their cultural bearings as well.

Martin Wickramasinghe a creative thinker and an 'amateur' anthropologist in his inimitable way says, "Not only the Christian church but sections of the other churches—Buddhist and Hindu—which supported westernisation are responsible for the demoralisation of the Ceylonese as a closely knit national unit. The culture, intellectual attainments, professional eminence, sophisticated manners and discipline of the few westernised Sinhalese as a class have to be subordinated when we think of them as a part of a greater national unit to which they owe allegiance if they wish to live in this country. The church or the religious institution, whether of Christianity, Buddhism or Hinduism, is not genuine religion but a distorted symbol of it. The question of nationalisation of schools should be approached from the point of view of eliminating the unfair privileges that have accumulated over a long period to benefit the westernised minority. The majority of these people are Christians but nevertheless there is a large number of Buddhists and a few Anglicised Hindus amongst them."[2]

Kannangara found that the mere existence of a few Buddhist and Hindu schools—the great imitators as he called them—could not undo the damage already accomplished. He said "This system (denominational schools) acted very unfairly upon those who were not Christians. I asked one of my clerks to take a Civil list and jot down the names of the heads of departments and judges. What did I find ? I found that there were 109 Christians, 28 Buddhists and 16 Hindus controlling the administration of this country. . . . This is the result of this system of education. . . .[3] There was (in fact) a time when every man in government service had to be a Christian."[4]

"In the case of High Schools, there are 7 Hindu, 20 Buddhist, and 170 Christian high schools out of a total of 197. (These figures showed that the Buddhist and Hindu organizations did not have the

1. Cultural Foundations of Education. New York, 1957 p. 17.
2. Buddhism and Culture. Tisara, Dehiwala, 1964. p. 165
3. H. 1944. p. 851
4. H. 1925. p. 246

resources to compete with the Christian missions on an equal footing). This kind of system will never do. . . ."[1]

Elsewhere he says, " It was found in the second Annual Report of the University Council that out of a total of 904 students, 318 were Buddhists, 193 were Hindus, 364 were Christians, 25 were Muslims and 4 were others."

Even the few Buddhists and many of the Hindus who had entered the University or the administration service came from the Anglicised minority. Thus there was very little prospect of a cultural renaissance through them. The ideal held by the sponsored elite was more and more westernisation.

Kannangara continues, " I have to state that fact not to raise, not to rouse religious feelings and sow discord in this country, but to prove my case as to what happened in the past, and what appeared to me to be a great defect in the educational system of this country.

" After all, these are the men—the graduate students of the University—who are going in the future to occupy the highest posts in this country, both in government service and outside it. The professions will be manned by them. And how do we find those figures ? Is it that the non-Christians have no brains ? It is the fault of the system. The dice is unduly loaded on one side in an absolutely unjust and unfair manner. That is why we desire that there should be a fairer distribution of schools, which everybody can attend. That is why we say that the difference between the Christians and others should disappear. That is why we say that those who have held an undue advantage so far as English education is concerned should not continue to enjoy that advantage. That is why we say that the other people who have been shut out from power and influence, from the hope of some-day serving their country, just as any others, should be given a chance of having their hopes fulfilled. This is not a state of affairs that prevails in any other civilized country in the world.

" Why should we be the exception ? That appeared to me to be a great defect in our educational system. Why should the Buddhists who form 65 per cent. of the population of this country be represented in the University by 318 students whilst the Christians who form only 9 per cent. of the population be represented by 364 ? Why should such a difference exist among the flower of the youth of this country ?

" I am not complaining about religion at all . . . I am only stating absolute facts. . . . This discrimination has existed for a large

1. H. 1944. p. 851

number of years. Government has actively supported the spread of Christianity through the schools. That must cease, in spite of all attempts made to continue it."[1]

The simple village folk who still 'clung to the heritage of religion and culture bequeathed to them by their ancestors' were the most neglected. "This policy of neglect of the country side in favour of towns carried on in the last 400 or 500 years has resulted in the utter neglect of the people in the provinces. . . . Justice deferred is justice denied. The time is long past when justice should have been meted out to the masses inhabiting the provincial districts of this country."[2]

Referring to the 'cultural denudation' and the resulting cramp of creative talents Kannangara said, "In spite of all the education given in the schools, in spite of the fact that millions are spent annually on education, yet this country has not within recent times produced a pundit, an intellectual giant.

"Those who have read Sinhalese texts know the name of the great Sri Rahula, the poet of Totagamuwa, the Principal of Vijayabahu Pirivena. He wrote some wonderful works. . . . Students came from India to his Privena to learn and he was practically the last of the race. . . . After him, there were hardly any. . . ."

"The cause is not far to seek. . . . Kill the people's language, kill the people's soul, kill the people's imagination, kill the people's freedom and say, 'you have not produced any poets or pundits'."[3]

But when the neglected majority—the 90 per cent. who clung on to their ancient culture—ask for justice they have to face such charges as '(i) you are ungrateful to the missionaries who have rendered a great service; (ii) you are a fanatic, a rubble rouser. You rake up religious disputes'.

Kannangara admitted the service rendered by the missionaries when he said, "It must be said to the credit of those Christian missionaries that they have rendered through their schools a great service to the people of our country while at the same time not failing to avail themselves to the fullest of the opportunities thus secured by them for the propagation of their faith."[4]

Referring to the question of gratitude to the missionaries Kannangara said, "For many years I have been depicted as a man who had no gratitude. . . . All of us especially those who have passed, say their 35th and 40th year, went to existing denominational schools

1. H. 1944. p. 845
2. H. 1944. pp. 856-9.
3. H. 1944. p. 847
4. CAS. p. 3.

at that time because there were no other schools to attend. The government had not done its duty. The government had asked other people to do its duty for it, and if we attend any schools that were existing at that time does it necessarily mean that forever our mouths are shut; that we shall not speak about the system of education; that we shall not condemn the existing system ?... The tie of loyalty and gratitude to one's school is a great thing. I hope honourable members will believe me when I say that that feeling exists in me as much as in anybody else."

But does that mean that when I deal with matters educational, I shall not condemn the methods that are being adopted in my old school; that I shall not condemn a policy which should be changed. Where would we come to if we adopt that attitude in discussing public questions, which affect the welfare not of one particular school, but of the whole community, when the welfare of 6,000,000 people is concerned ?...."

" What is the attitude that we adopt towards the British Government that has been controlling this country from the year 1796 ?.... Are we not asking for greater freedom ?.... Does that mean ingratitude to our British friends ?...."

" We have to condemn them because their system is becoming obsolete. We want freedom. We want to control our own affairs. So then if I ask that education be also controlled like that, does that mean that I am ungrateful to my old College ? Should we do whatever is right or wrong to uphold our old colleges ?....

" So when we ask for a change if we are always confronted with this charge of ingratitude how can we do our work ? It is a base charge that should not be levelled as far as public questions are concerned."[1]

Answering the charge of raking up religious disputes he said, " I am sorry to say that if the Buddhists should in any matter try to ask for their rights it is always flouted in their face that they are trying to rake up religious disputes in the island. But there are certain matters in which we are compelled to ask that justice be done to us in spite of our being placed under that charge."[2]

" It has been stated that the Minister of Education has disturbed a hornets' nest." He said answering the charge of being a rubble-rouser, " it might be that in the discharge of one's duty one may have to disturb more than one hornets' nest but so long as I occupy that chair my duty shall be done whether I disturb one or ten hornets' nests."[3]

1. H. 1945 Col. 2881
2. H. 1926 p. 1330
3. H. 1933 p. 1674

Kannangara often expressed the fact that he was ...neither a fanatic nor an anti-Christian. 'I have no idea of hitting the Christians at all'.[1] 'Nor have I been plotting the whole time against some religious order.'[2]

He said he was impartial to the best of his ability, 'I thought it my duty in discharging the duties of this high office that has been entrusted to me that I must not take into consideration the fact that I am a Buddhist'.[3]

"Whether it be a Buddhist school, Hindu school, a Christian school or whether it is my own school it does not matter to me; the same rule shall apply to everybody alike."[4] "I do not care who are going to get hit, I shall do my duty by my people and my country."[5]

Kannangara saw very vividly how the 'exported' educational systems slowly but surely were spreading the tentacles of cultural imperialism. He wished to break this stranglehold before it was too late. The surest attack on cultural imperialism was a system of re-education. Reform of the educational system he thought was the only effective method of a renaissance.

He said, "Let us start building a national system of education, a national system of education which aims at realizing the destiny of the nation. Are we going to have a nation in this country or not ? Are we going to be slaves for ever ? Are we not going to have some freedom ? If we aim at that let us start with our schools, let us educate our people. If it is going to be a national education let it certainly be religious in spirit, let it be patriotic in form. 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 national system of education let it be under national control. If it is going to be a national system of education let it provide for all the children of the nation, let it be directed to their physical, moral and intellectual welfare."[6]

Though Kannangara wished his national educational system 'to draw its inspiration from the historic past' he was not blind to the vast technological changes that were taking place in the world. He wanted Ceylon to borrow the knowledge of science and technology that the west had developed, but not its morality. He said, "I feel

1. H. 1944 p. 1870
2. H. 1947. Col. 1131
3. H. 1938. p. 3795
4. H. 1940. p. 441
5. H. 1944. p. 1870
6. H. 1944. p. 946

very strongly that while our culture should always be eclectic and absorptive it should not lose its fundamental individuality. Mere imitation of others, however great spells disaster to cultures as certainly as it does to individuals or nations."[1]

He wanted the English language to find a place in our curriculum because we need the scientific and technological literature written in that language.[2] But 'from ancient times our morals have been much better than the morals of those people who say they are very much more civilized'.[3]

Kannangara wanted us to look to the past for inspiration in 1944. The world had advanced much more by 1956. In 1956 S. Radhakrishnan the great Indian philosopher said, " Nations which cut themselves away from their historical roots may make brilliant splashes in the space of history but they will pass out, like meteors which burn themselves out when they are cut off from the fire which generates and feeds them."[4]

The Keio Conference of Asian Educators expressed the same opinion in 1960 when they concluded, " A new modernization of Asia, not in terms of westernization had to be realized only on the basis of a cultural synthesis of both the Eastern ideal, morality and spirit and Western science technology and organization."[5]

Of the success of a civilization Kannangara said, " The test of the welfare of a country and the success of its civilization is not the number of its population nor the amount and diffusion of its wealth, but the quality of the men and women that it produces."[6]

The national system of education he had in mind can be elaborated under three headings. (i) Building an eclectic culture that would modernize society but not westernize it; (ii) Establishing a universally educated democracy with equal opportunities for all and (iii Diversifying secondary education to provide for an optimum development of the economy and the abundant human resources.

Dealing with revival of culture he said, " There is a clamour on all sides for the revival of our national language, our literature, for the preservation of our manners and customs and the culture that was inherited from our forefathers."[7] It is considered the duty of every

1. CAS. p. 8
2. H. 1945 Col. 2894
3. H. 1925 p. 853
4. Occasional Speeches and Writings. Volume II, New Delhi, 1957, p. 156
5. Final Report : Keio University, Tokyo, 1960.
6. H. 1924 (Oct.—Nov.) p. 134.
7. H. 1945 Col. 4676

government to give to a boy an education in his mother tongue. . . . I and my committee will try our utmost . . . to see that more of vernacular education is given to people of this island, and that even to the highest degree education will be in the vernacular.[1] The greatest educationists in the world and practically in all countries, have recommended from the theoretical point of view as well as after much experience that the proper language in which a child should be taught is his mother tongue."[2]

" A child's native speech is the natural medium for his many sided growth. It is only the language of his mother that will serve his emotional development so important in childhood. It is this same language that he can successfully use for his intellectual development."[3]

Michael West for example says: ' Language is not a mere means of expression. We do not think first and then say what we have thought. Language is an instrument of thinking. It is more than that; it is an instrument of feeling, and an instrument whereby we are enabled to sympathise with the feelings of others. . . . It is the stuff of which our selves are made; it is the most important of all formative influences in moulding not only the intellect, but the character also '.[4]

The Sadler Commission reports, ' A man's native speech is almost like his shadow inseperable from his personality '.[5]

Kannangara advocated the mother tongue as the medium of instruction even as far back as 1926. His cry at that time was ' No language, no nation '. " English is a good thing for the nondescripts who have no language or race of their own, " he said, " but it is not a good thing for those Tamils or Sinhalese or others who have a pride in their race."[6]

" If ever we had an idea—ultimately of having the languages of this country made the official languages, then in that case, there must be a body of officials who could work in those languages and have a good working knowledge of them. As long as the schools continue the same system of education as hitherto, you could never find a body of officials of that type.

" Of course there is one school of thought that says, ' . . . the medium of instruction shall be the home language '. If you accept

1. H. 1931 p. 824
2. H. 1932 p. 3349
3. Nesiah, K. : The Mother Tongue in Education : Colombo, 1945. p. 19.
4. Language in Education : Calcutta, 1932 pp. 2 and 16.
5. Calcutta University Commission, (1917-19) Report — Volume 1. 1919. p. 244.
6. H. 1926. p. 387

that position, it will mean that those who have forgotten their mother tongue and adopted English as their home language will continue in that unsatisfactory state."[1]

Commenting on this K. Nesiah says, ' It must be made clear that an adopted home language cannot take the place of the mother tongue. On the other hand, though children can easily pick up a foreign language the process will contribute towards their retardation.'

' A child cannot live equally well in two languages at one and the same time. If an attempt is made to make the child so, its intellectual and spiritual growth is not doubled but halved.'[2]

Quoting F. L. Woodward, Kannangara said, "The language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is ever the language of the slave.

" Can English become in the same way the mother tongue of the East ? It may indeed become a means of communication, as it is already, of many millions all the world over, but it can never, never take the place of the mother tongue of the peoples that it dominates. Neglect your sacred tongue and corruptions creep in: treat it with contempt and your children will never learn it, and if the tongue is no longer used as a store-house of the thought the people will decay, for a people without a language of its own is only half a nation. . . .

" What of the future ? The future of Ceylon made by its own bards and poets, the real ' makers ' of nations ? When a national poet shall arise and call with trumpet-tones to his dreaming fellows, (not in the tongue of Shakespeare or the words of Scott) but in his native tongue, bidding them up and doing, then there may be a hope that once more the nation will be a reality. This is my hope and dream.

" The Sinhalese nation, which has descended into the mire of disenchantment, may yet, if there be but a handful of devoted patriots to uphold the ancient ideals of life enshrined in the Sinhalese tongue, stand forth among her sisters in the band of pioneers of a new cycle in the history of the world."

Though mother tongue alone could produce creative thought, in the best schools of Ceylon (even in 1944) it had no place in the curriculum. Referring to his own school days Kannangara said, " I happened to be prefect in my school I was given authority to punish Sinhalese boys for speaking Sinhalese."[3]

1. H. 1944. p. 756
2. loc. cit. p. 10
3. H. 1944. p. 847

Nesiah supports the position taken up by Kannangara thus: " For somewhat over a century Ceylon has paid attention to the acquiring of ' English, more English and better English ' as probably no other people ever attempted to acquire a foreign language. We have had some success as far as communication in that language is concerned, but it has been for all that a blank century in our history. . . . And where are the thinkers of the nation ? . . . . Nor is this failure to create confined to thought and literature; there has been little creation in art or science or industry. . . . If then Ceylon is to enter into new life she must first revive her national languages."[1]

While advocating the mother tongue as the medium of instruction under a national system of education Kannangara also spoke for the retention of English. ' Languages other than the mother tongue have their place in education though not as the medium of instruction '.[2]

Kannangara said, " English has become almost a world language now. The many hundreds and thousands of books that come into this country from abroad are all in English and unless a vast amount of literature is produced in the country itself in the vernacular it will not be fair to exclude English."[3]

Though Kannangara wished his system of national education to be ' religious in spirit ' he was originally not in favour of teaching any denominational religion. In 1938 he said, " I cannot subscribe to the statement that religious instruction during school hours is absolutely essential. At present in government schools no religious instruction is imparted during school hours. We have worked on that principle for so many years and I make bold to say that the pupils who have passed out of those government schools are as good as any of the pupils who have passed out of religious schools. . . . It does not mean that they have never been given religious instruction. They are given religious instruction in their homes."[4]

This was akin to Mahatma Gandhi's attitude to religious education. Gandhi said, " Religious instruction in the sense of denominational religion has been deliberately omitted. Unless there is a state religion it is difficult, if not impossible, to provide religious instruction as it would mean providing for every denomination. Such instruction is best given at home."[5]

Later Kannangara agreed to the decision of his Executive Committee: " In the case of state schools our proposal is this: if there

1. loc. cit. p. 29
2. Ibid. p. 25
3. H. 1944. p. 936
4. H. 1938. p. 927
5. Basic Education : Ahmedabad, 1956 p. 68.

is a Buddhist boy, teach him Buddhism; if there is a Catholic child teach him that religion; a Muslim the same; and a Hindu the same; we are not partial to anybody and that is the only place where it can be done—the state school—where the treatment will be the same to everyone."[1]

The Board of Education which laid down 'the Code' till 1939 paid more emphasis to the history and geography of Britain than that of Ceylon. Kannangara speaking of a new experiment in Rural Education said, " Instead of teaching them what the height of Mount Everest is or who William the Conqueror was they are taught the height of the highest hill in their locality and they are taught something about the rivers in their own villages. That trains their minds to study properly on scientific lines history as well as geography which are becoming important subjects."[2] The idea in teaching local history and geography Kannangara said, 'is to engender in them an affection for their own locality, for the work and institutions of their villages, a good part of the time of the students is spent out of doors in a study of the locality'.[3]

Nesiah criticising the system that existed under the Board of Education wrote: 'Imagine a code in the 20th century which almost ignores their own history to teach them that of their conquerors, which forgets their classics to introduce them to Latin, which instructs them in the problems of the west and scarcely attempts to throw light on those of the East; while training them for clerkships and law, forgets to show them the duty and beauty of service to their Motherland. . . . The whole orientation is not merely to uphold but extol English culture as the best for Ceylon. There are still prominent places of learning in our country, run with people's purse and patronage, where Ceylon boys and girls are deliberately taught to look down upon their people and their culture.'[4]

" In these big schools, " added L. H. Mettananda, " our children are made to believe 'that they are inferior beings belonging to an inferior race, speaking an inferior language and inheriting an inferior tradition and that all the best things are elsewhere and not here in their own country."[5]

" Dr. Michael West points out the fallacy that if one learns English he will acquire English culture. He notes that some men know a foreign language and precious little else and adds, with some

1. H. 1945 Col. 2890
2. H. 1933 p. 1678
3. H. 1938 p. 2410
4. loc. cit. p. 36
5. Young Ceylon, January, 1939.

sarcasm, that if just learning to speak a foreign language is the criteria waiters are the best educated of men. But the English educated intelligensia of Ceylon must have some pretensions to culture. So they practice a pseudo-culture, which consists not in fine feeling and high thinking, not in the creating or enjoying of art and literature, not in the cherishing of ideals and values, but in the copying of Western modes in dress and language and manners. The fact of the matter is they have fatally confused with culture, which is values, civilization, which is technique. Using the tools of the Western civilization is not the same thing as being animated by the spirit of the west."[1]

" Our contribution to the world's culture," Kannangara said, " and thereby to the happiness of mankind is by no means over. In fact a new cycle has just begun in the destiny of the Asiatic peoples. Throughout Asia there is the throb of a new conception of freedom; in India and China, in Persia and even in tiny Ceylon. I call it a new conception because it spells for vast masses of humanity, who have hitherto been submerged, the right to raise themselves to the fullest stature of their manhood."[2]

1. Nesiah, K. : loc. cit. p. 38
2. CAS. p. 8

CHAPTER 9

EDUCATION AND STATE

THE second important aspect of Kannangara's conception of a national system of education is 'the establishment of a universally educated democracy with equal opportunities for all'.

Since 1927 Kannangara has been an ardent supporter of a unified system of state schools. In this opinion he seems to have been influenced by William H. Kilpatrick, Professor of Education, Teachers' College, Columbia University and the author of the Project Method. He visited Ceylon in January 1927. Kannangara speaking of Kilpatrick said, " We made use of his presence here to get his views on most of the educational matters with which we were concerned, and he was kind enough to deliver two lectures to us on January 17 and 18. I have got here a copy of his lectures and this is what he says 'It seems to me that there is a tendency to divide your population into permanent groups with the danger that each group may be morally suspicious and feel itself morally antagonistic. In India it is perfectly clear that the Hindus and Muslims have great difficulty in living together. In Ceylon there are also certain difficulties. So that it seems to me that there is great danger of something like this happening. That the Hindus will become self-conscious about their schools and their religion and that the Buddhists the same, the Christians the same. Now if it should be so, that the Hindus for instance in the Jaffna region continue to use Hindu schools and improve the quality of teaching so that the teaching in those schools would be just as good as it is in other schools, they would begin to say, 'we want our children to be in Hindu schools'. The Christians will say, 'we wish to have our children in Christian schools', and if they begin to see that all their children go to these schools, then the tendency will be to have separate schools with separate groups. In America most of the people are Christians. The Presbyterians have their church, the Baptists have their church. The community is split in its religion, but the schools bring them together. If you go and split your schools up, you will have in Jaffna Christian schools, Hindu schools, and so on. If there is any sect that government can favour the others will go to government and say, 'Look here, you are favouring so and so'. This will lead to trouble and most of the people living together will

not co-operate. They will begin to be suspicious, antagonistic, and to harbour grudges. I do not know what the future of Ceylon will be then. . . .

" It does seem to me that you want strong schools. A school with a number of teachers under capable masters. You want a strong school and a United Ceylon. You should not start with the policy that a child must associate his own kind. This will result in non-co-operating groups. You must work on the principle of welding people together. The more your country advances on lines of communication, the more do you wish to co-operate part with part, and less you can if you have those divisions. . . ."

Kannangara continuing said " We discussed this matter with him and he is strongly of opinion that the system prevailing now in this Island of running these schools by various denominations is not calculated to do any good to the country, and he is strongly of the opinion that all these schools should be taken over by the government.[1]

The idea that education should be controlled by the state is a very old one. The first experiments in state control of education were carried out in Greece about two thousand years ago. W. O. Lester Smith referring to these Greek experiments says, " Their importance to any one interested in problems of school management cannot be over-stated, and their value is greatly enhanced because they are associated with some of the keenest thinking about the aims and content of education that there has ever been. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any one administering education could find two more serviceable guides to his vocation than Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*. In both, it is interesting to note, politics and education are dealt with as inseparables; and education is conceived as a training for good citizenship, while contrary to modern town-palnning practice, the planning and the education of the city-state are considered together as one problem."[2]

" Both Plato and Aristotle were able to formulate their theories of the state on the basis of precedents as exemplified in the practices of Athens and Sparta. Ideas which were formulated later—like ' As is the school so is the state ' and ' whoever controls the youth, controls the future '—have a long tradition behind them. Fredrick the Great and Napoleon built the educational system of Prussia and France on the principle that the control of education should be vested in the hands of the state. And at the beginning of the 19th century. . . . Von Humbolt enunciated the principle that ' What you would put into the state you must first put into the school '. It is significant that

1. H. 1927. p. 351
2. To Whom Do Schools Belong ? Oxford, 1946. p. 25.

every basic political revolution has been followed by a radical change in the content and sometimes the methods of instruction. Adaptations of education to the more gradual political evolution are also marked in democracies.

"The contrast between the revolutionary changes and the slow adaptations of education gives the study of contemporary school systems its special significance. In the one case the state seems to enforce its ideology on the individual; in the other the state aims to extend the opportunities for the individual to realize himself and to think for himself."[1]

The reforms Kannangara had in mind belong to the latter category. He says, "The state system of education which I have supported for a considerable time and do support now should not be understood as including within its scope any kind of control or prescription of content or methods of education. In any democratic system these are matters that are left for free development of teachers. I consider that state control should primarily cover establishment of schools, admission and attendance of pupils, and appointment, emoluments and disciplinary control of teachers."[2]

Kannangara had no ideology to be enforced on the individual; 'We have to march with the army of democracy' he said.[3] But he approved a certain degree of indoctrination in morality when he said, "If you promote education, if you train the youth of this country, then there will be no necessity for such a large police force, and there will be no necessity for so many prisons."[4]

Kannangara advocated the abolition of the denominational system of schools because in his opinion a co-ordinated system of national education providing for universal literacy and equality of opportunity was not possible under dual control. He further saw the following defects in the existing system at the time: Multiplicity of small and ill-equipped schools; (ii) segregation of pupils by religion; (iii) rivalry and discrimination; (iv) school managers were not moved by a sense of sacrifice and service. School management was a profession and the schools in certain instances had become a kind of private property; (v) one who paid the piper had no right to call the tune; (vi) Religious hierarchs had become a powerful vested interest; (vii) status of the teacher was very low; and (viii) Returns did not commensurate with the investment.

N. M. Perera, leader of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party summing up the situation that existed in 1944 said: "Education is the respon-

1. Kandel, I. L. : The New Era in Education : London. 1957. p. 21
2. S. P. XXIV. 1943 p. 166
3. H. 1928. p. 1821
4. H. 1923 p. 357

sibility of the state, a responsibility which it cannot and must not shirk or surrender to some private body or individuals. It is inherent in the obligation to provide education, that it shoulder the sole responsibility therefor. The partial responsibility undertaken hitherto by the government by the various methods of control devised by the Education Department has been the main cause of the present chaotic conditions. It is now difficult to know where the responsibility of the department begins and where it ends. There seems to be a whole area of no man's land wherein continuous skirmishes are going on between the department and the private institution over the extent of control that could or should be exercised. Leave alone the waste of administrative time, energy and money, this is a ludicrous position for the government to be in: to be questioned at every turn over the extent of its power, when in point of fact education should be deemed its exclusive domain.

" Moreover, the gross inequalities of educational opportunity that now obtain and the heavy weighting in favour of the richer classes that now prevail are partly the results of this semi,—and therefore uncertain control."[1]

Kannangara saw clearly that no reform was possible unless ' this responsibility to a number of masters is put an end to '.[2] " If a sound system of national education is our objective then absolute control of the system should be in the hands of the state and that control should be divided into three parts: administrative, legislative and financial."[3]

" The Christian missionary bodies seem to think," he said, " that I who am a non-Christian, am trying at every stage to work against the Christians where matters educational are concerned. I make no secret of it when I say—I have seen things with my own eyes and I have examined various records in the Education Office—that I am fully convinced that for this country state education as it obtains in most of the civilized countries even in the west is certainly the best."[4] ' It is absolutely unfair and unjust to allow this system of denominational schools. '[5]

" I would emphasize here the great difficulty of having a co-ordinated scheme with these different forces working in different directions insisting on rights, rights not only to teach their own children but to teach children of other denominations."[6] . . . How it is

1. The Case for Free Education. Colombo 1944 p. 9
2. H. 1938 p. 949.
3. H. 1938 p. 1972
4. H. 1940. p. 438
5. H. 1944. p. 852
6. H. 1944. p. 855

possible to have a properly co-ordinated scheme of education with two parties becoming responsible—dual responsibility—I cannot understand."[1]

The denominational system led to a multiplicity of small schools. Referring to this Kannangara said, " We have accepted the principle that every society, that every religious body, is entitled to train its followers in its own religion, so that there would be a religious bias given to education. Once you accept that principle it is difficult to deny registration to schools that are started by these societies if they fulfill the conditions laid down for registration."[2]

What was the result of accepting this principle. " While some areas are definitely under-schooled, others are over-schooled. In the small town of Nawalapitiya there are four colleges one catering for Buddhists, another for the Hindus, and the others for the Christians; whereas one large college would have served the whole town with a considerable saving of money on buildings, equipment, and on staff and yet providing better facilities. Nawalapitiya is typical of many such towns.'[3]

This multiplicity of schools Kannangara said, ' becomes a very serious affair, especially in view of the fact that we contemplate for the future a aystem of multilateral or central schools '.[4]

Speaking of segregation along religious lines he said, " What is going to happen to this nation if we are going to have these water-tight compartments from beginning to end.—If we are going to have infants' schools according to religion, primary schools according to religion and post-primary schools according to religion ? And then those turned out by these schools will be trained in their own denominational schools if they want to become teachers. The result will be that those who would undertake to train the young would have no opportunity of associating themselves with others who belong to the teaching profession but unfortunately to another denomination. Those who are opposed to state training schools want to keep our nation in water-tight compartments."[5]

Commenting on the segregated teacher training schools further he said, " If the teachers of the future are not to be brought up in a free atmosphere with opportunities for mixing with one another, irrespective of race, caste or creed, their training, I am afraid, will be narrow. It is bad enough that pupils should be segregated during

1. H. 1944. p. 851
2. H. 1932 p. 2632
3. Perera, N. M. : loc. cit. p. 15.
4. H. 1944 p. 855
5. H. 1944 p. 930

the primary and post-primary stages of their education in denominational schools; but it is intolerable, from the point of view of breadth of sympathies, that, once they have left post-primary schools, they should be again segregated in denominational training schools. Finally, the products of the denominational training schools are to be sent out as teachers again to denominational schools. They will never imbibe the spirit of tolerance and sympathy for the other man's point of view, which are qualities so essential in a teacher."[1]

Not only were the pupils segregated along religious lines much rivalry and discrimination also existed in these denominational schools. 'We have schools like hostile garrisons, arraigned against each other.'[2] 'We are, as it were, divided into more than two hostile camps, with the result that there is very little chance of controlling the rising cost of education, or having a planned system of education'[3]

The worst feature in the denominational system according to Kannangara was the lack of a sense of sacrifice and service in most managers. This was especially marked among private managers. 'A person with the noblest and the highest ideals founds a school and carries it on properly, and the school remains private property. Very often, it goes on to the founder's son-in-law or to his son who may not be governed by the same ideals, with the result that there is no continuity possible in the case of a private school'.[4]

'My views on the question are pretty well known' he said 'that I am entirely opposed to private managers . . .'[5] 'I know of a good many cases where people both from the laity and the priesthood have made school management a profession'.[6] 'The school is regarded by some people as their private property, which can be handed over to their daughters at the date of their marriage as dowry'. 'Another trouble as regards the denominational schools is the question of the management making large profits out of these schools and making the schools a business concern'.

Some of the managers even submitted inaccurate accounts. Quoting from the Report of the Auditor-General for 1938-39 Kannangara said, "In an educational system in which considerable sums from public funds are disbursed through managers of schools it is a very serious matter if the audited accounts which they submit annually are false and inaccurate." This is precisely what the Auditor-

1. SP XXIV. 1943 p. 167.
2. H. 1927 p. 350
3. H. 1938 p. 1972
4. H. 1935 p. 919
5. H. 1938 p. 949
6. H. 1938 p. 1977

General says he found. Referring to a bogus receipt submitted by a school he says, ' The receipt is a false one which was made out because there is no other way of accounting for the money '.[1] (Fr. Le Goc in defence said that profits from schools are legitimate, and belong to the school and not the government).[2]

This type of dishonesty is inherent in the grant-in-aid system for ' immediately you start farming out, the middleman makes a profit it may be in kind or it may be in cash '.[3]

Kannangara also disapproved the members of the State Council continuing as managers of schools. ' I protested against this system ', he said, ' quite early—in December, 1931. Something should be done to remove this undesirable state of affairs '.

' For the permanency of a school, to safeguard the interests of the public at large and not only of the teachers, it is nothing but right, it is nothing but right and fair that we should really avoid even suspicion with regard to these matters. It is nothing but right that they (members of the State Council) should give up the management of schools. I do not think it is possible for any man in that position to take a detached view of problems when money matters are concerned, when the interests of teachers are concerned, when the interests of schools are concerned, when they come up for decision; I do not think it is possible; it is not humanly possible '.[4]

Kannangara also did not see any reason why managers should be there when the government had to bear the cost of education. ' Why should government make use of them as agents if government is going to spend every cent ? ' he asked. ' If the government has to provide every cent that is wanted, then in that case government must claim the management of these schools. . . . The management must bear their share of the expenditure; otherwise there is no reason for anybody to start schools '.[5]

He also did not see any reason for decentralization of educational administration unless the local authorities were prepared to meet a part of the cost. ' So long as they (local authorities) do not pay for it, they do not mind how the money goes, but if they are prepared to pay a certain part of the expenditure incurred on education, then we propose to devolve responsibility on such local governing bodies '.[6]

1. H. 1944 pp. 853-5.
2. CCM. August 18, 1939.
3. H. 1944 p. 919
4. H. 1940 pp. 1876-9.
5. H. 1945 Col. 4162
6. H. 1938 p. 1975

The Christian hierarchs in Ceylon had become a powerful factor in the political and economic field which Kannangara resented. 'This country is a country of minority rule' he said, 'and it looks as if none but Christians can insist on justice being done to them'.[1] 'Ministers of the Christian religion are running this country. . . . Disestablishment of the church has not taken place'. 'They (priests) are maintained by the schools and the government is paying the Bill. . . . Ministers of religion are being paid tremendous big salaries, and they will not give those posts to the lay teachers. . . . So many lay teachers are out of job' . . . . These priests 'try to prevent justice being done to the people'.[2]

They 'have enjoyed the monopoly of education for years together, and they will always stand in the way and obstruct any attempt made by government to effect any kind of improvement in the system of education. Any kind of power that they have enjoyed they will not willingly yield even for the good of the people, without fighting to the bitter end'.[3]

Referrin to the Roman Catholic claim of 'freedom of the parent to select a school for his child,' Kannangara said, 'The freedom of the parent is that all Catholic children must be sent to Catholic schools. Somebody else exercises the freedom there, I am sure not the parent'.[4]

Under the denominational system the teacher was at the beck and call of the manager. 'The teacher' Kannangara said, 'is a highly respected man so much so that the teacher is called 'guru'—the same word that is used for a parent in the Sinhalese language, because he is expected to hold that place in our reverence, in our respect, admiration, and affection that our parents are held by us, because he is responsible for the future well-being of the community'.[5]

'There are some people who put up schools for the sake of gaining popularity or merit, but they have no idea as to how a school should be managed. These persons wish to treat the people employed under them as their servants. . . .'[6] 'Some of them act the part of tyrant over teachers. . . . The power which a manager exercises over his teachers is not good so far as the teaching profession or the general public is concerned. There should be some limitations of the powers of managers'.[7]

1. H. 1926 p. 1331
2. H. 1944 p. 1870
3. H. 1940 p. 437
4. H. 1945 Col. 2889
5. H. 1927 p. 1123
6. H. 1927 p. 925
7. H. 1927 p. 934

'Under the present scheme the teachers have no security of tenure. They may be turned out by the manager at any time'.[1] 'In some instances the teacher has not even the liberty to choose even a partner in life. If a Christian teacher marries a non-Christian, the man is dismissed. There are a number of cases like that, it is not a solitary instance'. But 'if the government spends its money for the payment of salaries to teachers, and the parents too contribute a portion of those salaries there must be some provision to safeguard the position of teachers who discharge a very important duty for the state'.[2]

"In connection with the appointment and disciplinary control of teachers, the denominational system has lent itself to grave abuse. . . . A school should be deemed to be a public trust so long as it is supported from public funds. But the denominational principle insists on regarding the school as a private trust meant to be administered primarily in the interests of a private individual or of the members of the denomination concerned. These managements accordingly claim that no person other than a member of the denomination can hold a teaching post in a denominational school. I have throughout opposed this position. . . . It is difficult to expect the service of education to improve if appointments to teaching posts are made on grounds other than those of character, competence and efficiency. It will not be denied that character and efficiency are not the monopoly of members of any particular religious persuasion.

"Further apart from educational considerations, there are those of general policy. The teaching service is a large one. I cannot acquiesce in any system that aims at reserving any portion of these posts for persons of a particular religious persuasion. Only a state system can guarantee the impartial distribution of employment among all sections of the population on the ground of merit. . . . Experience has shown that teachers do not get a fair deal under the existing denominational system. . . . Contentment in the teaching profession can be secured only by making the tenure of teachers similar to that of public servants".[3]

The missionaries themselves were aware of the defects. Rev. J. H. Dickson of the American Mission who went before the Wace Commission in 1905 said, "I regard the whole grant-in-aid system as an unmitigated nuisance as a great waste of good money without adequate return. The government is only playing at education

1. H. 1925 p. 504
2. H. 1944 p. 851
3. SP XXIV, 1943 p. 166

under the grant in aid system, and we shall never have thorough-going steady progress until government takes absolute charge of the education of the children of the island.[1]

Kannangara however was not against an unaided system of denominational schools. "I do not for a moment intend that the denominational system should be 'scrapped'. If any section of the people desire that their children should be educated in denominational schools they should not be denied that right. But there is no reason why they should expect 'exclusive' schools of this kind to be supported from public funds, in the same manner and to the same degree as at present. The state can make educational provision only up to a point. If any individual or group is dissatisfied with the nature and extent of such provision such individual or group is free to make alternative provision at his or its expense".

One of the strongest arguments for the retention of a denominational system of schools was that education must be imparted against the background of religion. Kannangara was prepared to subscribe to this view: "I do certainly subscribe to the proposition that no education can be complete unless imparted against a religious background. . . . But I do not agree with the school of thought that holds that state education is *per se* godless or soulless, because it is imparted by the State. On the other hand all the usual activities of the state-maintenance of law and order, of economic and social services—have a meaning and purpose only in relation to the lives of its citizens, namely the provision for them of a fuller and a richer life both materially and spiritually. It must also be remembered that all state institutions are run by soulful men and women. Accordingly it is not beyond human ingenuity to device a system of education subject to public control in which there will be adequate arrangements to ensure a religious background and atmosphere appropriate to the pupils concerned and without violating the principle of state neutrality in matters pertaining to religion. In such a system arrangements could be made by the executive authority in consultation with the parents and the respective religious organizatons for providing religious instruction in the school to pupils of the particular denominations.

"If the advocates of the denominational system are serious in this contention, that a religious background is indispensable to education such a background should be ensured for every child attending a denominational school. But in accordance with the denominational system as prevailing at present, religious background and religious instruction are provided only in the religion of the body or organization that controls the school with the result that numbers of children who do not belong to that particular denomination have to forego a

1. H. 1944 p. 853

valuable part of their education. If the protagonists of denominational control are to be consistent, they must agree to make adequate provision for the religious instruction of any child attending a school in the religion to which the parent of the child belongs. . . . The alternative is for the state to insist on the ideal denominational system in which children of each denomination only are taught in schools under the control of that denomination. But then from the point of view of national unity the state cannot support a movement to divide its future citizens and segregate them on the basis of creed. This *reductio ad absurdum* furnishes a complete argument in support of my view that in a country of diverse religions a state system of public education is all the more essential. A decision to provide free education up to and including the University stage will reinforce my argument for complete state control."[1]

In addition to supporting a state system of public education Kannangara also advocated (i) universal literacy as a corollary to universal franchise; (ii) Human equality with no race, creed, sex or caste discrimination; (iii) community schools; and (iv) Ceylonization.

" In our Island practically half the children are without education and universal suffrage has been granted under the new constitution. In these conditions, if we decide to deny to the people even an elementary knowledge, I think it will be a most fatal step indeed".[2]

" In how many years our people will be able to exercise truly, fearlessly, faithfully and honestly the franchise that has been granted to them as the greatest boon since the advent of the British administration. . . . To set things right we shall have to make all our people literate. . . ."[3]

" As a first step in this direction evening classes should immediately be started in the localities where government buildings, schools and teachers are available. . . . Once they taste of this advantage it may be that they will become so educated that small libraries would have to be attached to the schools which will become centres of learning and united action; and the speedier progress and improvement of the villages will be assured. . . .

' These schools can become centres of education. Perhaps once a week or once a month lantern lectures may be delivered on subjects like Health, Sanitation and so on, at these centres which would then become attractive to the people.

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1. SP XXIV 1943. pp. 165-6.
2. H. 1932 p. 2633
3. H. 1944 p. 939

'Educated masses may rise up and claim their rights. . . . But they will also discharge their obligations properly. They may rise and claim their rights but they may also learn their duties.'[1]

Speaking of human equality Kannangara said, "The idea that the women in this country have been treated as chattels and slaves has been refuted.[2] In these days of democracy we have to move with the times. Women can compete with men on equal terms. You cannot keep in subjection, you cannot keep in slavery half the human race. If you keep them down on unequal terms what will be the nature of the product ? In the interests of the future generations you must make all equal."[3]

'We do not want in government matters any distinction of caste or community. These distinctions must absolutely disappear.[4] We are out for equality of treatment and justice.'[5]

'Religious communities with comparatively less resources and without organizational strength and solidarity has long suffered under a sense of frustration and a sense of injustice. Even to-day the Kandyan Buddhists and the Muslims make demands for various special concessions, because they feel keenly the serious handicaps under which they labour under the present system which they criticize as one based on an artificial equality without real equality of opportunity for all the communities.'[6]

Though Kannangara advocated a state system of public schools he did not want the schools to come under a bureaucracy. He said 'We try to inculcate into the teachers that they should try their utmost to co-operate with the people; that they should not think that the schools do not belong to the people. We always tell them that they must get on as well as possible with the people; that they should get the parents at least once a month to the school'.[7]

'It has been my endeavour . . . to see established in every school what we call a Parent Teacher Association. It is our aim to make the school the centre of the community, so that all the adult population themselves will take an interest in the work that is being carried on in the school. They will know what their teachers are doing at the school. They will learn themselves very many things about agriculture, health and various other matters'.[8]

1. H. 1931 p. 105
2. H. 1925 p. 853
3. H. 1928 p. 1822
4. H. 1926 p. 967
5. H. 1930 p. 645
6. SP XXIV 1943. p. 165
7. H. 1934 p. 1852
8. H. 1935 p. 2531

On the question of Ceylonization he said, "I believe that Ceylonese could man all the services. . . . The Ceylonese can do all the work at present that has to be done for the government. . . . In the case of a bird that is in a cage, if it has been all along trained to be inside that cage, even if the door of the cage is opened perhaps that bird will not fly away. When the slaves were emancipated sometime ago several of them refused to be free. Similarly if we are held down and not given chances of doing all the work that has to be done by the government of this colony, then I say that until we get these chances we will never be fit to do the work. We must have sufficient confidence in ourselves to say that we can do the work and we must do it. Otherwise we will never be qualified".[1]

It is necessary to take steps to ensure that Ceylonese who are qualified to take up posts in the teaching service are given preference over non-Ceylonese.[2]

Thus Kannangara held positive views about a unified system of state education based on democratic principles providing equality of opportunity to all citizens irrespective of any differences.

1. H. 1926 p. 1124
2. H. 1938 p. 4179

CHAPTER 10

EDUCATION AND ECONOMY

KANNANGARA foresaw quite early in his political career that in underdeveloped countries like Ceylon economic development should go hand in hand with educational development. The two could not be planned or executed as two separate fields. In 1923 he said, " If there is no proper education in a country then there cannot be proper prosperity".[1]

This is a very modern concept which in fact very few had realized fifty years ago. John Vaizey, one of the foremost educational economists to-day expands the same concept thus: " Economic development makes urgent calls on education, and in turn advancement of education and knowledge promotes economic development. It is difficult to determine which of the two should take the lead in effecting a breakthrough from a state of chronic backwardness.

" Two generalizations are possible: no illiterate country has ever achieved significant economic development, and an educated community with highly trained leadership does not remain economically backward. An illiterate society clings to custom and tradition, and through these to past productive practices and techniques. It does not respond readily to forces of change which stimulate the acquisition of new knowledge and new skills. Educational programmes break down obstacles to development, encourage geographic and occupational mobility, improve productive capacity, create new demands and facilitate innovations".[2]

" The 34 leading countries in terms of production per capita all achieved a primary school enrollment of over 10 per cent. of the total population before showing their most significant economic progress. No country has achieved significant economic growth within the past 100 years without first attaining this 10 per cent. level. . . . Experience in terms of the relationship of education and economic growth suggests that the former preceded and accompanied the latter".[3]

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1. H. 1923 p. 356
2. The Economics of Education : London, 1962 p. 143.
3. Peaslee, A.L: 'Primary School Enrollments and Economic Growth' in Comparative Education Review. February 1967 p. 66.

Advocating a general spread of education which ultimately would lead to a greater national effort Kannangara said, " A great deal has been said about the University turning out to be a degree factory. We are told that there will be graduates selling cigars. It is quite possible, that even shoe makers may be graduates; paddy growers, *goiyas* and so on, may be graduates. I submit that if a cigar-seller. goes through a University course he will be able to sell cigars better. He will know how to improve in that brand. The people who manufacture the cigarette we smoke everyday are University men. They know how to improve the quality. It is no disgrace to be a shoe-maker, but it is a disgrace to make bad shoes".[1]

Adam Curle, a professor of Harvard says, " There can be little doubt that entrepreneurship is an educated activity, or rather that the initiator of such activities is educated. . . . The pioneering entrepreneur is a man who has come to see that there is a new way of tackling things, to whom it has been revealed through schooling, travel, imagination or ambition that things could be different from what they are".[2]

" An African (or for that matter any other) cook" he says " is better at his job if he can read a cookery book and lists of prices in the store".[3]

To-day education is considered an investment in human resources. But 25 years ago the conception was still fighting for its general acceptance and there were many (including Ceylon's financial secretary at the time, H. J. Huxham) who did not agree with it. Kannangara explains how he fought the battle for its acceptance in Ceylon thus: Even in 1944 the educational needs of the rural areas in Ceylon were neglected. " It cannot possibly be righted without the expenditure of large sums of money. So what did I do ? I realized that it was really a large slice out of the annual vote and I suggested to the Board (of Ministers) that I should be allowed to put up these schools out of loan funds. This matter was mentioned by me several times. But I did not get one cent out of loan funds. I have with me the correspondence that passed between myself and the Board asking for funds. Those funds have not been given to me. The Board was led by the advice of the financial wiseacre who advised that education was not a longtime investment, that it does not produce anything, that loan funds should be given only for projects which give a return—a return in money—quite irrespective of the consideration that the best investment that a country can make is for the education of its people.

" The honourable financial secretary advised that the general principle was to finance electrical undertakings, railway undertakings,

1. H. 1927 p. 2116
2. Educational Strategy for Developing Societies : London, 1963 p. 57
3. Ibid. p. 141

road construction and things of that type out of loan funds because they give a very substantial return. But his advice is: 'you shall not build schools out of loan funds; they give no return'. If anything, the return is the other way about. Says he, 'There will be more clamour when they are educated, for better education, more education. So that the expenditure side will get loaded very heavily'. So the best thing to do is not to charge the cost of building schools to loan funds".

Insisting on his proposition that education was an investment par excellence Kannangara added, "Illiteracy must be removed at the earliest opportunity. I would beg of the Honourable the financial secretary to give up that old, rotten principle of his. Let us make the best investment we can with our money.... Any amount of money spent on education will bring about a large return. It will make up certainly for the loss that you incur in the first instance".[1]

'Education' says Charles S. Benson of Harvard University 'occupies a strategic place in productivity advance'.[2] 'In this century, economists have seen investment in physical capital as the primary means of obtaining a greater volume of output in a society. The contribution of increased investment in human capital (Education) to economic growth has been largely ignored'. That is because the contribution of human capital cannot be precisely measured. But 'it is universally agreed that education serves to increase the stock of human capital'.[3]

Vaizey adds "education improves the human lot and makes humanity materially richer too".[4] 'Education raises productivity, strengthens national defence and removes the social ill of abject poverty'. Education is a support of our democratic society, since surely it functions more effectively under an informed and literate electorate than it would if the voting population lacked an education. Finally, if learning is to be enjoyed it must be shared. For an educated person, it is more stimulating to live in a society where he can share his intellectual interests with other persons through various forms of communication".[5]

Kannangara disapproved the social-class-bias that existed in the educational system of Ceylon especially prior to the introduction of the Free Education Scheme in 1945. He said "English schools became necessary in this country for the reason that the authorities wanted a number of officials for administrative purposes when Ceylon

1. H. 1944 pp. 858-60
2. The Economics of Public Education : Boston 1961 p. 335
3. Ibid. p.344.
4. The Control of Education : London, 1963. p. 14
5. Benson : loc. cit. p. 23

passed into the hands of the British government. For providing those officials, schools were established for the socalled higher class at that time, and they were a privileged class. Fees were levied in those schools and the privileged class was able to pay those fees. So that we had the English school that levied fees and the vernacular school—Tamil for the Tamil section and Sinhalese for the Sinhalese section—that could not afford to levy fees".[1]

" What is the hope for the poor man who lives in the village ?" he asked. 'There is the comment always that the village children leave the schools before they attain the compulsory age, before the age of 14.... What is the cause of this ?.... Children will not attend schools unless there is some hope in the breast of their parents'.

" What is the ambition of the parents when they send their children to a vernacular school ? If the child happens to be a specially gifted child the parents' hope is that some day the child may become a vernacular teacher, the highest ambition beyond which he cannot hope!.... To him the other posts are closed. To him the other posts—the civil service posts, the provincial administration posts, engineers, doctors, lawyers—are closed. The village child has no hope of ever getting there. When there is no hope, how can any one expect these people to send their children to school. There is absolutely no hope.

" If the child happens to be an extremely smart and clever fellow he will perhaps after completing his education in the vernacular school go on to a Pirivena and learn a little Sanskrit and after committing to memory a few Sanskrit verses becomes a Vaidya or native doctor or perhaps might become a notary.

" This is absolutely the correct state of affairs and when nothing better is held out to a man, what is the earthly use of prosecuting the villager for not sending his child to school ?.... Hold out some hope to them; let them also have a look at this promised land flowing with milk and honey.... Education of the highest order shall be free".[2]

" If the mother tongue is the medium of instruction in all schools, then it is possible to have education in the highest degree in all village schools. This distinction between the upper classes and lower classes will undoubtedly disappear".[3]

" We must not think of building our educational system on the state of affairs prevailing in the secondary schools. You cannot start there and build down to the bottom. An architect militates against

1. H. 1944. p. 756
2. H. 1944 p. 847
3. H. 1944 p. 859

the first principles of architecture if he starts with the pinnacle and frieze and come down to the base of the column. If he tries to do that his structure will be upside down. But rather we must start at the bottom. It must be broad-based. Let us start with the villages. Let us start where these people hopelessly cry for salvation, for education—just like the picture that Aeneas is supposed to have seen: stretching out their hands, longing for the further shore, asking him to carry them across the styx which they could not possibly cross (Virgil). But the longing is there; it has long been there. We have denied them that".[1]

' You cannot have education freely, fairly and justly distributed amongst the different sections of the community throughout the whole island if you go on the present system'.[2]

Free education is the answer. ' I say that it is a pearl of great price. Sell all that you have and buy it for the benefit of the whole community '.[3]

' I am told', Kannangara continued, ' you are making education free for people who can pay. That is not the way to look at it'.

" To me all pupils are alike. I do not want to differentiate between the rich and the poor children. The rich parent should be made to pay by way of income tax and other taxes. When this is done why charge the rich and not the others. All pupils should be treated alike. There should be no room for anybody to develop the inferiority complex.

" I speak from bitter experience. I was selected as a foundation scholar of Richmond College, after a competitive examination. I came out first in the exam and I won this scholarship. In my college there were three classes of boarders. In one the charge was Rs. 25 and this class was composed of the sons of the very rich. As an ' upper class ' they dined with the teachers. In the second class the charge was Rs. 15. Those who dined with the teachers were given two courses while those who paid Rs. 15 received only one course. I was put amongst those who paid Rs. 10 the lowest class.

" I saw these other children receiving better food and better treatment, and yet to this day the fact that I received free education at this College is flung in my face. I certainly did receive free education, but this ' stigma ' has stuck for life.

" I do not want that charge about receiving free education flung by anybody at any child in this country. Let all the children eat together and study together. This ' superiority complex' must go".[4]

1. H. 1944 p. 946
2. H. 1944 p. 1870
3. H. 1945 Col. 4173
4. H. 1945 Col. 4675

Equality of opportunity in education is to-day one of the basic principles of a Welfare State. R. H. Tawney, one of the early advocates of secondary education for all wished for an educational system that would enable us ' to forget the tedious vulgarities of income and social position, in a common affection for the qualities which belong, not to any class or profession of men, but to man himself'.[1]

Humayan Kabir, one time Educational Adviser to the government of India expressed the same view when he said, " All schools generally, and public schools in particular, must be visible symbols of the principle that the role of education is the equalization of opportunity within the community. It is said that the children are the greatest asset of a nation. Care must be taken to see that these assets are used to the best advantage of the community. This will require that facilities be offered to each child according to its need and services expected from it according to capacity. In no other way can an optimum use of our human material be made".[2]

Though Kannangara advocated the elimination of the ' hereditary privilege' in education he had no idea of providing the same education for all. He said, " Roughly the scheme that we have in view is this, that everybody will have a sufficient training in the ordinary academic subjects until he comes to about the age of 12; and thereafter the students will branch out according to their special abilities to other courses of studies where the academic side will not be neglected but the vocational side will be emphasised".[3]

Kannangara's plan was to provide the various courses in the same school. " There will be a chance given to everybody within a radius of about 4 or 5 miles to come into the Central School and have the education that is best suited to him".[4]

" Now grading and classification have become necessary owing to this unsatisfactory state of affairs and because children are trying to do work for which they are not suited. It may be that the child will be a very successful artist. But the parent will never accept that advice".[5]

Though he advocated the streaming of children, " if it appears that some of them have been late-developers—sometimes the aptitude of a child appears long after the first selection—then at a second selection it should be possible" he said " to transfer them from one stream to the other".[6]

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1. Equality : London, 1929. p. 200
2. Education in New India : London, 1956. p. 63
3. H. 1938 p. 2411
4. H. 1940 p. 2736
5. H. 1944 pp. 932-3.
6. H. 1944 p. 937

T. H. Marshall advocating the inevitable selection wrote, "In essence it is the equal right to display and develop differences, or inequalities; the equal right to be recognised as unequal. In the early stages of the establishment of such a system the major effect is, of course, to reveal hidden equalities—to enable the poor boy to show that he is as good as the rich boy. But the final outcome is a structure of unequal status fairly apportioned to unequal abilities".[1]

In addition to the principle of selection according to aptitude and ability of children Kannangara also advocated an education with a vocational bias. "We are trying our utmost to make education as much as possible in the circumstances to be based on an agricultural and an industrial basis".[2]

Elaborating further the 'vocational-centred' education he had in mind he said "With a view to keeping the village boy in the village itself and making him regard labour as not degrading we have devised a new type of school. . . . Our main object is to have only two hours' work indoors and three hours work out of doors. We have in view more the health and physical development, the aesthetical and social development alongside the intellectual development".[3]

"Then there is the question of occupation which has not been forgotten. The children are taught some kind of occupation or other. In most of the schools they are taught various industries. They are taught to till land, to grow vegetable and take care of vegetable gardens and also to do masonry and carpentry work".[4]

"As regards spinning and weaving I may say that we are taking active steps".[5]

"The chief feature of this Rural Scheme of education is the development not only of the mind of the pupils, but also the development of the body of the pupil. It is not only the development of the body, but the development of his aesthetic sense. The health of the child is looked after, as much as the mind. Not only that. The fourth one is, the practical faculties of the child are also developed. So that in this scheme of education we have, if I may call it, the four H's instead of the three R's—reading, writing and arithmetic. I might say that our efforts are directed to the development of the health, of the hand, of the heart and of the head.

"When the scheme is worked and everything runs well, we hope that in due time there will be no unemployment in this country. It

1. Citizenship and Social Class : Cambridge U.P. 1950. p. 65
2. H. 1931 p. 825
3. H. 1932 p. 2636
4. H. 1933 p. 1679
5. H. 1934 p. 1856

is our intention by this means to stop rural lads from coming into the towns in search of employment. We hope they will have sufficient confidence in themselves and that they will be able to put their hands to other work without all the time waiting to get some clerkship in a Kachcheri or become a teacher".[1]

Food production was another feature of the system of education envisaged by Kannangara. He saw that Ceylon's economic take-off has to begin with self-sufficiency in food. As long as the exchange earned by the exports went to buy food, there was not enough left to buy machinery and raw material needed for an expansion of industries. Self-sufficiency in food Kannangara thought had to be achieved through a re-education of the villager. A scientific knowledge of agriculture and a respect for manual work had to be inculcated among the rural folk. 'Food production was not started as a result of war' he said, 'Food production in schools was started by me two years earlier than the war broke out. That was done with a view to prevent the school children from entirely giving up agricultural work in order that it may be part of their education'.[2]

Kannangara wanted higher education too reformed along 'rural' lines. He wanted a University that could contribute to the economic development of the country. 'It is evident, whichever way we look at the matter that there should be a University of our own. If we look at the exam results or the products of the present University College (1934) we will find that the education now imparted is really not of the type that is suited to the needs of this country. We may start with the rural scheme from the bottom but as we go up we find super-imposed from outside exams and subjects that we do not require. With that pressure on the top it is utterly impossible for University education to continue any longer in this island. It is absolutely necessary that the whole system should be put on a sound and proper basis.'[3]

'There is no co-ordinating influence in the various educational activities of the island, and so long as we are dependent on foreign Universities to dictate to us what kind of education we should impart in this country, it will not be possible for us to cater to the needs of our people.'[4]

Kannangara did not want the first University in Ceylon to be of the residential type, nor did he want it to be an exclusive 'academic' university. 'What is the fun of educating people in cloisters. What is the fun of keeping people away from the practical side of life' he said.[5]

1. H. 1935 p. 2532
2. H. 1943 p. 1678
3. H. 1934 p. 1857
4. H. 1935 p. 2538
5. H. 1927 p. 2117

F. Musgrove has expressed the same opinion more recently when he says, ' If boys live only with boys their ideas will continue to be boyish'. Presenting his case against segregation he says, ' When the young are segregated from the adult world, held in low esteem, and delayed in their entry into adult life, they are likely to constitute a potentially deviant population, but when they are segregated from the adult world in a position of high status and power, a conservative society is the probable result.'[1]

' Let us have a University' Kannangara said, ' to suit the wants of everybody. We might later on perhaps have a (second) University like that of Oxford or Cambridge somewhere in the Dumbara Valley. . . One of the most important functions of a present-day University is to help the people outside. . . . They tried to put them into cages, so that they may not mix with the outside world and the results have been fatal.'

Referring to the suggestion that a Buddhist University be established he said, ' In that event I would suggest that the best thing to do would be to convert one of our Pirivenas into a University. . . . But the first University is not meant to be a Buddhist University.

' If Buddhism stands in need of a University it has its own centres of education like Sangharaja Pirivena, the Vidyodaya College at Maligakanda and Vidyalankara Pirivena in Kelaniya. The Ceylon University however, is not intended to cater for the wants of a section of the community. We do not want it to cater for the high and the great, the noble, the rich or the aristocrat. This is not the aim of the only University of Ceylon. We want a University that will cater for the wants of everybody.'[2]

Where did Kannangara get his ideas of a vocational-based education ? When the author interviewed him in December, 1965 Kannangara confessed that the seed-idea came from R. Patrick, Inspector of schools, but the form it took in Ceylon—the Rural Scheme—was to a great extent his own formulation. The Ceylon Daily News says " It was modelled on a similar scheme which had proved a success in East Africa".[3]

R. Patrick himself had this to say about the scheme. " In Ceylon, as in most countries, efforts have been made in recent years to effect a closer relationship between the work of the schools and the means of earning a livelihood. With this aim in view, a new scheme of studies was introduced three years ago, (in 1930) its most important feature being that each subject was presented to the teacher under two

1. Youth and the Social Order : London, 1964.
2. H. 1927 p. 2118
3. CDN. August 29, 1945.

headings: (1) its cope, i.e. the restricted amount of knowledge included in the work of any Standard or class; (2) its application, i.e. the use to which this knowledge can be put both inside and outside the limits of school life."

Patrick does not mention its connection to East Africa. But it was introduced to Ceylon in 1930, before even Kannangara became the Minister of Education. This scheme introduced by Patrick in 1930 however was not the ' Rural Scheme' that originated in 1932 at Handessa.

Patrick himself adds " In the scheme of work introduced in 1930 the intention was that each lesson would lead on to its application. Thus the practical work associated with a lesson was done as a continuation of the lesson itself. This method was successful in the primary classes, where the tasks were of an elementary character, but in the post-primary classes it did not allow of any serious work. . . .

' After the scheme had been in force for two years, the results were carefully investigated. . . . It was the general impression, that there was not enough application in rural schools by the postprimary pupils, the majority of whom would later become cultivators or village craftsmen, and that a drastic change was necessary if they were to be trained to participate intelligently in the general industries and activities of village communities. '

It is here that Kannangara comes in. The drastic change was done in 1932 — leading to the Rural Scheme — which was inaugurated by Kannangara himself at Handessa.

In the Handessa scheme ' the usual subject-titles were omitted as far as possible, and tasks and lessons were grouped under the following headings which together were considered to provide an ample field of instruction suitable for schools : (*a*) Health (*b*) Study of the Locality (leading up to a Knowledge of the World) (*c*) Occupations and (*d*) Literature, Art, Music, &c.

' More than half of the school day was allotted to practical work out of doors. . . . '1

A. Ratnayake, Kannangara's lieutenant at the time the scheme was inaugurated thought that the idea had come from Gandhi's Wardha Scheme. But the Handessa Scheme was experimented at least five years before (1932) Gandhi wrote his first article on the Basic Education Scheme to the *Harijan* (1937).

S. A. Wickramasinghe in the first State Council said, " It (Rural Scheme) is not an original scheme of ours, but it is a scheme that has

1. Patrick R. : ' An Experiment in Rural Education in Ceylon. ' in Overseas Education. July, 1933. p. 166

been applied in other advanced countries for several decades probably."[1]

Wickramasinghe however does not name the 'advanced countries' he had in mind. Kannangara in answer says, 'Some people may choose to say that there is nothing original in it; that it was started about 40 or 50 years ago. There is nothing original under the sun'.[2]

So far as Kannangara is concerned education through a vocation (mainly agriculture) is an original idea. Before 1945 Swabhasa education did not lead a child to anything higher than a Swabhasa teacher. There was no incentive offered to the vast majority of the children who attended the Swabhasa schools. In fact many of them were reluctant to continue their education beyond the fifth standard. Education as it was organised was based on the three R's — reading, writing and arithmetic. The need for these abilities in rural Ceylon in the 1930's was very limited. Thus education did not help the Rural Child to improve his economic position. It was this barren system that prompted Kannangara to experiment with his Rural Scheme. The essence of the Rural Scheme was to combine intellectual training with productive work. Agriculture was the main vocation of the village. Thus he wanted education to be centred round agriculture, and to a lesser extent around animal husbandry and local crafts. They were taught the rudiments of scientific agriculture through teachers especially trained for the purpose. The vocation was skilfully combined with the intellectual training. Much scope was given for initiative and creative activities. The children learnt more or less the same vocations that their parents and neighbours engaged in. But they learnt it along scientific lines. Thus the children carried new knowledge into their homes, bringing about a silent social reconstruction.

The children, from young days became productive units and they were encouraged to earn and save. Thus under the Rural Scheme the barren village school, attendance at which was a drudgery provided a new vision, though of course the vision was limited to the village horizon. The limitation of the horizon was the result of the medium — swabhasa — and not of the method or the curriculum.

The method — learning by doing or education through manual work — is however neither new nor revolutionary. 'In primitive times all education was through observation and work. Life itself required work and physical work at that. . . . In hunting, fishing and agricultural civilizations, when there was no written, not to say printed word, whatever little knowledge there was, had to be painfully acquired through work and experience.'[3]

1. H. 1933 p. 1667
2. H. 1934 p. 1955
3. Kripalani, J. B. : The Latest Fad : Sevagram, 1957. p. 16.

Rousseau led Emile along the same path : " If instead of making a child stick to his books I employ him in a workshop, his hands work for the development of his mind. While he fancies himself a workman he is becoming a philosopher. '[1]

' A child learns' says John Dewey 'during the early years from experience. The educator who receives the child at the end of this period has to find ways for doing consciously and deliberately what 'nature' accomplishes in the earlier years. '[2]

Referring to the English Factory Act of 1864 Karl Marx says ' Paltry as the education clauses of the Act appear on the whole, yet they proclaim elementary education to be an indispensable condition to the employment of children. The success of those clauses proved for the first time the possibility of combining education and gymnastics with manual labour, and, consequently of combining manual labour with education and gymnastics. The factory inspectors soon found out by questioning the schoolmasters, that the factory children, although receiving only one half the education of the regular day scholars, yet learnt quite as much and often more. ' This can be accounted for by the simple fact that, with only being at school for one half of the day, they are always fresh, and nearly always ready and willing to receive instruction. The system on which they work, half manual labour, and half school, renders each employment a rest and a relief to the other ; consequently, both are far more congenial to the child, than would be the case were he kept constantly at one. It is quite clear that a boy who has been at school all the morning, cannot (in hot weather particularly) cope with one who comes fresh and bright from his work. '[3]

Marx was in fact advocating learning and doing — combining studies with productive work — rather than learning by doing. Thus Kannangara's Rural Scheme can be called a 'progressive' and 'socialist' concept.

When Wickramasinghe said, ' it is a scheme that has been applied in other advanced countries' perhaps he had the Soviet Union in mind.

" When the Bolshevicks seized power in 1917 they repudiated all the major features of Tsarist education. . . . The scope of the repudiation may be determined from Lunacharsky's (Anatol V. Lunacharsky, a literary critic appointed in 1917 as the first People's Commissar of Education) first annual report : ' In place of schools of all varieties and kinds . . . the Commissariat has introduced the Unified Workers' School, covering the entire length of the course of

1. Emile : London, 1963 p. 140
2. Experience and Education : New York 1956 p. 88
3. Capital — Volume I : Moscow. p. 482

instruction. . . . Every child of the Russian Republic enters a school of an identical type and has the same chances as every other to complete the higher education up to the age of 16, all specialization is omitted. The school is declared an absolutely lay institution . . . Our school will be in fact accessible to all. To attain this end, not only are all tuition fees abolished, but the children are provided with gratuitous hot food, and the poorest children with shoes and clothing. . . . The labour character of the school consists in the fact that labour pedagogical as well as productive labour, will be made a basis of teaching. In the primary schools it will be mostly work within the walls of the school : in the kitchen, in the garden, in special workshops, etc. The labour must be of a productive character — in this way, in particular, that the children serve the needs of the community so far as their strength will permit them. . . . The secondary school pupils should be able to perform in an easy but real labour outside of the school ; the participation in factory or shop work, the helping in serious farm work, the co-operation in some business enterprise, the co-operation in some social or state undertaking. "[1]

How much these changes influenced Kannangara's thought is difficult to be ascertained, but that he was aware of the Soviet educational reforms is clear from a statement he made in the State Council : ' Justice has been meted out in the Soviet Republic '.[2]

Whatever the source of the Rural Scheme, educational thought was for the first time in recent history was being 'exported' from Ceylon in the early nineteen thirties. Kannangara says, " There are other countries that have inquired from us about this scheme. . . . Places like the Sudan, Travancore, West Africa, N. India and Fiji have made inquiries from us as to how the scheme is working and have asked for the details of this scheme. "[3]

' Very recently an educationist of no mean repute who came to this Island was so very much impressed with it (the Rural Scheme) — he was going to take up a post as a Principal of a Training School in the East —that he said that the first thing he would describe to the people of the place he was going to would be the successful attempt that has been made in Ceylon as regards this Rural Scheme. '[4]

' The scheme was carefully examined by several educationists, not only local men, but those who came from outside, and they expressed the highest praise of the scheme. '[5]

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1. Bereday G. Z. F. et al : The Changing Soviet School : London 1960. p. 51.
2. H. 1944 p. 860
3. H. 1934 p. 1854
4. H. 1936 p. 1454
5. H. 1938 p. 2410

Of the countries we specifically know to which the details of this scheme were sent at least in one (the Sudan) a similar experiment was being made. The Sudanese experiment was inaugurated in August 1934 under the guidance of V.L. Griffiths at Bakht Er Ruda (120 miles south of Khartoun).

Speaking of this experiment Griffiths says, ' We had talked about ruralising education, but what did we mean ? We had no more than a vague idea that in our rural environment we might discover ways of diverting the interest of our pupils from academic learning to the practical affairs of rural life, giving them some knowledge and skill in rural pursuits and inspiring them with a spirit of service to the village community. '[1]

Apparently Griffiths did not have anything 'more than a vague idea' of ruralisation at the start. Whether he was influenced by the Handessa experiment in Ceylon cannot be established as he makes no acknowledgement. But the fact remains that the details of the Handessa Scheme were sent to the Sudan just before the Bakht Er Ruda experiment was started.

The Handessa Scheme obviously had no connection to the Wardha Scheme of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi says ' The view on education that I am now going to set forth have been held by me right from the time of the founding of the Phoenix Settlement in South Africa in the year 1904 '. But he 'set them forth' in the *Harijan* only on May 8, 1937.[2]

Even before 1937 Gandhi had expressed the need to impart education in the mother tongue and to provide for vocational training. He also thought that in a poor country like India, schools should as much as possible be self-sufficient. But are there any articles in which he has enunciated his 'theory of Basic Education ', published prior to 1937 ?

He told the readers of Harijan, ' I hold that true education of the intellect can only come through a proper exercise and training of the bodily organs. In other words an intelligent use of the bodily organs in a child provides the best and quickest way of developing his intellect. But unless the development of the mind and body goes hand in hand with a corresponding awakening of the soul, the former alone would prove to be a poor lopsided affair. By spiritual training I mean education of the heart. '[3]

This sounds very much close to Kannangara's idea of the 'development of the health, of the hand, of the heart and of the head '.

1. Griffiths, V. L. : An Experiment in Education : Londom 1953. p.15,
2. Gandhi, M. K. : Basic Education : Ahmedabad 1951. p. 10
3. Ibid.

Gandhi in his first article to the Harijan on the craft-centered education makes an indication that the idea of Basic education came to him ' during his recent wandering in Travancore . . . '[1] Kannangara names (in 1934) Travancore as one of the places to which details of the Rural Scheme were supplied. Whether Basic education was influenced by the Handessa Scheme through Travancore is worth investigating.

There are two more questions on which Kannangara has expressed his opinion : (i) Teachers' pay and (ii) Financial principles.

' It is absolutely necessary, in the case of the teacher who discharges a highly important and valuable function toward the state, that he should be given a living wage. I would consider, a reasonable living wage to be a wage that enables a man to feed himself and clothe himself, to feed and clothe his wife and children and other dependents, to educate his children, to enjoy a reasonable amount of comfort, to have a little enjoyment during his holidays and to put by something for an evil day.

' The best teachers in our schools have been birds of passage. If there are very intelligent men in the teaching profession to-day, in a few years' time you will find them taking to other walks of life. The reason for this state of affairs is, that the teaching profession is poorly paid. . . . If a person is to discharge properly the duties in which he is engaged, he has got to be trained for it ; and in the case of the teacher, I maintain that he should fit himself thoroughly, and that he should be trained. '[2]

The teachers are not a body of men to be treated like the riffraffs of society ; they are not to be treated like daily paid labourers.[3]

The financial principles once Kannangara laid down before the State Council are also worth being recorded though they have no direct relation to education. They are: (i) Do not start new projects without proper estimates and plans ; in other words, look before you leap. (ii) Do not borrow more than you need ; for, all excess is inappropriate. Even honey turns to gall. (iii) Do not borrow at high rates of interest and lend at low rates ; for remember that charity begins at home. (iv) Do not provide for interest and sinking fund on a loan the extent of which you do not know ; in other words, put not the cart before the horse. (v) Do not spend more than you can safely spare on services for the benefit of future generations at the expense of the present generation ; . . . for, sufficient unto the day is

1. Ibid.
2. H. 1923 p. 585
3. H. 1928 p. 935

the evil thereof. (iv) Do not risk too much on services likely to prove remunerative; for, speculation is the cause of the destruction of individuals as well as nations. (vii) Do not allocate for work more money than can possibly be spent ; for the saying goes ' Do not take to your mouth more than you can swallow '. (viii) Do not extract now from the people interest and sinking fund on a loan that is far off ; in other words do not put on your bathing suits a league before the river. (ix) Pay heed to the entreaties of the people ; for, the saying goes *vox populi, vox Dei.* (x) If you are ready and willing to co-operate, put that desire into practice ; for an ounce of practice is worth a pound of precept.[1]

These principles are as educative as his educational principles.

1. H. 1929 p. 867

PART IV HIS WORK

CHAPTER 11

THE GROWTH OF AN INTEREST

KANNANGARA, though chose law as his profession, took a great interest in education. He himself expressed this once when he said, 'There was nothing dearer to the heart of an Easterner than the subject of education'.[1] The influence of Darrell and his experience as a teacher early in life were perhaps the contributory factors. Even before he entered the Legislative Council he had become the champion of the teacher.

In April 1923 at the annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress he moved, 'that this Congress is of opinion that the schemes suggested by the Director of Education and the Board of Education for the improvement of the pay and prospects of the members of the teaching profession are unsatisfactory and that immediate steps should be taken by the government to formulate schemes that would satisfy the just demands of teachers as regards pay and prospects.'[2] This was unanimously accepted by the Congress, and incidently this was the first time the Congress expressed its opinion on teachers' pay.

He entered the Legislative Council at the end of June 1923. The very first act of his as a Councillor was the submission of a petition from the teachers of Galle District, 'praying for such increment of salaries as were granted to the public service'.[3] That was on July 5, 1923. From that day he was the 'shadow' Director of Education among the unofficial members of the Council. He studied the work of this department in detail and often had the facts and figures with the necessary documents to establish them, in his hands, whenever the subject was debated in the Council.

He made his maiden speech during the debate on the Supply Bill 1923-24, when he fired the first shot in a long drawn out battle for 'a better pay for the teacher', which he relentlessly fought to a successful end. He said, 'As regards the pay of the teacher everybody knows

1. Bandaranaike, S. W. R. D. : loc. cit. p. 743
2. Ibid, p. 518
3. H. 1923 p.223

that it is a disgrace. A teacher in England is paid double or many times more than the teacher in Ceylon. . . . What do we pay those teachers who are training the youth of the country, who are going to be the citizens of the future ? We pay them much less than we would pay even domestic servants in some instances.'[1]

Three months later in moving 'that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to report on what immediate steps should be taken to improve the status, pay, and prospects of the Ceylon teacher, and provide him with a pension' he said, ' In ancient times the *gurus* fed and clothed their pupils and the pupils were their guests sometimes for about ten or twelve years. But, Sir, that state of affairs has long since gone by'. To-day he himself hasn't the bare necessities of life. ' The teacher has been very badly treated for a long time, and it is necessary that the government should do something to help him.'

The teaching profession which should attract the ablest of a country's educated citizens was in fact fed by men who could find no other employment. ' Capable men shun the teaching profession, because they cannot possibly get a living wage.[2]

Then again speaking on the Supply Bill 1924-25 Kannangara again referred to the question of teachers' pay.[3] Thus for two long years consistently and almost single handed Kannangara fought for a scheme of salaries for teachers. In early 1925 the Board of Education recommended a scheme of salaries for the teachers of the assisted schools. A change in the system of grant became imperative and the Board decided that, ' (i) in the case of the vernacular schools which have no receipts from fees the grant should cover the whole of the salary cost of an adequate staff together with a fraction for the maintenance and equipment of the school; (ii) in the case of English schools which collect fees from pupils the grant would be based upon a percentage of the salary cost of an adequate staff.'[4] These proposals were accepted by the government and financial provision was made in the Supply Bill 1925-26 for ' improving the pay of the teachers in assisted schools'.[5]

Kannangara was not jubilant at the 'victory'. Speaking on the Supply Bill he said, ' It was I believe in 1923 that I had the pleasure of moving in this Council a motion for the appointment of a select committee. On behalf of the teacher, Sir, I might say the teachers are thankful to the Director of Education and the Board of Education for bringing out this scheme of salaries. It does not fully satisfy the

1. H. 1923 p.356
2. H. 1923 pp. 583-9
3. H. 1924 p. 134
4. SP XXI 1925 pp. 4-5.
5. H. 1925 p.277

teachers, . . . but teachers will cheerfully accept it. . . . What teachers ask is that this scheme be referred to a select committee of this House for the removal of anomalies'.[1]

'The provision of a scheme of salaries for the teachers in assisted schools in 1925 did not stop Kannangara's agitation for further improvements. In February, 1926 he moved that a select Committee of this Council or an advisory Committee be appointed to make recommendations without delay for an equitable revision of salaries of vernacular teachers in government and assisted schools.'[2]

When the Supply Bill 1926-27 was debated in July, 1926 he again pointed to the necessity of providing better salaries for the poor teachers. 'The teachers have been fighting and fighting' he said, 'for a decent wage for a number of years, and they have also been urging for a pension scheme for a considerably long time, but that scheme has not yet come. The vernacular teachers too have been begging and praying for a little increase to their salaries, which are very small, but yet they have found no relief'.[3]

In the Supply Bill 1927-28 provision was made for enhanced salary scales for the teachers of assisted vernacular schools. For the first time the salary scales of the teachers in assisted schools were brought on par with those of the government schools.[4]

A teacher of an assisted school once retired from his service had practically no means of livelihood. Though a scheme of salaries was provided to all teachers in assisted schools in 1925, the demand for a pension scheme was ignored by the government.

Speaking on the Supply Bill 1926-27 Kannangara said, 'I would specially request the government to put into immediate execution the pension scheme for teachers, who have been toiling and moiling and sacrificing all their time and their energies for the benefit of their country.'[5] He raised the question again in October of the same year.[6]

At last in July, 1927 L. Macrae the Director of Education presented an Ordinance to make provision for granting of pensions to teachers in assisted schools.[7] This was indeed another victory for Kannangara. While congratulating the Director of Education for bringing out the ordinance he said, 'I cannot exculpate the government for the delay'.

1. H. 1925 p. 504
2. H. 1926 p.246
3. H. 1926 p. 967
4. AR. DE 1928 p. A4
5. H. 1926 p. 967
6. H. 1926 p. 1079
7. H. 1927 p. 918

Unlike in the case of government servants, the teachers were called upon to make a 4 per cent. contribution to their pension fund. Kannangara saw no reason for this discrimination. 'It will be better not to give these poor people a pension', he said, 'rather than get them to contribute 4 per cent. per month. . . . The government is making a profit on the Widows and Orphans Pension Fund. We do not want that to happen in the case of the teachers too'.[1]

Though the government provided a salary scheme and a pension scheme, there was still no guarantee that the teachers actually received these scales. There were unscrupulous managers who made various deductions from the teachers' pay. The teachers could do nothing against such managers as there was no security of tenure at all. The teachers in fact were at the beck and call of the manager. Kannangara's next battle was against this unlimited power of the managers.

'The government pays money to the manager and he has control of the school, control of the staff, and he can give any teacher a month's pay and send him away. The teacher must go; he has no way of redress. The ordinary government clerk drawing Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 a month has the right to appeal to the Colonial Secretary, the Governor, or the Secretary of State, but the teacher who is sent away with a month's pay has no way of having his grievance redressed.'[2]

It was at this time that he first suggested his scheme of direct payment of salaries to teachers of assisted schools by the department.

In June, 1928 he had an argument with the Colonial Secretary on the same subject. 'Are there any rules at all as regards the payment of teachers by managers in Assisted Schools, as to the time of payment and the method of payment ?' he asked. When the Colonial Secretary replied in the negative Kannangara retorted, 'Does it mean that they are in the position of master and slave'.[3]

The following day he moved 'that this Council urges upon the government the necessity for the establishment of a Board or Committee to inquire into and report to the Director of Education on questions of wrongful and unjustifiable treatment of teachers in grant-in-aid schools.'

The committee he proposed to set up was to be an Arbitration Board which could give the teachers a certain degree of security of tenure. Sponsoring the motion he said, 'In the Education Commission (of which he was a member) when I raised this point about the treatment of teachers by managers, and that in view of the salaries scheme and the pension scheme, which was just then being discussed, their

1. H. 1929 p. 1429
2. H. 1927 p. 350
3. H. 1928 p. 659

position should be made a little safer, the hands of the managers went up in horror, and I was told that the managers should not be interfered with; that they must have a perfect right to deal with their teachers as they liked.... The government, although it subsidises these schools and goes very far to meet all their expenses, by means of a fiction they say, ' we have nothing to do with these teachers; what we do is, we pay grant at the end of the year....'

' In the case of salaries of teachers, before the new salaries scheme was introduced, the managers had the liberty to pay any salary they liked to a teacher and there have been cases where teachers worked for very poor pay. Even to-day under the salaries scheme there are instances of teachers being paid one-half of the salaries put down on paper. Ten days ago I came across an instance where teachers were paid one-fourth of the salary put down on the list.'[1]

In December 1927 the department sent a circular to the teachers in assisted schools. This was really a set of rules to be followed by them. One of the rules read: ' Teachers of out-station schools are in no case to leave their stations during the school vacation, without having notified to the manager their address during vacation, together with a report that they have taken proper precautions for the security of the school furniture and records during the vacation'. The teachers handed this over to Kannangara.

When he attended the Council that week he said, ' I hold in my hands here a circular sent by the Director for the benefit of teachers in assisted schools....' Quoting the above rule he added: " The Director can pass a rule like this and send it down to the teachers and say ' you must obey that rule,' but has he taken any steps to see that these teachers are properly paid."

The Director of Education Macrae who was an official member of the Council said, ' I should like to correct that Sir. That refers to government schools not to assisted schools.'

Kannangara: "Well Sir, perhaps I know a little better. (reads) ' The following rules regarding discipline in *assisted schools* have been approved by the Board of Education and are circulated for information'. It is a printed sheet that has been sent out by the government for the benefit of the managers who have so many thousand teachers in assisted schools....

Macrae: ' May I explain Sir, that these rules are not binding on any assisted schools. These rules have been sent to managers for their consideration: they can adopt them or not as they like'.

Kannangara: " This notification is signed ' L. Macrae, Director of Education' and was sent from the Education Department on

1. H. 1928 p. 731

December 21, 1927—circular No. E 36. If this was sent out without any idea of enforcing it, I do not know why teachers should complain. They are all complaining against the circular."

Reading more rules from the circular Kannangara said, " Then about residence—' If no quarters are provided, they should reside within one mile of their schools, unless special leave has been obtained. . . . It is essential that every teacher should be an example of cleanliness and neatness.'

" But no pay ! He is asked to keep up appearances and live on thin air. . . ."

" If the teacher is really a bad man, there is no reason why he should not be penalised. But what I ask is that there should be some kind of Committee or Board constituted as government knows how; and if there is a case of wrongful dismissal the man can appeal to this Committee, this Arbitration Board, call it anything you like."

Ending his speech Kannangara warned, ' If you refuse to assist the teacher, in the way I have indicated . . . then the teachers will have to unite. . . . When they find that any of their number has been unjustly treated they will have to call off all the other teachers from that school.'[1]

When the department still took no action, on July 12, 1928 Kannangara moved, 'that government should take immediate steps to ensure the pay of teachers in assisted schools being given to them, (*a*) without unlawful and unjustifiable deductions; (*b*) monthly, but not later than the tenth day of the following month and (*c*) strictly in accordance with the scales of salary prescribed.'

Sponsoring the above motion he said ' Why should a manager be allowed to pay the teacher say once in six months ? . . . Uncertificated teachers are employed in assisted schools on a salary of Rs. 20 a month, which is the salary laid down in the code, but these young teachers are so anxious to get their certificates that they will even work for nothing. They are made to sign pay sheets for Rs. 20 but they are paid anything like Rs. 5, 10 or 15.[2]

The teachers could not complain as all letters to the department had to be sent through the manager.

Kannangara also took an early interest in the University College. Speaking on the Supply Bill 1923-24 he said, ' Although conditions in Ceylon are favourable for the founding of a University, there is no chance at present for a University of Ceylon for one reason, and that is, perhaps the only reason—the lack of a pious founder and generous

1. H. 1928 p. 933
2. H. 1928 p. 998

benefactors. We look, Sir, to the government of Ceylon as the generous benefactor who has been so generous in distributing its favours, to the public service of this Colony'.[1]

In March, 1924 the Colonial Secretary moved that a sum of Rs. 3,000,000 from the rupee balances be set aside and temporarily invested to form a Building and Equipment Fund for the proposed University of Ceylon.[2]

The Governor, Henry Manning speaking on August 28, 1924 just before the dissolution of the 1920 Legislative Council said, 'The inauguration of the University College marks an epoch in higher education, and I am glad that the opportunity has come, during my tenure of the office of governor of this Colony, to bring to fruition this scheme; and I most sincerely hope that before I relinquish that office I may see the University of Ceylon safely and surely established.... And government has set aside an area of 95 acres for the University site, and as the Principal of the University College truly says:—

'The University is no longer a problematical proposition, but an assured scheme which should come to the fruition of actual material existence in the space of three or four years'....

'The preparation of the foundations of the future University has been entrusted to an Academic Committee, and steps are being taken for the preparation of a scheme for the constitution of the University, and it is expected that the complete University scheme will be completed before the University buildings are erected'.[3]

Thus it was very clear that before the departure of Governor Manning the government had set aside the 95 acres to the south of the Bullers Road, had voted a sum of Rs. 3,000,000—sufficient to complete the scheme at the time—and had entrusted the preparation of the blue prints to an academic committee. But with the coming of Hugh Clifford as Governor and Arthur Fletcher as Colonial Secretary the situation changed.

Early in 1926 flared up a controversy as to where the University should be established. D. R. Wijewardhane and his Press supported the Dumbara Valley group, while Kannangara was among those who argued for the Bullers Road site. The controversy received much publicity and practically all the country's leaders were involved. So much 'wind as well as dust' was raised that later critics called it the 'battle of sites'. (see chapter 3).

1. H. 1923 p. 357
2. H. 1924 p. 118
3. H. 1924 p. 317

The government took this controversy as a sufficient excuse to postpone the whole question indefinitely. In fact every time the question was raised in the Council the Colonial Secretary replied, 'The government is not in a position to prepare detailed estimates and specifications for the building of a University until the Legislative Council has selected a site.'[1]

Kannangara referring to this controversy in the Legislative Council said, 'We were all waiting for the establishment of a University somewhere about the end of 1928 at the latest. The buildings were to have been started in January 1926, but what has happened ? What has been at the bottom of this mischief ? Why has all this been thrown into the melting pot, as some say ? Who have been the apostles of reaction ? Why go on considering till the end of time ? Why try to bring up this question that has already been well thrashed out ? . . . . Are not the members of the College Council competent to decide on this question ? . . . . Was it not decided . . . by three successive governors ? Was it not decided by the Colonial Secretary ? Was it not decided and approved of by the Secretary of State and by the Legislative Council ? . . . .

'I submit that the University must be built where there is need for it. You are not going to remove the University to any other place. . . .'

'If the University is established in Kandy, I ask, even among the Sinhalese how many will be able to send their children outside Colombo ? . . . .

'The idea that the Ceylon University is to be a Buddhist University has been receiving considerable currency. On the banks of Mahaveli Ganga, under the shadow of the Maligawa the students, it is argued, can be brought up in a culture of their own. But the place that has been selected is more under the shadow of the Papal Seminary than under the Maligawa.[2]

In his speech Kannangara adequately answered all the arguments brought forward by the anti-Bullers Road group.

The voting on the site question is also interesting. The officials and the unofficial Europeans all voted against Colombo. There was no reason why they should have supported a University 'under the shadow of the Maligawa', They voted only with one intention—to delay the establishment of the University. All Kandyans voted against Colombo not because Dumbara had any great advantage over Colombo to a student from either Badulla or Ratnapura. They voted on sentimental grounds. These two groups account for 18 of

1. H. 1927 p. 1466
2. H. 1927 p. 2111

the 26 votes cast against Colombo. Some of the others who voted against Colombo were active participants in the anti-Bullers Road campaign.

All the Muslims and most of the Tamils voted for Colombo. Of the Buddhists only Kannangara and W. A. de Silva joined this minority.[1]

G. E. de Silva one of the opponents of the Colombo site later confessed: " In the year 1924 a sum of Rs. 4 million was earmarked for the establishment of a University in Ceylon. But when this sum was voted there was strong opposition to the immediate establishment of a University in Ceylon. When that proposal came before the country there were a number of public meetings held in all parts of Ceylon. I think a meeting was held in Colombo at the Tower Hall at which I had the privilege of presiding. . . . At the time, we opposed the immediate establishment of a University in Ceylon.

" Instead of the immediate establishment of a University, we suggested that the four million rupees earmarked for the purpose should be invested, and that from the proceeds of the investment a number of scholarships should be given to young men sent to universities in various parts of the world."[2]

The mind of the opposition was clear. They wanted to limit University education to as few students as possible. They did not want graduates to be ' mass produced in degree factories'.

Teachers' pay, pension and security of service and the Bullers Road site were the four main educational issues Kannangara supported in the Legislative Council. In addition he never hesitated to express his opinion in favour of a system of compulsory education for all, adult education to eradicate illiteracy, and mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

Supporting both temperance and universal education he said, ' You will find in the budget that the amount expected from the sale of arrack, rum and toddy licenses is about ten million rupees. Out of these things which destroy the vitality of our nation a revenue of ten million rupees is derived by the government. I would say to the government in the words that very often are used by government officials at prize givings: Play the game; play cricket by the people of this country. Let the education vote be raised by the amount of ten million rupees. That is what I wish to ask the government to do'.[3] 'Whatever else is starved, education should not be starved'.[4]

1. H. 1927 p. 2273
2. H. 1936 p. 721
3. H. 1924 p. 134
4. H. 1923 p. 357

Even in the 1920's Sinhalese and Tamil were not taught at all in some of the English schools. Attacking this policy Kannangara said, 'It will be seen from the Census Report for 1911 that there were 1,060 males and 670 females who did not know their mother tongue. In 1921 the number had increased, the number of males being 1,517 and the number of females 870. This is a very serious state of affairs and there is no doubt about it that something must be done to remedy it.

'Then we are told that it is dangerous to progress in one's own language; that it might lead to national independence. I do not know that it is such a dangerous thing to get national independence; that it is such a dirty thing. I thought that the ideal of every nation was to be an independent unit in the British Empire'.[1]

Just before the Legislative Council was dissolved to give way for the State Council, Kannangara proposed 'that the government should take early steps to enable the illiterate adult population of this island to become literates and that as a first step in that direction evening classes should immediately be started in localities where government and assisted school buildings and teachers are available'.

'Under universal franchise' he said, 'literacy is very important'.[2]

In addition to taking a deep interest in the educational issues of the day Kannangara also served as a member of the Education Commission (Chairman: L. Macrae) of 1929.[3] He was the Chairman of the Galle Municipal Education Committee and a member of the Galle District (Rural) Education Committee.[4]

1. H. 1926 p. 387
2. H. 1931 pp. 104-7.
3. SP. XXVIII — 1929
4. AR. DE, 1930 p.A33,

CHAPTER 12

STATE OF EDUCATION IN 1930–31

BEFORE the inauguration of the Donoughmore Constitution in 1931, the Director of Education was responsible to the Governor for the control and development of education in Ceylon. He was assisted by a Board of Education and 34 Education District Committees.

The Board of Education consisted of 20 members nominated by the Governor from among the members of the Legislative Council, the Managers of Schools and the teachers. The Director of Education was the ex-officio Chairman of the Board. The main duties of the Board consisted in considering questions of legislation and policy and advising the government on any other matter especially referred to it for advice. It was a purely advisory body having neither administrative functions nor executive powers. All the regulations the Board framed therefore required the approval of the governor in Executive Council.

The Department had its head office in Colombo and there were four sub-offices in Colombo, Kandy, Galle and Jaffna dealing with the inspection of schools and routine regional duties. The Head Office had as many as ten sub-divisions handling—i. Policy and Legislation, ii. Government Schools, iii. Assisted Schools, iv. Industrial and Vocational education, v. Examinations, vi. Printing Press, vii. Supply and Training of teachers, viii. Translation of Text Books, ix. Finance and x. General Office dealing with correspondence and maintenance of records, etc.

All activities connected with the inspection of schools, circuits of inspectors and problems relating to syllabuses of work in various areas of the country were under the control of the Chief Inspector and his staff. For inspection purposes the island was divided into four divisions each of which had a sub-office with a Divisional Inspector as the Senior Administrative and Inspection Officer of the division.

There were also a number of special inspectors in art, physical training, girls schools and needlework who worked in all divisions. They were directly under the Chief Inspector.

Each division also had a School Medical Officer who was appointed and controlled by the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services. But his duties were generally confined to the medical inspection of school children.

There were 34 Education District Committees to assist the department in the erection and maintenance of buildings, supply of furniture and other local matters. Every Municipal Council and Urban District Council had a Committee of its own. In all there were 14 such committees, three in the Municipalities of Colombo, Kandy and Galle and 11 in the Urban Districts of Kalutara, Negombo, Panadura, Matara, Matale, Jaffna, Chilaw, Ratnapura, Dehiwala-Mt. Lavinia, Moratuwa and Kurunegala. In addition each revenue district had a committee which looked after the rural area within the district. All these committees—both urban and rural—were appointed by the governor and consisted of both official and unofficial members.

Attendance was legally compulsory between the ages of 6 and 14, but the law was applied only when school accommodation was provided within a reasonable distance of the residence of the pupil.

Rules relating to compulsory education were executed through the Education District Committees which could employ their own attendance officers. The committees were financed by an annual grant from the department based on the approved programme of works submitted each year.

At the end of 1930 there were nearly 4,000 schools of which roughly 1,500 were directly administered by the department. Their total cost —both capital and recurrent—had to be borne by the department.

The remaining 2,500 schools were commonly called the assisted or denominational and received an annual grant based on the total salary of the approved teachers. Every teacher was entitled to a standard salary scale depending on his qualifications. The vernacular schools received the total salary of the approved staff and an additional amount for maintenance. In return these schools had to provide free tution to all the students who sought admission.

In the case of English Schools the manager had to provide a fixed sum towards the salary of each teacher he employed. This fixed sum varied according to the qualifications of the teacher. In addition the manager had to maintain the school from his own funds. The balance salary was provided by the department as a free grant. The manager had no difficulty in finding his share of the expenditure as an English school was entitled to reasonable tuition fees.

The approved staff in the case of both types of schools was calculated on the average attendance during the previous year.

The estate schools, Pirivenas, special schools and industrial schools also were assisted by the department, but their grant was calculated on a much more arbitrary basis.

There was a third group of private schools which received no grant but were subject to the annual inspection.

The schools could also be classified as (i) academic and (ii) vocational. The vast majority of the schools were of the academic type providing a general and literary instruction. They can be sub-divided into three further categories according to the medium of instruction: (i) English schools where the medium of instruction was English; (ii) Bilingual schools where the medium was Sinhala or Tamil but English was taught as a subject; and (iii) Swabhasa (so-called vernacular) schools where the medium of instruction was Sinhala or Tamil like in the case of the bilingual school, but no English was taught at any stage.

These three categories could be further sub-divided into: (i) Primary providing a six year education from the Lower Kindergarten to the fifth standard; (ii) Junior secondary, providing a ten year education with classes from the Kindergarten to the School Leaving Certificate; (iii) Senior secondary, providing a twelve year education leading up to London Matriculation; and (iv) Collegiate, having only post-primary classes and providing an education in both arts and science. These collegiate schools prepared students for the University College, and their medium of instruction was exclusively English.

Not coming within the above categories but still falling within the broad academic or non-vocational group were the Pirivenas and the Estate Schools. The Privenas were designed mainly but not exclusively for the training of Bhikkhus. These institutions were not compelled to adopt the ordinary school syllabus of studies. They specialized in oriental studies such as Pali, Sanskrit, Classical Sinhalese, Prakrit, Buddhism, Ceylon and Indian History, etc. A few of them also had Tamil, Ayurveda and Astrology in their curriculum.

The Estate schools imparted an elementary education often in the Tamil medium to the children between the ages of 6 and 10 living in the Tea nad Rubber Estates. The school was held on week days between 8 and 10 a.m.

Both Pirivenas and Estate schools were entitled to a government grant provided they maintained certain minimum facilities.

There was also a Deaf and Blind School assisted by the government which may be included in this category though it was a special school meant for the physically defective.

A complete scheme of studies drawn up by the department was in force in all schools up to the junior secondary grade. This curriculum included Language and Literature, Mathematics, History, Geography, Elementary Science, Housecraft, Singing and Drawing.

Schools which had courses beyond the junior secondary level normally followed the London University Syllabus. Pirivenas, Estate Schools and the School for the Deaf and Blind had their own schemes of studies.

Vocational schools also fell into three sub-divisions: (*a*) Technical School was the only one of its kind serving as a centre for the training of technical personnel at the middle and lower levels for the government technical departments. The present College of Fine Arts was also a department of the Technical school in 1930. (*b*) Full-time vocational schools included: (i) institutions for the training of teachers; (ii) industrial schools; and (iii) agricultural schools.

The teacher-training schools provided a two year course in the principles and methods of teaching. There were four training schools run directly by the department of education and 17 more run by the denominational bodies with government aid.

The industrial schools were conducted upon a profit sharing principle, so that the pupils benefitted by whatever articles they produced. These schools provided apprenticeship courses in Basket and Matwork, Carpentry, Weaving and Spinning, etc. The medium of instruction was the mother tongue in all these centres.

The School of Agriculture at Peradeniya provided a two year course in Agricultural sciences for the English medium students. This course was mainly organised for agricultural instructors and other technical officers of the agricultural department. There was also a Sinhala medium course designed to meet the requirements of school teachers. The Jaffna Farm School provided a similar course for the Tamil medium teachers.

Maggona Reformatory meant for Juvenile Offenders was also an industrial school.

Part-time industrial schools provided courses in a variety of home industries. These schools were held often in the afternoons in the same buildings that sheltered non-vocational schools in the forenoons.

Over 86 percent of the students attending academic schools received a free education in the swabhasa leading normally to literacy in the mother tongue. A few of them qualified to be swabhasa teachers which was the highest one could aspire through this education.

Two percent attended the few bilingual schools providing a few more openings for white collar-jobs, than those provided by the vernacular schools. They could end up as teachers, clerical assistants and commercial aids.

The remaining twelve percent attended the fee-levying English schools. These children, destined to become the elite of the country, fell into two classes: (i) those whose home language was English and (ii) those whose home language was either Sinhala or Tamil. The former received their education in the English medium from the Lower Kindergarten and grew up with practically no knowledge of the mother

tongue. The latter often had a four-year grounding in the mother tongue and joined a special course in English before being promoted to the English medium stream.[1]

Higher Education was provided in the University College which coached matriculates for the London Intermediate and Final Examinations, and the Ceylon Medical College which had a system of internal examinations.

The University College was by now ten years old and had twelve departments of study: English, Classics, Oriental Languages, Tamil, Modern Western Languages, History, Economics, Geography, Philosophy, Chemistry, Physics, Botany and Zoology. The number of pupils enrolled in 1931 was 355.

Robert Marrs, the Principal of the College reported in 1931 : ' So far as I am able to ascertain, no University College in the United Kingdom giving instruction for external degrees of the London University can offer a superior general and honours record, proportionately viewed. The progress of the University College has . . . belied the fears expressed in some quarters before the decision was made to open a University College, that Ceylon was not ripe for a University institution or that such an institution would languish for want of students.'

In fact the problem in 1931 was not finding students for the College but finding accommodation for the increasing numbers seeking admission.[2]

The Medical College had three courses, the highest of which ended in the Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery. In 1931 there were 154 students preparing for this examination. The course for Apothecaries had 57 on roll and at the bottom were 18 girls undergoing training as midwives.

The third of the Institutions of Higher Education — the Law College provided lectures both for advocate and Proctor students. In 1931 there were 89 following the advocate's course and 227 following the course for proctors.[3]

In 1930 itself education made hardly any progress, due to the economic difficulties the country was facing. Many proposals for the erection of new schools and additional training schools were conveniently postponed. Registration of many new aided schools was put off. The same building was often used to house two schools, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

No new teachers were recruited and vacancies in government schools remained unfilled. The number of pupils allowed per teacher

1. AR. DE 1930
2. AR. Principal, University College, 1931
3. AR. DE 1930

in the assessment of grant was increased, thus reducing the staff in many aided schools as well. Pupils in higher classes were directed to do work without the direct supervision of a teacher. The supervision of schools by the inspectorate was curtailed due to reductions in travelling expenses.

Not more than 50% of the children of school going age attended school in 1930. The non-school going children fell into two categories : (i) Those who were unwilling to attend school, though accommodation was available within a reasonable distance from home and (ii) those who were willing to attend school but could not find accommodation within a walking distance of their residence. This second category increased rapidly with the depression as no new schools were established.

The School Broadcasting Service started in early 1929 was an innovation going back to the days of the economic depression.[1]

To summarise the educational statistics at the dawn of the Donoughmore era :[2]

Year	*Population*	*No. of Children in School.*	*Percentage*
1931	5,312,548	593,179	11.2

Year	*No. of Govt. Schools*	*No. of Aided Schools*	*Expenditure Rs.*
1931	1498	2621	12,128,845

In 1930 the number of aided schools was 2,449 and they were managed by the following organizations.

Management	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
American	90	10,049
Anglican	309	34,343
Baptist	42	4,684
Buddhist	240	45,728
Friends	12	940
Hindu	155	25,794
Indian Mission	3	289
Mohammedan	14	2,337
National Mission	3	265
Presbyterian	6	1,241

1. AR. DE 1931
2. AR. DE 1931

Private	718	81,873
Roman Catholic	588	82,766
Salvation Army	11	880
Wesleyan	252	28,854
Temporarily Director-Managed	6	567

Many of the 'private' schools were also either Buddhist or Hindu. Schools managed by individuals were all included under this category in the statistics of 1930. In fact only the schools belonging to the Buddhist Theosophical Society have been designated Buddhist schools in the Director's Report of 1930. During other years (e.g. 1920) many of the private schools also, if managed by Buddhists were included in the category of Buddhist Schools. If private schools managed by individual Buddhists were added, the number of Buddhist schools in 1930 may have been about 600.[1]

Literacy is another important guide to the availability of educational facilities.

Year	*Literacy in any Language.*			*Literacy in the English Language. Total*
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	
1931	62.0	30.2	47.9	04.7

Candidates presented for the public examinations in 1931 is a guide to the availability of secondary education in the English medium. The following are the numbers presented for the Cambridge Examinations.

Boys		*Girls*		*Total*
Senior	*Junior*	*Senior*	*Junior*	
1026	1348	241	272	2887

In addition to the Cambridge Examinations there were two other examinations to which the schools presented candidates. They were the English School Leaving Certificate (number of candidates in 1931 was 3296) and the London Matriculation (number of candidates in 1931 was 837) Examinations.[2]

The 1498 government schools functioning in 1931 fell into the following categories :

1. AR. DE 1930
2. AR. DE 1931

Category	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
English	16	2,665
Bilingual	31	9,758
Swabhasa	1,395	201,911
Training	4	156
Industrial	52	685
Technical	1	707

The 3175 aided schools (includes estate schools) fell into the following categories :

Category	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
English	255	60,041
English Night	20	1,755
Bilingual	21	3,848
Swabhasa	2,246	276,018
Swabhasa Night	2	108
Industrial	22	689
Pirivenas	37	2,743
Estate	554	39,163

The number of private unaided schools in 1931 was 1185, made up of :

Category	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
English	84	3,584
Bilingual	33	1,505
Swabhasa	303	12,196
Classical	26	1,278
Pansala	451	1,834
Koran	288	10,546

The pupils attending school in 1931 belonged to the following nationalities :

Low Country Sinhalese	295,421
Kandyan Sinhalese	116,910
Ceylon Tamil	81,580
Indian Tamil	32,227
Moors	17,735
Burghers	6,200
Malays	2,300
British	178
Other	1,150

The religious declarations of the pupils were as follows :

Buddhist	358,067
Hindu	92,938
Roman Catholic	66,551
Muslims	20,065
Church of Ceylon	8,963
Wesleyans	4,043
Other Christians	2,916
Others	158

In 1931 the Donoughmore Constitution brought a certain degree of internal self-government and for the first time elected representatives of the people were given the responsibility of control and management of the educational system of Ceylon. This responsibility fell on Kannangara.

The significance of the reforms introduced by Kannangara can be best understood if one perceives the inner working of the system that the British Colonial government had built during a period of over 100 years.

'I do not believe that educational practices are an exportable commodity. . . . Education must be regarded as a social process ; it is related in each country to the current political sense, the social history of the nation and the national ideals.' says J. B. Conant.[1] But the educational system that existed in Ceylon in 1931 was an essentially imported system. It was imported from England in every detail. There were differences, between the two systems no doubt, but these differences were not due to any disinclination on the part of the Ceylon authorities to imitate. These differences were unavoidable due to the differences in the social, economic and political circumstances.

In England education was controlled by the Board of Education consisting of the President (the Minister of Education), the Principal Secretaries of State, the first Commissioner of the Treasury, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But during its long history the Board never met and for practical purposes it consisted of the President, a Parliamentary Secretary, a Permanent Secretary and the Senior officials. Thus it was functioning more in the nature of a Ministry rather than in the nature of a Board. A Consultative Committee was established to advise the Board.[2]

In Ceylon there was neither a Cabinet nor a minister, hence the counterpart of the consultative Committee was named the Board of

1. Education and Liberty. New American Library, 1953. p. 7.
2. Curtis, S. J : loc. cit. p. 311

Education. It rendered advice to the Director of Education. Nominated by the Governor it consisted of Managers of assisted schools and representatives of teachers. After the enactment of the Education Ordinance of 1920 the Board was empowered to make regulations concerning all educational activities.

In England Educational administration was decentralised, the County Councils and County Borough Councils acting as the Local Education Authorities. A good part of the educational expenditure was also borne by them.[1] In Ceylon there was nothing in the nature of a County Council, hence District Education Committees were set up with the government agent as chairman especially for the purpose. Within Municipalities and Urban Council Areas the Local Authority acted also as the Educational Committee. The Educational committees did not bear any expenditure on education and hence their power in educational matters was correspondingly much more limited than that of the County and County Borough Councils of England.

At this time England had two distinct systems of education, one for the poor and the other for those who could afford to pay high tuition fees. The children of the poor received free education in elementary schools. 'The purpose of the public Elementary School is to form and strengthen the character and to develop the intelligence of the children entrusted to it, and to make the best use of the school years available, in assisting both boys and girls according to their different needs, to fit themselves practically as well as intellectually for the work of life.'[2]

The children of the rich who could afford to pay fees received their education in fee-levying grammar schools which provided a secondary education 'planned according to the needs of the minority who were eventually entering either the University or one of the professions. And it proved a difficult task to shake off this tradition.'[3]

In Ceylon the elementary education was provided by the Swabhasa schools. But these for the most part confined themselves to the teaching of the three R's with a little geography and history. The elementary school in England on the other hand also provided a practical education which trained their pupils in modern skills. The Swabhasa school in Ceylon provided at best only literacy in the mother tongue and a self-perpetuating line of Swabhasa teachers. This education, unlike its counterpart in England, completely ignored the economic life of the country and thereby neglected the vocational needs of the pupils.

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1. Ibid. p. 310
2. Ibid. p. 324
3. Ibid. p. 323

The secondary school in Ceylon was the English school. The richest and the most intelligent pupils attending these schools eventually entered either the University College or one of the professions. Professional training was provided at the Medical College, the Law College and the Technical College. The majority of the pupils even of the English schools however had to be contended with at best a minor white-collar job.

These two traditions were perpetuating the social class differences in society and were providing only very limited social mobility.

J. B. Mays in his book ' Education and the Urban Child ' summarises the situation that existed in England before the Education Act of 1944 thus : ' In the past, it must be admitted, our society was deeply divided into social classes which were all too often determined by considerations of birth and economic inheritance alone. As a result of this class stratification, two fairly distinct educational traditions operated and, even to-day, their divisive influence is still discernible. One derives from the predominantly theoretical bookish grammar school ; the other, a more recent growth essentially utilitarian and minimal, has developed from the nineteenth century elementary school. It is the latter that has provided the basis for secondary modern education in densely populated centres of the great industrial cities. The two traditions spring from different social values and expectations. They embody two distinct cultures. '[1]

If the Secondary Modern School and the Grammar School in England embody two distinct cultures how much more distinct were the two cultures embodied in the Swabhasa school and the English School in Ceylon. These two cultures were not only distinct, they were in fact conflicting.

Another feature in Ceylon education in 1931 was the dual system of denominational and state schools. This too was imported from England. England being a cent percent Christian country could at least teach undenominational scripture, and attitudes, values and beliefs remained fundamentally the same among all denominations.

In Ceylon the differences were not merely denominational. They were social and cultural. The various religious groups that composed Ceylon society differed fundamentally from one another in their attitudes, values and beliefs.

In 1931 86% of the School going children were enrolled in the Swabhasa schools. Another 2% attended the Bilingual schools. There being very little difference between these two, they can be conveniently put into a single category. The remaining 12% attended the English schools.

1. Liverpool, 1962

The swabhasa school generally transmitted the indigenous culture minus (in a majority of the schools) the most vital aspect of it — as far as Ceylon Society is concerned — religion.

The 88% attending the swabhasa and the bilingual schools fell into three sub-divisions ; (i) Those attending Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim (including private) schools — 26.5% ; (ii) Those attending government schools — 38% ; and (iii) those attending Christian schools — 23.5%.

The first group made an attempt to preserve the traditional religious atmosphere of the people. But these schools accommodated only 26.5% of the 500,000 pupils attending the Swabhasa schools in 1931.

Religion was not taught at all in the government schools where 38% of the pupils studied.

In the Christian Swabhasa schools the indigenous culture was tolerated but the attitudes, values and beliefs of the management were not sympathetic to it.

The 12% attending the English schools were in a worse plight. In these schools (including the Buddhist and Hindu) ' education was an introduction of an alien culture. '[1]

The religious affiliations of the children who attended school in 1931 were :

Buddhist	64.7%
Hindu	16.8%
Roman Catholic	12.0%
Protestant	2.9%
Muslim	3.6%

Buddhist, Hindus and Muslims constituted 85% of the total. But Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Private Schools could accommodate only 29%— of the school going population. Government schools accommodated another 38.5%. The remaining 17.5% attended Christian Schools which also accommodated 15% Christian children. Thus Christian schoools in fact had more non-Christians than Christians. There were many Christian schools where hardly any Christian children studied.

The general trend in the English schools was in the direction of what is characterised as 'western culture.' " Culture in this context means the broad standards of conduct and beliefs which constitute the social norms acceptable to influential and powerful groups in the wider society. "[2]

1. Ibid. p. 8
2. Ibid.

The English schools ' were the pace-setters for most other kinds of schools and it is difficult to conceive of any other type which at secondary level would not generally be regarded as second best to this well-established tradition.... Most of the teachers derived from or aspired to the same tradition and hoped that their own children will follow a similar educational pattern. '[1]

' Education involves the transmission of the generally accepted national culture, the handing on and perpetuation of those values which give coherence to the whole society in the form of established traditions. '[2] The English schools failed miserably in this duty.

Education also has to promote develop and refine the national culture. In this duty even the swabhasa schools failed as they were by no means equal to the task. Thus the educational system in Ceylon in 1931, though provided literacy for the general population and white collar jobs for the English speaking elite drew a blank as a promoter and transmitter of national culture.

English education provided almost the only avenue of social mobility as the social class system in Ceylon was based more on a cultural foundation than on the normal economic foundation prevalent in the West. One could not aspire to enter into the upper or the middle class in Ceylon without adopting at least the outward manifestations of the English culture with its language, dress, customs and manners. The Christian denominations were happy at the outcome because they could expand only by cutting the historical roots of the Buddhists and Hindus. Thus the English schools — most of them run by the Christian missionaries — became centres of denationalisation.

The Christian Teachers' Guild of Ceylon admitted this when they said, ' The Christian Church in Ceylon, perhaps more than in any other land, has owed its strength to the policy adopted from the beginning of establishing Christian schools in every village and, later, high schools in every town. Many of the charges which are at present being brought against the church's educational work are without foundation ; but the charge that the church established schools in order to further its work of bringing the light of the Gospel to the people of Ceylon is entirely true. '[3]

Kannangara reforms could best be comprehended on this background.

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Jackson, G. B. : The Responsibility of the Christian School : Colombo, 1955. p. 1

CHAPTER 13

THE PERIOD OF MINOR REFORMS

AFTER the general elections of 1931, the State Council met on July 8 to divide itself into seven Executive Committees as provided for in the Donoughmore Constitution. The following members were elected to the Executive Committee for Education : Kannangara, C. W. W. (Galle), Amarasuriya, H. W. (Udugama), Karalliadda, W. T. B. (Matale), Ratnayake, A. (Dumbara), De Zoysa, G. R. (Balapitiya), Madawala, G. E. (Narammala), and Wickramasinghe, S. A. (Morawaka).

On July 9, 1931, the Executive Committee met and elected Kannangara as their Chairman, thus making him also Ceylon's first Minister of Education.[1]

This Committee functioned till the dissolution of the first State Council on December 5, 1935. After the General Elections of 1936 a new committee was elected on March 18 consisting of : Kannangara, C. W. W. (Matugama), Amarasuriya, H. W. (Galle), Ratnayake, A. (Dumbara), De Zoysa, A. P. (Colombo S), Gunasekera, D. D. (Bandarawela), Jayah, T. B. (Nominated), Natesan, S. (Kankesanturai) and Wille, G. A. H. (Nominated).

Kannangara was once again elected the Chairman of the Committee[2] and Minister of Education. He continued in that capacity till the election of the new Parliament under the Soulbury Constitution in September, 1947, as no general elections were held in the intervening 11 years due to the intervention of the second World War. Thus Kannangara served as the Minister of Education for a consecutive period of 16 years — the full Donoughmore Era (1931-47). These 16 years fall into two almost equal halves, which for convenience of reference may be termed as : (i) the period of minor reforms (starting with his assumption of duties to the enactment of the Education Ordinance of 1939) ; and (ii) the period of major reforms (ending with his defeat at the General Election of 1947).

This Chapter deals with the first period.

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1. CDN. State Council 1931 : Colombo p. 9
2. CDN. State Council 1936 : Colombo p. 4

The educational problems that needed the attention of the new Minister were not really new to him. He had taken a great interest in educational work and was well aware of these problems. L. Macrae, the Director of Education paying a complement to him in 1931 said that ' the Department of Education was fortunate in having a minister who has had wide experience of educational work in Ceylon. '[1]

The country however was in the grip of a financial depression and no reforms for educational expansion could be initiated. In fact he was called upon to retrench his staff and cut down the expenses where ever possible.

The reforms and innovations introduced during these first eight years were aimed at ' a maximum of efficiency with a minimum of expenditure '. They related to : (i) the direct payment system ; (ii) limiting the number of Dirstrict Education Committees ; (iii) encouragement of the study of the mother tongue ; (iv) the Rural Scheme of Education ; (v) midday meal; (vi) examination set up ; (vii) scholarships for Burgher children ; (viii) Dental Clinics ; (ix) expansion of the teaching of English as a second language ; (x) Providing educational facilities in the more remote areas; (xi) uniform academic year ; and (xii) economy measures due to the depression.

Almost immediately after Kannangara assumed duties as the Minister of Education he found ' that in many cases teachers in assisted schools were compelled to work for 12 months or more without receiving any salary. ' This was partly due to the then prevailing system of grant. The grant was paid to the management only at the end of the year. In the meantime the manager was called upon to advance the salaries of teachers monthly. Due to the economic depression most managers — especially of societies like the Buddhist Theosophical Society which depended on public subscription found it difficult to comply with this requirement. Advancement of the salaries was one of the conditions for the award of a government grant. The grant was in fact a reimbursement of such payments. As the management had failed to satisfy an important condition of the grant, the department was unable to give teachers relief through the usual channels of the management even at the end of the year. ' The difficulty however was overcome by the adoption of a new code regulation in 1931, which empowered the department to pay teachers directly in cases where grant was forfeited by the management. '[2]

The first society that came under this direct payment system was the Buddhist Theosophical Society. The managers of assisted schools considered this as an encroachment of their rights. G. C. S.

1. AR. DE 1931 p.8
2. AR. DE 1931 p. 9

Corea (Chilaw) brought this up before the State Council in November, 1931.[1] Kannangara defending the action taken by the department said, 'The immediate reason for the stoppage of the grant was two-fold. One was due to the fact that the grant was stopped under a seizure by the court. The second cause — after that seizure was lifted — was that it was brought to the notice of the Director of Education that the salaries of teachers had been paid by post-dated cheques to the extent of over Rs. 80,000 some of the cheques being payable somewhere in February next. But returns had been sent in by the Manager to the effect that the salaries of teachers had been duly paid every month before the tenth day of the mext month. . . .

'Under the provisions of the Code grants cannot be paid out except by way of reimbursements for expenditure actually incurred and, that being so, the Director was perfectly justified in stating that payment by post-dated cheque is a sort of subterfuge and is not actual payment.'[2]

The teachers in the B. T. S. service were directly paid only as a temporary measure to help them tide over the depression. But 'the continuous difficulties which school managers experienced in paying the salaries of teachers led to a considerable extension of the system of direct payment by the department' in 1932.

The Director of Education explaining the new procedure adopted reported, 'This system consists in the department paying directly the teachers their salaries in monthly instalments instead of refunding this expenditure to the manager at the end of the year in the form of grant. In the schools where this system is adopted the managers have to undertake to maintain the school in a satisfactory condition at their own expense.'

Though initiated as a temporary measure later it was decided to adopt it as a regular system in all assisted schools as 'it met with considerable success owing to the fact that the teachers appeared to work better and in a more contented atmosphere owing to the regular receipt of their salaries.'[3]

Before the system could be regularised there was one difficulty that had to be overcome. Under the prevalent system the manager had to advance the money to the teachers and collect the grant only at the end of the year. The department could not make advance payments. Thus what was paid to the teacher directly during the current year was really the previous year's grant.

Kannangara's intention was to convert the annual grant system into a monthly advance payment system, so that the intervention

1. H. 1931 p. 1059
2. H. 1931 p. 1059
3. AR. DE 1932 p. 10

of the management could be eliminated completely. He said in the Council, 'If there is any possibility of converting this system into a system of advance payment monthly, I shall be the happiest man in the island.'

To make the conversion the Council had to provide (in the first instance only) two years grant in a single Appropriation Ordinance. This would have made it possible to pay both current year's salary and the previous year's arrears, which the management had failed to pay. But under an economic depression when the budget had to be balanced with the greatest difficulty the provision of a 'double grant' in a single year was not possible. Kannangara added, 'If the Council will provide me with the money to turn over from one system to the other, I shall be the first person to advocate it.'[1]

The difficulties experienced by school managers in paying the salaries of their teachers continued and although the system of direct payment introduced to meet the schools most seriously affected did a great deal of good, there were still a large number of private managers who covered their financial inability to manage schools by withholding the due payment of salaries to teachers. The most unfortunate feature of this problem was that the teachers concerned were afraid to expose the treatment meted out to them as such a course might have led to their discontinuance. Many cases of serious hardship came to the notice of the department only when teachers reached the limit of endurance and exposed the fact that they had been requested to sign receipts for amounts which they never received. This was one of the most difficult and delicate problems that awaited solution.'[2]

In 1934 the condition of the finances of the country improved. The teachers' salary problem was reconsidered by the Executive Committee for Education and a report was made to the Council recommending 'that in the case of Assisted Vernacular and Bilingual schools the salaries of teachers should be paid directly each month by the department instead of by the old method of allowing the manager to advance the salaries and await a refund of the moneys advanced at the end of the school year.' This recommendation was accepted by the Council and an additional non-recurrent expenditure of over Rs. 2,000,000 was voted for this purpose. The system of direct payment was made compulsory in the case of private managers and optional in the case of recognised societies.[3]

Asking the Council to grant this extra sum of money to change the system of reimbursement of the manager, to advance payment

1. H. 1932 p. 2214
2. AR. DE 1933. p. 10
3. AR. DE 1934 p. 10

directly to the teacher, Kannangara said, 'I would press this as one of the most seasonable times to change over from the one system to the other. We are blessed with a surplus balance of Rs. 23,000,000. . . . I was not able to put matters in a satisfactory position earlier owing to the financial difficulties in which all of us were placed. During the past three years it was utterly impossible to bring up a proposal as the one I now suggest. But now is the right time for remedying this state of affairs, and I would ask the Board of Ministers to agree to the proposal by giving a part of the money (surplus) to convert the reimbursement system to one of direct monthly payment.'[1]

The money was provided in the 1934-35 Appropriation Ordinance and the department could extend the system of direct payment to most of the assisted Swabhasa and Bilingual schools. By the end of 1935 the direct payment system was extended to 1,115 schools and the arrears of salaries due to teachers from the managers who had defaulted were settled by the department.[2]

Several of the recognised societies led by the Roman Catholic hierarchy objected to the direct payment system. They felt that direct payment would diminish their authority over the teachers serving under them. But they were eager to enjoy the advantages of advance payment. While rejecting direct pay they demanded the grant in advance either in monthly or quarterly instalments.

The teachers on the other hand considered direct payment as one arrangement that would help them to regain their self-respect. In December, 1934 the Secretary of the North Ceylon Tamil Teachers' Association wrote to the Minister of Education: 'Many teachers who are employed under the Christian Missionary bodies and other incorporated Boards have been complaining to me of levies and charity deductions, not to speak of irregular and delayed payments. Teachers of other faiths teaching under the missionary managers are compelled much against their wishes, to contribute towards the maintenance of a church or a pastor who is invariably the local manager, through whom the salaries are paid to the village teachers. I understand it is some of these missionary managers and private managers who are opposed to the direct payment system, because under that system the levies and charity deductions may vanish as the teacher becomes the sole contributor of the purse. Moreover, under the new system even if the manager has an itching palm he has to undergo the humiliation of having to go to the teacher and plead for the contributions which, even if wrenched, cannot any more be termed a compulsory levy. In such a situation the teacher has at least the consolation that he is no

1. H. 1934 p. 1855
2. AE. DE 1935 p. 17

more a creature of circumstances to be unduly bullied or treated even as a slave by the unscrupulous managers.'[1]

In spite of the protests of the teachers Kannangara agreed to a compromise solution to make quarterly advance grants to the managers who were against the direct payment system. A majority in the Executive Committee however turned this proposal down and he had to bring it before the Council for a decision.[2]

On July 24, 1934 he moved 'that quarterly grants be paid to the managers of recognised societies', if they so request. This was agreed to by the Council.[3]

Thus by the end of 1935 direct payment was made compulsory in all schools managed by private individuals, but in the case of schools managed by recognised societies there was the second alternative of receiving quarterly grants by the managers for the payment of teachers.

The direct payment system led to unexpected repercussions. In 1936 the cost of education exceeded the amount provided in the estimates by nearly 7½ lakhs. 'In the past the manager was not inclined to engage more teachers than were necessary because he had to pay the salaries himself, before being reimbursed by the grant at the end of the year, but after the staffs of Swabhasa schools began to to receive their monthly salaries regularly from the department a marked tendency for managers to employ the maximum staff allowed by the Code was noticed. The manager can now afford to engage not only the maximum staff allowed but also a highly qualified staff as the code lays down no restrictions about the qualifications of teachers, with the exception of trained teachers whose employment is restricted by the number of pupils.'[4] Thus with the rise of the cost of education the standard of education also improved especially in the assisted Swabhasa schools.

The *second* question dealt with during this period was the gradual elimination of the District Education Committees. Under the provisions of the Education Ordinance of 1920, District Education Committees were set up in 3 Municipalities, 11 Urban Districts and 20 Rural (Revenue) Districts. These committees were in charge of erecting and maintaining school buildings, the supply of furniture and the enforcement of attendance laws. The Executive Committee for Education was not favourably disposed towards these committees. The Executive Committee appears to have considered the district

1. H. 1935 p. 1944
2. H. 1935 p. 1936
3. H. 1935 p. 1949
4. AR. DE 1936 p.9

committees as a liability rather than an asset, as their cost of administration was greater than the assistance they could render the department.

In March 1932 nine more Urban District Councils were constituted. Under the provisions of the existing law new Education Committees had to be set up in these new Urban Districts. On July 21, 1932 Kannangara moved the first reading of a Bill to amend the Education Ordinance of 1920, so that the legal compulsion to set up Education Committees in all Municipalities and Urban Districts and Revenue Districts be deleted.[1] This was accepted by the Council[2] and the number of Education Committees was restricted to the 34 that existed at the inauguration of the new constitution.

In 1933 'in order to reduce administration charges the Urban District Education Committees were suppressed and their duties were taken over by the Rural authorities.'[3] The number of District Committees was thus reduced to 23 (from the original 34), 20 Rural and 3 Municipal.

The encouragement of the teaching of the mother tongue was the *third* marked feature of this period. Kannangara himself had referred often in the Legislative Council to the existence of a community of people in Ceylon who did not know their mother tongue.[4] Invariably they spoke English in the home, were educated in the English medium from kindergarten and were holding high positions in the administration. They had no cultural link with the common man of the country. This was an undesirable feature under a democratically elected government.

In 1931 a Code of regulations was introduced making it obligatory on all English medium schools to provide a course of instruction in the mother tongue of the pupils up to standard V.[5]

Bourdillon Committee appointed by the Governor in October, 1930 'to consider and advise on certain suggestions in connection with the study of the vernaculars' recommended 'that all Civil Service Cadets should for the first six months of their service, be attached to an office in Colombo, and should during the period, attend the vernacular classes recently instituted.'[6]

This recommendation also may have encouraged the Executive Committee to insist on the study of the mother tongue.

1. H. 1932 p. 1928
2. H. 1932 p. 2142
3. AR. DE 1933 p. 13
4. H. 1926 p. 387
5. AR. DE 1931 p. 11
6. S. P. XXI — 1931 p. 4

To help the study of the Swabhasa and also to facilitate its use in education and administration 'technical terms' became a necessity. The Executive Committee for Education saw the importance of setting up a Committee of specialists to coin 'Sinhalese equivalents of new terms' that were coming into use daily and submitted the following report to the State Council: 'The inauguration of the new constitution has introduced a large number of terms to which it will be necessary to find appropriate equivalents in Sinhalese. Owing to the great danger of confusion arising as the result of indiscriminate translations it was suggested that a Committee be appointed for the purpose of finding suitable and adquate equivalents in Sinhalese for the terms that need translation'.

Kannangara moving the acceptance of this report said '. . . The Executive Committee for Education has considered that this should be the beginning of a committee to translate important terms, scientific and otherwise that are from time to time brought out in the course of educational and other activities of this island; . . . to turn out some words that will be acceptable to everybody, remove misunderstanding and add to the richness of the language . . . Perhaps every man thinks he is an authority on this and gives the equivalent that he thinks is most suitable, but I think that the usage of words like that leads to misunderstanding.'[1] The proposal was accepted by the Council.

As an example to other English schools provision was made at Royal College to teach the mother tongue in all classes up to standard V, from January, 1932. In 1933 at the Royal Preparatory school a new kindergarten class was opened with Sinhalese as the medium of instruction on the orders of the Minister.

Explaining this step to the Council, Kannangara said, 'Soon after the Executive Committees were formed the Director of Education was asked to look into this question; to see how we could carry out the recommendations of the Education Commission and bring Royal College into line with modern requirements. The recommendation was that the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue. We do not propose to create an upheaval and a revolution all at once. The suggestion is that from January, 1933 there shall be one class that will be taught in Sinhalese for the Sinhalese children only in the first year. . . . This class is reserved for the Sinhalese and for those who choose to take Sinhalese as the medium of instruction.[2]

In 1933 the Minister also decided 'not to employ in future any inspector of schools who does not know one of the vernaculars'[3] and that 'all trained teachers in future should be bilingual'.[4]

1. H. 1931 p. 111
2. H. 1932 p. 3342
3. H. 1933 p. 1176
4. H. 1933 p. 2004

Kannangara's policy of encouraging the study of the mother tongue was opposed by many including some of the principals of English schools. But reviewing the success of the scheme he said, 'It has been contented by certain critics that the teaching of the vernacular in English schools retard the knowledge of English that can be gained by the pupils. Although certain Principals objected to this, there are others who report that the work of their schools is being conducted most satisfactorily with the introduction of Sinhalese or Tamil into the curriculum. We have made an attempt to teach the children in their mother tongue. The medium of instruction in some of the classes at the Government Training College Kindergarten has been thoroughly successful. The parents themselves objected at the start. But now that the parents see how well the children are able to do their work they are full of praise for the system and there is a clamour for admission to the school once this system has been introduced.'[1] (The above statement relates to the so-called English schools. There were hundreds of swabhasa schools where the medium was the mother tongue during their entire course).

Though the mother tongue was introduced as a subject in many assisted English schools, the medium even in the Kindergarten continued to be English. 'This system is educationally harmful', reports the Director of Education in 1938, and adds, 'Unfortunately public opinion is not alive to the defects of the system, and there is financial reason which tends to maintain the system, because although the Code provides for vernacular primary classes in English schools, the quota of teachers for these classes is not so generous as for English classes. Managers are consequently slow to take the step of introducing vernaculars into primary classes from the fear that they may have to carry on with fewer teachers. The question of the medium of instruction in primary classes calls for solution'.[2]

The solution was found in 1939. Swabhasa was made compulsory at all examinations for posts under government. 'The study of Sinhalese and Tamil which occupied a very unimportant place in the curricula of many English schools in the past is bound to receive greater attention hereafter as a result of this decision. It is hoped that school authorities will even now see the desirability of doing away with the present unsound system of educating a young child through a foreign tongue and of making the mother tongue of the child the medium of instruction in the initial stages at least,' reports the Director of Education.[3]

The *fourth* and perhaps the most important reform of the period however was the Rural Scheme of Education. What made Kannan-

1. H. 1935 p. 2533
2. AR. DE. 1938 p. 15
3. AR. DE 1939 p. 13

gara and his Executive Committee to adopt this scheme is obscure. The original idea seems to have come from R. Patrick, a Divisional Inspector of Schools at the time. Lionel Heath late principal, Maya School of Arts, Lahore also seems to have made a further contribution.

Lionel Heath prepared a report for the Ceylon Government ' upon Industrial Education in Ceylon with suggestions for its Development into Training in art-crafts in order to improve Indegenous Cottage Industries on a basis of Traditional Ceylonese Art.'

Heath opened his report thus: ' I take it that the Ceylon Government desires to improve the productive power and ability of its many craft working citizens by a system of education and practical training that shall balance the cultural education which here shows signs of proving itself incomplete as a system of education adapted to the requirements of a modern country. Whether rightly or wrongly every country is paying more and more attention to the practical or modern side of education and is striving by every means to induce its people to equip themselves for the struggle in production, through an ever improving standard of technical education. It may be very true that a supply of skilled labour will not produce a demand for it, but the converse is equally true—that industrial workshops or projects cannot be established unless the country has sufficient skilled labour . . . It is a legitimate function of a Government therefore to give a form of education that shall lead its citizens towards productive work.'[1]

Heath report dealt only with industrial education, that too pertaining only to crafts like carpentry, weaving, pottery, etc. The idea expanded to a system of general education based on a practical programme perhaps in the fertile brain of Kannangara.

Kannangara speaking on November 5, 1931 (six months before the scheme was inaugurated at Handessa) in the State Council said, ' Now Sir, I come to the question of vocational training, if the members of this House know what our present code is like, they will see that we are trying our utmost to make education as much as possible in the circumstances to be based on an agricultural and an industrial basis, and we shall try our utmost to perfect it according to the means that you provide to enable us to do so. . . . '[2]

In May, 1932 what later came to be called the Rural Scheme of education was inaugurated at Handessa, near Kandy. The Minister himself went up to Handessa in the company of A. Ratnayake and W. T. B. Karalliadda to inaugurate the scheme.[3]

1. S. P VII — 1931 p. 3
2. H. 1931 p. 825
3. H. 1933 p. 1672

The objectives of the people who inaugurated the scheme are clearly expressed in their earliest speeches on the scheme. Ratnayake the chief lieutenant of Kannangara and the brain behind some of the reforms said, 'We are of opinion that thousands of children who finish schooling will be let loose and they will be knocking about looking for employment. That is a very serious state of affairs. We must take notice of that, and we must apply ourselves deliberately to the solution of this problem. How are we going to change the curriculum and remodel the curriculum to enable these pupils who get out of school to find jobs somewhere and somehow ? It is with that object in view that a new scheme is being tried at a place close to Kandy.'[1]

The Director of Education gives greater details in his Report for 1932. 'A scheme of work on rural lines was introduced into Handessa School early in the year and was later extended to thirteen other schools. The usual subject titles were omitted as far as possible as it was found exceedingly difficult to effect a change in method so long as they were retained. The aim of the scheme was to bring school work into closer relation with the lives and occupations of villages. The majority of the pupils attending rural schools become cultivators or village craftsmen, and therefore agriculture and training in crafts have been given an important place in the scheme.

The scheme was drawn up under the following headings: (i) Health work; (ii) study of the locality; (iii) occupations; and (iv) literature, art, music, etc.

Under health work, in addition to the usual lessons on personal hygiene, the following tasks were performed: erection of suitable latrines; testing the various sources of water supply in the neighbourhood; oiling of water-holes and ditches where mosquito larvae were found; and building walls around wells to prevent surface pollution. Visits were paid to the local dispensary, and statistics relating to the health of the district were studied and discussed. Health games were played, and training in first aid was given.

'A survey of the neighbourhood and the drawing of a large scale map were begun, the necessary instruments being made by the pupils. Statistics relating to the area of land under cultivation and the crops grown were kept.

'School gardening and paddy cultivation formed the chief occupations, but the maintenance and repairs of buildings and furniture were also undertaken. At some of the schools where the scheme was introduced, bricks have been made for the erection of tool sheds, and trees sawn into planks to provide timber for the necessary equip-

1. H. 1932 p. 2554

ment. Walls have been repaired and colour-washed, and the woodwork painted. Instruction has been given in the manufacture of cane furniture and various articles of coir.

'In the time table the day's work consists of two parts, the first being spent in tasks done outside the schools, and the second in lessons and written exercises carried out in school and developing from the practical work. Approximately two and half hours daily are allotted to each part. One morning is spent on health work, two on study of the locality, and two on occupations. Two afternoons are allotted to literature, art, music, etc.; one to study of the locality, one to occupations, and one to health.

'The scheme was first introduced at Handessa School under the personal supervision of the Divisional Inspector, Central Division, and at the end of the first term a conference of Inspectors was held, three Inspectors attending from each of the four divisions. Three full days were spent in observing the work being done at Handessa school, and two in discussing the scheme. Each of the inspectors present then introduced the scheme into one school in his district, and copies of the daily programmes of work carried out at Handessa during the first term were supplied to these schools. The results obtained were considered satisfactory.'[1]

There was a vast difference in the curriculum, methods and emphasis between a Rural Scheme School and a conventional school. Kannangara said, 'We have started the scheme as a trial, and gradually we shall introduce it into all schools as time goes on.'[2]

After 18 months of its introduction the Director reported '. . . the scheme has shown remarkable results. . . . The scheme may now be said to have got beyond the experimental stage and has become a definite part of the educational programme for the island. The enthusiasm with which it has been received both by the pupils and the parents augurs well for the future.'[3]

'Among the many practical tasks undertaken in these schools were the sinking of wells, the building of tool sheds, the recadjaning of roofs, the colour-washing of buildings, work in cane, leather and cement and even the manufacture of soap. Since the work at these schools developed from tasks which were closely related to the village interests and activities, it was found an easy matter to obtain the co-operation of the parents in any project which could not be accomplished by the pupils in the time available. At one school for example, a field of nearly four acres had been handed over to enable

1. AR. DE 1932 p. 17
2. H. 1933 p. 1679
3. AR. DE. 1933 p. 10

the pupils to conduct experiments in paddy cultivation. Only a few days remained before planting operations had to commence and as it was impossible for the pupils to prepare the soil in such a short time the head teacher let the villagers know that their co-operation in ploughing on a fixed date would be appreciated. Thirty ploughing teams arrived, and the whole field was ploughed in a single morning. The pupils were allowed to accompany the grown-ups at the ploughs during the first hour, and then took charge and proved that they could carry out ploughing operations successfully.

'Experiments in transplanting, weeding and manuring have been carried out and records kept. In all districts the yield obtained from the school paddy fields was higher than that obtained by villagers in the adjoining fields.

'As a result of the school experiments, transplanting was carried out during the year by many villagers for the first time, and the new light iron ploughs and Burmese harrows were borrowed and used by the villagers when they saw that their sons were able to do good work with them in school fields, although they had previously been extremely conservative in their methods of cultivation.

'Many of the villagers' homes have been greatly improved by the boys who have obtained instruction on building and the maintenance of buildings at these classes, and without cost to the owners. In one district, for instance, some of the boys, having learned coir work in school, made coir doormats at home and having sold them, purchased lime with the proceeds. During the vacation they replastered the crumbling mud walls of their houses, and then applied lime plaster and colour-wash.

'The children also did not neglect their books. The results obtained by them in language and Mathematics in the Junior School Certificate Examination compared favourably with those of candidates from the schools following the ordinary syllabus.

'The training of teachers necessary to carry out the new scheme was felt in 1933. Short courses of instruction in practical health measures and occupations were held to assist the teachers, and at these officers of the Public Works Department, the Department of Medical and Sanitary Services, and the Department of Agriculture have co-operated and rendered valuable assistance.'[1]

The scheme expanded and in two years there were 79 schools following the scheme. Newer and newer projects were added in individual schools, as much independence and initiative were allowed. For example Pasyala School set up an Orchid Palace and Danowita School constructed a water-machine for irrigation purposes.

1. AR. DE. 1933 p. 20

On reviewing the progress of the Rural Scheme, the Executive Committee of education came to the conclusion that a scheme of this kind could only succeed if teachers were especially trained for the purpose.[1]

For this purpose a Rural Training Centre was opened on September 3, 1934 at Mirigama on a 7 acre estate. Thirty two teachers were admitted and the programme of work was arranged under the four heads : (i) health ; (ii) agriculture ; (iii) occupations — excluding agriculture ; and (iv) study of the locality.

The forenoons were spent in practical work out of doors, and in the afternoons related exercises developing from the practical work were prepared. Literature, art and music were studied during the evening hours.

Considerable progress was made by the end of the year. Vegetable gardens, paddy fields and orchards were laid out and planted according to carefully prepared plans, a road and culvert were constructed, complete sanitary conveniences provided, and a start made with the erection of dormitories.[2]

The Director of Education called the Rural Training Centre, 'the most notable development during 1934. . . . It has made an excellent start . . . It is still at the experimental stage, but the results achieved so far indicate that it will become a permanency.'

Teachers who were trained at this centre returned to schools with the special purpose of introducing the Rural Scheme in such schools.[3] However no attempt was made to increase the number of such schools rapidly as it was realised that some training in the scheme was necessary before the majority of teachers would be able to carry it out successfully.

By the end of 1934 the scheme took root in all educational divisions except the Northern, where a keenness for a purely academic education asserted itself with consequent discouragement to Rural Scheme Work.

A scheme of Girls' Rural Schools based on Housecraft also was launched in 1934. 'In seven government schools, a time table was drawn up in which six hours were devoted each week to child welfare and care of sick, cookery and housewifery and needlework—the practical work being followed and not preceded by notes on the work done, on lines similar to those of the Rural Scheme in the boys' schools.[4]

1. AR. DE. 1934 p. 10
2. AR. DE. 1934 p. 21
3. AR. DE. 1934 pp. 9-10
4. AR. DE. 1934 pp. 20-3

In 1935, however the progress of many of the Rural Scheme schools was hampered by the prolonged drought and by the malaria epidemic. The conversion of some of the schools into temporary hospitals and convalescent homes gave pupils and teachers scope for social service in the villages.

In the unaffected areas barber's saloons and school laundries were established which helped in the breaking down of prejudice against such forms of work. The running of co-operative bookstalls and paultry farming were tried out in certain schools.[1]

By the end of 1936 the total number of schools in the Boys' Rural Scheme rose to 153 of which seven were assisted schools. In 1936 attention was paid to arts and crafts, budgrafting and fodder grass growing. Cattle rearing and bee-keeping were tried in some schools. Danowita school obtained a suitable building on the Colombo-Kandy road and started a shop where the produce of the school garden and of the home gardens of the pupils was displayed for sale. The shop did excellent business and the shareholders — pupils of the upper classes — started Post Office Savings Bank accounts with the profits earned.

The number of swabhasa girls' schools working under the house-craft scheme rose to 43 by the end of 1936. Owing to the difficulty of supervision this scheme was not introduced to any of the schools in the Northern Division. Week-end and holiday training courses were held in Colombo and Galle for the benefit of teachers in these schools.[2]

Further steps in the expansion and development of the Rural Scheme were taken in 1937. The school survey was one of the most important among them. 'In order that the life of the school should be more related to the life of the community in which the school is situated all inspectors made a careful survey of the possibilities of employment which different areas in their circuits offer to the pupils when they leave school. Information was required in connection with a proposal to establish Central Secondary Schools in which pupils might have a training largely based upon local conditions, especially those affecting employment. It was proposed to give pupils in these Central Schools more intensive training in (i) academic subjects, (ii) rural science work including agriculture, (iii) technical training in carpentry, iron-work &c.[3]

By the end of 1939 the Rural Scheme was adopted in a total of 253 schools. Only seven of them were assisted schools. The system was mature by this time. It was considered a better system for rural

1. AR. DE. 1935 p. 22
2. AR. DE 1936 pp. 24-8.
3. AR. DE 1937 p. 9

child in every respect. There was some doubt whether the scheme interfered with the preparation of pupils for examinations. 'But a comparison of figures at public examinations showed that pupils from Rural Scheme Schools had invariably fared better than the others at the Junior School Certificate and Senior School Certificate examinations. Under these circumstances the apathy on the part of assisted schools was unexplainable.[1] The missionary societies were still bent on providing an academic curriculum and this reduced the prestige of a scheme which had much inherent potentiality for a developing country.

Associated with the Rural Scheme, a programme of adult education also was started in 1933. In the first year 'classes for adults were opened at ten rural scheme schools and there was at once a ready response from the villagers, who were eager to supplement their meagre education. The programme of work consisted of lectures and discussions on health topics, agriculture, co-operative movement and matters of general village interest. A library was provided for each of these classes and it was found that simple literature in the form of legends and folklore held a strong appeal for those who attended.

Individual instruction was given to those who wished to be helped in letter writing or in calculations relating to their daily tasks, and music and games formed regular features of the programme.

Practical experiments in agriculture were also conducted by the adults, and at Udupila, an Agricultural Club was formed. The members of this club succeeded in obtaining a 3 acre plot of land for the purpose of starting a market garden, and the first crop of vegetables was so plentiful that a stall in the Colombo market was rented and managed by the members.[2] Thus the adult education programme was a success from the start. But next year the malaria epidemic interfered with its expansion.

In 1936 the Minister decided 'to pay the head teacher of any school that conducted an adult class, Rs. 5 for the extra work that he is called upon to do and for the expenses incurred in connection with the lights required in the school.' A sum of Rs. 2500 was passed by the Council thus making it possible to start 500 classes.

Expressing his interest in the programme Kannangara said 'The first proposal was made by me in 1924. I had to fight the Education Department before I was able to get this system tried even in a single school. I have been hammering away at it all this time. At last, two or three years ago, without any money provision being made for this work, I tried the experiment in two or three schools. Later the

1. AR. DE 1939 p. 12
2. AR. DE 1933 p. 21

scheme was worked satisfactorily in 48 schools. But owing to the malaria epidemic some of these classes had to be disbanded.'[1]

By the end of 1937 adult education classes were launched in about 150 schools.[2] Next year the head teacher allowance for the adult class was increased to Rs. 7.50, provided the average attendance was not less than 20.

During the same year a grant $ 6500 was received from the Carnegie Corporation of New York towards educational development in rural schools of Ceylon by means of the radio and the cinema. This amount was utilized for the purchase of radio receiving sets to be installed in the schools which were attended by adults in the evenings and for equipping a travelling cinema. The cinema equipment was received and the travelling cinema was ready to go round the adult classes in rural areas — from the beginning of 1939.[3]

By the end of 1939 there were as many as 271 adult classes in various parts of the country. The installing of radio receiving sets improved the attendance. The travelling cinema went round these classes and screened pictures of an educational value. English was introduced as a subject in most of these classes.[4]

The reform of the examination set up was the *fifth* feature of the period. In 1933 the School Leaving and Teachers Preliminary Examinations were renamed the Junior School Certificate and Senior School Certificate Examinations and the Corresponding Swabhasa and English Examinations were brought together more closely.[5]

The Cambridge Junior Examination was discontinued in Ceylon after December, 1936.

In June 1936 G. R. de Zoysa (Balapitiya) moved in the Council 'that arrangements should be made at the University College, Colombo for giving post-graduate training courses to teachers instead of sending them to England for training.'[6] This motion was negatived by the Council, but a few months later a scheme was approved by the Executive Committee for Education whereby graduates might be ranked as Trained Graduates provided they (i) have passed in 5 of 6 specific subjects in the intermediate or Final Examination ; (ii) pass in two papers in the principles of education and one in the History of Education ; (iii) have had two years satisfactory teaching service.[7]

1. H. 1936 p. 2475
2. AR. DE. 1937 p. 28
3. AR. DE. 1938 p. 16
4. AR. DE. 1935 p. 22
5. AR. DE. 1933 p. 21
6. H. 1935 p. 1622
7. AR. DE. 1935 p. 12

This examination was held in 1936 for the first time. Four candidates entered for the examination and one qualified for the award of the Diploma in Education.[1] In 1937 a practical test in teaching and a thesis on one of the more important features of the present educational system in Ceylon was added as parts of this examination.[2]

The setting up of a Board of Examinations in 1935 was another step taken to make examinations more in keeping with the country's needs. The Board consisted of Principals and teachers, representing the schools, and members of the department.[3] Boards of Moderators were also set up the same year to moderate the question papers. These Boards did much to co-ordinate the standard of departmental examinations.[4]

In 1939 a common Standard V Test for all schools — Swabhasa, Bilingual and English — was also introduced to fill the need for a standardized test before the pupils entered the post-primary course.[5]

The *sixth* reform of the period was the provision of a midday meal to the needy children. Like in the case of the direct payment system this was not meant to be a regular service at the start. It was initiated as a temporary measure in areas affected by the epidemic of malaria towards the end of 1934.

The Report of the Director of Education, 1935 says, 'The year opened under the shadow of one of the most severe malarial epidemics within living memory. This outbreak was different from the endemic malaria which occurs at this season of the year in well defined areas. Districts which had been regarded as healthy were the worst affected. Schools suffered in their attendance and in many parts of Central and Western Division Schools were closed and converted into temporary hospitals.

'The feeding of school children was started and for 4 or 5 cents a day the children had a meal of rice and curry. The good results of the regular feeding of the children were seen discernible and it was interesting to compare the healthy appearance of children, who though living in districts where malaria had been prevalent, had the benefit of regular meals, with the appearance of children in areas where there had been no distress and consequently no free meals. If it were only possible to provide a meal for all children in our schools a marked improvement in their physical condition would be seen.

1. AR. DE. 1936 p. 27
2. AR. DE. 1938 p. 5.
3. AR. DE. 1935 p. 11
4. AR. DE. 1936 p. 26
5. AR. DE. 1939 p. 11

Many children leave home early in the morning without an adequate meal, and they do not take any substantial meal until late in the afternoon. It has come as a surprise to realize the enormous change for the better which the provision of a meal has produced and the very short time it has taken for the change to become apparent.'[1]

Kannangara supporting a more permanent midday meal service said, 'The work was carried out under the aegis of the Education Department as a kind of social work. It was done only in certain malaria affected parts of the Island.' The finances were provided through the Relief Commissioner. 'There should be a more systematic feeding programme as in all parts of the civilized world.'[2]

In 1936—37 Budget a sum of Rs. 1,000,000 was included for the special purpose of feeding shool children. The feeding programme was to be a regular feature and the money was to be spent directly by the Education Department. The Director of Education commenting on this, reports 'This amount would have provided meals at the rate of 5 cents a head for 180 days during which schools are normally in session during the year, for 20% of the pupils. But after considering the views of the Medical Department the Executive Committee decided that the feeding of school children should be confined to certain areas where the mortality and morbidity rates were very high and that schools in such areas should receive sufficient grant to enable all children to be fed.

'This scheme was put into operation wherever possible, as a trial during the month of December, 1936. The Executive Committee considered that milk would be an admirable and easily prepared diet, but unfortunately the supply was inadequate to meet the needs.[3]

In the majority of the schools the diet given was rice and curry. . . . In May 1937 instructions were issued to arrange for a milk diet wherever an adequate supply could be obtained. By the end of 1937 only 37 schools had adopted a milk diet.

The produce of school gardens has been a factor that has greatly contributed to the successful working of the scheme. Food production in schools receiving midday meals has been stimulated.

Out of a total of over 6000 schools only 15% could supply the midday meal with the money available. Kannangara said, 'the ideal is to feed children in all schools. But in the circumstances,

1. AR. DE. 1935 p. 8
2. H. 1935 p. 2530,
3. AR. DE. 1936 p. 10

according to the amount that has been in my hands I am trying to do my best to supply this need. We have selected the needy areas and also needy schools in other areas.[1]

'On the other hand there were 37 schools which were approved for feeding, but did not provide the meal. The reason given was that the parents objected to their children having a midday meal in the schools.

'The managers of assisted schools were also up in arms. Some of them at least were against feeding. They did not like to take the trouble to do it. But giving a free midday meal has done a great deal for the children, and the average attendance rose in all schools where the meal was provided.[2]

By the end of 1939, the number of schools providing the free midday meal had risen to 2104 — nearly 35% of the total. Of these 2104, no less than 523 (mainly Rural Scheme Schools) contributed garden produce towards the food supply.[3]

Parent Teacher Associations which spread to the villages with the inauguration of the Rural Scheme received further encouragement with the introduction of the feeding programme. By the end of 1936 there were as many as 2014 P. T. Associations functioning mainly in the rural areas. 'Many and varied have been the activities of these associations, and among them the following are most worthy of note : provision of books, magazines and newspapers for school libraries and reading rooms ; donations of prizes at school prize givings and other school functions; encouraging pupils ' home gardens ; helping rural scheme work ; organizing Sunday schools for religious education ; erecting temporary extensions to school buildings ; assisting in the midday meal programme ; providing fences for school gardens and constructing an approach road to the school'.[4]

Thirty three associations in the Central Division have undertaken to start a scheme of rural reconstruction and are carrying out village surveys with the co-operation of the Circuit Inspector of Schools.[5]

By the end of 1939 the number of P. T. Associations had risen to 2390, accounting for nearly 40% of the schools existing at the time.[6]

The *seventh* innovation of the period was the inauguration of a scheme of scholarships for Burgher children. The issue was raised

1. H. 1937 p. 3022
2. H. 1938 p. 2400
3. AR. DE. 1939 p.6
4. AR. DE. 1936 p. 25
5. AR. DE. 1937 p. 29
6. AR. DE. 1939 p. 14

by a deputation of Burgher parents who met the Minister in August 1933. As the Minister himself put it, 'They claim that you give free education to 87% of the children of this Island — because in the Vernacular schools no charge is made so far as education is concerned. Now Sir, the Burghers claim that their children should also be given free education.

"If the principle upon which we give free education is that a child should be taught his mother tongue free up to a certain standard, then the Burgher child has a good claim as the Tamil child or the Sinhalese child for free education up to a certain standard. One cannot get over that, and I am sure the question will receive very sympathetic consideration at the hands of the committee."[1]

The question did receive the sympathetic consideration of the committee and it was decided to institute a system of scholarships in the primary classes of English schools for the children whose home language was English. In 1934—35 Appropriation Ordinance a sum of Rs. 40,000 was included for this purpose.[2]

By the end of 1939 the provision had risen to Rs. 85,000 and 2389 Burgher children were receiving scholarships.[3]

School Dental Clinics was the *eighth* service that received attention during this period. The School Medical Inspection scheme started in 1919 was functioning satisfactorily. But no provision was made for Dental Clinics till 1935. In 1935 in the code for assisted schools a clause was inserted providing for a grant to schools which had established Dental Clinics.[4]

Teaching English as a second language — the *ninth* innovation — in the swabhasa schools also started in the thirties. By 1936 the number of swabhasa schools that taught English as an optional subject increased rapidly especially in the grant-in-aid section.[5] With the introduction of this course in the swabhasa schools all the training schools were made bilingual training schools in that English was taught as a subject. Thus any teacher who passes out of a training school was able to conduct some classes in English.[6]

In 1937 the Executive Committee decided to provide facilities for teaching elementary English in all swabhasa schools. 'In the past, English has been taught when there were sufficient pupils who

1. H. 1933 p. 1675
2. AR. DE. 1934 p. 10
3. H. 1939 p. 4059
4. AR. DE. 1935 p. 13
5. AR. DE. 1936 p. 9
6. H. 1935 p. 2532

could afford to pay fifty cents a month for such instruction. In future English will be taught in any school when a member of the staff is capable of giving instruction, and free of charge.'[1]

When the teaching of English was optional and a fee of fifty cents was charged it was the aided schools that made provision for its teaching. But once it was made free, 'managers were slow to avail themselves of the new facilities for the free teaching of English',[2] and by the end of 1939 only very few swabhasa schools in fact were teaching English.[3]

Expansion of facilities for elementary education was the *tenth* feature. Though Universal franchise was granted in 1931 less than 20% of the electorate was literate. Without a proper system of adult education, adult illiteracy could not have been eliminated. The worse feature however was that out of every seven children of school going age in the island only four were being educated — in 1931. 'In these conditions' Kannangara said, 'if we decide to deny to the people even an elementary knowledge, I think it will be a most fatal step indeed.'[4] But under an economic depression the expansion of educational facilities was almost impossible. The Executive Committee found two solutions to this problem : (i) the establishment of government managed or maintained schools ; (ii) revival of the pansala schools.

The maintained schools were usually erected either by private individuals, villagers or Education District Committees. When a school was completed the department appointed a local manager, on the advice of the Education District Committee. The staff was appointed by the local manager, but was paid directly by the department. These teachers however were not considered as government teachers. Their position was equivalent to the teachers employed in the assisted schools. They came under the contributory pension scheme which applied to teachers in assisted schools. The school buildings and grounds were the property of the government and were maintained by the Education District Committees.[5]

Explaining this system to the Council Kannangara said, 'The policy of the Committee of Education is not to put up those costly schools that government used to put up at a cost of some twelve to fifteen thousand rupees each. Our present policy, owing to the dwindling revenue, is to try and bring in everybody and extend our

1. AR. DE. 1937 p.9
2. AR. DE. 1938 p. 14
3. AR. DE. 1939
4. H. 1932 p. 2633
5. AR. DE. 1932 p. 10

school system to those parts where children have never had the opportunity of attending schools. That we want to do with the co-operation of the people, with the result that prime consideration is given to those schools that the people put up. The schools may be of a temporary or semi-permanent nature that will cost about seven or eight hundred rupees each. . . .

'The villagers put it up and give it to us. Immediately they do that we take the school over and start paying the salaries of the teachers, if we are convinced that the school is necessary in that locality'.[1]

'In this way' the director reports 'a large number of schools which were necessary were built during the course of the year. . . . There is no doubt that the policy adopted in this respect was a popular one, and secured an unprecedented extension of education during a time of financial depression.'[2]

In 1934 the number of children in school increased by 21,050. This number was above the average increase for a year and was accounted for by the great enthusiasm on the part of remote villages to eatablish schools by their own labour. . . . The system of maintained schools did more than anything else to spread education in the remote and poorer areas.

The system was such a success that in the same year the Executive Committee decided not to register any swabhasa school under private management unless land and school buildings were handed over to the crown. Once this was done it became a maintained school instead of an assisted school.[3]

By August 1935 the number of maintained schools had risen to about 85.[4] By September 1937 there were over 400 maintained schools all established within a space of ony five years.[5]

This system encouraged local people to come forward — with offers of money, land, building materials, or their own practical skill in building — to erect schools.[6]

At the end of 1937 the Executive Committee decided to end the system of maintained schools, and convert them either to government schools or assisted schools. (i) All maintained schools the title to whose lands and buildings was in the crown by acquisition or donation

1. H. 1933 p. 1673
2. AR. DE. 1933 p. 10
3. AR. DE. 1934 p. 9
4. H. 1935 p. 2532
5. H. 1937 p. 2981
6. AR. DE. 1937 p. 17

should be converted into government schools and (ii) all maintained schools whose lands and buildings were leased by the crown should have the option of becoming assisted schools, on the owners of the property terminating the lease before its date of expiry, if they so desire.[1] This was agreed to by the Council on March 11, 1938 [2], thus ending a system that had helped to bring a large number of additional children to schools during a period of economic difficulties.

Kannangara summarising this achievement said, 'In 1931 there were in the schools of this country 560,638 pupils. There were about 300,000 children of school-going age not receiving any education at all. The present position (1938) is that there are 833,905 children in the schools of the island. So that we have brought into the schools 250,000 children leaving perhaps at the present time only about 100,000 children of school going age who are not receiving any education '.[3]

The second system of schools that contributed to this expansion of education between 1931 and 1938 was the 'pansala school'. The idea came perhaps accidently in October, 1932. The European representatives in the Council were not happy at the extension of educational facilities in the villages especially at a time when the government faced financial difficulties. G. K. Stewart (nominated) gave vent to this feeling when he said, 'It seems to be a commonly accepted principle not only in this House but elsewhere and among all communities that the extension of primary educational facilities is in itself a good thing. . . . In other words they have accepted a doctrine which certainly originated in the West, namely that the first duty of the State is to extend education, and we have come to accept it as an axiomatic principle.

'At this time intelligent opinion in the West is beginning to reject many ideas and ideals which were hitherto considered immensely important a few years ago, and to inquire whether the spread of a superficial primary education has in fact proved an unmixed blessing to the recipients themselves. I ask whether at a time like this we are wise in following a policy of which the originators themselves have for some time been at any rate extremely sceptical. '[4]

Kannangara answering this view point said, 'I might inform the honourable the nominated member that he gave utterance to an awful heresy when he said that the idea that the first social duty is to impart education was a Western idea. It is a heresy and it was

1. H. 1938 p. 353
2. H. 1938 p. 950
3. H. 1938 p. 2397
4. H. 1932 p. 2611

stated in ignorance. Perhaps he does not know that right through so many ages, every child in the island was educated. It was given an elementary education. . . . In practically every pansala there was a school and it was the (British) government that put an end to this pansala school. '[1]

In 1934 the Executive Committee considered with great care the problem that arises owing to the lack of educational facilities that exist in some of the remoter parts of Ceylon. In some of these parts the number of school-going children was very small and the only facilities which existed at the time were the pansala schools. It was decided that a sum of Rs. 25,000 should be provided for the salaries of qualified teachers who could be attached to pansalas in areas where there are no other schools. These teachers were to supplement the education already given by the Bhikkhus.[2]

Explaining the proposal to the Council Kannangara said, 'The idea is to send down teachers to those parts of the Island where there are no other schools except pansala schools. It may be that there are some Koran schools in certain parts of the country, or there may be some schools attached to Hindu temples or kovils. If there are such schools in parts of the Island where there are no other schools, they will also come under that category '.[3]

In 1935 arrangements were made to open about 70 new schools attached to pansalas.[4] By 1939 the number of such schools rose to 158. All these were one teacher schools housed in halls attached to Buddhist temples and mosques. They were replaced by fully equipped government schools as funds became available.[5] Thus the revival of pansala schools was a temporary measure adopted to provide elementary education in areas where no such facilities were yet available.

The *last* of the reforms of this period worth recording is the introduction of a uniform academic year. Till 1939 various types of schools started their academic year in various months of the year. This was changed in 1939 and January — December was made the academic year for all schools.[6]

In addition to the above reforms many temporary steps also had to be taken especially during the early years of the period to reduce expenditure on education. They were : (i) a system of dual sessions

1. H. 1932 p. 2633
2. AR. DE. 1934 p. 10
3. H. 1934 p. 1851
4. AR. DE. 1935 p. 10
5. AR. DE. 1939 p. 12
6. AR. DE. 1939 p. 11

(two schools in the same building) especially in the urban areas ; (ii) suppression of certain posts and retrenchment especially in the administrative branch ; (iii) reduction of the maximum age of a pupil to qualify for a grant by one year ; (iv) increasing the quota of pupils per teacher ; (v) raising the school fees especially at the Royal College ; (vi) reduction of salaries of new recruits to the teaching profession ; (vii) prohibition of constant changing of textbooks, and the curtailment of the use of exercise books by encouraging the use of slates — (relief to parents) ; (viii) prohibition of private tuition by the teachers to one's own pupils etc.

The cumulative effect of all these reforms was the slow building up of a centralised national system of education in keeping with the cultural, political and economic life of the country.

CHAPTER 14

EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1939

On assuming duties in July, 1931 the most important matter dealt with by the Minister and Executive Committee for Education 'was a comprehensive review of the existing legislation relating to education. Many important proposals affecting the future educational policy were made and it was decided that the Ordinance of 1920 required revision at an early date.'[1] 'The new bill was under preparation,' reported the Director of Education at the end of 1931.[2] But the draft was not ready even at the end of 1932. It was still in the hands of the draftsman and consequently many important changes of policy had to be shelved till the completion of the New Ordinance.[3] After a wait of over three years the Director again reported that 'the new ordinance has not yet left the draftsman's hands.'[4]

Referring to the same delay in the Council Kannangara said in 1932, 'We were not able to get the honourable the Attorney-General's Department — when I say the Hon. the Attorney-General's Department, I mean the Legal Draftsman's Department — to do anything. I am afraid Sir, our Education Ordinance has been held up there'.[5]

In September, 1934 G.C.S.Corea (Chilaw) raising the issue during the debate on the Appropriation Ordinance prophetically remarked, 'I am not quite sure whether the ordinance will come up . . . .' To this Kannangara replied, 'The ordinance is ready and will be able to bring it up in a couple of months.'[6]

Apparently Corea knew more of the Legal Draftsman's Department than the Minister, for even in a couple of years it was still 'sojourning in the Chambers of the Legal Draftsman. It has not yet returned' said Kannangara in September, 1936.[7] In fact it never returned. After a long wait of six years the Minister handed over the drafting to a private lawyer who completed it in a matter of 18 days.

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1. AR. DE. 1931 p.10
2. AR. DE. 1931 p. 9
3. AR. DE. 1932 p. 10
4. AR. DE. 1934 p. 10
5. H. 1932 p. 2636
6. H. 1934 p. 2318
7. H. 1936 p. 1455

The Bill was presented in the State Council on August 9, 1938. Tracing the history of its drafting Kannangara said, 'Early in the first State Council somewhere in 1931, I entrusted the then Director of Education to draw up the draft of a Bill that will really bring the Education Ordinance into line with other Ordinances and under which the State Council could function. When the draft was prepared it was sent to the Legal Draftsman on July 7, 1932.

'Then, Sir, on March 6, 1933 the Acting Legal Draftsman (C.C.A. Brito-Mutunayagam) commenced to work on the Bill. He took 8 months to start work on the Bill. On May 31, 1933 the Legal Draftsman completed the Bill and sent it to the Director of Education for revision. On July 4, 1933, the Director of Education returned the Bill, and nothing was heard about this Bill for several months. I protested in this Council and in the Board of Ministers several times, where-upon on May 11, 1934, the Legal Draftsman (J. M. Fonseka) wrote to me that he was busy with other important and urgent legislation and would take the final drafting after May 18, 1934.

'Then, Sir, on July 18, 1935, I again invited the attention of the Attorney-General to the matter. In August, 1935 the Legal draftsman proceeded on leave and promised to work on the Bill and complete it while on leave. On June 30, 1936 I protested again to the Board. On August 18, 1936, the Attorney-General undertook to expedite the preparation of the Bill. On November 4, 1936 the Legal Draftsman asked for further instructions. On February 1, 1937 the Legal Draftsman addressed the Director of Education for elucidation of a few minor points. On June 10, 1937 I again complained to the Board, and the Legal Draftsman wanted further memoranda. On September 6, 1937 the Legal Secretary inquired whether the Bill could be laid by in view of the proposal to appoint an Education Commission.

I have to thank the Honourable the Legal Secretary for granting me an interview on November 24, 1937, and discussing with me this Bill. He agreed that his department was unable to go on with this Bill.

When called upon for an explanation, (from the Legal Draftsman) I think the explanation went into a hundred sheets of foolscap. He might have devoted that time to completing the Bill (The Bill went to 28 pages in print and was already in draft form). Whatever it may be I am thankful to the Legal Secretary for agreeing with me that this Bill might be handed over to someone else. It was therefore handed over to Mr. M. T. Akbar on November 24, 1937, and in less than a month — on December 13, 1937 — the Draft Bill was completed by Mr. Akbar.[1]

1. H. 1938 p. 1971

(A mystery hangs around the cause of the delay except for the fact that the Christians opposed this Bill most vehemently and the Legal draftsmen at the time happened to be Ceylonese Christians.)

The Bill presented to the Council in 1938 consisted of seven parts :

Part I deals with the Central Authority, that is the Executive Committee for Education, the Department, the Director and Officers. The Department was for the first time brought under the general direction and control of the Executive Committee for Education. The Executive Committee could rescind, alter or raise any order or determination which is made by the Director in the exercise of his discretion under any of the provisions of this ordinance or any regulation made there under. The decision of the Executive Committee in every such case is final and is binding on the Director and all other persons affected thereby.

Part II reduced the existing Board of Education and the Education District Councils to the status of Advisory Committees, Central and Local. Under the Ordinance of 1920 it was the Board that made regulations which were called ' the Code '.[1] The function of the new Board is only to give advice to the Director on any matter relating to education in the island, and hence it was not vested with any administrative or executive power or functions. The Board is appointed by the Governor for a term of three years.

' For the purpose of advising the Director upon matters connected with education in the different parts of the Island and the educational needs thereof local committees are constituted —

(*a*) for the area within the administrative limits of each of the Municipal Councils ;

(*b*) for each area within the administrative limits of an Urban Council which is specified by the Governor by Order published in the Gazette as an area for which a Local Advisory Committee may be constituted.

(*c*) for each of such other areas, not including the areas referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b), as may be specified by the Governor by Proclamation as areas for which Local Advisory Committees may be constituted. '

These Local Advisory Committees were meant to replace the Education District Committees set up under the Ordinance of 1920. The Education District Committees that were constituted under the law of 1920 were empowered to make by-laws pertaining to compulsory

1. See Chapter 3.

education and were allocated money to erect and maintain school buildings etc. These powers were removed by the new law and the new local committees became mere advisory bodies.

Part III provided for Decentralization of Education by creating local Education Authorities. Any Municipal Council, Urban Council or Village Committee that could bear the cost of supplying the educational needs or any specified part of the educational needs of that area may by proclamation become a Local Education Authority. These Local Education Authorities could levy an additional rate on property for the purpose of meeting the cost of supplying the educational needs of the area. The Local Education Scheme however had to be approved by the Executive Committee.

Under the law of 1920 educational administration was partly decentralised, in that the Education District Committees had certain responsibilities and the finances they needed to keep these responsibilities were supplied by the department. The new law however, was based on the principle of ' who pays the piper can call the tune, ' and any Local Body which aspired to control education in its area had to collect the money by levying an additional rate.

Part IV dealt with Religion in Schools and Managers of Schools. The provisions of the law of 1920 remained more or less unchanged except for the fact that the conscience clause was made positive for the first time in the educational history of the country. The law of 1920 provided that ' any scholar may be withdrawn by his parents or guardian from religious observance or instruction without forfeiting any of the other benefits of the school, ' whereas the new law laid down that, ' no child belonging to a religious denomination other than that to which the proprietor or manager of an Assisted School belongs shall be permitted to attend any Sunday School or any place of religious worship or to attend any religious observance or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere unless the parent of the child has expressly stated in writing his consent that his child shall attend such place of religious worship or receive instruction in religious subjects in the school.'

The new Ordinance also provided for the release of government school buildings for the purpose of holding religious classes ' at any time either before or after the hours appointed for the ordinary meeting or session of the school, or on any day on which such meeting or session is not held. '

A new provision (non-existent in the law of 1920) was added providing for the Director of Education to appoint the manager upon the recommendation of the proprietor of an assisted school. Director also was empowered to suspend or remove from office any manager so appointed.

Part V conferred the power of making regulations which are called ' the Code ' on the Executive Committee for Education. Prior to 1939 the power of making regulations was in the hands of the Board of Education.

Part VI provided for the education of the children of the labourers in the estates. This was more or less the same as Part V of the Ordinance of 1920.

Part VII deals with general topics such as the duty of persons opening new schools to report to the Director of Education, penalties for various offences under the law, and acquisition of land for the erection or extension of school buildings. This is equivalent to part VI of the previous ordinance.[1]

Kannangara introducing the Bill in the House said, ' This Bill is a consolidating measure which contains most of the provisions of the present Ordinance (No. 1 of 1920), but gives effect to certain important changes in policy in regard to education. . . . The subject of education is entrusted to the State Council and the State Council at its very inception entrusted this subject to the Executive Committee of Education.

' Now Sir, some people seem to think that the subject of education should not be entrusted to the Executive Committee of Education and that anybody may be asked to deal with that subject except the Executive Committee of Education. That is a negation of this Constitution. The main objection comes from those who want to see the Board of Education super-imposed upon the State Council and the Executive Committee of Education.

' So far as this Board of Education is concerned. . . it has been functioning for many years. It consisted mostly of managers of schools who did what they liked so far as the framing of regulations were concerned, enabling them to establish schools where they liked under different denominations and so on, till as a result of agitation by certain members of the Legislative Council the personnel of the Board of Education was changed somewhat and teachers and other officers were taken on to the Board.

' Under this (1920) Ordinance the Director of Education is not responsible to the Executive Committee or the State Council. He has to discharge his duties as the Board of Education wants.

' The Board of Education cannot function as an administrative body side by side with the Executive Committee of Education and the State Council.

1. See the Education Ordinance No. 1 of 1920 and the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939.

'The present Ordinance is completely out of date. It is not in keeping with the spirit of the constitution and I expect the honourable members of this House to hold the Executive Committee of Education responsible for anything done as regards education. We cannot hold somebody else responsible. That is not proper. The State Council must be able to take the Executive Committee of Education to task, but the Executive Committee of Education cannot discharge those functions properly if the administration is left in the hands of someone else and the Director is made responsible to that party. . . .

'The very first thing we propose to do in this Bill is to do away with the Board of Education as an administrative body. The Board will be retained, but retained as a purely advisory body. . . .

'We want to control education by placing it entirely in the hands of the Executive Committee of Education and of the State Council ; and if you want experts to be consulted, then the Board of Education can be consulted for their views. That is the principle on which the new Bill has been drafted.

'Now Sir, I come to the Education District Committees. . . . They are the people in charge of education in their own localities. You can understand some other people being entrusted with the educational policy, with the administration of education so far as those localities are concerned, if they pay for it. In all justice to this country and to 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.

'But that is not so. What now happens is this. We sometimes issue orders to the Chairmen of Education District Committees and they refuse to carry them out. We might say that a school is not necessary at a certain place, but they will say that that school is necessary and we have to pay.

'There are 23 Education District Committees. They have to engage an office. They want all kinds of equipment. They have to make payment for maintenance and for various things like that. These Education District Committees cost the country a great deal of money.

'It is impossible for me to be answerable for the work of others. They control the policy, and not the State Council or the Executive Committee of Education. . . . I have found that certain Education District Committees are so very stubborn and so independent that they do not want to recognize the fact that they obtain authority from this House.

'So far as Education District Committees are concerned, I said that they are going to be scrapped ; but we do not want to centralize the whole thing. If these various local governing bodies are prepared

to subscribe a certain part of the expenditure on education, there is provision made in this Bill for the progressive devolution of responsibility upon them so far as the educational policy is concerned. They must pay for it.

'The rule making power will be vested in the Executive Committee of Education under the new Ordinance. At present the rule making powers are vested in the Board of Education.

'Another matter I would like to bring to the notice of honourable members is this. . . It was found that in spite of the conscience clause the requirements of the rule were not strictly enforced. The conditions were really not kept. Therefore, instead of making it negative we have made provision in this Bill that is positive — that before you can teach religion to children you must obtain the consent of the parents to teach them religion.

'There is no planned system of education, and it is utterly impossible to do anything without any proper control.

'We have tried hard to obtain this control by bringing up this Bill. It has taken seven years in the making. . . . Some of the people who were entrusted with it fell ill, some left service, and it was reported that some would die if they went on with this Bill any longer, but I must thank an ex-judge of the Supreme Court, Mr. M. T. Akbar, for attending to this Bill in the short space of one month. I have pleasure in moving its first reading.'[1]

Though the Bill was tabled on August 9, 1938 it did not come on the Order Paper till September 20, 1938. When at last it came up for the consideration of the House, A. P. De Zoysa wanted it deferred and E. A. Nugawela called it 'an attempt to rush this very important Bill through the House.' Kannangara objected, 'This has been going on for the last 4 or 5 months. I have been trying my utmost to get it on the Order Paper and when it is here members ask that it be deferred.' But the question that the consideration of the Education Ordinance be deferred put and agreed to by 14 voting for and 13 against.[2]

Two days later it came up for discussion again. I. X. Pereira (nominated) and G. C. S. Corea (Chilaw) wanted it deferred for the second time. Kannangara once again protested, 'I do not know whether it is the intention of honourable members not to take up this Bill at all. It looks very much like that, the way it is being put off.'

This time however the question that consideration of the Education Ordinance be deferred, put and negatived by 14 voting for and 15 against.

1. H. 1938 pp. 1970—7
2. H. 1938 p. 3310

Then Kannangara moved that the Bill intituled 'An Ordinance to make better provision for Education and to revise and consolidate the law relating thereto be now read a second time.'

Corea pressing for a deferment even after the House had voted on it said, 'It is hardly fair that members who are keenly interested in this Education Bill have not had the opportunity nor the time to study this Bill, it should be taken up now.' But the real reason why he pressed for a deferment was revealed when he later added, 'I am entirely opposed to this Bill.'

The debate could not proceed any further when Corea rising again moved, 'that the debate be adjourned'. R. P. Gaddum (nominated) seconded. The question put and agreed to this time by 13 voting for and 12 against.[1]

The Bill came up again before the House only on October 26, 1938. But in the meantime the Christian opposition to the Bill had mounted to such an extent that Kannangara had to make a statement that 'this Ordinance is not designed to give effect to any policy aimed against denominational schools', before the Bill could be debated.[2]

Corea who had already spoken on the second reading of the Ordinance now wanted the speaker's permission to speak again. But the speaker said that according to the rules of the House of Commons a member cannot speak a second time in the same debate.

One final attempt to differ the Bill was made on October 27, 1938 when F. H. Griffith (nominated) moved an amendment to the motion to delete the words, 'now read a second time' and substitute the words 'postponed pending the consideration of the question of education policy by a commission.'

The Deputy Speaker who presided, however, pointed out that it was not quite in order to move an amendment in this form. The normal procedure he thought was to move that the Bill be read six months hence or three months hence.

Griffith agreed to the suggestion of the Deputy Speaker and changed the amendment accordingly.

C. E. P. De Silva (Negombo) seconded.[3]

Corea who was debarred from speaking a second time in the same debate made an attempt to speak at length on the amendment. But the Deputy Speaker (Susanta de Fonseka) promptly called him to order, and Corea was forced to cut short his speech.[4]

1. H. 1938 p. 3389
2. H. 1938 p. 3590
3. H. 1938 pp. 3608-10
4. H. 1938 p. 3615

N. M. Perera (Ruwanwella) speaking on the amendment said, " I am prepared to admire a member who honestly gets up and says : ' I am opposed to this Bill ; I do not want to have anything to do with it. ' That is courageous. But, Sir, in an indirect way to try to undermine the main principle of this Bill — I would like to use strong words. . . . I appreciate a straight talk. " Turning to Griffiith he added, " I am inclined to believe that this is an unwilling babe of the hon. nominated member. I think it has come out much against his will. "

' This postponement is really intended to defeat the Bill ' remarked E. R. Tambimuttu.[1]

Kannangara was really grieved over the attitude of some of his colleagues (in the Board of Ministers). " I am not surprised at the action of the hon. nominated member (Griffith) in becoming the unwilling instrument of people who are opposing the Education Bill. But, Sir, I am surprised that the Hon. Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce should have spoken for the postponement of this Bill. He knows the travails that I have gone through, he knows the reasons why this Bill got postponed ; and I am therefore surprised at his action in having supported the postponement of this Bill. '[2]

This time the amendment was lost — 13 voting for and 33 against. The 13 who voted against were : Hon. G. C. S. Corea, C. E. P. de Silva, D. P. Jayasuriya, Naysum Saravanamuttu, R. Sri Pathmanathan, R. P. Gaddum, F. H. Griffith, J. W. Oldfield, H. F. Parfitt, I. X. Pereira, A. P. de Zoysa, E. W. Abeygunasekera and H. A. Gunasekera.

It may be surmised that of these the first five members represented predominantly Roman Catholic electorates and the church may have brought all the pressure at their command to get them to toe the Roman Catholic line. The next five were nominated members who were either Catholic or Christian themselves. A. P. de Zoysa voted against the Bill because it did not go far enough. In fact he was totally against the system of denominational schools. This leaves us with Abeygunasekera and Gunasekera who voted for the amendment but expressed no opinion in the Council. Why they voted against remains a mystery.

Among the 33 who voted against postponement were 23 Buddhists, 6 Hindus, 2 Muslims and two Christians. The two Christians were H. R. Freeman (Anuradhapura) and G. A. H. Wille, who was a member of the Executive Committee of Education.[3]

1. H. 1938 pp. 3612-3
2. H. 1938 p. 3617
3. H. 1938 p. 3619

The opponents of the Bill did not expect such massive support for the Bill in the House. In fact the history of the Bill in the House from the day it was introduced — August 9 — up to October 27 was one of disinterestedness. How did this Bill become such a controversial and prestige Bill ?

It was the opponents of the Bill who whipped up interest and enthusiasm to an otherwise non-controversial Bill. When the Bill was introduced in August, ' the Christians (led by the Roman Catholic Church) organised meetings all over the country and said that this Bill was an attack on the Christian religion — they did not read a word of this Bill although they thought that this was an organised attack on Christianity — that a situation like the one which existed before the 1915 riots was going to be created.'[1]

' This Bill ' they added ' is going to divide this country into two camps. The two camps would consist of (i) the denominational schools who have been carrying on the education of the country for a large number of years, the denominational schools whose rights would be endangered by this Bill and (ii) the party whose point of view is represented by a majority in the State Council, the party belonging to the Buddhist religion who say that this Bill would give the state the right to direct the educational policy of the country in the manner in which they desire to direct it. . . . If this Bill becomes law, there will be religious persecution and a clash of interests which may bring about civil commotion and unrest in the country.[2]

When such public meetings were held, resolutions proposed and seconded, and even threats were held out of carrying the campaign to the Secretary of State, Buddhists who were quiet till that moment, who thought that there was nothing in this Bill to be over-enthusiastic about, and who themselves had not read the Bill, started an agitation. . . . Started to organize meetings (in support of the Bill) all over the country and to threaten reprisals.[3]

' The controversy resolved itself into a controversy between the Christian community on the one hand and the Buddhist and Hindu communities on the other. '[4]

The members of the State Council were flooded with a large amount of literature on the subject of education, resolutions passed at meetings and memoranda in the form of booklets by various educationists and others.[5]

1. H. 1938 p. 3742
2. H. 1938 pp. 3615-6
3. H. 1938 p. 3742
4. H. 1938 p. 3597
5. H. 1938 p. 3661

Roman Catholic delegations met some of the members of the State Council to lodge their protests. R. S. S. Gunawardhane (Gampola) said, 'I was amazed when a leading member of the Kegalle Bar, a very distinguished gentleman, a Roman Catholic, told me that he was going to say at a public meeting which he was going to address that there would be religious persecution in this country, that this Education Bill hastened the dawn of religious persecution in this country.' [1]

N. M. Perera added, "I have a large number of Roman Catholic friends and when some of them came to see me I put this simple straightforward question to them : 'What is it that you object to in this Bill ? Tell me precisely what it is that you object to, and I will try to find an answer. If I cannot convince you I shall vote against the Bill.' I asked them whether they had read the Bill. Not one of them had read the Bill. They had been issued instructions to carry on an agitation against the Bill."[2]

The Christians undoubtedly did a mistake in starting this agitation. Looking retrospectively it was a miscalculation which awakened the anti-Christian forces. 'The Buddhists have looked on calmly and gravely all these years, in spite of the fact that they had very good reasons to complain that they were very scandalously treated in the matter of education.'[3] If there was any grievance at all, the grievance was on the part of the Buddhists of this country.'[4]

'In one sense, I feel one can welcome the agitation that has been carried on outside' said N. M. Perera, 'in another sense, one can regret it and very sincerely regret it. I say regret it, because it has raked up I think some of the most undesirable features of public life—the question of religious controversy, the question of one denomination trying to undermine the influence and power of another religion. . . . And Sir, I welcome it in another sense. It has roused an apathetic Buddhist public to a full recognition of its rights, and if a challenge is issued for a struggle between missionary education and Buddhist education, I have not the slightest doubt in my mind as to what the eventual result will be — and much I think to the regret of the missionary bodies. I deplore that such an issue should have been raised in the public life of this country. I hope the missionary bodies will learn this serious lesson therefore, that in tackling public matters they should not rouse the prejudices of people in this fashion and try to mislead the public in this way.'

In fact, some of the members of the State Council confessed that they may have voted against the Bill if not for this agitation. 'As a

1. H. 1938 p. 3621
2. H. 1938 p. 3761
3. H. 1938 p. 3621
4. H. 1938 p. 3658

matter of fact, if not really for the rumpus outside I might have been disposed to oppose the Bill, because it does not go far enough. For six or seven years they have struggled and struggled and produced a mouse, and here we are fighting over this mouse for nothing. ' observed N. M. Perera.[1]

A. Mahadeva : ' I am surprised how this agitation outside took the shape it has taken and assumed the proportions it has assumed. '[2]

Griffith : ' I have not yet been able to find anything in it to cause the amount of alarm and fear expressed in the country.[3]

The demand made by the Christians was merely that this Ordinance be withdrawn and a Commission be appointed.[4] Why did they object to this Bill ? Firstly the powers of the Board of Education were rendered ineffective. The rule making power was vested entirely in the Executive Committee of Education. The Board of Education consisted of a majority of Christians who were sympathetic to the denominational schools, whereas the Executive Committee of Education consisted of a majority of non-Christians some of whom (including the Minister) were for a complete system of state schools. The Christians feared that the passing of the rule making power to the hands of the Executive Committee may slowly but surely undermine the system of denominational schools.

Secondly they objected to Government teachers being permitted to teach religion. The provision merely permitted government teachers to take up religious classes if they like and if the classes were held outside school hours — or on non-school days. If other people (e.g. voluntary societies) arranged the classes and the teachers were prepared to go and work, they could do so. It is essentially voluntary and optional. Here again the fear was of the future. The Christians thought that this provision will, by a series of gradual steps convert secular government schools to Buddhist and Hindu schools managed and financed by the government.

Thirdly they were against the conscience clause being put in positive form for the assisted schools. The Bill stated that religion could not be taught in assisted schools without the written consent of parents — being obtained thereto. The missionaries had two objectives in starting denominational schools : (i) for proselytism ; (ii) for teaching children belonging to their own denominations. ' With some people the major object was proselytism and the other was only ancilliary ; with others the second object was the main

1. H. 1938 p. 3760
2. H. 1938 p. 3599
3. H. 1938 p. 3608
4. H. 1938 p. 3592

object, and the first only ancilliary.' But proselytism was not entirely out of their picture. A positive conscience clause they saw as an obstacle to this.

Fourthly they objected to the provision of the Director's certificacate of excuse in the case of objection to attend a school of another denomination. According to the Ordinance of 1920 if there was a school belonging to any denomination within a required distance, the parent had to send the child to that school. But under the new Bill if the closest school belonged to any other denomination, on conscientious grounds the parents need not send their children to that school. The parent would get a letter of excuse from the Director of Education. This provision the Christians believed would reduce the attendance of their schools in predominantly non-Christian areas.

Fifthly they objected to the following decisions of the Executive Committee of Education arrived at on December 4, 1936. As Kannangara put it, 'This was the real objection, the one that has made people represent matters not only to this government but even to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. That is not something that you find in this Ordinance at all.' The decisions of the Executive Committee referred to above are :

(i) A survey should be made of areas where schools are necessary; the results of the survey should be published for general information ;

(ii) Denominational bodies should be allowed to open schools in such areas if they were willing and if there were sufficient pupils, say 50 belonging to the particular denomination ;

(iii) Otherwise, all schools to be opened hereafter should be State schools ;

(iv) All existing maintained schools should be state schools excepting those provided entirely by a single private individual who wishes to remain as manager. These may remain as maintained schools.

These rules were proposed as amendments to the Code for Swabhasa and Bilingual schools, and were sent to the Board of Education for approval. The Board decided that the 50 might be reduced to 20 in the case of English schools and 30 in the case of Swabhasa schools and Bilingual schools. Although this decision was arrived at with the approval of some of the clergymen present, there was such an outcry afterwards that it had to be referred back to the Board again. The second time it went up to the Board it was even moved that this regulation be not made. It was however not passed, for otherwise the Board of Education and the Executive Committee could have come to loggerheads.

Christian societies protested against these amendments to the Code. They even sent up a protest to the Secretary of State. They tried to make out that the State Council was trying to harass the minorities. 'We therefore' the Catholic Union of Ceylon said in their memorandum, 'pray that in any reform of the constitution that may be decided on, there be included safeguards which will protect the civil and religious rights and liberties of Roman Catholics, as of other non-Buddhist communities.'

What the Christians actually feared was the expansion of franchise and the gradual granting of independence which they thought would be detrimental to their expansion in Ceylon.

Kannangara answering these criticisms said, "This Bill has nothing at all to do with any proposal to do away with denominational schools. This Bill has become necessary because we want to have a co-ordinated policy, unhampered by anybody. We want to have a Bill that would fall into line with the provisions of the Donoughmore constitution.

" The main objection is to the character of the Board of Education. The Board of Education, since its establishment in 1896 has been a sort of second chamber over the Director of Education. Now it wants to be a sort of Second Chamber of the Executive Committee of Education. There is no Second Chamber as regards other Ministries or other departments, and I do not think it is proper to impose this Second Chamber on me.

" The other objection is to government teachers being permitted to teach religion under the proviso to section 29. I included that provision in the Bill in accordance with a decision of this Council. This Council on March 10, 1938 passed this motion : 'This Council is of opinion that teachers in government schools should be permitted to give religious instruction to children in their schools immediately before or after school sessions.

" The opponents of the Bill are against the conscience clause being put in positive from for the assisted schools. I have not done it on my own. The Macrae Commission (1929) recommended that ' the conscience clause should be recast in a positive form so as to indicate that in the matter of religious teaching the written consent of the parent or guardian is required. . . .'

" Then there is another clause to which objection was taken, that is to the Director's certificate of excuse in the case of objection to attend a school of another denomination. That, too, I have not done on my own. It is a recommendation made by that Commission : " That the by laws for compulsory education should provide 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.'

" Then Sir, I come to the real objection, the one that has made people represent matters not only to this government but even to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If anybody thinks that the objection is to something that is in this new Ordinance he is utterly mistaken. Their objection really started very much earlier. Their objection was to section 13 of the Code for vernacular and Bilingual schools. . . .

" Representations had been made by some of the most prominent people in Ceylon saying that the Board of Ministers under the Donoughmore Constitution were an irresponsible body, that they were wasting the money of the people, that the Revenue derived was much less than the expenditure and that the country would soon become bankrupt. . . .

" These memorials were sent to H. E. the Governor, and the Governor took a very serious view of the situation. He by letter to the Board of Ministers said that the expenditure of the country was really becoming too high, and especially the amount spent on education was quite out of proportion to the revenue of the Island. Then the Board of Ministers considered this matter and asked me to suggest ways and means of reducing expenditure on education.

" I placed the matter before my Executive Committee. The Committee went into the question and found that one thing that involved this waste was the superfluity of schools in one place. . . . In that connection the Executive Committee decided that there should be a recommendation made to the Board of Education to amend the Code for Vernacular and Bilingual schools in such a way that the starting of rival schools may be curtailed. '

The denominations raised an outcry against this recommendation and the Catholic Union of Ceylon sent a memorial to the Secretary of State attacking the whole system of government.

" The important point is that, " Kannangara continued, " behind our back when they know that reforms are being considered this memorial was sent up. . . . When Downing Street is considering the question of reforms these memorials have been sent up purporting to be sent because of something or other that has been done by me and also by some other people. This minority is trying to take control of the situation and trying to take advantage of the fact that they are a minority and prevent any reforms being granted to the people of the country. "[1]

As a result of this religious controversy the Bill received an unexpected and enthusiastic support.

The Hon. W. A. de Silva said, ' I think it is one of the most important Ordinances that have been introduced into this Council for a long time. '[2]

1. H. 1938 pp. 3781-94.
2. H. 1938 p. 3592

G. E. de Silva said, 'I say to-day without any fear of contradiction that this Bill is one that should have been introduced at the very beginning of the working of the Donoughmore Constitution'[1]

B. H. Aluvihare said, 'Coming from the Kandyan Provinces I am sorry that this Bill did not come fifty years ago.'[2]

Francis de Zoysa said, 'My only complaint is that it was not introduced in 1931 and that the Bill does not go far enough.'[3]

N. M. Perera summed up the whole controversy when he said, 'Everybody has gone off at a tangent and raised entirely irrelevant issues, and all the defects of this Ordinance have been severely let alone. I must congratulate him (the Minister) Sir, on his astuteness, and he quite rightly led them up the garden path and let them fight among themselves and with the busy bodies outside, and leave the Bill severely alone.'[4]

The massive vote against Griffith's amendment to postpone the Bill broke the backbone of the opposition to the Bill.

Even J. W. Oldfield who voted for the postponement, later in the debate confessed, 'As a whole the Bill must, I am sure, receive the general support of all members of the House. I must at once acknowledge that the present position is entirely wrong whereby no executive work can be initiated by the Hon. Minister or his Committee. It is directly against the principles of the Constitution outlined by the Donoughmore Commissioners.'[5]

The opposition was so demoralised at the end of the debate that the second reading of the Bill was passed on November 10, 1938 without even a division being called.[6]

The Bill was referred to Standing Committee 'A', which took over seven months to consider its clauses in detail. The report of the Standing Committee was presented to the House on June 27, 1939.

On June 29 the Bill passed its third reading without any debate 32 voting for and five against. The 5 who voted against did so mainly because it did not go far enough. All of them had supported the Bill during its second reading and on the third reading they voted against because they disagreed with some of the amendments.[7]

The Ordinance received the Governor's assent on July 18 and came into force on September 1, 1939 — after over a year of its first reading on August 9, 1938.

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1. H. 1938 p. 3600
2. H. 1938 p. 3619
3. H. 1938 p. 3661
4. H. 1938 p. 3760
5. H. 1938 p. 3621
6. H. 1938 p. 3800
7. H. 1939 p. 2196

CHAPTER 15

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

THE second important Ordinance Kannangara steered through the State Council was 'An Ordinance to make provision for the establishment, incorporation and regulation of a University in Ceylon'. This Ordinance combined the Ceylon Medical College and the University College to form the nucleus of the University of Ceylon. [1]

'The Colombo Medical School was established in 1870. It was designed to impart a practical and safe knowledge of medicine and surgery so as to enable the graduates of the School to engage in private practice or fill subordinate posts in the public service. The course was one of three years and the Diploma was called L. C. M. C. (Licentiate of Ceylon Medical College). In 1874 the period of studies was increased to four years. In 1884 the course was extended to five years with the recognition of the Diploma by the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Edinburgh and Dublin.

'In 1887 by an order in Privy Council, Her Majesty was pleased to extend the provisions of Part II of the Medical Act of 1886 to Ceylon so that the Ceylon licentiates were at liberty to practice in Britain.

'In 1888 the Diploma was changed to L.M.S. (Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery). Thus the Ceylon Medical College became a medical school entitled to produce fully qualified medical practitioners. The formal power to do so however was not conferred until July 1905 when the Ordinance received Governor's assent'.[2]

The University College was founded in January, 1921. The founders expected the legal formalities to go through in a couple of years and the University College to evolve itself into an autonomous University by the end of 1925.[3] The Principal, R. Marrs drew up a draft Ordinance and discussed it in detail with the Ceylon University College Council and with the Hebdomadal Council (an administrative board meeting weekly) of Oxford while he was on leave in England.[4]

1. Ordinance No. 20 of 1942 Article 74 (3)
2. Wijerama, E. M. CDN. March 10, 1966.
3. SP. X — 1925 p. 7
4. SP IX — 1927 p. 5

Unfortunately a controversy over the location of the University developed in 1926 and a site Committee was appointed the same year to recommend a suitable site. This Committee recommended Uyanwatta in the Dumbara Valley as the best site for the University.[1]

Soon Uyanwatta was considered unsuitable and H. B. Lees, Director of Public Works proposed Mavilmada and A. Woodeson, Chief Architect recommended Aruppola both on the Kandy side of the Dumbara Valley as better sites than Uyanwatta.[2]

The Legislative Council on March 9, 1928 resolved—(*a*) that the proposed University shall be unitary and residential; (*b*) that it shall be established in Kandy on site scheme No. 3 depicted on plan scheme No. 3 attached to Sessional Paper XXVIII of 1927; (*i.e.* Aruppola); (*c*) that the government shall appoint a Commission to work out the details of the proposed University to be established as recommended above.[3]

On July 4, 1928 the Governor appointed a 26-man Commission with Walter B. Riddell as Chairman 'to inquire into and report upon the details of or incidental to such a scheme. . . .' On November 27, 1928 the Commission submitted its report.

The main recommendations of this Commission were: (i) All the University courses should lead to a first degree of Bachelor of Arts; (ii) All candidates for admission should be required to pass an Entrance Examination; (iii) The course for the first degree should be of a 3-year duration; (iv) Every candidate for the pass degree of Bachelor of Arts should pass First and Second Public Examinations which should involve the study of both Arts and Science subjects; (v) The Bachelor of Arts Honours degree should be differentiated throughout from the Pass degree; (vi) There should be two Masters degrees, the Master of Arts and Master of Science. The course for a Master's degree should be of a 2-year duration; (vii) The first three years of the medical course should be taken at Kandy and should include pre-medical sciences, Anatomy and Physiology and should lead to the Bachelor of Arts degree. The remaining three years should be taken at Colombo and should lead to the degree of Bachelor of Medicine; (viii) Post-graduate courses should be established and diplomas conferred in Education, Agriculture and Archaeology; (ix) Five Faculties—Arts, Science, Law, Medicine and Engineering—should be established; (x) Unless for quite exceptional reasons all undergraduates should be required to reside in Halls of Residence; (xi) The University should be secured under its constitution the maximum measure of Autonomy practicable; (xii) The government should consider whether it might

1. SP V — 1927
2. SP XXIII — 1927
3. SP IV — 1929 p. 7

not be desirable and practicable to bring the University into being before all the buildings are completed.

The Commission also appended a 'Draft University Ordinance and Statutes'.[1]

The Governor Herbert J. Stanley addressing the Legislative Council on July 4, 1929 said, 'The Government is pledged to the establishment of a University.... The government, though committed to the establishment of a University on the Kandy site, was not committed to the acceptance of the Commission's Report as a whole or to any of the details of the scheme which the Commission recommended. In considering the Report we could not but feel concern at the great expense, recurrent as well as non-recurrent, which the scheme entails. It is not unlikely that the preparation of detailed plans and estimates would show the eventual cost to be even higher than the approximate estimate given in the Report (Rs. 10,436,000). In the present state of our finances, the question of expense is not one which can be approached lightheartedly....

'I do not suppose that a better scheme than that of Sir Walter Riddell's Commission for the establishment of a teaching University on the prescribed site (Aruppola) is likely to be obtainable, and it seems to me, therefore, that either that scheme and the financial liability which it involves must be accepted, or the proposal to establish a teaching University on the prescribed site must be abandoned, or at any rate postponed.....

'The Commissioner's have attached to their Report the draft of an Ordinance providing for the constitutional framework of the proposed University, on the prescribed site. That draft Ordinance will now be introduced by the Government as a Government measure.... I may add that I have obtained the Secretary of State's consent to the introduction of the draft Ordinance....'[2]

The draft Bill was circulated to the members of legislative Council in early 1930 and it was on the Agenda for a number of months,[3] before it was formally presented for the consideration of the Council on October 28, 1930.

In moving the first reading of the Bill, W. E. Wait, Acting Conservator of Forests said, 'The Ordinance as now presented for the consideration of this House is based upon that draft (appended to the Report of the Riddell Commission) with certain minor amendments.... There is one thing which I wish to make quite clear in this time of financial depression, namely, that the passing of this Ordinance does not bind the government, this House, or anybody else to provide forthwith any expenditure for bringing the Ceylon University into being....

1. SP IV — 1929 pp. 62-6
2. H. 1929 p. 568
3. H. 1930 p. 1137

'The actual passing of this Ordinance does not do more than lay down clear definitions in statutory form of the goal at which we are aiming'.[1]

L. Macrae, Director of Education moved the second reading of the Bill on November 25, 1930. H. A. P. Sandrasegara moved an amendment 'that the second reading be taken up this day six months.' Giving reasons for his amendment Sandrasegara said, 'It is well known that this University is not going to be started on the passing of this Bill. . . . Therefore the passing of this Bill by this House, constituted as we are, representing as we do a 4 per cent electorate, and shorn of any powers which generally representative assemblies have I think it is premature to ask us to pass this Bill just now. . . . It is the State Council that will be called upon to finance this institution, and I think it is but proper that this Bill should be postponed till the State Council is constituted.'

The amendment however was lost only 10 members voting for and 28 against.

The second reading was then passed almost without debate (only G. A. H. Wille making a plea that the question of site may be reconsidered) 38 members voting for and only H. R. Freeman voting against. Sandrasegara declined to vote.[2]

The Legislative Council was dissolved in early 1931, before the third reading could be taken up and the Bill lapsed.

When Kannangara became the Minister of Education in 1931, the University College had completed its first decade of existence. It had ten departments of study and 355 students on roll.[3]

The Ceylon Medical College had 154 doctors and 57 apothecaries in training.[4]

Kannangara took over the responsibility for education in Ceylon at the bottom of an acute economic depression, and no expansion in any direction was possible. But the number of students seeking admission to the University College rose steadily and finding accommodation for the increasing numbers became a problem by 1933. 'There is no room for some of the classes and in the Medical College also certain reforms are needed which cannot be properly attended to unless something is done as regards the question of the University,' said Kannangara.

'Whether it is possible to have a properly equipped University at Dumbara . . . is a matter that is being looked into just now by the Committee on Education. I hope Sir, during the course of the year

1. H. 1930 p. 1692
2. H. 1930 pp. 1919-23
3. AR. Principal, University College 1931.
4. AR. DE 1931 p. A24

to bring up certain proposals before this House either to have temporary arrangements made to get over the difficulty, or to finally settle this question one way or another.'[1]

By 1934 the demand for the establishment of the University without any further delay came to the surface. The financial difficulties that the government faced in the early thirties were coming to an end. The Appropriation Ordinance of 1934-35 provided for a surplus of Rs. 23,000,000.

N. Selvadurai (Kayts) expressing this demand in the House said, 'I think the establishment of the University should no longer be postponed. . . . I should like it very much indeed if a certain portion of the surplus balance was used for the purpose of making a start with the University project at once.'[2]

Kannangara answering this demand said, 'The establishment of the Ceylon University has been long overdue. . . . The matter is one which should be attended to at once. . . . It was not possible to take any steps during the last three years with regard to the building of the University because we were not in funds to make any kind of scheme. . . . I think there is no better time to separate a sum out of this 23 million of surplus if we really want to start the University. . . .'[3]

No steps however were taken even to provide the finances needed to start the building operations at Aruppola till the introduction of the next Budget. The general public now became 'very anxious to see what was going to happen to the University—whether the University was going to be established, whether the Executive Committee were trying to shirk their responsibility, whether they had postponed the matter, or whether there was any kind of dilatoriness on the part of any person concerned.'

Kannangara in an attempt to reply these critics said, 'the establishment of the Ceylon University has engaged the attention of the Executive Committee for some time past. The cost of building the University at Dumbara has been calculated. Transitory provisions to the Ordinance to enable the University to be established have been framed and these are now being considered by the legal authorities. We are also in touch with the Medical Council and with the Council of Legal Education regarding the part which they will play in the Ceylon University.'[4]

The State Council included a sum of Rs. 75,000 in the Budget for 1934-35 for the erection of temporary extensions in Colombo. These were very necessary as the number on Roll passed the 500 mark in 1935.[5]

1. H. 1933 p. 1676
2. H. 1934 p. 1585
3. H. 1934 p. 1856
4. H. 1935 pp. 2535-6
5. AR. Principal, University College 1934 p.13

Kannangara as noted earlier was an ardent supporter of the Colombo site in the Legislative Council. Therefore the extensions to the Colombo campus was considered by some as a way of avoiding the shift to Kandy.

In answer to this suggestion Kannangara said, ' As is well known, personally I was for the Colombo site, but the Legislative Council decided that the University should be located in Dumbara. There was no intention on my part as has been suggested (*e.g.* by G. E. de Silva) to nullify that decision. I had no intention at all to reverse that decision by putting up certain buildings in the University College premises at Colombo with the object of seeing the University established there. . . . Those buildings had nothing at all to do with the question of site. Practically those were temporary buildings.'

In 1934 Kannangara appointed a sub-committee of the Executive Committee of Education consisting of A. Ratnayake, H. W. Amarasuriya and G. R. de Zoysa to submit revised plans and estimates for the University at Dumbara.

The Sub-Committee, taking all the circumstances into consideration was of opinion that the scheme could be completed for the sum of Rs. 7,500,000. There was already a sum of Rs. 5,000,000 (approximately) set apart as a Building and Equipment Fund.

On March 27, 1935 the Council on principle agreed to provide the balance Rs. 2,500,000 as and when required.

On August 23, 1935 Kannangara told the Council, ' the Ordinance to establish the University at once with a view to its transfer as soon as the buildings are completed, to Kandy is now in the hands of the Legal Draftsman. We are awaiting the receipt of that Ordinance.'[1]

In the meantime finding accommodation for all who sought admission to the University College became a problem, that called for an immediate solution. Up to 1935 all who passed the London Matriculation could enter the University College if they so wished. By 1935 the numbers who matriculated increased so rapidly that it was not possible to provide accommodation for all these applicants.

The Executive Committee for Education unanimously decided ' that the institution of an Entrance Examination would not only be the most effective way of limiting numbers but also the most desirable since it would give the College itself control over the standard of admission to its courses and they accordingly recommended that an Entrance Examination should be conducted by the University College authorities.'

1. H. 1935 pp. 2536-8

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike called this ' a very reactionary measure' and G. G. Ponnambalam described the proposal as ' novel, reactionary, and utterly unheard of.'

G. E. de Silva saw this as a subtle method of delaying the establishment of the University in Dumbara.

In answering G. E. de Silva, Kannangara said, " When there was the depression it was not possible to take any steps in that connection. . . . When there was a surplus balance the first thing that was suggested by me was to earmark 2½ million rupees for the University. That suggestion was readily accepted by honourable members, and steps have been taken to bring something concrete before this House so that the House may be able to discuss the question and arrive at an agreement once and for all as to the question of site.

' The question of the site is somehow involved in the question of the establishment of the University. It may be argued by some members that the question of the site has already been decided by the last Legislative Council and that, therefore this Council should have no say in the matter. But considering the fact that a large sum of money will have to be spent on a project of that type, it is nothing but right that this Council should have a say in the matter of site.'

The proposal to restrict numbers at the University College was put to the House and negatived by a majority of one vote.[1]

University Scholarships was another subject that received attention during the mid thirties. ' These scholarships have, from time to time, been instituted by government to help deserving local students to proceed to the United Kingdom and complete their education or training in more advanced institutions abroad. . . . The first English University Scholarship was granted in 1870, and at first it was confined to the Colombo Academy and awarded on the results of a special examination in which distinguished members of the government service usually acted as examiners.

In 1880 the Scholarship was thrown open to general competition and was awarded on the results of the Cambridge Senior Local Examination. This arrangement lasted for fifteen years but was abandoned on representations made by the Headmasters of some of the leading schools who contended that the system had a bad effect on the work of their best pupils. The scholarship was subsequently awarded annually on the results of an examination held specially for the purpose by the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board, the award being made alternately for classics and mathematics.

In 1905 an attempt was made to put the higher work of schools on a broader footing and it was decided to give two scholarships

1. H. 1935 pp. 3957-89

annually instead of one. One of these was attached to the Intermediate Examination in Science and the other to the Intermediate Examination in Arts of the University of London.

The committee on the Further Employment of Ceylonese in the Higher Ranks of the Public Service recommended the award annually of a third scholarship, which was established in 1920, on the results of the Intermediate Examination in Science (Agriculture) of the University of London, the candidates being required to take Botany, Chemistry, and one other Natural Science subject.

An important alteration in the conditions was made in 1922, when it was resolved to award all these scholarships on the results of the Final Examinations in Arts and Science of the University of London, the candidates being required to pass such examinations in the First Division. Two Engineering Scholarships, awarded annually on the results of the Final Examination in Science of the University of London, subject to the recommendation of a selection Board were also established by government in 1922. In 1926 it was decided to raise the standard of award of the Arts and Science Scholarships to the Final Honours Examinations of the London University. The arrangements were revised so that three scholarships would in future be awarded, one for Arts, one for Science and one for Mathematics. The conditions of award for the Agricultural and Engineering scholarships remained as before.

A government University Scholarship in Oriental Languages was added in 1928.

In 1929 a Telegraph Engineering Scholarship was first awarded. The Telegraph Engineering Scholarship was not to be an annual award: it was instituted specially to meet the demands for Telegraph Engineers in that branch of the Post and Telegraph Department and was to be awarded according to the needs of the Department.[1]

In 1931 a Government University Scholarships Committee was appointed with special reference to the Engineering and Agricultural Scholarships. That Committee recommended that no more scholarships in Engineering, Agriculture and Forestry should be offered for a few years, and that the matter should thereafter be reconsidered. The Committee further recommended that any technical scholarships that government might award in 1932 should be offered according to the requirements of particular departments so as to ensure employment for every scholar to whom a scholarship was awarded.[2]

On August 23, 1934 the Governor appointed a Commission to examine the present system of government scholarships which are tenable outside Ceylon, and to make recommendations thereon, with Kannangara himself as Chairman.

1. SP. IV — 1936
2. SP XXV — 1931

This Commission recommended that: (i) University College Scholarships should remain substantially as they are at present; (ii) the number should be limited to three in the Arts and Science Faculties without reference to subjects when the University comes into being, and awarded on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor of the University on the report of the University Council; (iii) Scholarships awarded at the University College should be awarded in future to the most meritorious candidates of those who obtain First Class Honours, due provision being made for the award of the Science Scholarship to a man with Second Class Honours in exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the Heads of the Science Departments if no candidate with First Class Honours is available. (iv) In exceptional cases scholars should be permitted to proceed for advanced study to Universities outside the United Kingdom, though it is impossible to lay down in advance the amount of subsidy suitable for a particular country outside Great Britain.[1]

The Report was published on March 11, 1936 and on December 2, 1936 Kannangara moved its acceptance in the State Council.[2]

Sponsoring the motion Kannangara said, 'As regards the scholarships not included in the main categories, members will find that scholarships are proposed to be given in Education and in Medicine. . . . There is a suggestion here that there should be encouragement of Oriental Music. One Scholarship is to be given for Carnatic Music in India, and the other one is for North Indian Music. There will also be a scholarship in Western Music at a recognised institution, tenable for two years.

'There is also a scholarship for Art. . . . Research scholarships will be open to all students irrespective of age who have shown exceptional promise or capacity for research work in any subject.'[3]

The motion was discussed on May 19 and November 18, 1937 but as 'the extent of the financial commitment' was not indicated no vote was taken.

As regards the University itself no action was taken till the end of 1935. On May 12, 1936 G. E. de Silva gave notice of the following motion: 'That in the opinion of this Council immediate steps should be taken to establish a University in Kandy.'[4]

Moving the resolution De Silva said, 'The decision reached by the previous Legislative Council, that the University should be established in Kandy, should have been carried out by the Minister of

1. SP IV — 1936
2. H. 1936 p. 3180
3. H. 1937 p. 1176
4. H. 1936 p. 63

Education. It is inexplicable why such a decision has not been carried out, as there are nearly Rs. 5,000,000 available for the purpose of starting the University.[1]

Kannangara answering some of these criticisms said, 'I am more anxious than anyone else to see the University established. I do not want to fight about the question of site. The trouble is, in the case of some people it is not the University they want but the site. I have always been pleading for the University. I do not mind whether it is going to be in the home of the honourable member for Dumbara or whether it is going to be in Colombo. . . . The only thing I am concerned with is that we must get the most practical site possible.'[2]

Ratnayake, normally a supporter of Kannangara accused him of procrastination on the question of the establishment of the University. He said, 'A decision has at last been arrived at in the Executive Committee in regard to the University project and I hope again, as I have been hoping ever since 1931, that the matter will come up before this House and that a final decision will be arrived at by this House.'[3]

All said and done it became quite apparent that the procrastination was in fact due to Kannangara's heart not being in the Dumbara site. Even his Executive Committee was for the Colombo site, for they had decided on July 24, 1936 to recommend the establishment of the University in Colombo.

A motion by Kannangara 'that in the opinion of the Council early steps should be taken for the establishment of a University in Colombo by utilizing the existing site and buildings of the University College and the site south of Buller's Road proposed for the University in 1923 and referred to in Sessional Paper V of 1927 as the Buller's Road site' came up before the House on February 10, 1937 but before that could be moved G. E. de Silva's motion 'that the University be established in Kandy', moved on June 11, 1936 was passed by the Council by 30 voting for and 18 against.[4]

This was a final decision, and there was no alternative but to establish the University in Kandy. On November 18, 1937 Kannangara moved 'that this Council resolves to authorize the expenditure, out of the money voted and set apart as the University Building and Equipment Fund in 1924 and duly appropriated by Supplementary Appropriation Ordinance (1923-24) No. 3 of 1925, of a sum not exceeding Rs. 500,000 for the purpose of acquisition of land for the University to be established in Kandy.'

1. H. 1936 p. 605
2. H. 1936 p. 1458
3. H. 1936 p. 1451
4. H. 1937 p. 243-5

On technical grounds the item had to be deferred[1] and it was brought up again on December 7, 1937 as a Supplementary Estimate. Again the site became the main theme of the debate.

A. Mahadeva said, ' Why should we immediately, merely because of our anxiety to establish a University in Kandy, blindly adopt site 3 (Aruppola) of the Dumbara sites and not even consider the Peradeniya site which in my opinion and in the opinion of several other members is more suited for the purpose.'

S. Natesan added, ' In accepting this resolution it should be clearly understood by the House that we are definitely committing ourselves to this particular site (Aruppola). The Hon. the Minister of Education has been goaded by the criticism made in the press and elsewhere that he was adopting obstructive tactics with regard to the establishment of the University, and that accounts for the anxiety which he has shown to bring this motion up at an early stage to implement the decision arrived at by the Council with regard to the motion of the honourable member for Kandy.'[2]

The supplementary estimate however was passed without a division. But soon there was so much criticism that eventually, in September, 1938 it was decided to purchase the site at Peradeniya.[3]

The ' battle of sites ' thus lasted thirteen years but at the end of it all the three sites recommended by the Site Committee, Uyanwatta, Mavilmada and Aruppola had to be dropped in addition to the original site at Buller's Road.

In the meantime the number on roll at the University College rose to 664 in 1938. The number sent away annually as unfit also was increasing steadily. In 1937-38 the number rejected rose to 57 from 24 in 1935-36. The need for an Entrance Examination was actually felt. On February 8, 1939 Kannangara moved, ' that this Council is of opinion that no students shall be admitted to the Intermediate courses of the Ceylon University College unless either,— ' (i) he passes an entrance test to be held annually by the authorities of the University College or (ii) produces a certificate from the Headmaster of an approved secondary school in Ceylon that he has successfully completed at least one year's post-matriculation course in such school'.

The resolution was accepted by the Council.[4]

R. Marrs retired on June 30, 1939. S. A. Pakeman acted for him for a number of months till W. Ivor Jennings the next Principal arrived in the Island. After Jennings took over as Principal, university matters moved faster.

1. H. 1937 p. 3705
2. H. 1937 pp. 3988-4021
3. The Calendar of the University of Ceylon 1952-53 p. 32
4. H. 1939 p. 356-83

The system of certificates from Headmasters of approved Secondary schools in Ceylon as contemplated by the resolution of February 8, 1939 could not function satisfactorily and on February 6, 1940 Kannangara moved, 'that admission of students to the intermediate courses at the Ceylon University College for the academic year 1941-42 and thereafter shall be regulated solely by an entrance examination to be held annually by the authorities of the College.' The resolution was passed.[1]

While these changes were being made at the University College the Minister of Communications and Works (J. L. Kotalawala) went ahead with the acquisition of land at Peradeniya and 360 acres in all were acquired between September, 1939 and April, 1940. This completed the first stage of the acquisition.[2]

The preparation of the site was undertaken in early 1941, but there was great difficulty in getting down the blue prints from London. The war had reached a stage when no ship was safe on the high seas.[3] With the entry of Japan to the war at the end of 1941, Ceylon itself came within the belligerent zone and the building programme had to be postponed. The site itself was taken over by the South East Asia Command of the British Army for military purposes.

Up to 1942 the Ceylon University College prepared candidates for the Examinations of the London University. 'The question papers and the answer scripts had to be sent to London, and owing to the seriousness of the war situation, there was considerable delay in the receipt of question papers from London and the despatch of answer scripts to London; that was causing a great deal of hardship to the students themselves, because they could not ascertain the results of these examinations for a considerable time with the result that their studies were held up for a long time.[4] In fact there was no guarantee that the answer scripts would ever reach their destination as no ship could sail safe such a long distance.

It was this emergency situation that prompted the government to legally establish the University of Ceylon in 1942 after a delay of over 15 years.

On March 10, 1942, Kannangara moved, 'that the Bill intituled an Ordinance to make provision for the establishment, incorporation and regulation of a University in Ceylon, be now read the first time.'[5]

The Bill presented in the House consisted of 14 parts:

1. H. 1940 p. 192
2. H. 1940 p. 1398
3. H. 1941 p. 1171
4. H. 1942 p. 453
5. H. 1942 p. 452

Part I—The University: dealt with the Incorporation of the University, its powers and its location.

Part II—The Chancellor and Officers of the University: made the Governor the ex-officio Chancellor and the Minister charged with the subject of education for the time being the Pro-Chancellor of the University. The Vice-Chancellor was to be a whole-time officer and the principal executive and academic officer thereof. The Ordinance also provided for the appointment of a Registrar and a Librarian.

Part III—The University Authorities: provided for a Court with power to make Statutes (legislative); a Council with Executive power; a Senate to be the academic body; Faculties and a general Board of Studies and Research.

Part IV—Convocation:

Part V—Statutes, Acts and Regulations: dealt with the matters on which the court could make statutes; the Council could make Acts; and the other authorities could make Regulations.

Part VI—Residence: provided for compulsory residence of undergraduates within a prescribed radius from the Convocation Hall of the University.

Part VII—Examinations: Admission to the University and to Courses of Study and Graduation.

Part VIII—Appointment of Teachers, etc.: empowered the Council to appoint Professors, Readers and Lecturers after considering the recommendation of a Board of Selection.

Part IX—The Ceylon University Provident Fund:

Part X—Financial Provisions: established a University Fund into which the fees, income from endowments and money's provided by Parliament should be paid to. It also dealt with the keeping of accounts, auditing and budgeting.

Part XI—General Provisions: dealt with such thing as bonuses, deprivation of a degree, etc. on account of misconduct, rights of women for equal treatment, etc.

Part XII—Special Provisions: dealt with prohibition of persons convicted of certain offences from entering the University radius.

Part XIII—Application of Housing and Town Improvement Ordinance to areas in proximity to the University precincts.

Part XIV—Transitory Provisions:[1]

Kannangara moving the first reading of the Bill said, 'It is a long Bill consisting of 75 clauses, and it is drafted on the popular model. That is, the model that is to be found in the case of most of the other Universities.

1 Ordinance No. 20 of 1942.

'The University will be an autonomous body and will not form a department under government .... A certain amount of control is retained by providing that the estimates that are passed by the University should be tabled here, so that any question arising from the estimates can be raised. On the other hand, the (State) Council is very strongly represented on the Court. About 22 members of the State Council will be members of the Court.'[1]

The Second Reading was fixed for March 12, as 'the matter was extremely urgent,' but it could not be taken up on the scheduled date as some members wanted more time to study the Bill.[2]

The second reading was taken up on March 26. A. P. de Zoysa proposing an amendment 'that the Bill be read a second time six months hence' said, 'The students can very conveniently take up the London University Degree Examination in Ceylon. A degree obtained from London University is valued all over the world.'[3]

Kannangara replying said, 'I hope this Bill will pass its second reading now. I was very anxious that it should go through all stages to-day itself, because the new term in the University College begins in July and the Board of Studies has to meet and make all the arrangements. There is no possibility of getting question papers from the London University owing to the war siutation. The matter is extremely urgent.'

De Zoysa's amendment was lost and the second reading was passed. There was little opposition and less enthusiasm.[4]

On April 2, the Committee stage was completed and the third reading was passed without debate.[5]

The Governor gave his assent on May 5 and the Ordinance came into operation on July 1, 1942 thus converting the University College to the autonomous University of Ceylon with W. Ivor Jennings as its first Vice-Chancellor.

1. H. 1942 pp. 452-4
2. H. 1942 p. 560
3. H. 1942 p. 663
4. H. 1942 pp. 671-2
5. H. 1942 p. 827

CHAPTER 16

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

ON September 12, 1935 P. B. Ranaraja (Galagedara) moved ' that this Council is of opinion that a Commission should be appointed to inquire into the present system of education in Ceylon and to report on the defects, if any, existing in the system and to recommend ways and means of remedying such defects.'

The motion was referred to the Executive Committee of Education.[1] But before the committee could deal with the matter the Council was dissolved at the end of the year.

In the Second State Council on June 11, 1936 E. A. Nugawela (Galagedara) moved ' that in the opinion of this Council a Commission should be appointed, under the Chairmanship of an expert from abroad, to report upon the existing system of education in Ceylon, and having regard to the changed conditions of the day and the future development of the country to recommend the needed changes.'

This motion too was referred to the Executive Committee of Education.[2]

This was considered by the Executive Committee on various dates between August 4, 1936 and September 9, 1937. The majority of the members of the Committee who were no doubt aware of the pressing nature of the question of educational reform did not think that the solution lay in the appointment of a Commission of the kind envisaged in the above motion.[3]

In 1937 when the annual budget was being prepared the attention of the Board of Ministers was drawn to the soaring cost of education. In moving the first reading of the budget, the Leader of the House D. B. Jayatilaka said, ' The problem of education is always with us and is likely to trouble us for many years to come. If you look at the estimates you will find the Bill this year has increased by Rs. 2,211,887 and we do not know what the Bill will be next year or the year after. This question has engaged the attention of the Board of Ministers for some time and they have come to the conclusion that

1. H. 1935 p. 3385
2. H. 1936 p. 575
3. SP XXIV 1943 p.5

the whole situation must be examined and reviewed by an independent authority. . . . '[1]

The proposal of the Board was referred to the Executive Committee of Education for its views. On August 17, 1937 the Executive Committee discussed the necessity for a Commission. Various opinions were expressed and the Committee tentatively agreed that—(*a*) A commission was necessary; (*b*) it should be appointed from outside; (*c*) it should consist of two experts one of them having a knowledge of the national aspects of the educational problem; (*d*) not only its financial aspects but also the educational policy in general should be included in its scope; (*e*) it should be immediately appointed.[2]

On August 31, 1937, the State Council considered in Committee the Budget provision for the ensuing year for the expenses of Commissions and Committees. In reply to questions by members the ministers explained that they proposed to recommend the appointment of an Education Commission. The questions indicated a certain amount of opposition to such a Commission and a reduction in the vote (Rs. 35,000) by a sum of Rs. 15,000 moved by H. R. Freeman was agreed to.[3] The Executive Committee had no alternative but to consider this decision of Council as an expression of its disapproval of the proposal for an Education Commission and on September 9, 1937 arrived at the following decision:—

'On the matter being mentioned by the Minister of Education the proposal to obtain a Commission on education from abroad was reconsidered. Simultaneously a communication from the Legal Secretary inquiring whether the Education Bill should be proceeded with forthwith in spite of the likelihood of changes in educational policy as a result of the findings of the proposed commission was also considered. It was resolved by a majority that a Commission on education was not necessary and the drafting of the Education Bill (see Chapter 14) should be proceeded with, without further delay.'[4]

This decision seems to have been disliked by a certain section of the people not really because they desired a Commission but because they did not want the Bill.[5]

The report of the Executive Committee of Education on the motion of Nugawela was presented to the Council on February 9, 1939 after a lapse of nearly three years. The report said, 'The

1. H. 1937 p. 1800
2. SP XXIV — 1943 p. 5
3. H. 1937 pp. 2202-5
4. SP XXIV — 1943 p. 6
5. See 'What Is This New Education Bill' : Colombo Catholic Press, 1938. p.2.

Executive Committee does not recommend the acceptance of the motion. It proposes to investigate at an early date the defects of the existing educational system with special reference to the present inadequate financial control, and to make the necessary recommendations to the State Council.'[1]

On April 4, 1940 the Executive Committee passed the following resolution: 'The Executive Committee by a majority reaffirmed its earlier decision that no Commission on education was necessary and further decided that the task of investigating the defects of the present educational system and recommending measures of reform necessitated by the changed conditions should be undertaken by the Executive Committee itself with the assistance of educational experts already available in the country. For this purpose it was resolved to form a Special Committee consisting of all the members of the Executive Committee willing to serve thereon and the following persons: The Director of Education, The Principal, Training College, The Principal, Royal College, The Rev. Fr. M. J. LeGoc, P. de S. Kularatne, S. Sivapadasundaram, The Rev. R. W. Stopford and E. A. Nugawela. The procedure for setting about the investigation of the existing system of education and the formulation of the necessary measures of reform was left for decision by Special Committee themselves.[2]

The Executive Committee for Education at the time consisted of: C. W. W. Kannangara (Chairman), H. W. Amarasuriya (Galle), A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South), D. D. Gunasekara (Bandarawela), T. B. Jayah (Nominated), S. Natesan (Kankasanturai), A. Ratnayake (Dumbara), G. A. H. Wille (Nominated). The Director of Education at the time was L. Mc D. Robison, the Principal, Training College was H. S. Perera, and the Principal, Royal College was E. L. Bradby.

At the meeting held on May 31, 1940 the Executive Committee resolved to co-opt S. A. Pakeman, Acting Principal, University College and G. P. Malalasekara, Professor of Sanskrit, Pali and Sinhalese, University College. On May 28, D. D. Gunasekara left the Executive Committee of Education and was replaced by D. Wanigasekara (Weligama). G. K. W. Perera and the Rev. R. S. de Saram were co-opted to the Committee on September 27, 1940. N. Nadarajah, was co-opted on October 18, 1940. J. C. Amarasingham was appointed (in place of Rev. Stopford) on January 23, 1941 and W. Ivor Jennings joined the committee (in place of Pakeman) on June 3, 1941.

H. W. Amarasuriya left the Executive Committee in June, 1942 and Wanigasekara in February the same year. A. R. A. Razik (nominated) joined the Executive Committee on March 10, 1942 and became

1. H. 1939 p. 443
2. SP. XXIV — 1943 p.6

a member of the Special Committee with effect from the same date. A. P. de Zoysa though was a member of the Executive Committee did not take part in the deliberations of the Special Committee. Thus there were in all 24 Councillors and educationists who served as members of the Special Committee sometime during the 3½ years it sat. Six of them had left the Committee before the Report was ready for signing on September 9, 1943. Of the 18 who remained members of the Special Committee till its end only 11 were original members appointed at its inception.

Though the Special Committee was appointed by the Executive Committee of Education the approval of the House became necessary when funds had to be found for its work. On July 9, 1940 Kannangara moved a Supplementary Estimate for Rs. 1,500 to meet the travelling and subsistence expenses of members of the Special Committee on Education.

The Board of Ministers in their Report said, 'The Board of Ministers approves the provision of funds to meet the expenses referred to, though it would have preferred the appointment of a Special Commission on Education'.[1]

Kannangara sponsoring the estimate said, 'In accordance with the decision of the Executive Committee a Special Committee has been appointed, and a questionnaire has been sent out. There have been five meetings of the Committee, and good work has been done.'

G. E. de Silva opposing the motion said, "The Hon. Minister is asking for this money after the Committee has been appointed. Surely the Hon. Minister knew, before appointing the Committee, that it would incur some expenditure. . . . The House has not been consulted in this matter. When they have no fodder to live on, they come before this House and say, 'We want fodder'."

E. A. Nugawela who moved the motion for a Commission on Education in 1936 however observed, 'I attended most of the meetings held by that Committee and I must express my satisfaction at the way in which the inquiry proceeded.' After some debate the vote was approved.[2]

The questionnaire referred to consisting of 21 questions was circulated in June and 'the response from the public was very encouraging.' 114 replies to the questionnaire (in the form of memoranda) were received from individuals (39), representatives of various bodies (18), and associations (57). In addition many witnesses either individually (60), or in delegations (38), came before the Committee.

1. H. 1940 p. 1315
2. H. 1940 pp. 1328-44.

The Committee had sittings in Colombo, Kandy, Galle, Jaffna and Batticaloa to record evidence given by various witnesses.

After analysing the mass of material the committee had collected, a report was drafted in 1943. The Report was signed by 17 members. W. Ivor Jennings did not sign the report. In his dissent he says, ' When I joined the committee at its 30th meeting the main principles of its recommendations had already been laid down. These recommendations assumed that the ' English ' schools would continue to levy fees, at least in the post-primary stage. It was not until the 88th meeting when the report was ready for signature, that it was decided to recommend that education be free from Kindergarten to University. I agreed with that decision. . . . It seems to me, however, that the consequences of the decision need more consideration than the committee has given to them. Since the whole of the Report, other than Chapter XIII was written on the assumption of a fee-paying system in the post-primary stage, there may be many paragraphs where that assumption colours the recommendation. . . . Though there is much in the Report which I agree, I regret that I am unable to sign it.'

The Report is ' a comprehensive review of the educational system and policy'. Writing a Preface to the Report, Kannangara says, " As a stray critic or two has thought it fit to denounce in the Press or elsewhere the decision of the Executive Committee (to appoint a special committee) as intended to cover up and white wash the sins of omission and commission of its own administration it is necessary to say a few words in vindication of the step taken by the Executive Committee. It is easily conceded that an educational system grows rapidly out of date in a world of rapidly changing values. It is particularly so in Ceylon where political, social and economic development has in the past been slow and conditioned to a large extent by the interests of imperial or colonial policy. In these circumstances a periodical stocktaking at least every ten years is absolutely necessary. Besides, the educational system of Ceylon as that of India has grown haphazard and to a great extent without plan or purpose. It is unfortunate that, although several commissions or committees had been appointed on various occasions to investigate and report on particular aspects of the educational problem, at no stage was a comprehensive review of the entire educational system made. Neither was any attempt made to found a national system of education. . . . Signs of a national consciousness are a recent manifestation in Ceylon and as such it was impossible in the nature of things for the administrators of the past to think in terms of a national system. Education, however, is the key to any national reawakening and the only way of escape from the vicious circle—no education, no national reawakening, no national reawakening, no national system of education—was for

the national leaders to have agitated for a national system. This our leaders failed to do in the past or were prevented from doing by their preoccupation with other questions concerning the Island's welfare. Years of neglect during which a system of education sprang up laissez-faire more to meet the needs of colonial administration than to aid the economic and cultural progress of the community had to be made good."

The Report itself consists of 21 chapters dealing with topics ranging from aims of education to methods of teaching.

'The character of an educational system', the report says, 'depends upon the character of the society for which it is designed'. The character of Ceylon's society being democratic the committee assumed that their task was to recommend an educational system suitable for a democracy. 'A democratic system of education should on the one hand enable the pupils to achieve the highest degree of physical, mental and moral development of which he is capable irrespective of his wealth or social status; on the other hand it should enable the pupil as a result of his education to use his abilites for the good of the nation in the fullest possible measure and to exercise intelligently the franchise that the state has conferred on him.'

'The general aim of education' according to the report—is preparation for life in its material and spiritual aspects. The particular aims are: (i) mental development or mental discipline; (ii) culture, including character; and (iii) efficiency.

There is even a greater need in Ceylon. Ceylon is a polyethnic and multi-religious state. Therefore welding these heterogenous elements of its population into a nation is a fundamental need in Ceylon. To accomplish this the democratic principle of tolerance has to permeate the entire educational system.

The committee found four major defects in the existing educational system. They were: (i) the existence of two types of education according to the medium of instruction used—English or Swabhasa. English was the path to affluence, and English schools had better buildings, better equipment and better teachers. But the great majority of the pupils were taught in 'Vernacular' (Swabhasa) schools where Sinhalese or Tamil was the medium of instruction. English had become a badge of social superiority, thus dividing the population into two more or less water-tight social compartments, the English-educated and the swabhasa-educated. Sinhalese and Tamil, the 'natural' medium for Sinhalese or Tamil people respectively, and the best medium through which they can effectively contribute to the world of literature and art, had not been developed. (ii) The second major defect was the excessive uniformity of the educational system, which was purely academic in character, and almost totally unrelated

to the practical aspects of life. (iii) The third major defect was the absence of equality of opportunity, the development of the educational system having resulted in two types of schools—one attended mainly by those who could afford to pay fees, and the other attended by those whose means did not permit them to do so. (iv) The fourth major defect was that compulsory education in substantial measure was not compulsory.

There were also a number of lesser defects related to the above. Some of them were: (*a*) the inadequacy in many cases of school grounds, buildings and equipment especially for practical work; (*b*) the domination of curricula by examinations; (*c*) the narrowness of curricula, especially in the secondary schools; (*d*) the unsuitable nature of external examinations; (*e*) the lack of sufficient provision for the blind, deaf, dumb, epileptic, crippled, mentally deficient and backward children; (*f*) the inadequate provision for adult education; and (*g*) the abnormal percentage of withdrawals of pupils at the end of the primary stage.

Who should have control of education was a burning question in Ceylon at the time. There were two systems in operation: (i) a state system of public education; and (ii) a voluntary or denominational system. The memoranda submitted to the committee and the oral evidence taken by them indicated that the support for either system was more or less equally balanced. Hence the committee recommended that the system of direct state control and the system of denominational control should be permitted to exist side by side. But to prevent undue multiplication of schools they recommended that the following conditions should be laid down in regard to the recognition of denominational schools established after the date of these reforms and in regard to assisting such schools from public funds: (*a*) to be recognised, a denominational school shall have at least 30 pupils of school-going age of the same denomination as the controlling body who reside with their parents within a radius from the school of two miles for boys and one mile for girls and children under 8 years of age; (*b*) having been recognised and registered for grant, such a school shall have at least 30 pupils of school-going age of the same denomination as the controlling body if it is to continue to receive assistance from public funds; (*c*) if it is within two miles of an already existing state school, children of an 'unlike' denomination shall not be taken into account for assessing grant.

The system of State Training Colleges and denominational Training Colleges shall continue but shall be organised as educational centres consisting of a training college and schools in which the art of teaching can be practised.

The Committee also recommended that religious instruction (that is instruction in the religion of the parents) should be provided

in all state schools; that no school established in the future and controlled by an individual proprietor should be assisted from public funds; that a condition of State aid to all new schools should be that proprietorship of the school should be vested in a religious or educational society incorporated by law or an educational society duly registered under any written law; that a law declaring schools receiving aid from public funds as perpetual educational trusts and providing for the registration of school proprietors should be enacted; and that no undue restriction be placed on unaided schools but that power be taken to inspect them to ensure that they maintain a minimum standard in regard to accommodation including playground, equipment, staff and efficiency of instruction given.

On the question of grading, classification and organization of schools the committee recommended that school education be divided into two clear-cut stages, primary and post-primary, the dividing line being at the end of the fifth standard. This dividing line according to the report-coincides with the onset of certain physiological changes that mark the end of childhood and the beginning of adolescence. According to the psychological research of the time the dividing line marks the peak of the development of general ability and by this age differences in the interests and abilities of children begin to become apparent.

The primary stage should be a single type of school and it should be organized in six stages or classes.

The committee groups the workers in the state into three categories: (i) the professional; (ii) the highly skilled; and (iii) the ordinary skilled and semi-skilled. Based on the above economic groupings the committee recommended three types of post-primary schools to which all children of primary schools should be normally assigned after a suitable selective examination at the end of the fifth standard. The three types are: (i) Secondary schools leading to the University and Professional Colleges; (ii) Senior schools leading to Polytechnics and Technical Schools and (iii) Practical Schools leading to the Agricultual and Trade schools.

Each of these post-primary schools should have a lower and a higher department. The work in the lower departments, extending over three years, should be practically the same in all three types.

The complete course in the secondary school should be one of seven years and in the senior school five years. The practical school, which will normally have a three year course, may have a higher practical course of two years for those pupils who are capable of benefitting from such education.

The classification of pupils at the end of the fifth standard is not final since they may be reclassified at the end of the eighth standard or earlier.

Coming to the medium of instruction the committee recommended that in the primary school it should be the mother tongue. 'The mother tongue', the committee agrees, 'is the natural medium of education and the genius of a nation finds full expression only through its own language and literature. The ideal therefore is for the mother-tongue to become the medium of instruction at all stages of education. This ideal goal should be achieved in stages.

English shall be introduced as a language subject in all primary schools where it is not the medium.

In the lower department of the post-primary schools the medium of instruction shall be the mother tongue or bilingual (mother tongue and English). English shall continue to be a subject in the lower department of the post-primary schools where it is not a medium. In the higher department of the secondary or senior schools the medium shall be the mother-tongue, bilingual, or English. English shall remain a compulsory second language even in the higher department of the Secondary and Senior schools where it is not a medium.

The higher practical course shall be given through the mother-tongue or bilingual medium.

Under the system of streaming envisaged by the Committee nearly 80 per cent. of the pupils would attend practical schools. They will normally occupy the base of the employment pyramid as subsistence farmers, unskilled and semi-skilled workers and craftsmen. The more industrious and enterprising among them may—through either the Higher Practical Course, the Agricultural schools run by the Agricultural Department or the trade schools run by the Department of Commerce and Industries have some opportunity of upward mobility. The agricultural and trade schools will provide vocational training for this class of citizens.

The middle 15 per cent. of the pupils will stream into the Senior schools providing education for the middle level of the employment pyramid. The Senior school pupil will end up as the technician or the clerk. After a five year secondary education they may enter a technical or commercial school for specialized training.

The top 5 per cent. would be selected for the secondary school. This elite would form the peak of the pyramid. They would man the technological and professional callings. After a seven year secondary education they would enter either the University or a professional college.

The examinations for which the pupils prepare under this national system of education the committee divides into two classes, Fitness Tests and Attainment Tests. A Fitness Test looks to the future; it seeks to determine whether the candidate is fit to proceed to a certain course of study. An attainment test looks to the past; it seeks to determine whether the candidate has attained a set standard in the courses of study which he has pursued.

The Committee recommended a Fitness Test at the conclusion of the Vth standard, and a further Fitness Test at the conclusion of the VIIIth standard.

The attainment tests the committee recommended were: (i) A Senior School Certificate examination for pupils who complete the Senior School course and for pupils who complete the first five years of the Secondary School course; (ii) A Practical School Certificate examination for pupils who complete the higher practical course in the practical schools; (iii) A Higher School Certificate examination for secondary school pupils who have passed the Senior School Certificate examination and complete a further two year course of higher education; (iv) Diploma examination for pupils who complete the respective courses of the technical schools, agricultural schools and trade schools.

Teachers would fall into five main grades under the new system: (i) Trained Graduate, Graduate with technical qualifications and untrained graduate; (ii) Technically trained specialist; (iii) Trained teacher; (iv) Approved specialist; and (v) Probationer (maximum period of probation three years).

The training of graduates should be undertaken by the University. A single type of Training College should train the non-graduate.

The technically trained specialist should possess a Diploma of a Technical or Agricultural College or College of Music, Art or Physical Training.

The recruitment of probationers should be made on the results of a selective examination, the minimum qualification for entry being the Senior School Certificate. The period of probation should not exceed three years. At the end of this period the probationer should either join a Training College or give up teaching if he is found unfit for the profession.

The most epoch making decision of the Special Committee however was 'that education should be free from the Kindergarten to the University.' Putting forward their case for free education the Committee says: 'The epoch we are about to enter will be one in which the highly productive economic system that has already been developed could be administered to bring a fuller and richer life to all

according to ability and capacity; and that every individual in the State must have equal opportunities so that, provided he has the necessary innate ability, he can lift himself from the humblest to the highest position in the social, economic and political life of the nation. In the field of education, future policy should, therefore, assume all normal children to be of equal educability. This will replace the assumption implicit in present-day educational systems that only children of a certain economic level or social position can receive certain types of education. The type of education which each child is to receive must be determined by a process of scientific selection and not by consideration of economic or social status. Stated briefly, not only on the ground of justice to the individual, but also on the ground of social efficiency, it is demanded that the educational system should provide for the training of the proper men and women for filling the proper places in the life of the nation. . . . It is not difficult to see that among the objectives that would dominate national policies after the war will be the prevention of unemployment, the raising of the standard of living of the masses, increased production, a more equitable system of distribution, social security, promotion of co-operative enterprise, etc. But as none of these things can be fully realized without mass education we are of opinion that free education must come first and foremost.

The recommendation of free education from the Kindergarten to the University was really decided on their own confession at the latter stage of the investigation. Bradby goes even further. He says, 'This chapter was re-written with drastic alterations at a stage when the whole Report was already in proof and signatures had been invited. The new version includes a recommendation for free education at all stages up to and including the University, instead of merely up to the end of the eighth standard, as had been agreed in our earlier discussions.'

The committee went further and recommended that provision should be made to afford free board and lodging to poor students, where necessary, whatever be the type of education they receive.

Under free education the basis of computation of grant to assisted schools including training colleges should remain the teachers salaries in accordance with an agreed incremental scale, and should cover the full salaries of an 'eligible' staff. Besides the salary grant, an equipment grant should be paid annually. In lieu of the equipment grant the secondary and senior schools should be authorised to levy an equipment fee if they chose to do so.

The eligible staff shall be assessed on the basis of the following quota of pupils per teacher: Primary, Practical and Senior Schools 27 units of average attendance; Secondary school 22 units of average attendance.

The salaries scheme for teachers they recommended was based on the principle of family allowances.

The Education Ordinance should be amended early lowering the age at which compulsory attendance should begin to five years. The upper limit shall remain 14 as at present. No exception should be allowed until a child is at least 12 years of age and then only if he has completed the primary course and is beneficially employed. Raising the upper limit is not feasible in the present condition of Ceylon. The law however shall be enforced strictly.

The committee considered that Municipal Councils and the more well-to-do Urban Councils should be called upon to bear a share of the responsibility for education. They might begin by assuming sole charge of primary education. The Central Government should contribute a share of the cost, the other share being found from rates.

Among the other important recommendations were that Director's powers for controlling Managers should be increased; the constitution of a Central Examination Board to be in charge of all examinations; the constitution of a Council of Educational Research to co-ordinate experiments and research in education; an Ordinance entitled 'the Assisted Schools Teachers Tenure Ordinance' be passed to regulate and safeguard the rights of teachers and setting up an Arbitration Board to adjudicate on appeals from the manager or the teacher from the decision of the Director.

Most of these decisions were neither unanimous nor original. The committee was badly divided on most of the crucial recommendations.

Kannangara, the chairman, Sivapadasundaram and Razik were against the continuance of the denominational system. 'The grant-in-aid system should be abolished,' Sivapadasundaram wrote in his rider 'and all schools in future should be State Schools. Those bodies and individuals who own schools would oppose the abolition, as their business might come to a standstill. But that is not the concern of the country.'

'I am of opinion' Kannangara said, 'that any system of public education for the future must be entirely free and under public control, *i.e.*, under the control of the state and/or the local authority.'

Razik added, 'I wish to record my emphatic protest against the continuance of the denominational system.'

On the other hand members like G. A. H. Wille, Le Goc and Amarasingham wanted unrestricted freedom for the expansion of the denominational system.

R. S. de Saram, Sivapadasundaram and Kannangara thought the teaching of religion in State Schools an advance on the existing

position. But Wille, Bradby and Amarasingham thought that the proposal would involve insuperable difficulties and to tend towards intensifying minor denominational differences.

Wille, De Saram and Jennings argued that the recommended equipment grant was so inadequate that it would bring down the educational standard of some of the best schools. The advocates of a national system of State schools on the other hand opposed any grant to denominational schools and wanted them to depend on their own resources (as private schools) if they wish to continue.

Free Education from the Kindergarten to the University was opposed on financial grounds by De Saram, Bradby and Amarasingham.

Bradby did not agree with the suggestion that, ' the ideal should be the mother tongue medium at all stages.'

Even the historical sketch given in Chapter IV of the report was the result of compromise. Wille for instance disagreed with the view ' that Ceylon's educational system had developed in piecemeal fashion'. ' A narrow application of the ethos of the nation theory' he thought ' may well result in the evolution of our educational system along lines too restricted, and leading to comparative intellectual poverty.'

Jayah, Natesan and Kularatne wrote that the historical sketch being the result of compromise had failed to bring out salient points which have an important bearing on the educational development of the country, *e.g.* no reference is made to the pansala schools and the cause of their disappearance or to the Hindu educational movement.[1]

If the recommendations had little unanimity, they had less originality. The whole report was (except the idea of free education from the Kindergarten to the University) influenced by the findings and the recommendations of the Consulative Committee of the English Board of Education. The Consultative Committee produced a number of very valuable reports on educational reforms during the inter-war period. They were : i. The Education of the Adolescent (1926), ii. The Primary School (1931), iii. Infant and Nursery Schools (1933), iv. Secondary Education (1938). The first three are popularly called the Hadow Reports and the fourth the Spens Report.

The streaming of children after a selective exam at 11+ is in fact the main theme of the Hadow Report (1926). The Report says, " There is a tide which begins to rise in the veins of youth at the age of eleven or twelve. It is called by the name adolescence. If that tide can be taken at the flood, and a new voyage begun in the strength and

1. SP. XXIV 1943

along the flow of its current, we think that it will ' move on to fortune '. We therefore propose that all children should be transferred, at the age of eleven or twelve from the primary school either to schools of the type now called secondary or to schools of the type which is now called central, or to senior and separate departments of existing elementary schools. Transplanted to new ground, and set in a new environment, which should be adjusted, as far as possible to the interests and abilities of each range and variety, we believe that they will thrive to a new height and attain a sturdier fibre. "[1]

Therefore the Hadow Report concludes that Primary education should be regarded as ending at about the age of 11+. At that age a second stage, which for the moment may be given the colourless name 'post-primary', should begin ; and this stage which, for many pupils would end at 16+, for some at 18 or 19 but for the majority at 14+ should be envisaged so far as possible as a single whole, within which there will be a variety in the types of education supplied, but which will be marked by the common characteristics that its aim is to provide for the needs of children who are entering and passing through the stage of adolescence.[2]

It is desirable that education up to 11+ should be known by the general name of Primary Education, and education after 11 by the general name of Secondary Education. Secondary education will be provided in three types of institutions : (i) Grammar schools which pursue in the main a predominatly literary or scientific curriculum ; (ii) Modern schools which give a course with a realistic or practical trend ; (iii) Senior classes of Public Elementary schools which provide post-primary education for children who do not go to any of the above mentioned types of schools.[3]

Adequate arrangements should be made for transferring children who show ability to profit by secondary education beyond the age of 15+ from modern schools to Grammer schools at the age of 12 or 13.[4]

These recommendations of the Hadow Committee are almost completely adapted by the Special Committee to their system.

Some of the recommendations of the Spens Report also have influenced the decisions of the Special Committee. Spens

1. Hadow : The Education of the Adolescent, 1926. Introduction p. XIX.
2. Ibid. p. 71
3. Ibid. p. 95
4. Ibid. p. 93

Committee says, ' We hold that all secondary schools shall follow a similar curriculum for the first two years of their course ', so that transfers from Modern Schools to Grammar Schools and vice versa is possible.[1]

Hadow Report recommended only two types of Secondary Schools — Grammar and Modern. The third alternative — extended classes in elementary schools — was only a temporary measure till the two streams got established. It was the Spens Report which made secondary education in England a tri-partite system, by adding Technical High Schools as a third type of secondary school. Spens Committee recommended ' that pupils should be recruited for Technical High Schools at the age of 11+ by means of the general selective examination by which pupils are at present recruited for the Grammar Schools. The curiculum for pupils between the ages of 11+ and 13+ in Technical High Schools should be broadly of the same character as the curriculum in other types of secondary schools of equal status. '[2]

Hadow Report provided for streaming at 11+ and Spens Report provided for transfer of late developers and misfits between 11+ and 13+ to more appropriate streams. Ceylon's Special Committee adapted the Hadow recommendation in toto and provided for transfers at the end of the VIIIth standard.

Spens Report expected the Technical High Schools to be only a minor stream. Modern Schools would take about 70 per cent Grammar Schools coming next would provide for about 25 per cent and Technical High Schools would admit the balance. In Ceylon the Secondary Schools which were to be the equivalent of Grammar Schools were to take 5 per cent, Practical Schools the equivalent of Modern Schools were to provide for 80 per cent and the Senior Schools which in certain respects resembled Technical High Schools were to admit as much as 15 per cent

Jennings in fact pointed out this discrepancy in his Dissent. ' I have never been happy ' he says ' about the proposal to establish three types of post-primary schools, Secondary, Senior and Practical. It appears to have been adopted from the Spens Report. There may have been a case for some such division in Great Britain ' having a highly commercialized industrial economy but a primarily agricultural country like Ceylon, ' may not be able to absorb even half the number leaving Senior Schools every year with commercial and technical qualifications. I should therefore recommend that there be only two types of post-primary schools—the academic and the practical'.[3]

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1. Spens : Secondary Education, 1938 p. 367
2. Ibid. p. 372
3. SP. XXIV — 1943 pp. 147-8.

Thus the Committee which started by quoting Kandel that ' a successful national system of education must arise out of and be adopted to the ethos of the nation concerned' ended up by adapting almost in detail a system recommended for England.

The major new proposal ' Free Education from the Kindergarten to the University' was adopted on July 29, 1943 when the members of the committee had assembled for the final signing of the report.[1] This was the 88th of the 90 meetings held and the Report was ready for signature at the time.

Chapter XIII dealing with Educational Finance had to be re-written to accommodate this new proposal, but only that chapter was revised. Jennings wanted the whole report revised on the basis of free education. He says, ' My chief objection is that the Committee after 87 meetings, suddenly changed the basis on which the Report was compiled. Since I agreed with the proposal to make education free, I was quite prepared to start again; but the committee decided otherwise and I am therefore unable to sign the Report'.[2]

Kannangara concluding his rider says, ' The changed conditions due to the war and the fact that free education throughout a student's career is bound to be one of the essential features of a suitable post-war educational system in this country, make it imperative that this necessary reform should be put into operation at the earliest possible opportunity'.[3]

The report was published at the end of 1943 thus starting a new and stormy chapter in the educational development of the country.

1. Ibid. p. 132
2. Ibid. p. 149
3. Ibid. p. 144.

CHAPTER 17

THE MAJOR REFORMS

THE recommendations of the Special Committee on Education were accepted by the Executive Committee with a few modifications. The allocation of pupils to the three types of post-primary schools should not, they thought, be entirely based on the results of the fitness test at the end of the primary course. 'The wishes of the parents and school records shall also be taken into consideration'.

The Special Committee recommended 'that the secondary and senior schools be authorised to levy an aquipment fee if they choose to do so'. This was dropped by the Executive Committee which agreed with the Special Committee's first alternative in 'paying an equipment grant annually to assisted schools at prescribed rates provided that equipment so procured remains the property of the State and provided that no fees, other than games fees, towards the cost of providing equipment shall be charged in Assisted schools from pupils therein'.

The third modification decided by the Executive Committee was with regard to the period of compulsory education. The compulsory age under the Education Ordinance of 1939 was 6 to 14. The Special Committee reduced the minimum age to 5 but left the maximum at 14. The Executive Committee extended the maximum age of compulsion to 16.[1]

After these modifications the main recommendations were summarised into a 25-clause resolution and sent to the Board of Ministers on January 1, 1944. The Board of Ministers first considered it on February 7, 1944, and again on March 6 and 7, 1944. The Board agreed to include the motion in the Agenda of the State Council for discussion.[2]

In their report on the resolution the Board of Ministers said, 'The Board of Ministers desires to promote discussion on the policy involved in these important recommendations. The financial implications are, however so considerable and uncertain that the Board must retain the right to consider these implications in detail and must not be regarded as committed either in respect of the extent or the

1. H. 1944 p. 837
2. H. 1944 p. 2858

date of the implementation of any recommendation approved by the Council, which must depend on the financial position of the country as a whole from time to time'.

The Financial Secretary (H. J. Huxham) in his observations added, ' It would appear that the proposals of the Executive Committee involve expenditure on a scale which this Government cannot possibly afford'.[1]

The report of the Minister of Education attached to the resolution revealed the intentions of the Executive Committee: ' The proposals contained in the report may, for convenience, be classified under three heads: (*a*) Organization and Administration; (*b*) Financial; and (*c*) Technical. The last which deals with the aims and techniques of education does not form part of the recommendations made by the Executive Committee of Education as they are of particular interest mainly to the teachers. . . . What the Council is invited to approve is the scheme of reforms suggested by the Special Committee in regard to the organizational and administrative side. This scheme which has been accepted by the Executive Committee of Education is the starting point of a new educational policy. Once the scheme has been accepted by Council in principle, appropriate measures for either amending existing legislation or introducing fresh legislation and for framing a new Code will be laid before the House. In regard to financial implications, the details will be worked out in accordance with a plan for the progressive implementation of the decisions of the Council and appropriate financial resolutions will be submitted early to the Council.

" While there is no doubt that the lines of reforms suggested by the Special Committee and endorsed by the Executive Committee are certain to usher in a new era of educational progress in this country, the proposal to introduce free education must be regarded as perhaps the most radical and far-reaching suggestion made by the Special Committee. The cost to the country on this account will be carefully examined and, in implementing the proposal, full consideration will be given to the financial resources of the Government.'[2]

The resolution appeared on the Agenda of the State Council for March 9, 1944 and was taken up for debate on March 31. The time fixed for the introduction of the resolution was 2-30 p.m. but it was nearly two hours later that the Minister got his opportunity. ' My committee is anxious', Kannangara said, ' that it should not be taken up now and my speech delivered in part'.

At the end of the day the Council was to enter a long recess and D. S. Senanayake wondered whether it would not be an advantage to

1. H. 1944 p. 841
2. H. 1944 p. 839

have the speech made that day so that the policy of the Executive Committee would be known to the public. 'If the Hon. Minister does not make his speech now, the opportunity that the Council and the public will have of studying the Committee's views during the interval would be lost,' he said. But the Council agreed to defer the consideration of the motion.[1]

Moving the resolution on May 30, 1944 Kannangara said, 'Some matters which you will find in the Report of the Special Committee have been purposely removed by the Executive Committee from the scope of this resolution. Some of those are, for instance, the subject of nursery schools; that is, the attention that should be paid to infants between the ages of 2 and 5. Then the question of adult education has been dropped; the question of education in estate schools has also been dropped for the present.'

In one of his longest speeches in the country's legislature Kannangara traced the history of education from the British occupation in 1796 to the advent of the Donoughmore Era in 1931. Quoting extensively from S. G. Perera's History of Ceylon he accused the British Government of discrimination against the Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims and the missionaries of using education as a vehicle of proselytization. Producing statistics to prove his thesis he showed how the system of education prevailing hitherto had put the majority community in a disadvantageous position.

"English schools were established" Kannangara said, "to train a body of men, the sons of the Mudaliyars and the Muhandirams, and they changed their faith; and hence we find the establishment of English shcools, not only for the purpose of helping them to find interpreters but also to get them to become more loyal subjects by becoming Christians."

"In India, Lord Macaulay laid down that famous dictum, which is now considered to be infamous, supporting this very system.

"'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 tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.' His theory was: educate the classes and the masses will look after themselves. This system has acted most drastically upon the masses. A class has been educated'....

"More and more places, power and position got into the hands of those who knew English"....

Commenting on the resolution he said, "Sir, under this motion, the very first recommendation of the Executive Committee is that the

1. H. 1944 p. 660

system of denominational schools shall work side by side with the government schools. I know how it acts unfairly and I am not personally in favour of it. . . . "[1]

When the debate was resumed on June 2, 1944, Kannangara added: 'The present system is nothing short of a system of farming-out education. . . . . How that has worked to the detriment of certain classes of society in this country, is well known. . . .

"Sir, the tendency just now, (of the Christian Missionaries) because we have inserted a 'Conscience Clause' is to say, 'All right, we will not include these children for the service with which we begin our schools. They will be excluded from the service, but we will force them to come to the service that is conducted in the boarding-house. If you are not willing to attend our service in the boarding-house, you shall not come into the boarding-house.'

"That is the definite decision that has been come to by the authorities. . . . The manner in which these people try to get over the 'conscience clause', to say the least is most objectionable.

"Another part of the 'Conscience Clause' says that no child shall be compelled to attend service without the written consent of the parents. What do they do ? They print some forms, hand them over to the children, and ask them to obtain the signatures of their parents to it. That has been done on a very large scale. . . .

"The very words used in one of these printed forms is '*Sudda liyavili*', for the teaching of '*Sudda liyavili*.' How have those words been interpreted by the children ? The parents are told that it means 'correct writing' and they have signed the form and returned it. But 'Sudda liyavili' means 'Holy Writ' which is quite a different thing. . . .

"The defects appear lurid. It is only when we go to work out the ways and means by which those defects are to be remedied, it is only then that vested interests come in and say, 'You shall not touch with unholy hands the sacred edifice built by us over many years. We have given protection to so many thousands of people. Let them be grateful to us for what we have done for them. Who dare condemn a school in which he was educated.' Yes, Sir; I know, that appeals to a large number of people. But where duty demands justice shall be done, not by managers of schools or by institutions, but by the people of this country, where the nation calls for justice, that kind of shibboleth of gratitude should not stand in the way of our taking proper action".

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1. H. 1944 pp. 841-61

Then Kannangara went on to comment on the recommendations themselves. Commenting on the free scheme of education he said: 'There are many improvements suggested by the Executive Committee as regards what the future scheme should be. May I say that they are only the embellishments on the casket that contains *the pearl of great price* ? Free education all round. I consider that, Sir, the most important of all the recommendations.'

Concluding his speech he said 'Sir you will realize that it will not be an easy task to bring these reforms or a substantial portion of them into operation all at once. It must necessarily take time. These will have to be introduced in sections during different periods and may take us another 15, 20 or 30 years. Whatever it be, the policy will be laid down, and whatever can be done should be done annually with a view to implementing the proposals contained in this motion. . . .

" Sir, it was the boast of the great Augustus that he found Rome of brick and left it of marble. How much nobler will be the state of the State Council boast when we shall be able to say that we found education dear and left it cheap, that we found it a sealed book and left it an open letter, that we found it the patrimony of the rich and left it the inheritance of the poor ? "[1]

Kannangara sat down under a thunderous applause. From his own estimate this was the greatest speech of his career,[2] and it was no surprise that he received the congratulations of his supporters. Ratnayake passed a note, 'Congratulations ! Great Speech '.[3] M. S. Aney the Indian Government Representative who listened to the whole speech from the Distinguished Visitors' Gallery came down stairs immediately after the speech to congratulate Kannangara. In his own words " Immediately I finished my speech Aney came rushing down, took me by both his hands and said, 'you would have been worshipped as a god, had you been in India.' "[4]

After Kannangara's speech other business was taken up and on June 16, D. S. Senanayake moved another recess till July 18. Kannangara protested.

R. E. Jayatilaka opposing the adjournment said, 'I was wondering why the Hon. Leader wanted the House adjourned . . . Sir we have been discussing many questions. We took up the question of plumbago, but when it comes to an important question—the education of the poor of this country—we want to put it off. I wonder, and I want to know whether it is the Old School Tie Brigade tyring to torpedo this scheme, because it has been said that powerful influences are trying to torpedo these Education proposals."

1. H. 1944 pp. 916-46
2. Kannangara, C. W. W. : IW February 12, 1966.
3. PF (Note)
4. Kannangara, C. W. W. : IW November 22, 1965.

H. J. Huxham, Financial Secretary supporting the adjournment pointed out that it had always been the practice of the Board of Ministers and the House to adjourn about that time of the year in order to consider the Budget.

D. S. Senanayake was prepared to advance the date of next meeting by one week. He said, 'As far as I am concerned, I am willing to accept July 11 as the next date on which the Council should meet to discuss the Education motion and nothing else.... If that is conceded, then we would agree not to bring up even Supplementary Estimates, so as to enable this motion to be discussed from morning, until the debate is concluded.[1]

The debate was taken up on July 11, but it could not be concluded as expected. The debate took 15 full days of discussion spread over a period of over 15 months. The motion that appeared on the Agenda of the Council for March 9, 1944 was ultimately disposed of only on June 6, 1945.

No less than 29 members spoke on the resolution some of them for hours. 51 amendments were moved in the course of the debate, G. A. H. Wille alone moving 11 of them.

Most of the members who spoke supported the recommendations as a whole. But some thought they did not go far enough. None opposed free education directly, but a few wondered whether the country could afford it.

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who spoke early in the debate said, 'this is perhaps one of the most important subjects if not the most important subject, which this House has been called upon to consider and decide during the whole course of its existence.... The document which the Special Committee has produced is an extremely important one.... In fact, the measure of the value of a proposal is very often the violence of the criticism that it evokes; and this Report has evoked so much criticism that I think the Hon. Minister should be flattered that his Special Committee has produced a document of such importance and interest that it has aroused so much discussion in this country.'

Referring to the Special Committee's definition that national education is an education that is adapted to the ethos of a nation he said, "I was anxiously looking for a definition by them, and an attempt at examination, of the ethos of the people of this country, if they have such a thing and an attempt to show in what way this educational system is modelled to suit that ethos. I simply did not discover it.... 'Ethos' as I understand it, means, when applied to a nation 'the spirit of a nation in terms of culture', but apart from that emphasis

1. H. 1944 pp. 1077-8

should be laid on the aspect of education which enables a person to be able to obtain a reasonable living. The Special Committee in its high idealism has rejected the purely vocational aspect of education, but I would ask that that position be further considered."[1]

V. Nalliah speaking against the denominational system said, " To my mind, the Hon. Minister of Education has one of the toughest problems that any Minister of Education in any part of the world can have. I do not think that any reform of education can be initiated in this country without at the same time raising tremendous opposition, simply because of the fact that the minority-community denominations have control over the education of the majority-community denomination. It is a very elementary principle of human nature that those in power will never give up that power without a fight. Therefore can we legitimately expect the Minister of Education and others to provide a rational system of education unless they face the major-issue before the country, namely the problem of denominational education versus state education ?

" The politicians in this country will be the first to condemn diarchy in political administration. As a matter of fact, I think they are even prepared to go to any length to see that even the limited form of diarchy that now obtain in Ceylon is ended as soon as possible. But how is it that those who are now fighting to end diarchy in political administration wish to see a dual system of educational administration in this country—the State system of education and the denominational system of education ?

" How is it possible to have any rational or planned system of education when the Minister has only nominal control over education in this country ?" he asked.[2]

W. Dahanayake who entered the State Council as the new member for Bibile in the middle of the debate[3] supporting the swabhasa medium as proposed by the Special Committee said, ' What is it that English Education has done to us ? It has taken away the manliness from us; it has impeded the natural development of each individual in this country. . . . The medium of instruction, being a foreign language, has bottled up our genius making it impossible for us to grow into men. . . . It is through the medium of English that the Britisher tries to keep us slaves for ever. Knock out English from the pedestal it occupies to-day, and place thereon our Sinhalese and our Tamil languages, and we shall soon be a free race.[4]

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1. H. 1944 pp. 1216-22
2. H. 1944 p. 1260
3. November 14, 1944 (H. 1944 p. 2413)
4. H. 1944 p. 2615

J. R. Jayewardene sponsoring his amendment that, 'the system of Public Education shall be a State system' said, "We find that wherever there has been progress in any country, that country has progressed as a result of State Education. In New Zealand quite long ago—as long ago as 1906—they had free, state, and compulsory education. Illiteracy was completely wiped out, so much so that to-day they do not take statistics of illiteracy.

"Of course, it is not necessary to speak of the Soviet Union, where we know that they have State Education, where we know that in 20 years they did what the Czars did not do for over 200 years. They not only have State education; they spend on education more than any other country in the whole world: they spend £8 4sh. per head on education. In England they spend £2 5sh. per head and in Ceylon we spend Rs. 5 per head.

"In Denmark they have state education. In Australia they have free state compulsory education. In America they have state education. In France Sir, for a number of centuries there was a struggle between priests and laymen, and ultimately the state has triumphed and large numbers of pupils are now going to State schools. In Italy, the home of Catholicism, the system of education is a State system. Now what is there wrong in Ceylon adopting a system of State education ?"[1]

P. de S. Kularatne referring to the question of proselytisation said, "Sir, I do not want to be ungrateful to the school that produced me. That is far from my intention. But facts are facts. . . . It is my experience that with the very best intentions—I will not question their motives—all these good people did proselytize did attempt to proselytize and do proselytize the Buddhist children attending their (missionaries') schools. . . .

"I do not blame anybody for doing this work which it is the duty of a missionary to do, because the work of a missionary is to convert the people to his faith. . . . I do not mind conversion. I would rather have the children converted in a Christian School. It is the failure to convert them that I object to. Most of the Buddhist children who attend a missionary school and are not converted are a grave danger to this country. . . .

"They leave the school without any kind of religion whatsoever, their religion has been destroyed, and nothing has been put in its place. Such people are a grave danger. They often sit on the fence, and their religion is often determined at the time of their marriage. We have got that class of Christians known as *Istrians*. Their religion depends on the religion of the wife."[2]

1. H 1945 Col. 495
2. H. 1945 Col. 553-4

The above extracts are from the speeches made generally in support of the resolution. The opposition to free education never came to the open. The opponents preferred 'guerilla warfare' instead of a frontal attack.

G. G. Ponnambalam who was very critical of the report—sometimes because it did not go far enough and at other times because it went too far—said, "The Special Committee having delivered itself of the platitude that what would be very good for England might not necessarily be good for Ceylon, has gone on to adopt for Ceylon some of the worst features, some of the most impracticable features of the English system, some of the features about which there is acute difference of opinion even in England. . . .

"I can understand an intelligence test being applied at the age of 11 to find out who are the most intelligent—at the top—and those who are not intelligent—at the bottom—the centre, grouped in between. But that is clearly not what is contemplated by the various paragraphs in the report dealing with this question, because they say that the test should be with a view to finding out the various types of ability, the various aptitudes, and the various capacities. . . . Has there been in any country in the world some kind of psychological test or tests by which at the age of 11 you can take a boy and say that he will turn out to be a first class engineer or a lawyer or owing to some hidden talent, that he will be an Agricultural Minister ?

"I hope I will not be blamed if I express my most anxious fears that these tests will work out to be a racket in this country, the most corrupt form in which people can possibly be chosen."[1]

Criticising the inadequacy of the free education proposed, he said, "I contest the claim that there is a recommendation for free education. I venture to submit quite summarily that the recommendation is nothing more or less than the abolition of tuition fees. The abolition of tuition fees cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called free education. . . . It would be a good cry that we were giving or proposing to give free education, and anybody who hesitated or questioned such a move or, shall I say such a manoeuvre, was a reactionary and a diehard. But in point of fact the claim of free education sought to be given to the people of this country is one of the most gigantic hoaxes which it is sought to perpetrate on an uneducated electorate. . . .

"It is remarkable how, on this question of equality of opportunity there seems to be one *idee fixe*, both with the Special Committee and with the Minister. They both speak of levelling-down. Why should you level down inequalities ? . . . . There have been very high levels

1. H 1944 pp. 1150-65

attained by secondary schools in this country. The Hon. Minister of Education is himself a product of one such secondary school. He was not merely a product, but I am told a very distinguished product, and not merely a distinguished product, but a free scholar, so that, he was a distinguished and a finished scholar. And is it wrong for such schools to ask this finished product not to finish them off."[1]

Answering the accusation that Christian schools proselytize G. C. S. Corea said, " You cannot urge now that there is any denominational body which uses its position for purposes of conversion. . . . We have had in this House a very large number of Members who have attained prominence in various spheres and who are all Buddhists educated in Christian institutions. Where is this theory of conversion ? Why raise this bogey at the present time and to frighten ourselves with the thought that Buddhists are being converted ? . . . Take the Buddhist leaders we have had in the past who were educated in Christian institutions. Have there been any cases of conversion, or has their faith in any way been shaken ? On the contrary those are the men who have fought stoutly for the propagation of their own faith.'[2]

D. S. Senanayake speaking on behalf of the Board of Ministers towards the tail end of the debate, when the House had expressed its overwhelming support for the resolution said, ' There seem to be doubts in the minds of some Members of this Council, that for financial reasons the government does not propose to give effect to the recommendations of the Special Committee on Education. I say that there is no foundation for that fear.

" I am convinced that all those responsible—the new Financial Secretary (Oliver Goonetilleke) as well as the rest of the Board of Ministers—are anxious to do all they can to give practical effect to the recommendations.

" I want to assure all those present here that there is no room for doubting the country's ability to pay, and our willingness to provide the money.'

Then giving his own opinion on the reforms contemplated, he said, ' The problem is not to get the money, but to get the men—the staff. If you can find the men, I say that we shall find the money long before you provide the men. I would be the last person to suggest a scheme which merely enabled you to say, ' Oh, we are giving free education to every child in the island,' but which in fact did not provide that education, which merely resulted in the construction of bare buildings and the giving of employment to the unemployables of Ceylon '. . . . By the time you have trained the necessary staff of teachers you will get all the money you want. But I do object to

1. H. 1944 pp. 1206-10
2. H. 1945 Col. 503-04

your saying, ' We are going to give free education to all' and then proceeding to build schools without roofs; I do object to your using mud huts as schools, to your starting schools without the necessary staff of teachers".[1]

Support for the reforms came from traditionally unexpected quarters as well. It was well known that the new Financial Secretary, Oliver Goonetilleke was sympathetic to the proposals. (If not for the proposals he was perhaps sympathetic to his teacher—at Wesley —the Minister of Education).[2]

Support also came from the new Legal Secretary, M. W. H. de Silva who said, ' For 130 years this country has had no educational policy and has had no educational plan. I say that it is undoubtedly the duty of the government to provide for the education of the people under it. That duty is solely the duty of the government and nobody else. Now, how have the Government carried out this duty of theirs ? I say the Government have not recognised their duty fully. They have allowed missionary bodies, Buddhist societies and other persons to carry on the functions which properly belong to the Government.

" Now having done that for 130 years, are we surprised that this country is illiterate, that crime is prevalent, and that nothing has been done on a proper footing ? . . . There is no place in a proper educational system, for other bodies to intervene and interfere in the education which the state provides.

" I say that if there is one asset in this country, it is the human asset, and there are 1,280,000 children or more to be neglected, to be allowed to grow up without education, to grow up like savages because they have not got the training to earn their own livelihood ?

" Now, one member suggested that these children should be provided, not only with education, with books but also with clothing. What a comment on our social system. If we have a country where the people are so poor that they cannot afford to provide clothing for their children who attend schools, is that not a commentary on the social system which provides not sufficient to the labourer to provide clothing for his children ? I say, if you are to progress, you have to educate the people, first and last. Without education there can be no progress."

S. Natesan encouraged by the comments of De Silva made a prophetic statement: ' The debate has been lifted to a higher level, and it is tense with excitement, thanks to the intervention of the . . . Hon. the Acting Legal Secretary whom I wish to compliment, Sir, if I may, on his most excellent speech suffused no less with socialistic

1. H. 1945 Col. 2808-11
2. Kannangara, C. W. W. : IW February 13, 1966.

fervour than with patriotic feeling. We are not used yet, Sir, to hearing strains of patriotic eloquence from that quarter, but we are now come on happier times and it augurs well for the future of Ceylon that we find installed into those seats men of the calibre of Sir Oliver Goonetilleke and Mr. M. W. H. de Silva men who could most appropriately fill in the constitution to come the offices of Minister of Finance and Minister of Justice.'[1]

On June 6, 1945 the resolution with many amendments was passed by the State Council thus starting a new era in the educational history of this country. The recommendations adopted by the Council are as follows:—

(i) The system of State schools and denominational schools shall continue in respect of the existing schools provided however it shall be the duty hereafter of the State exclusively to establish schools of all types where necessary. Provided further that—(*a*) Denominational schools shall be subject to the following among other conditions:— to be registered for grant the school shall have at least 30 pupils of school-going age of the same denomination as the controlling body who reside with their parents within a radius from the school of two miles for boys and one mile for girls and children under 8 years of age; to continue to receive assistance from public funds the school shall have at least 30 pupils of school-going age of the same denomination as the controlling body, who reside with their parents within a radius from the school of two miles for boys and one mile for girls and children under 8 years of age. (*b*) All Estate schools shall be converted into primary State schools and shall form part of the system of national education.

(ii) The system of State Training Colleges and Denominational Training Colleges shall continue provided they re-organize themselves as full-fledged training centres with practising schools. Assisted Denominational Training Colleges shall admit only students of like-denomination and the number of students admitted into any Training College shall be restricted only to the number assigned to the Management by the Director after taking into consideration the number of unemployed teachers and teachers required for employment by the management in the schools. Provided that a minimum of 100 students be considered adequate and that Practising Schools need not necessarily be attached to the Training College but should however be within easy reach of it.

(iii) Religious instruction (appropriate to the religion to which the parent of the child belongs) shall normally be provided in all Assisted denominational schools and in State Schools including State Training Colleges subject to the right of individual parents to withdraw their children from such instruction by written request addressed

1. H. 1945 Col. 2823-27

to the headmaster: provided that it shall not be compulsory to provide such religious instruction to such children if their number on the roll does not exceed fifteen.

(iv) Unaided schools and Training Colleges may be permitted to exist provided they give adequate and suitable instruction.

(v) Schools shall be divided into two grades: primary and post-primary; the primary grade being uniform in type and the post-primary consisting of a Junior School from standard VI to standard VIII, bifurcating at standard VIII (normally at 14+) into Senior Secondary and Senior Practical Schools; Junior Schools being of diverse types adapted to suit local requirements. Provided that such secondary education is imparted in multilateral schools. The system of Multilateral schools conducted by the State and providing courses of instruction free of charge up to the standard of the Higher School Certificate Examination shall continue with necessary alterations and modifications.

(vi) Each type of post-primary school shall be organised into a lower department giving a three year course and a higher department giving a two year course, the secondary school giving a further two-year course. Pupils may be transferred if the circumstances demand it with the approval of the Department from any type of Post-Primary school to another at the end of any year in the Post-Primary stage.

(vii) The medium of instruction in the primary school shall be the mother tongue, with English as an optional language. (viii) The medium of instruction in the lower department of the post primary schools may be either the mother tongue or bilingual. (ix) The medium of instruction in the higher department of the post-primary schools may be English, Sinhalese, Tamil or Bilingual.

(x) There shall be a fitness test at the end of the Junior School Course — the test being organised and administered by the Department of Education in collaboration with the schools, provided, however, that in the allocation of pupils to the two types of Senior schools the wishes of parents and school records shall also be taken into consideration.

(xi) There shall be one attainment test — held on completion of the five-year course — for each of the two types of post-primary schools.

(xii) Graduate teachers shall be trained at the Ceylon University as early as possible. (xiii) Non-graduate teachers shall be trained at Training Colleges organised and conducted as educational centres.[1] (xiv) Untrained teachers may be employed in a probationary capacity for a period not exceeding three years.

1. See paragraph 159 of SP XXIV — 1943.

(xv) In Assisted or State primary and post-primary schools and Training Colleges, in the State Technical, Agricultural and Trade schools and in the University no tuition fees shall be levied.

(xvi) The full salaries, according to prescribed scales, of teachers consisting of 'eligible' staff of Assisted primary and post-primary schools and Training Colleges shall be met from public funds.

(xvii) An equipment grant shall be paid annually to Assisted schools at prescribed rates provided that equipment so procured remains the property of the State and provided that no fees, other than games fees, towards the cost of providing equipment shall be charged in Assisted Schools from pupils therein.

(xviii) The 'eligible' staff shall be assessed on the basis of the following quota of pupils per teacher : (a) Primary, practical and Senior schools : 27 units of average attendance ; (b) Secondary school : 22 units of average attendance. No non-Ceylonese shall be placed on the eligible staff of teachers save with the approval of the Executive Committee of Education.

(xix) Salary Scales should be fixed for teachers, bearing in view the need to secure the most suitable persons for this important and responsible work.

(xx) Provision shall be made to compel attendance at school from the age of 5 to 16 subject to exceptions, in suitable cases, after the age of 14, provided free books and necessary clothes are supplied by the state.

(xxi) The responsibility for primary education in urban areas shall be transferred to the local Bodies where the Governor so decides, provided that they shall not be liable to contribute more than 50 per cent of the cost.

(xxii) A central Examination Board with executive functions shall be constituted to be in charge of examinations.

(xxiii) A Council of Educational Research shall be constituted to co-ordinate experiments and research in education.

(xxiv) The appointment, dismissal and disciplinary control of teachers of Assisted schools shall be regulated by separate legislation.[1]

(xxv) Steps shall be taken to bring into operation the above reforms, putting into form suitable transitional arrangements until the administration and organizational difficulties incidental to the superimposition of the new system on the existing one are smoothed out.

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1. See paragraphs 390 and 391 of XXIV — 1943.

In addition to the above recommendations originally proposed by the Executive Committee of Education seven new recommendations were also passed, thus bringing the total to 32. Five of the new resolutions approved by the Council were proposed by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. They are : (i) the University shall confer external degrees ; (ii) steps shall be taken to establish nursery schools ; (iii) a state scheme of adult education shall be launched ; (iv) steps shall be taken to establish state primary and secondary schools, wherever necessary, in order to afford a reasonable opportunity for all children of school going age to receive education ; (v) a satisfactory scheme shall be prepared for medical inspection and treatment of children in primary and secondary schools.

The other two of the new resolutions were proposed by W. Dahanayake : (i) steps shall be taken to establish sanatorium schools to which children in malarial districts shall be transferred for the period during which malaria prevails in their home districts ; (ii) all pupils shall be provided with a free midday meal on a balanced diet, and in cases of malnutrition all the other meals shall also be the concern of the State.[1]

As no time limit was fixed for the reforms, no budgetary provision was made in the estimates of 1945-46 for their implementaton. Bandaranaike, the Acting Leader of the House in introducing the Appropriation Bill said, ' This matter (Free Education) came up for consideration by the Board of Ministers as an emergency measure only last Monday (July 16, 1945). It was felt by some of the Ministers that any scheme to give effect to free education must be considered as a whole and that State schools as well as state-aided schools should be dealt with at one and the same time. . . . The matter will receive the very early consideration of the Board of Ministers. '[2]

D. S. Senanayake was away in England on constitutional negotiations from July to October, 1945. When the author interviewed Kannangara he said, ' Senanayake was not enthusiastic about the grant of free education. Immediately he left for England, I brought the proposals before the Board of Ministers for approval. ' In early August the Board of Ministers approved the implementation of the Free Education Scheme.

On August 24, 1945 the two proposals, the use of the mother tongue as the medium of education in schools and the remission of fees (free education) was brought up before the Council in the form of ' school grants (Revised Conditions) Regulations, 1945.'

The main regulations were: ' The proprietor of every Assisted School have the right to elect whether or not the revised conditions

1. H. 1945 Col. 2925-92
2. H. 1945 Col. 3539

hereinafter set out are to be complied with in that school, and where he elects in favour of such compliance, he shall nominate one of the years 1945, 1946, 1947 and 1948 as the year in which such compliance is to commence.

'In the case of every Assisted school in which the revised conditions are complied with, the grant payable from state funds in respect of any period on or after the first day of October in the year in which such compliance commences, shall consist of 'the amount, to be known as the maintenance and Equipment Grant calculated at the following rates: (*a*) Assisted English Schools. For each unit of average attendance in the primary classes Rs. 2.50; in the Junior Section of the post-primary classes Rs. 5.00; in the Senior Section of the post-primary classes where an approved science laboratory is not provided Rs. 10.00 and where an approved Science laboratory is provided Rs. 15.00. (*b*) Assisted vernacular or Bilingual schools. For each unit of average attendance Re. 1.00.

'The revised conditions referred to in the preceding provisions of these regulations shall be as follows: (i) No fee, other than a games fee not exceeding six rupees a year for each pupil, shall be levied from any pupil attending the school. (ii) The mother tongue of each pupil shall be made the medium of instruction in the primary classes of the school; and English shall be taught as a compulsory second language in the primary classes from the third standard upwards: provided that, when the mother tongue of any pupil is English the compulsory second language to be taught to that pupil shall be either Sinhalese or Tamil, at the option of the parents of the pupils.'[1]

When the recommendations of the Special Committee were first brought before the State Council for approval on May 30, 1944 the Financial Secretary Huxham calculated the additional recurrent cost of free education at Rs. 46,650,000, to which he added a capital cost of Rs. 20,000,000 more. This was perpaps done to emphasize his comment that Free Education would 'involve expenditure on a scale which this government cannot possibly afford.'[2]

The new Financial Secretary, Oliver Goonetilleke made almost a contrary observation. He calculated the additional cost at Rs. 2,900,000. Kannangara intervened to say 'I reckon that it will be a little more and calculated the additional cost at Rs. 3,674,000.

As usual with educational issues there was once again a long debate which normally was not the case with this type of regulations. The main argument of the opposition was that the equipment grant proposed was inadequate and standards would come down.

1. H. 1945 Col. 4151-4
2. H. 1944 p. 840

Kannangara sponsoring the regulations asid, " These assisted schools, it is said, have reached a very high standard. They have reached ' Himalayan heights ', by levying school fees as they liked, without any restriction, and by paying as they liked, out of the money's collected by them, excess salaries to teachers.

" The point I wish to emphasize is that if excess teachers are employed and excess salaries are paid by some of these schools and not by others, and in varying amounts, to reach these ' Himalayan heights, ' what chance is there for doing justice to the large majority of children in this country ?

" Are those people in charge of denominational schools to be given every cent they require to enable them to sit in their arm-chairs and manage the schools ? Are they to come empty handed, open schools and then carry on ? Why should the government make use of them as agents if government is going to spend every cent ? If the government has to provide every cent that is wanted, then in that case government must claim the management of these schools. Government must control the appointments of teachers, and above all, government must control admission to those schools, and any systems of scholarships, or anything like that. . . ."

" Some one asked me the other day whether instruction in the mother tongue would be compulsory only in the schools that come into the scheme and whether the other schools, those schools that would stand out after this period of three years could carry on as they like. I am afraid they are reckoning without the host. The other code amendment that will apply to all schools is ready, and you will find it on the Agenda paper ere long. So that anybody that stands out of the scheme on October 1, 1945, will be able to have nothing else except the mother tongue as the medium of instruction so far as its schools are concerned.

" One final word, Sir, with regard to the maintenance of this very ' high ' standard. . . . This is the very high standard that has been attained by the Collegiate and Senior secondary schools: for every 100 children in the country there are only five in these schools ! Then the fair standard for Junior Secondary and Primary English schools: for every 100 children in this country there are only two in those schools. For the lower standard, the standard that has to be attained by the sons of the labourers and the peasants in the villages, a standard which everybody condemns as very low there are 62 of them for every hundred ! And there are 31 others who have not the facilities. So that I have to sacrifice my scheme to satisfy those five, five out of 100 ! To maintain a standard of excellence for five I have to deny to those children the facilities of a reasonably fair education. Do I promise, with Alladin's lamp in my hand, overnight to establish these schools

with a very high standard in every village ? Some of the Central Schools were established only the other day, last month. Sir, some of the big schools have been plodding on for the last 100 years to attain this excellence.

"I have been condemned for offering this 'false pearl' of the central schools. I say that it is a pearl of great price. Sell all that you have and buy it for the benefit of the whole community. 'Mankind has struck its tents and is on its onward march'. Let us not lag behind."[1]

The regulations were approved by the Council without a division on August 28, 1945 and free education scheme became a reality on October 1, 1945.[2]

The Governor, Henry Moore (who ratified the Regulations on September 8) forwarding six copies of the regulations and the recommendations of the Special Committee approved by the Council to G. H. Hall, Secretary of State for the Colonies (on October 15) also conveyed the following observations of the Minister of Education: 'A new landmark in the history of Education in the Colonial Empire has been established by the bold decision to abolish school fees in the various types of schools in this Island. . . . This revolutionary measure which is one of first-class social importance will for the first time give all pupils in this country equality of opportunity to profit from education suited to their diverse aptitudes, and that no child hereafter will be denied all that a well planned system of education can offer him owing to the poverty of his parents."

G. H. Hall, the Secretary of State in his reply dated December 15 said, "I have noted with pleasure the inclusion in the regulations of the provision that education in the primary schools shall be through the mother tongue—a provision which, I am advised, is based on sound educational psychology.

"I am happy to be able to endorse the observations of the Minister of Education reported in your despatch, and I consider that he deserves to be congratulated on his achievement in introducing an educational system which will for the first time in Ceylon give all pupils equality of opportunity in the educational sphere, irrespective of the status or financial position of their parents.

"In this connection, I shall be grateful if you will let me know whether it is intended to provide free books and stationery at least in the primary grade and Junior schools. It would appear that, if the principles of equality of opportunity is to be preserved, free books and stationery should be provided.

1. H. 1945 Col. 4154-73
2. H. 1945 Col. 4294

" I trust that future educational progress in Ceylon will prove to any critics that a scheme of free education is able to maintain the high standards which have marked the system now superseded."[1]

At the end of 1945 the Director of Education had this to say about the new scheme: ' Education in the Island underwent a far-reaching change with the introduction on October 1, 1945 of the scheme of Free Education, which was Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara's particular contribution to the education of the Island. All Government Schools are now free schools, while a large number of Assisted English Schools have already joined the scheme."[2]

" The year 1946 was a notable one in the history of education in Ceylon as the new Educational policy of the government was largely implemented in the course of it.... Many new schools were opened . . . Public-spirited persons came forward to help the government with donations of money, sites, buildings and material.

" In this brief and matter-of-fact description of the reforms of 1946 it has hardly been possible to do justice to the very great change and reorientation of education that were set in actual motion and will develop some of their far reaching effects for many years to come. It would have been difficult to foresee that the mother tongue would have been able, in the space of one year, to supplant English in the primary classes and that the idea of free education would have been able to catch the imagination of the common man all over the island".[3]

1. SP. VII 1946
2. AR. DE. 1945 p. 4
3. AR. DE. 1946 pp. 4-7

CHAPTER 18

THE EDUCATION ORDINANCE, 1947.

THE State Council's decisions of June 5 and 6, 1945 fell roughly into two classes, viz. (*a*) those that could be implemented under the existing Ordinance and (*b*) those that required new legislation.

'Out of the decisions capable of immediate implementation undoubtedly the most important were the introduction of the mother tongue into the primary classes of all schools and the provision whereby assisted English schools were given an opportunity voluntarily to enter the free education scheme.

'There was a small group of decisions which, although capable of immediate implementation were for reasons of expediency deferred to a later stage. The most important of these was the decision to introduce a quota of 22 in Senior Secondary schools and 27 in other schools.

'Among the decisions calling for legislation one of the most important was that which involved the conversion of estate schools into state schools.... The problem of framing legislation to meet the State Council's decisions necessitated preliminary discussions with planting and labour interests.'[1]

In addition to these discussions with planting interests, there was—as usual with educational ordinances—delay in the Legal Draftsman's office.

Referring to this delay Kannangara said: "As regards the implementation of those decisions, (June, 1945) as I intimated at the time, these decisions have to be embodied in legislation. From that date I have been trying my utmost to bring up legislation before this House. I pointed out this matter to the Board of Ministers on several occasions. I have complained to the Hon. Leader that the legislation was getting delayed. I do not know whether there is any chance of our seeing this legislation before this House for the next two or three months. But I hope even after the Hon. Legal Secretary (J. H. B. Nihill) leaves the island we will be able to attend to this legislation.'[2]

1. AR. DE. 1946 p. 6
2. H. 1946 Col. 3585

At last the Bill intituled ' An Ordinance to amend the Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939' was introduced in the Council on January 23, 1947. Almost at the end of the day Kannangara asked the speaker's permission to move the First Reading of this Bill.

D. S. Senanayake moved the adjournment to prevent Kannangara moving the first reading of the Bill. But the Speaker (Waitialingam Duraiswamy) intervened and said, ' The Hon. Minister has already moved the First Reading of the Bill formally.' Then the question ' that the Bill be now read the first time' put, and agreed to.[1]

The opponents of the Bill were using delaying tactics as the State Council was to be dissolved by the end of June, 1947. Therefore Senanayake's move to postpone the introduction of the Bill in the Council was not unexpected.

Kannangara recalling the happenings of the day said, " I had met Sir Waitialingam in the morning and told him what was up. He was a great friend of mine. ' Oh ! don't worry, Kannangara', he assured me, ' I'll do anything for you.' Duraiswamy kept his word and allowed me to move the first reading of the Bill before the adjournment was debated."[2]

Commenting on this incident the Political Correspondent (J. L. Fernando) of the Ceylon Daily News wrote: ' In the terrific hurry which so often precedes an adjournment of Council for a holiday the Minister of Education mumbled that he moved the First Reading of this Bill. Never a word was said to explain what it was all about, and the question was put and agreed to in the same blitztering style. But in keeping with essential procedure nobody heard the clerk to the Council reading the Bill for the First time. Who can then say that the First Reading took place.'[3] Fernando was the political confidant of Senanayake from 1933 to his death in 1952.[4]

Canon R. S. de Saram, Warden of St. Thomas' College at a meeting of the Old Boys' Association of the College commented on the same incident. ' I do not know how many of you are aware of the fact that this Bill has passed its first reading. How it did so is an extraordinary story. In a minute or two with no speech, no explanation, no information to the country at large, this important Bill which will if passed affect the lives of millions was introduced and passed its first reading.'[5]

The Education Amendment Ordinance of 1947 provided for:

(i) An Examinations Council appointed by the Governor to organize and conduct examinations;

1. H. 1947 Col. 290-1
2. Kannangara, C. W. W. : IW November 21, 1965
3. CDN. January 25, 1947
4. Fernando, J. L. : Three Prime Ministers of Ceylon.
5. CDN. February 1, 1947.

(ii) An Educational Research Council appointed by the Governor to conduct and promote research in educational theory and practice and investigations and experiments with a view to the improvement of the methods of teaching;

(iii) An applicant to be refused admission into any Assisted school on the ground that there are no facilities at the school for teaching him through the medium of the language through which he is by regulation made under this Ordinance required to be taught;

(iv) Instruction in the religion of the parent of each pupil in a Government School to be given to that pupil as part of his course of studies in the school, by a person who is an adherent of that religion;

(v) Prohibition of any instruction in, or any worship or observance connected with, a religion which is not the religion of the parent of the pupil in a Government or an Assisted School or in any hostel of the school or in any chapel or place of worship situated within the premises of the school;

(vi) The Director to appoint as the manager of an assisted school any person recommended in writing by the proprietor of the school;

(vii) The Director to suspend or remove from office the manager of an assisted school either of the Director's own motion or upon a written request made in that behalf by the proprietor of the school.

(viii) The Executive Committee to make regulations for (*a*) the establishment, taking over, transfer, continuance, discontinuance, grading, staff, and equipment of schools, including nursery schools for the education of children who have not attained the age of five years, schools for the education of blind, deaf, defective or epileptic children, and schools in any sanatorium for the reception of pupils and teachers from schools in epidemic stricken areas; (*b*) the registration of schools after July 1, 1947, subject to the condition that in the case of any denominational school any grant from state funds shall be payable only in respect of pupils whose parents profess the religion of the proprietor of the school; (*c*) the language through the medium of which instruction shall be given in any class in any Government school or Assisted school; (*d*) the classification of pupils other than those attending unaided schools, and their assignment to classes or schools, according to their proficiency and aptitude; (*e*) the supply of free clothes; (*f*) the classification of schools into, secondary, senior, practical and other classes and types; (*g*) requiring the parent of any child not less than 5 years and nor more than 16 years of age to cause such child to attend a school; (*h*) the education of adults;

(ix) The Education of children who are not less than 5 years and not more than 16 years of age resident on estates;

(x) The Director to establish and maintain a government school in premises set apart on the estate; and

(xi) The discontinuance of unaided schools.[1]

The second reading of the Bill appeared on the Orders of the Day of February 20, 1947. But even before the item was taken up A. F. Molamure (Balangoda) moved a postponement till after the recess. But he had to wait till the item came up for consideration. A few minutes later Molamure again moved that the second reading of this Bill be adjourned till after the recess. H. de Z. Siriwardene (Negombo) seconded.

'I should just like to know the reason for the motion' said Kannangara.

It was W. Dahanayake (Bibile) who suggested a reason. Rising to oppose the adjournment he said, "I do not think it has taken the House by surprise, because this morning the Times of Ceylon stated that the Hon. Member for Balangoda would, in all probability, move an adjournment motion.

"I do not know whether the Times Reporter did some crystal gazing, but if it was not crystal gazing, one might well believe the reason that was given in the Times of Ceylon of this afternoon. The mover has not given his reasons now, so it is for us to infer that the reasons given in this afternoon's Times of Ceylon are correct. The paper says that this is a method of sabotaging the Education Bill, because, Sir, if this Bill is to be taken up on the 4th of March, there will be some further delay, and it can be so managed that there will be more delays during the committee stage, and the Education Bill, as it is here, will not see the light of day during the lifetime of this Council."

Molamure in his reply said, 'I am not responsible for what appears in the Times of Ceylon concerning myself. . . . We know that news is usually supplied from one source in this House, and, evidently that one source must have heard some remark which I made in the lobby of the chamber yesterday, to the effect that I would ask that the consideration of the second reading of this Bill be deferred. . . .

"As regards the reason why I want the item deferred, it is because it is now a quarter to five and not mush discussion of this matter can take place by half past five. So, I thought that this being an important Bill, we might discuss it fully at a later date."

Molamure's motion for adjournment was passed by 19 voting for and 17 against. But the reason for the adjournment given by the mover stands questioned as he could not have thought of the time factor the previous day.[2]

1. Ordinance No. 26 of 1947
2. H. 1947 Col. 933-40

The second reading was scheduled for March 6, 1947. But during the interval the Christians (led by the Catholic Church) started a campaign against the Bill. Local Bodies over which the Catholics had some influence were whipped up to pass resolutions against the Bill. Occasions like the Prize Givings were utilized to make pronouncements opposed to the principles of the Bill. Public meetings were organised in predominantly Catholic areas.

At a meeting of the Old Boys' Association of St. Thomas' College (the then Leader of the House Hon. D. S. Senanayake was also present at the meeting) Canon de Saram said, 'The implications of the new Bill are no-where clearly set forth in the proposed Ordinance. All that is done is that through the amendments powers are sought for the educational authority to lay down regulations by Code rules. . . . In other words what is sought now is that the Educational Authority should be handed a blank cheque to be filled in as it likes. . .

'Some of the proposed amendments are very dangerous and if passed will put our very existence in peril. It is good that you should be aware of this. The Bill will be coming up possibly for a second reading. I hope there will be a full debate on it and that the State Council will decide to defer consideration of it till such time as an entirely new ordinance, not a few amendments to an existing ordinance is put before it.'[1]

A few days later T. B. Cooray Co-adjutor Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church said at the Prize Giving of St. Joseph's College, 'The State Council which has outlived normal life by many years and which is as it were in its decrepit old age wants to impose on us an Ordinance on which depends the future of the youth of this country; it is difficult to say that this is a very prudent act. . . . It may be extremely imprudent and expose our children to tremendous danger and ruin the entire future of the nation. . . . . It was most unfortunate that vast educational reforms were being planned with so much haste and in the face of almost universal opposition.'[2]

On February 28, 1947 the Roman Catholic hierarchy consisting of J. M. Masson—Archbishop, T. B. Cooray—Co-adjutor Archbishop, J. A. Guyomar—Bishop of Jaffna, N. B. Laudadio—Bishop of Galle, Edmund Peiris—Bishop of Chilaw, John Lineham—Adjutor of Trincomalee, D. L. Hyde—Adjutor of Kandy sent a joint memorandum to the Ministers and members of the State Council in which they said, " We wish to make it clear that we cannot on any account accept the position that would be created if the Ministry of Education were empowered to prohibit the Registration of schools after a

1. CDN. February 1, 1947
2. CDN. February 8, 1947

prescribed date for the purpose of receiving grants from state funds, *i.e.* if the Ministry be allowed to prohibit the opening of assisted denominational schools.'[1]

On the day of the second reading I. X. Pereira (Nominated) presented a petition signed by a large number (87,059) of Catholics in various parts of the Island. "They protest against the provision made in the Amending Bill against the opening of new Assisted denominational schools. They submit that this prohibition is irreconcilable with the liberty of the subject and the freedom of conscience guaranteed by the State to members of all communities" said Pereira.

Kannangara in moving the second reading said, "This Bill should have been passed by this House a long time ago. The proposals as regards the reform of the system of education were brought before this Council and discussed, and certain decisions were arrived at by the House about 1½ years ago. . . . It is very strange that decisions taken so long ago have not yet been embodied in legislation. . . . But, somehow or other, owing to obstruction and dilatory tactics on the part of certain people, these proposals have not yet been embodied in legislation in Ceylon.

"Of course, there are some people who can never agree to any kind of change in education. They are the master minds that must control the education of all the countries, wherever they can. The others are 'incompetent'; others should not deal with education. Education is their business. They have raised this cry everywhere, and everywhere they have been turned out. Their proposals have not been accepted. Now they are trying intimidatory tactics on the eve of the elections. . . .

"We have just had a memorial presented to this House with a very large number of signatures. I have received numerous letters and telegrams describing how these signatures are being obtained, and asking that a public inquiry be held into the matter. . . .

"Practically everyday there are meetings and prize-givings at which dignitaries of the church bitterly complain that somebody is going to ruin their denominational schools. . . ."

"May I state, Sir, that I have no such evil intentions? . . . . There was one general proposition which was accepted by this Council. . . . That is, after 131 years of suffering we wanted to give a just and equal opportunity to those whose fathers had no large bank balances, provided that they were able to profit by the education. . . .

"The medium of instruction accepted by this Council, Sir, is the mother tongue of the pupil. . . . A good many of our educationists have said that this is sure to ruin the future of the child. . . .

1. CDN. March 1, 1947

" As regards this matter, the Assisted Schools were given timely notice. In 1936, I instructed the Director of Education to inform all concerned that the time is coming when the education of a child, at least so far as the primary school is concerned, will have to be in his mother tongue. But they did not take notice of it.

" In 1940 in the ' scheme of studies ' they were advised to have the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, but, in spite of that, they paid no heed to it. The teachers who were in charge of these classes were all black or brown Englishmen or Englishwomen. They had never cared to study their own language, and therefore they were unable to teach in the mother tongue. . . .

" You know Sir, better than can describe, the system that existed and that exists now, and how for the last so many years certain people enjoyed the monopoly in this country to open schools as they liked. you go to Wanni Hatpattu to open a school. . . . There may not be any Christians at all, not one Christian. And for purposes of conversion that institution becomes the centre. All round it is a happy hunting ground.

" What was passed by the State Council ? . . . . ' It shall be the duty hereafter of the State exclusively to establish schools of all types where necessary.' This was the decision of the State Council, and yet a memorial is presented, signed by 100,000 people, saying that they deplore the fact that these denominational schools are going to be ruined ! . . . . The Minister is a bad man, he is against the Christians ! . . . . What have I done against the Christians ? . . . . Now, once that proposal was passed what was my duty ?

" I now come to a most important part of this Bill. . . . The House is aware of the present condition of the estate schools. These estate schools are intended to serve the children of labourers on estates, between the ages of six and ten. At the age of ten the children become earners and add to the income of the family. The labourers do not seem to realize the position in which they place their children; they do not seem to understand the need to improve their own position by sending their children to school rather than getting them to earn an income at that age. Owing to the ignorance of labourers, this state of affairs has gone on, and a mere smattering of education is being given to the children of these labourers, an education that leads them nowhere. We held a number of conferences, and all concerned were in favour of converting these estate schools into State schools.

" I hope, Sir, that this Bill will find acceptance with the members of this Council. It is their decisions that are embodied in this Bill. I hope this Bill will prove to be of lasting benefit to the children of this country."

The Bill was debated on March 6 and 7, 1947 and 11 members took part in the debate during these two days. Of them only one member (Ratnayake) dared to speak in support of the Bill. Some of the members of the Roman Catholic heirarchy (*e.g.* Fr. Peter Pillai, Rector of St. Joseph's College) were listening attentively to the debate, seated in the gallery.

E. F. Spencer (Nominated) who spoke immediately after the Minister said, " I find myself unable to vote for this Bill for the very simple reason that I have every reason to believe that it is not acceptable to a very large section of the public whom we are here to represent."

P. de S. Kularatna (Balapitiya) moving that ' the Bill be read a second time six months hence' said, ' It is not because I oppose free education that I will have to vote against this Amending Bill; it is not because of that. I am not afraid, Sir, of people who send threatening letters, that one would be opposed in the elections to come if one voted against the Amending Bill. I am not afraid of that threat. But I must do my duty as I understand it. I feel a great disappointment with this Amending Bill. I feel that the Minister should if possible bring a comprehensive Ordinance before this House; and if it is not possible for him to do so, we will have to wait for the Parliament to do that."

B. H. Aluvihare (Matale) seconding the amendment moved by Kularatna to postpone the consideration of the Bill said, ' I support the postponement of this Bill; first because the Hon. Minister has not yet used to advantage the powers that are vested in him; secondly, I am not at all certain the financial section of the Board of Ministers will allow him to carry on his plan with advantage.'

" This Amending Bill is not only incomplete, but it is also defective in many respects" said J. Tyagaraja (Mannar-Mullaitivu) and H. de Z. Siriwardene (Negombo) added, " Some people seem to think that I am opposing this Bill because I represent a Catholic constituency, and that in opposing this Bill I am actuated by self-interest. May I say that my electorate is 50 per cent. Christian and 50 per cent. Buddhist. I do not want to sit on the fence over this question. I refuse to be intimidated by anybody into doing anything that I consider to be unfair; I refuse to be dictated to by anybody. I shall allow myself to be dictated to only by my own conscience. . . . I do not object to free education; nobody in his senses does. But the point is, is it practicable in Ceylon ? Is the scheme put forward a practicable one ? . . . . I oppose this Bill and support the amendment of the Hon. member for Balapitiya" he concluded.

' This is not a Socialist Scheme ' said G. R. de Silva (Colombo North) ' this is a Communist scheme, and the unfortunate thing is

that the scheme is right, but the people who tried to work it have not followed the main principles of Communism. They have not the slightest idea of Communism, and that is why free education has been a failure so far.

" If only they were communist and the country was communist in outlook, this scheme could have been worked. Why it is difficult to work is that when you want teachers you have to pay them the highest salary. If it is done in a communist state, you would not have to bear all this expenditure. I do not see any reason why a delay should do any harm to this Ordinance or to anyone. I support the amendment."

" It is impossible to conceive of a more shoddy and more patch-work piece of legislation on a subject so vital to the life and progress of the nation." said J. G. Rajakulendran (Bandarawela).

" The Christians are doing a definite service to-day. They have done so in the past, except for the fact that they have been trying to convert students. But conversion is accepted in Buddhism. . . . What is there to prevent either the Hon. Minister of Education or myself accepting some other religion if we are convinced ?" asked A. P. de Zoysa (Colombo South).

D. S. Senanayake agreeing with the general opinion expressed in the House said, ' I admit that there is a great deal of discipline where there is a religious background to education. I admit that as far as religious education goes, my education has been as much wanting in that respect as it has been in other respects. But still I realize the need for a religious education. I feel that any country that tries to educate its children away from religion is making the greatest mistake.'

G. G. Ponnambalam the last speaker to oppose the Bill said, ' Quite apart from the question of educational policy, our concurrence with this Bill, in its present form, would amount to a complete betrayal of the democratic trust reposed in us as representatives of the people.'

During those two days only Ratnayake rose in defence of the Bill. Answering some of the opponents he said, " I looked through the Amending Bill to discover whether there was anything dangerous in the Bill, but I found that it was the most innocuous Bill that one could think of. . . . The opposition to the education proposals before us comes from various quarters in different ways. Now, the proposal made by the Hon. member for Balapitiya that this Bill be read a second time six months hence is just part of the technique. . . . Goodness knows where we shall be six months hence. The State Council will certainly not be in existence."

" Some poeple say that they are supporters of free education. We are all, Sir, supporters of free education. I have not yet come

across a single person in this country who is opposed to free education. But, Sir, they put in a 'but'. Some say, 'but it is very expensive. . . . The Hon. member for Balapitiya says that this Bill is very good, *but* we should have a comprehensive Bill. The third class of persons opposing this scheme, who say that the Minister has been given all the powers but has not used those powers.

" But, Sir, there is a real ' but '. An Hon. member told me, ' I am in favour of free education. But the elections are coming on. There are about 5,000 Catholics in my electorate, and those Catholics are so organised, so politically conscious and they exercise such a powerful influence on my electorate that I am compelled to vote for the amendment.

" Sir, this opposition is the historic opposition to all progress at all times by what are called ' vested interests '. This is the opposition of the classes against the struggle of the masses. The denominational schools represent vested interests and the Ministers proposals are an attack on those vested interests. . . .

" The Public school system has shut out thousands and thousands of brilliant young men, brilliant men who might have been poets or great scientists or great statesmen or eminent doctors. It was a conspiracy; it was a plot; it was a diabolical plot; and the plotters in various garbs and guises, are resisting the attempts of the Minister to break this conspiracy."[1]

On March 7, 1947 the House was adjourned for another long reeess till May 13. The opponents of the Bill had a successful day. Council would be dissolved by the middle of the year. D. S. Senanayake would come back as the Prime Minister in a cabinet form of Government. The Bill would be no more !

Fr. Peter Pillai who was all the time in the gallery was so pleased with the performance that he exclaimed, ' The enemy has been routed on all fronts. Victory is in sight '.[2] But many things were to happen during this 10 week recess.

On March 12, 1947 at a meeting held at Harischandra Vidyalaya, Negombo (a town of much agitation against the Bill) the Central Executive of the All Ceylon Buddhist Students Union decided to launch an Island-wide campaign in support of the Bill.[3]

Two weeks later at a meeting held at Ananda Sastralaya, Matugama the Central Free Education Defence Committee was formed under the leadership of E. W. Adikaram to campaign for the Bill.

1. H. 1947 Col. 1117-45
2. H. 1947 Col. 1665
3. Minutes of the AC-BSU and CDN. March 15, 1947.

The Ceylon Union of Bhikkhus (Kelaniya), Dakshina Lanka Eksat Bhikkhu Sangamaya (Galle), Samaggri Wardhene Bhikkhu Sangamaya, Elpitiya Bhikkhu Sangamaya, Udunuwara Maha Sangha Sabha and many other Buddhist organizations came forward in what they termed, ' the defence of free education '.

The Ramakrishna Mission in Batticaloa played an equally impressive role in mobilising public support for the Bill in the Eastern Province.

The three men who bore the brunt of the campaign (referred to as the ' Curious Trio ' by some of the Newspapers at the time) were Adikaram, G. P. Malalasekara and Ananda Mivanapalana.

At the inaugural meeting of the ' Defence Committee ' Adikaram said, ' that the two points brought out by the opponents of the Education Bill or the amendment to the Education Code as it was called were that the opponents were in favour of free education but they were opposed to certain provisions in it and that the country could not afford it. The first argument was a trick and the second a myth. . . . They were attempting a subterfuge to get the Bill postponed or defeated. Under the new system of government it was the belief of a large section, Mr. D. S. Senanayake would be the Prime Minister. Then he would have the right to select his Ministers and it was generally believed that Mr. Senanayake's choice would not fall on Mr. Kannangara for the Education portfolio. The free government schools would then be starved of furniture, equipment and teachers and later when those schools become unpopular they would jibe at the architects of free education.

' The next point would be that denominational schools would be allowed to levy a small fee of about a rupee which would gradually increase to the present rates of fees. It was the duty of the country, to express publicly and with one voice the disapproval of Mr. Senanayake's action.'[1]

Within the next six weeks public meetings were held and student demonstrations organised in practically all the important towns of the island in support of the Bill.

At Matale Adikaram said, ' that it was freely stated that Mr. Senanayake would not select Kannangara as Minister of Education. That could be believed judging from the fact that Mr. Senanayake was hand in glove with the missionaries'.[2]

At Paiyagala Mivanapalana alleged that D. S. Senanayake, the leader of the State Council and the so-called leader of the Buddhists of

1. CDN. March 28, 1947
2. CDN. April 30, 1947

Ceylon had given a pledge to Dr. J. M. Mason, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Colombo and to Rev. R. S. de Saram, Warden St. Thomas' College, that he would see that the consideration of the Education Bill was left to the new Parliament.[1]

This allegation was denied both by Mason and de Saram.[2]

Mivanapalana replying revealed that the information was supplied at a public meeting by Mr. R. D. Ranatunga, working in an office looking after the proprietary interests of Messrs. Senanayake and Kotalawala.[3]

At Bandarawela Malalasekara said that Mr. D. S. Senanayake who was an opponent of the Amending Ordinance adduced the argument that by the passing of the Ordinance the Buddhists would stand to suffer more than the Christians, as no new schools would be registered after a prescribed date. Sixty per cent of Buddhist children attend Christian schools where they did not provide any religious instruction to Buddhists. Those who were opposed to the Amending Ordinance could not be good Buddhists for they would afford opportunities to convert Buddhist children into Christianity. He severely criticised the Minister of Agriculture and Lands and asked whether his agricultural policy had been a perfect one to criticize the policy of the Minister of Education who had rendered to this country the greatest service by piloting the Free Education scheme.

Winding up the campaign at Kegalle Malalasekara said, 'that he could say from personal knowledge that many of those who now declared from the housetops their concern for free education were vehemently opposed to it and tried to sabotage it in every possible way. . . . When the leader of the State Council joined their ranks they got great courage and started shouting that they had won. The country had now given a resounding answer to their plots. No politician would now dare to imperil free education unless he wished to commit political suicide.[4]

In addition to the large number of meetings held in all parts of the country a series of petitions with nearly 500,000 signatures were presented in the Council.

The opponents now had no answer. A. F. Molamure said, 'I think these petitions are out of order'.

'The petitions are already presented,' replied the Speaker, and that was the end of the opposition.[5]

1. CDN. May 5, 1947
2. CDN. May 7, 1947
3. CDN. May 8, 1947
4. CDN. May 12, 1947
5. H. 1947 Cols. 1254, 1433 and 1489.

When the adjourned debate on the Education (Amendment) Bill was taken up on May 15, 1947 the first reaction came from Kularatne. 'I should like to have the leave of the House to withdraw the amendment I moved on March 6' he said and the members in one voice said 'Aye'. The Amendment 'to defer the Bill for six months' was by leave withdrawn.

Seven more members spoke on the last day of the debate. But members were more keen to pass the Bill as early as possible.

Bandaranaike the first speaker of the day said, 'To my mind there does not appear to be any necessity whatsoever, either to put off the second reading of this Bill, as envisaged in the amendment moved by the member for Balapitiya which he has now withdrawn, or to defeat the Bill, or to ensure its non-passage during the life-time of this Council. There is no shred of argument that I can see which can be reasonably used to bolster up that point. The Bill must be passed, and it will be passed.

Neither Senanayake nor Kularatne could speak again. It was left to H. W. Amarasuriya to defend them. 'On several platforms it was stated that the Hon. Leader of the House and those who follow him held a special brief for the denominational interests in this country and that a section of this House was out to sabotage and undermine the passage of this Bill. There was nothing further from the truth; and it was a pity that my hon. friend from Balapitiya should at a very early stage have brought an amendment to delay this Bill. But I do not think the hon. member had any ulterior motive. The very fact that at the first opportunity he stood up in his place and asked the permission of the House to withdraw his amendment shows that he wishes to remove any misapprehension or misunderstanding the country has regarding his position. I hope that gesture on his part will be accepted by members of this Council and also those outside it, and they will not think that the hon. member in any way attempted to delay or hamper the smooth working of the scheme of free education. . . . I would like hon. members to pass this Bill without a dissent.'

'I want to explain the position that I and so many other leftists in this country take up in regard to this Education Bill', said Dahanayake, 'In the first place, we say that this Education Bill does not take us sufficiently far. Our opinion is that no free education worth the name is possible while the dual system of denominationalism and state schools exist side by side. We say that if free education is to be given a fair chance, denominationalism must be rooted out neck and crop, because we find provision made for the existing denominational schools in the present Bill. We consider to that extent, this Bill is a reactionary one,

'If the destinies of this country are to be entrusted to the United National Party, I say that free education is doomed. Free education will not have a dog's chance. . . . We hold that free education can be a reality only in a country where there is full freedom, only in a country in which there is a government of the workers and peasants on the basis of Sama Samajism.

'Sir, our Leader resembles the Englishman a great deal, because our Leader to-day opposes free education on financial principles. He accepted a slave constitution on national principles. He oppresses the peasants of this country on agricultural principles. I say that, that attitude of the Hon. Leader is very important indeed, and the country must make a note of it because the future of free education in this country demands that the men who will be at the helm of the state should be those who are absolutely keen on free education.'

'We hold that in the future system of education, the denominational schools must be destroyed. By that I do not suggest that the buildings should be pulled down. What I say is that a school like St. Thomas' College should be handed over to the state and its doors opened to the sons of the workers at Ratmalana. To-day its portals are open to the sons of the Ministers, but tomorrow we want those portals to be opened to the sons of the workers at Ratmalana.'

J. R. Jayewardena said, 'It is unnecessary for me to say that I am speaking in support of this Bill, for this Bill seeks to implement some of the proposals that this House has accepted by a majority of votes. I personally wish to go much further. I feel that we cannot have free education in its entirety, nor a proper system of education in this country—a proper national system—unless we have free, compulsory, state education, education where the schools are owned, and where the syllabuses and the control of schools are managed, by the representatives of the people. I have not deviated from that point of view by one iota.

'We read in the papers reports of speeches by men like Fr. Peter Pillai in the course of which they stated, 'Victory is in sight'. Victory for whom ? For the small clique that he represents—vested interests; men who laugh at our national languages and our national names. . . . But later on when victory was not so closely in sight, the Catholic hierarchy disappeared from the scene of battle, and some of them (Fr. Peter Pillai) went to England.

'I claim myself to be a socialist I want this country to have a socialist form of government. I am against all vested interests. I am against private ownership and management, including land and industry. I want state education.

S. A. Wickramasinghe said, 'All arguments that have been put forward to postpone this Bill, the various methods adopted—some

say that this must be deferred for six months because we have no money; others say that the next Parliament is the best place for this matter to be discussed—are attempts to deny the implementation of this scheme'.

'I submit that the struggle for free education is not over. It has been said that the Hon. member for Balapitiya made a peaceful retreat. I agreed that he made a peaceful retreat. But there are many other leaders who have made not a peaceful retreat but a strategic retreat.'

Referring to the campaign carried by the Bhikkhus in support of the Bill, V. Nalliah said, "Sir, it is to the 'scheming brains beneath the shaven skulls' of the Buddhist clergy that we owe this early resumption of the debate on the Education (Amendment) Bill, and the spirit that prevail here to-day—the spirit of calm resignation to the will of the people of the country. No one can seriously deny that there was grave danger of this Bill being postponed, this Bill which is being debated to-day in the House.'

"The person who announced 'victory is in sight' cannot by any means be regarded as one of the simpletons of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. He is one of the best brains of the church, and it was not without a proper survey of the situation in this country that he made the announcement: 'The enemy has been routed on all fronts' and 'victory is in sight'. It was in the complete faith that the people of the country had at long last regained their 'sanity' that he left for Europe to convey these happy tidings to those higher up.

"If to-day we are here, in a spirit of calm resignation, discussing this Education Bill, we owe that fact to the politically conscious section of the Buddhist clergy. This is the first victory they have won, and that is why I say that this Bill will go down to history, not because of any great intrinsic merit in it, but because of the manner in which it will go through this assembly'.

"Sir, the opposition to this Bill is not based on educational grounds. But the opponents of this Bill happen to be a powerful minority with vast resources who are adepts in the art of propaganda. They could have given a point or two to the late Goebbels of Germany. They have succeeded in getting the Press under their wing; not only have they succeeded in winning over the Press of this country to their side, but they have gone even to the extent of winning over some of the leaders of the people of this country for the purpose of securing the defeat of this harmless motion—this Amending Ordinance."

The Councillors wanted the second reading passed as early as possible. 'I am very anxious to see the second reading of this Bill passed to-day,' said G. E. de Silva. At 5.45 p.m. after only 3½ hours of debate Simon Abeywickrama moved 'that the question be now put,' which was not carried.

The speeches were perhaps becoming a headache to the members who originally opposed the Bill. They even did not want Kannangara to reply. At 6.15 just after 4 hours, debate Molamure who originally wanted it 'discussed fully' moved 'that the question be now put', which was carried. The Bill was then passed without a division and was referred to Standing Committee 'A'.[1]

Unlike on March 7, on May 15 even the gallery was full of supporters of the Bill. In fact 'Buddhist priests had swamped the House'.[2]

Catholics now changed their front. D. J. Anthony, General Manager of Roman Catholic schools apeaking at Moratuwa called for amendments. 'We were against only certain clauses, Pass the Bill after amending the objectionable features', he said.[3]

Public were given an opportunity to give evidence before the Standing Committee. On May 22, thirty deputations called at the House to record their evidence before the Standing Committee.[4]

The Committee made two important amendments. (*a*) With regard to Free Education the original draft laid that the Executive Committee may make regulations for 'the control of the levy or remission of fees, in Government schools and Aided schools'.

Bandaranaike speaking in the House said, 'the recommendation to remit fees has been implemented by way of Code regulations passed by this House; that practical effect has been given to free education. But whether that action is legally and strictly justified under rule-making powers is a matter of some doubt.'[5]

Jayewardene commenting on this said, 'Well, if there was a doubt there is no harm in his putting it beyond any doubt'.[6]

In the Committee a new section (41A) was added to 'Part VII General' of the original Bill providing that (i) No fees shall be charged in respect of admission, or of the education provided in, a Government school or Assisted school; (ii) Notwithstanding anything in Sub-section (i), charges not exceeding the prescribed rates in respect of the provision of any facilities for games or physical training or of the provision of any article or service for a prescribed purpose may be levied in a Government school or an Assisted school, from such of the pupils benefitted by that provision as are, in the opinion of the principal of the school, able to pay those charges.'

1. H. 1947 Col. 1600-70
2. CDN. May 17, 1947
3. CDN. May 15, 1947
4. CDN. May 23, 1947
5. H. 1947 Col. 1604
6. H. 1947 Col. 1647

This amendment was made mainly to satisfy the supporters of the Bill.

(*b*) With regard to new denominational schools the original draft laid that the Executive Committee may make regulations for 'the prohibition of the registration of schools after a prescribed date, for the purpose of receiving grants from the state funds.' This was amended to, 'the registration of schools after July 1, 1947 subject to the condition that in the case of a denominational school any grant from state funds shall be payable only in respect of pupils whose parents profess the religion of the proprietor of the school.'

This amendment was provided to satisfy the denominational bodies, but in effect it would have mainly helped the Buddhist and Hindu educational societies as in most areas the Christians may not have been able to employ with the requirement and maintain schools with minimum standards.

On May 27, 1947 Susanta de Fonseka, Chairman of the Standing Committee A presented the Report of the Committee. The third reading of the Bill was passed without a division on the same day.[1]

Once the Bill was passed the 'Pedagogue' on behalf of the opponents of the Bill wrote, 'The opponents of the Amending Education Bill as it was before the Standing Committee stage have been the saviours of Free Education. If not for them the clause that ensured free education would not have been added.'[2] In other words once the Bill was passed the opponents claimed that they had done a service by the country by opposing it and getting it amended so that the provision for free education was legally sound.

Mivanapalana replying 'Pedagogue' said "How could this be, when the opponents of the Bill vociferously declared in the Press and outside that Free Education was Law; that the Amending Bill was unnecessary. Free Education was not law. An amendment to the Education Bill was necessary to secure Free Education. This the protagonists of the Bill asserted with vehemence and secured.

"Among the memoranda to the Committee 'A' from the opponents of the Bill not one contained a submission to secure the section quoted by the Pedagogue.

"Almost every memorandum from the supporters of the amendment contained the substance of the following which I quote from the memorandum of the Central Free Education Defence Committee. 'To-day there is no free education provided legally. The provisions that purport to give Free Education are the regulations of 1945,

1. H. 1947 Col. 1794-1818
2. CDN. May 31, 1947

All his reforms were opposed and criticised by the Catholic Church. His system of direct payment, maintained schools, rural scheme, legal enactments, special committee, free scheme and even adult education were all opposed by the Church.

The criticisms began almost immediately after he took office as Minister of Education. In 1931 the Ceylon Catholic Messenger the Bi-weekly (at the time) of the Church said, " There is little doubt that Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara owes his title of Minister of Education to the fact that he was known to have had some educational experience. The appointment to the post of one who had no previous experience at all would probably have caused some misgiving. On the other hand, however, might not one ask whether the selection of one with no experience at all would not be preferable, at least under certain circumstances, to one who has only had a one-sided experience. The former would learn and what is more, he would be in a position to study a question under all its aspects, in all its bearings and form his opinion on the intrinsic merits of the subject discussed, unmoved by prejudices and pre-conceptions. The latter on the contrary would look at things with a ' jaundiced eye ' and allow himself to be guided by prejudices and preferences, by conclusions drawn from the incomplete data of his partial experience. . . . "[1]

Commenting on Kannangara's educational policy the Church said in 1934, ' The following are some noticeable characteristics of his policy : (i) Extended support of the Pirivenas which have been defined as schools for the training of Buddhist monks ; (ii) State support for pansala schools ; (iii) State patronage of Buddhist schools ; (iv) Creation of a new category of schools not provided for in the Education Ordinance — to wit Government managed schools — to meet exclusively, the needs and requirements of Buddhist education.

' These features of the ministerial policy, which are unmistakable, can only point to one thing : to the distinctly Buddhist trend of the educational policy of to-day.

' Are we at the commencement of a subtle campaign of peaceful penetration '.[2]

' Exposing ' Kannangara's partiality to the Pirivenas the Church said, ' Before Mr. Kannangara came into office the Director of Education had refused to register new schools. After Mr. Kannangara came into office the Director of Education consented to register six Pirivena schools. We wanted — and we still want — to know how or why this was done.

1. CCM October 20, 1931
2. CCM November 6, 1934

CHAPTER 19

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION 1940-47.

CHAPTER 13 traced the development of education during the first half of Kannangara's term of office as Minister of Education. This chapter deals with the second half from 1940-47.

If the first period began with an economic depression, the second began with a great World War. The Education sphere had to be adjusted to the needs of the war. Even the Administration Report of the Director had to be curtailed due to shortage of paper.

With a threat to the country's food supply the value of the Rural Scheme of Education was greatly felt. But the assisted schools were very apathetic in adopting the scheme and the progress was confined to government schools. In 1940 the scheme made steady progress, but the supply of teachers qualified in Rural work was not equal to the demand. A second Training Centre for Rural Scheme teachers was opened at Welitara. Mirigama and Welitara Training Centres sent out a steady stream of enthusiastic teachers.[1]

A third training centre for Rural teachers was started in Kandy on May 1, 1941,[2] and a fourth at Weeraketiya in the south a few months later. Though the supply of teachers steadily rose, practical work in the Rural Scheme schools suffered owing to lack of equipment and materials. By 1943 the number of pupils in post-primary classes in these schools decreased as most of the bigger boys found employment in State Farms and in Emergency and Military services. But the schools continued to maintain their record of good work.[3]

After the establishment of Central Schools, and especially after the publication of the Report of the Special Committee on Education the enthusiasm for the Rural Scheme dwindled and in 1944 the Rural Training Centres were discontinued. Mirigama Training Centre was converted into a Sinhala Training College with effect from October 1, 1944 and the Sinhala section of Government Training College, Colombo was transferred there. The Welitara Rural Training Centre ceased to train Rural Scheme teachers as such, and instead gave short residential

1. AR. DE. 1940 p. 4
2. AR. DE. 1941 p. 5
3. AR. DE. 1943 p. 5

courses in gardening, building construction, dairy farming, poultry farming and bee-keeping to final year students of government Sinhalese and Tamil Training Colleges.[1]

Though the Rural Scheme as separate type of school declined in importance after 1944, food production itself received much attention and encouragement.

With the outbreak of war interest in this work was greatly stimulated by the island-wide food production campaign inaugurated by the Minister of Agriculture and teachers showed great keenness to participate in the scheme. Many unused lands adjoining schools were immediately cultivated by the pupils with the permission of the owners.[2]

By 1940 the area under cultivation by the pupils of Sinhala and Tamil Schools increased to 2,245 acres of school gardens, 117 acres of paddy fields and 100,292 home gardens.[3] Seeds and plants were extensively distributed, and the keeping of poultry, goats and milk cows was undertaken by schools. Many schools obtained crown lands for cultivation.[4]

'In 1942, with the extension of the war to the East, the food supply situation deteriorated rapidly. The supply of rice from Burma was cut off and it was inevitable that imports from India would be reduced because India herself imported some rice from Burma and also because she would have to maintain a steady stream of supplies to her armies in many theatres of war.[5]

In 1943 an intensified Food Production Campaign was organised in the schools. By bringing under cultivation an increased acreage of land, schools made an appreciable contribution to the National Food Drive. Pupils and teachers answered the call of the emergency and their enthusiasm and useful work was so appreciated by the public that many privately owned lands were placed at the disposal of the schools for the purpose of cultivation. Practically every available piece of land was brought under cultivation. Garden implements were distributed among all government schools. Hundreds of unemployed teachers were given posts on the staffs of schools as special assistants in charge of Food Production.

Explaining the significance of the School Food Drive Kannangara said, 'Food production was not started as a result of the war. Food production in schools was started by me two years earlier than the war broke out. . . .

1. AR. DE. 1944 p. 10
2. AR. DE. 1939 p. 6
3. AR. DE. 1940 p. 3
4. AR. DE. 1941 p.3
5. How Lanka Fed Herself During the War 1939-45 : Issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food — 1947.

'Men are dying of starvation in the streets of Calcutta. The conditions there are horrible; the people have no food to eat. I am afraid we will have to avert a calamity of that type in this country. . . .

'Sir, it is my proposal that we harness every young grown up child, and secure his services. Let him work for one hour a day in producing food. We want to impose it on every school.'[1]

In 1944 the Director of Education reported, 'The Schools Food Drive which was launched in 1943 with a view to intensifying food production activities in schools achieved remarkable success during the year under review. More special food production assistants were appointed to the staffs of schools and in every division all cultivable land that was available, either from the Crown or from private parties besides school gardens and pupils' home gardens, was brought under cultivation. The efforts of pupils and teachers, guided and supervised by a specially appointed Additional Assistant Director (T. D. Jayasuriya—also Secretary to the Minister) and his staff of Food Production Officers under direct control of the Hon. the Minister of Education, were crowned by the realization of considerable quantities of food stuffs.'[2]

Explaining how the Food Drive worked in the schools Kannangara said, 'In the case of schools which have joined in the food-production campaign, the sessions start at 8 a.m. For half an hour, the children do a little gardening. The school work go on till about 12 noon, when the children take their mid-day meal. After that, the children rest for about 2 or 2½ hours. The majority of the children go home, and only children above standard V are required to do, in the afternoon, about one hour's or one and a half hours' gardening. Those who do gardening are given the benefit of the produce in the form of Savings Certificates.'[3]

The intensive Food Production Campaign started on July 1, 1943 and officially ended on July 31,1944. During these 13 months, 19,487 acres were brought under cultivation at a total cost of Rs. 78,469. The total output of food stuffs was 9,384 tons of which 4,666 tons were consumed by the pupils. The balance 4,719 tons was sold for Rs. 722,082. The money earned was deposited (in the names of the children who took part) in War Savings Certificates Rs. 355,536; in Post Office Savings Bank Rs. 296,022; and in War Savings Stamp Cards Rs. 70,524.

Of the total cost of the campaign (Rs. 78,469) Rs. 50,623 was spent on agricultural implements and planting material including transport; Rs. 21,877 was spent on salaries and allowances payable

1. H. 1943 p. 1678
2. AR. DE. 1944 p. 5
3. H. 1944 p. 254

to food production teachers, supervising inspectors and clerks; and the balance Rs. 5,969 was spent on travelling, stationery, etc.

Of the crops grown, pride of place was given to various kinds of yams and the total quantity of yams produced reached the impressive figure of 5,887 tons.... The importance of a balanced diet was, however, impressed on the schools and pupils were encouraged to produce large quantities of vegetables, particularly leafy vegetables. The quantity of vegetables raised amounts to 1,587 tons. When it was apprehended that sufficient supplies of onions and chillies might not arrive from India, special emphasis was laid on the necessity of the production of these two articles of food. Although the schools had little previous experience of the cultivation of onions and chillies, they succeeded in raising 415 tons of onions and 201 tons of dried chillies. The production of cereals amounted to only 19,944 bushels. The total of other produce raised like fruits reached the figure of 1,304 tons.'[1]

William M. Clyde, Food Adviser to the Colonial Office who visited the Island in 1944 wrote, 'compared with other colonies that I have visited during the past year, Ceylon seems to me to be singularly well provisioned.... In my travels during the past year I have seen nothing more inspiring than what has been done by the children of Ceylon in the cultivation of their school gardens and home gardens. I have nothing but praise for what I have seen and heard of their achievements. They have cultivated 19,487 acres, terraced slopes which many an experienced cultivator might have regarded as too steep for terracing, drained marshy ground, exploited many methods of preventing soil-erosion, made compost heaps, constructed their own home gardens in their own time and given one another a helping hand in their construction; and from their cultivation they have not only contributed largely to the provision of their own school meals, but brought war savings certificates and opened Post Office Savings accounts to a grand total of Rs. 720,000 with the public sale of the surplus produce. And all this has been achieved within a period of only one year.

'I shall not readily forget the delight of the children in their work, their grave absorbed air and unself-conscious diligence, their proper pride in their achievements. They are greatly helping the country in these critical times of food scarcity....

'I propose sending to the governors of certain other colonies interested in planning school meals and school food production, a report on what has been achieved here.'[2]

1. SP. XXII 1944
2. SP. XVIII 1944

The Food Production Campaign did not end there. '1944-45 was another very successful year. The cessation of hostilities did not in the least interfere with the effort of the schools to produce more food. The work done by schools in the matter of food production also earned commendation of the Soulbury Commissioners.[1] Their report says, 'The vernacular schools are practically all rural schools and the instruction given in them has a rural bias. It was therefore possible greatly to extend the school gardens and not only to provide a supplement to the government allowance for school feeding, but also a considerable addition to the general food supply'.[2]

In 1946 the enthusiasm for the food production campaign declined and the number of food production teachers saw a marked reduction.[3]

In 1947 a fresh batch of 1,102 Food Production teachers was appointed, to continue the good work done during the emergency. But the interest gradually declined.[4]

In addition to the production of food schools also contributed towards the war effort in many different ways. Various war funds have benefitted from funds raised through concerts and carnivals. In 1940 the Sinhala and Tamil schools alone contributed Rs. 20,000 in this way. In 1941 teachers made fixed monthly contributions from their salaries. During 1942 and 43 several teachers and Inspectors of Schools made a noteworthy contribution to the war effort by their voluntary services in A.R.P. and other Emergency Services. Schools rendered valuable help in the dissemination of 'correct' information concerning the war, in the suppression of 'false rumours' and in salvage drives. Many first aid and fire-fighting parties also were organised.[5]

In 1944 war savings were encouraged by the awarding of a war Savings Banner to the school that deposited the largest amount of money in approved forms of savings. Teachers also helped in the spread and development of the Co-operative Stores Movement which became a necessity under food rationing.[6]

Another movement that spread during the war years was the promotion of Thrift. 'Central Banks' were started in some schools whilst a very large number of Thrift Societies were also organised.[7]

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1. AR. DE. 1945 p. 8
2. Soulbury : loc cit. p. 35
3. AR. DE. 1946 p. 10
4. AR. DE. 1947 p. 9
5. AR. DE. 1943 p. 4
6. AR. DE. 1944 p. 4
7. AR. DE. 1941 p. 3

The spread of adult education was a feature of the war years. In 1940 the number of adult classes rose to 272. Arrangements were made to train batches of unemployed teachers in adult education and Rural Reconstruction work. A month's training was provided to each batch at the Scout Colony, Kalutara and a further two months were spent by each teacher in a village school under a head teacher who has also undergone this training. At the end of the training the teachers were attached to schools to assist with the food production by the pupils and to arrange adult classes.[1]

In 1941 the number of adult classes rose to 329. The first class for training women teachers in this work was organised with the help of Maha Mahila Samitiya at Sri Palee School, Horana. Members of the adult classes helped to improve the amenities of village life by constructing village roads and bathing places arranging excursions, folk dancing displays and dramatic performances.[2]

By 1943 the village interest in the adult classes declined and the number of classes fell to 181. Intensive food production work and the migration of able-bodied persons from rural occupations to more lucrative employment in the Emergency and military services were the main causes of the decline.[3]

In 1944 an organised effort was made in all Divisions to bring the benefit of adult education within the reach of larger mumbers of the rural population. The number of adult classes rose again to 469 at the end of the year. A good deal of time was devoted in these classes to instruction in reading, writing and number, as many adults were not able to read or write. But adult class work was mainly concerned with discussions of agriculture and commercial topics. Talks on health too were given. Indoor games and volley-ball were played wherever possible while aesthetic activities such as music, singing and dancing figured largely in the curricula of several classes. The daily newspapers and small collections of books were also provided. The teachers were instructed to convert their adult classes into community centres which in course of time should develop into centres of rural reconstruction.[4]

The progress of adult education continued in 1945 and the number of classes rose to a record figure of 895. The attendance at sessions was not regular in all the classes. But a large number of classes especially those where useful and enjoyable programmes of activities were introduced, did very useful work and served the purpose of community centres. The departmental cinema vans made regular

1. AR. DE. 1940 p. 3
2. AR. DE. 1941 p. 3
3 AR. DE. 1943 p. 5
4. AR. DE. 1944 p. 8

visits to these classes. 1945 also saw an organised literacy campaign to liquidate illiteracy.[1]

The initial enthusiasm however was short lived. The whole scheme was based on voluntary service which needed helpers imbued with a spirit of service. But many who came in had other ideas, and when those expectations were not fulfilled their enthusiasm declined. The number of classes again declined to 532 in 1946.[2]

An Adult Education week was held in the Government Training College, Polgolla in April, 1947. The 500 delegates who came into residence on April 20 formed a representative cross-section of near-urban as well as rural-life, being appointed by village welfare societies from among their number. The aim of the course was not to impart text-book knowledge, but to instil into the delegates a sense of citizenship by evoking their interest in information contained in Blue Books, Sessional Papers, Administration Reports and other official publications to which they normally have no access.

The residential course lasted a whole week. Profitable diversions were afforded by the educational, agricultural, health and industrial exhibitions held in conjunction with the adult week by excursions and cinema shows and by physical training exercises.[3] The week concluded on April 27 was more or less a grand finale to Kannangara's contribution to the development of adult education in Ceylon.

The Parent Teacher Associations were also associated with adult education and food production campaigns. In 1945 the number of PTA's had risen to over 3,000. They generously assisted with gifts of land and buildings and of furniture where the needs were urgent.[4]

By 1947 almost all Government Schools had PTA's, and grant of free education in 1945 tended to awaken the public spirit of parents and others.[5]

The free midday meal programme also expanded with the Food Production campaign. In 1941 over 260,000 pupils in 2,619 schools received free midday meals. By 1943 the need for the provision of free midday meal became greater than ever before. In spite of serious difficulties in obtaining foodstuffs, free midday meals were supplied in most Sinhala, Tamil, Bilingual and Central Schools. The usual meal of rice was however replaced by such substitutes as wheat, yams and 'roti' made of wheat flour. The produce from school gardens were used to supplement meals.[6]

1. AR. DE. 1945 p. 11
2. AR. DE. 1946 p. 17
3. CDN. April 21 and 28, 1947
4. AR. DE. 1945 p. 19
5. AR. DE. 1947 p. 16
6. AR. DE. 1943 p. 8

The most widely used menu during the latter half of the war years was bread and vegetable soup, curry and sambol. Though the quality and quantity of the meal supplied was not everything that could be desired, it saved the poor child from malnutrition, and even starvation during a period of dire food scarcity.[1]

Soulbury Commission commenting on the midday meal wrote, 'The Minister of Education made a great contribution to public health when he succeeded against fierce opposition in introducing a system of school meals for children. The cost of this service, which has been skilfully brought into relation with the food production campaign of the last two years, has risen from Rs. 250,000 in 1937 to Rs. 3,750,000 in 1944.'[2] In 1947 nearly 70 per cent. of the total number of pupils on roll in all schools were receiving the midday meal at an average cost of Rs. 10.47 per child per year.[3]

War years also saw the reform of the hitherto existing examination system. The war made it difficult to transport question papers and answer scripts safely and in time for London Examinations. A Special Senior School Certificate (English) Examination was held in December 1941 for candidates who were preparing for the London Matriculation Examination. There was also difficulty in obtaining the question papers of the London Chamber of Commerce Examinations in time and a local examination based on the same regulations was introduced in 1941 in collaboration with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The Cambridge Senior Examination was discontinued at the end of 1942 and even the Special Senior Examination started in lieu of the London Matriculation was discontinued the next year. The local Senior School Certificate (English) Examination took the place of these examinations. Provision however was made for exemption from London Matriculation on the results of the Senior School Certificate examination under conditions laid down by the University of London. Action was also initiated in 1943 to bring all Sinhala and Tamil examinations into line with English examinations. In 1947 it was finally decided to hold one Senior School Certificate examination on a common syllabus in all the three languages—Sinhala, Tamil and English—after 1948.[4]

The number of candidates sitting for the SSC rose steadily after the London examinations were done away with. This was due to (i) Abolition of several examinations of equal standard and giving pride of place to the SSC as the only School Leaving Examination;

1. AR. DE. 1945 p. 15
2. Soulbury : loc. cit. p. 35
3. AR. DE. 1947
4. AR. DE. 1947

(ii) the country becoming more education conscious; (iii) the introduction of Free Education in 1945; and (iv) abolition of examination fees.

In 1945 Sinhala and Tamil were given an important place in the syllabuses of all Ceylon examinations, and Sinhala and Tamil were made compulsory for the SSC examination in and after 1946.[1]

The Junior School Certificate Examination lost its former importance as the number qualifying for the SSC was more than sufficient to fill up all white-collar jobs. The JSC (English) Examination as a departmental examination was discontinued in 1940 and the school authorities were empowered to conduct it as a school examination. The JSC (Sinhala and Tamil) also was made a school examination two years later.[2]

With larger numbers qualifying for the SSC the demand for higher education also increased rapidly. A new Advanced School Certificate Examination (Bilingual) open only to those who have passed the SSC was started in 1944. It was also decided that a Higher School Certificate Examination should be conducted by the Department. At the request of the Oriental Studies Society the department took over the conduct of that society's examinations as well. In 1945 the Department held the HSC Examination and the Oriental Studies Examinations under its charge for the first time.[3]

In 1944 important changes were effected in the syllabuses and method of conducting examinations concerned with the training of teachers. Contrary to previous practice, the papers set for the Training College Entrance (Sinhala and Tamil) examination were made similar to those set for Training College Entrance (English) Examination.[4]

The above mentioned examinations can all be classified as achievement tests. In 1944 a new class of tests—Selective—was introduced to Ceylon for the first time. The All-Island Fifth Standard Test on the results of which 65 scholarships were awarded was held this year for the first time. The Standard VIII Selective Test was introduced two years later.[5]

All these changes and the rapidly increasing numbers sitting for all examinations increased the work of Examinations Branch of the department several fold. The Examinations Branch itself had to be expanded. In 1943 the results section of the Examinations Branch was reorganised on modern lines. In March, 1947 the staff of the Branch was approximately doubled.[6]

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1. AR. DE. 1943
2. AR. DE. 1940-42
3. AR. DE. 1944-45
4. AR. DE. 1944
5. AR. DE. 1944
6. AR. DE. 1943 and 1947

The financial provision for School Buildings also increased during the war years. Before the war no loan funds were provided for the building of schools as education was not considered an investment either by the Financial Secretary or by the Board of Ministers. Kannangara alone fought for the release of loan funds for school buildings, as he considered it as much an investment as any other productive enterprise. In August 1944 Kannangara said in the Council, 'By a curious theory, although I am also a builder—the agricultural department is a builder, the Public Works Department is a builder, the Health Department is a builder—I have not got anything. . . . There are only some departments, that are to be given money out of loan funds.

I will tell you the theory on which they work. Only remunerative works can be financed out of loan. What stupidity, what ignorance, what asses they are to think that education is not remunerative' [1]

But no loan funds were allocated for school buildings. The Soulbury Commissioners commenting on this decision of the Board of Ministers reported, 'The Board of Ministers has ruled that capital expenditure on education may not be met out of loan funds. The Minister of Education has in consequence to provide for his building programme out of the annual vote, and this naturally set a serious limit to it; for if he commits himself heavily in that direction he reduces thereby the amount available for current expenditure on the improvement of already existing facilities. Considering that the total public debt of Ceylon barely exceeds one year's revenue, such extremely conservative finance cannot be justified. It would be difficult to estimate what the state of education in Great Britain would be if capital expenditure on the provision of school buildings had been met entirely out of revenue.'[2]

After 1945, loan funds were provided for school buildings, and the building programme saw a rapid pace of expansion. The schools attached to places of religious worship (started during the economic depression) were discontinued from October 1, 1945 and a scheme of converting them into Government schools was introduced from that date. There were 220 such schools on September 30, 1945.[3]

If the war indirectly helped the expansion of education in Ceylon, it also created difficulties. School buildings, lands and playing fields were requisitioned in 1942 for the use of military services. The average attendance of certain city schools dropped during these years. This reduced the annual grant and the managers found difficulties in

1. H. 1944 p. 1872
2. Soulbury : loc. cit. p. 34
3. AR. DE. 1945

paying all their teachers. Special provision had to be made to provide salaries to these excess teachers. Teachers also were called upon to help the war effort which resulted in the neglect of school duties.

The requisitioned buildings, etc. were released by the service authorities in 1946 but invariably they were not in a suitable state for an immediate return to normal. Many buildings and premises needed reconditioning and repairs.[1]

The war years also saw the establishment of Branch Schools. Most of these schools were opened in 1941 and 1942 by the Assisted School Managements under Emergency provisions as certain schools had to be shifted from the city to more 'peaceful' areas. Many of the larger Colombo Schools started 'Branches' in outstations. Royal College for example opened a branch—the Hill School—at Bandarawela.

By the end of 1945 most of the Branches had developed into healthy entities affording educational facilities in areas which had not enjoyed such facilities up to that time. The schools could not continue as Branches as there was no provision in the Code for that type of school and the Emergency provisions (Ordinance No. 24 of 1942) were a temporary measure. In 1946 it was decided to register these schools as separate schools—if they complied with certain conditions regarding site, accommodation, equipment, attendance and staff.

These eight years also saw many other developments which had no connection with the war. Two epoch making changes, (i) the abolition of school fees and (ii) the adoption of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the primary school was discussed in Chapter 17. In addition to the changing of the medium of instruction in the primary classes English also was gradually introduced as a second language to the Swabhasa schools. The method of approach adopted in these schools was the 'Basic English' invented by the Orthological Institute of Cambridge. It was at once a stepping stone to regular English and a language by itself confined to 850 Basic words. Adolph Myers (Basic Representative in India) introduced the system to Ceylon in 1940 by organising a Teachers Training Course. By 1944 the Basic approach to the teaching of English became popular in schools which taught English as a second language. Teachers courses on the Principles and methods of Basic English were conducted during this year at Colombo, Galle, Kandy, Kegalle, Batticaloa and Badulla, and by attending these courses many teachers not only qualified themselves in Basic English but also became conversant with scientific methods of teaching language. An Inspector of Basic English also was appointed. But by 1945 the interest in the subject

1. AR. DE. 1942 and 1946

was waning mainly due to the death of H. S. Perera, Director of Education, on January 25, 1945. He took an interest in the Basic approach to English teaching while he was the Principal of Government Training College. In fact the first experiments in adopting this approach were made at the practising school of the Training College. By 1947 it had lost much of its popularity.[1]

The demand for the inclusion of English in the curriculum of the Swabhasa schools grew so rapidly that by 1946 a new category of teachers—English Assistants—had to be appointed to many Swabhasa schools.

Religion was another subject that entered the curriculum of government schools during this period. The traditional neutrality of government in respect of the teaching of religion in its schools was abandoned in 1945 and the broad principle that pupils should be taught their religion was adopted. In government schools in which either Buddhist or Hindu children were in a majority, the day now started with the recitation of 'pansil' or 'thevarams' and at least one period a week was devoted to the study of religion. On 'poya' days children were taken to nearby temples for corporate worship. In 1946 the Director of Education reported, "There was a wide spread religious revival in schools. Large-scale 'sil' campaigns were held and Buddhist Sunday Schools were inaugurated." Buddhism and Hinduism were offered as subjects for the S.S.C. in 1946.

The Education (Amending) Ordinance of 1947 made instruction in the religion of the parent of each pupil in a government school as part of his studies compulsory.

The study of Oriental Music and Kandyan dancing in schools was also expanded and encouraged. The Lanka Gandharva Sabha and the North Ceylon Oriental Music Society established for promoting the systematic study of these subjects organised courses and held examinations culminating in the Teacher's Certificate in Music or the Final Examination of the Lanka Gandharva Sabha.[2]

The establishment of Central Schools was another important reform of the period. 'The proposal to establish Central Secondary schools in which pupils might have a training largely based upon local conditions, especially those affecting employment' was first discussed in 1937. With this end in view the Inspectors of Schools made a careful survey of the possibilities of employment which different areas in their circuits offer to the pupils when they leave school.[3]

1. AR. DE. 1940-47
2. AR. DE. 1941-47
3. AR. DE. 1937 p. 9

Explaining his plan for Central Schools in the Council in 1940 Kannangara said, ' As regards the Central Schools, the plan is that there should be a system whereby there will be one school in the centre of a group of schools and that group of schools will be feeding that Central School as much as possible. The post-primary classes of these schools will be stopped and post-primary education will be given in the Central School. But so far as education itself is concerned, it will be given in the Central School, and the education will not be of one kind as has hitherto been given.'[1]

In 1940 eleven schools were selected for reorganization as Central Schools. By the end of 1941 three of them were functioning as Central Schools. The Financial Secretary (H. J. Huxham) was not sympathetic to the proposal at the start. ' Sir, this idea of Central Schools which was a suggestion of mine, was accepted by my Committee about three years ago. When I reported the matter to the Financial Secretary, he immediately straightaway objected to it.' revealed Kannangara in the Council. " That was the first reaction. He (Financial Secretary) said, ' What is the reason ? We are getting so many thousands of rupees from this (Royal) school. Now your idea of starting a free school means that we are going to lose in point of revenue. Therefore you shall not have it.'

" Then I had to argue it out with him: ' For the sake of the poor children in these distant and far off places, whose parents cannot afford to send them to places like St. Thomas', Wesley, Ananda or Royal, let us establish these schools. These children must also have a chance in life; let us try to help them. Why should only the children in big towns—why should only they profit by higher education ? Could we not have something of the type of the Royal College, or something even less than that to start with at least ? Could we not have some of them in our constituencies where we find hundreds and thousands of children unable to go to better schools ? . . . . Where a child with absolutely no hope in this life beyond becoming a vernacular teacher, circumscribed as he is by the bounds of his village, circumscribed as he is by the means of his parents, but still a beautiful child with a splendid brain—why should that child not have an equal chance with the others ? . . . . The Financial Secretary gave in afterwards."[2]

By the end of 1943 there were nine Central Schools functioning at Minuwangoda, Veyangoda, Mawatugoda, Akuramboda, Matugama, Weeraketiya, Kattankudy, Ibbagamuwa and Dickwella. Thirteen more schools—Piliyandala, Galahitiyawa, Henegama, Hikkaduwa, Karandeniya, Wanduramba, Nugawela, Walalla, Narammala, Jaffna (Stanley), Getangama (Sivali), Deniyaya and Irrukilanpiddy—were

1. H. 1940 p. 2736
2. H. 1944 p. 925

established in 1944 bringing the total to 22. A definite step forward taken this year was the provision of 40 free board and lodging scholarships at each school. The pupils were picked out from the surrounding area, from feeder schools. How far this measure was welcomed and appreciated by the public was seen when the residents of several localities came forward with generous offers of land, money and material to put up buildings required for dormitories.[1]

In 1944 Kannangara told the Council, 'These schools were started only about 3½ years ago. It was my own scheme. I thought that this was the only way in which education could be spread far and wide.... Everybody seemed to condemn this measure, and asked 'What is this nonsense that you are starting ?' So I thought I would start this nonsense on myself. I tried it as an experiment at Matugama in my own constituency.'[2]

The policy of the Executive Committee was to establish a Central School in each electoral area of the Island.... The scheme of residential scholarships attracted the most intelligent pupils in the area to every Central School. An extensive building programme was launched in 1944 and in several schools hostels were constructed and school accommodation enlarged. Teachers with good academic and professional qualifications were appointed to most Central Schools and syllabuses of work were fixed. Practical and vocational activities received careful attention. Many applications often supported by generous promises of land and buildings were received for Central Schools in new areas. The Director of Education reported at the end of 1944, 'The work done so far by Central Schools suggests that these institutions are destined to play an important role in the educational development of the country.'[3]

With the coming into operation of the Scheme of Free Education in 1945 there was a rush for admission to Central Schools so much so that in many of them a scheme of dual sessions had to be resorted to.

Fourteen more new Central Schools—Maradana, Kalutara (Tissa), Ruwanwella, Sandalankawa, Welimada, Kekirawa, Vantharamulai, Wadduwa, Tolangamuwa, Velanai, Hunumulla, Hanwella, Talatuoya and Poramadulla—were established in 1945.

Another fourteen—Dehiwala, Colombo (Green Street), Telijjawila, Pelmadulla, Ginigathena, Gampola, Madampe, Maho, Passara, Bibile, Vayavilan, Nelliady, Horana (Taxila), and Hedunawa—were established in 1946 bringing the total to 50.

1. AR. DE. 1943 p. 5
2. H. 1944 p. 1875
3. AR. DE. 1944 p. 7

In 1946 Kannangara said, 'I have a list of 50 Central Schools, and in these schools there are 11,879 pupils, most of them doing very well. Some of these schools have been in existence for only a few months. Of course you cannot expect a Central School opened the other day to be so good as for instance the Royal College. . . . These schools have a history behind them; they may be a hundred or 70 or 80 years old. These other schools in villages started only a couple of years ago. They cannot be so good as these other schools, but at no distant date they will be able to compete on equal terms. Minerva is said to have sprung from the head of Jupiter fully armed. We cannot do that. It is impossible. Schools have to be developed. They have to grow.

'We know for instance, how Ananda and Nalanda were regarded by the other first-rate schools at the start. When Ananda and Nalanda were inaugurated, the bigger schools would not look at them. . . . The other schools would not even take part in cricket matches with Ananda or Nalanda. . . . But Sir, who will do that to-day to Ananda or Nalanda?' 1

Central Schools presented candidates for the SSC (English) Examination for the first time in November, 1946. Of the 121 candidates who sat for the full examination from 14 Central Schools 61 passed. Nine candidates passed with distinction in English. The percentage of passes was 50.4 compared with 37.5 the percentage for the Island as a whole.

Four more Central Schools—Anuradhapura, Karawita, Kuliyapitiya and Alutgama (Muslim Girls)—were added in 1947.

The schools imparted a general education of the literary type as well as practical education. Handicrafts were regularly taught. Carpentry and weaving were the chief handicrafts and a cottage industry that was peculiar to the district was also included in the curriculum. A start was made with the teaching of physics, chemistry and biology. Teachers of Music and Kandyan Dancing too were appointed. The teaching of religion was organised in every Central School.

Free clothes were given to scholars. The pupils were keen in both work and play and took part in circuit and provincial physical training displays, sports meets, competitions and concerts. Nearly all the schools introduced the house system before the end of 1947.

Some action was also taken to improve the lot of the teachers. New and better salary scales were provided from January 1, 1946. A progressive and far reaching concession was made to encourage

1. H. 1946 p. 3589

teachers to graduate. It was found that in Ceylon teachers do not as a rule improve their qualifications, unless they did so while young, even though they were unable to secure any increase in salary at all without qualifying further. The salaries Committee appointed in July, 1945 reported, ' We think that it would be fair to place teachers who graduate, at the point on the new scale which they would have reached had they served on it for half the number of years which they have served on the old scale or on the point equal to their old salary whichever is greater. This, while making it worthwhile for a teacher to graduate after a number of years' service if he has been prevented from doing so before, will give a strong incentive to graduate early."[1] This recommendation was adopted by the department.

Ceylonization of the teaching profession was another change implemented during the early years of the war.

The approval and prescription of text-books was another problem that had to be probed into. Even Councillors sometimes alleged, " that, in determining the text-books to be used in schools, the authorities were influenced by the motive of promoting their own private gain, the private gain of their schools or of authors, publishers and booksellers."

On March 4, 1941 Kannangara announced in the State Council that on the advice of the Executive Committee of Education H.E. the Governor has decided to appoint a Commission to inquire into and report upon the various allegations made in connection with the preparation, approval, prescription and adopting of text-books in schools, both government and assisted.

On March 26, A. C. G. Wijekoon (Chairman), K. Balasingham and Kenneth de Kretser were appointed to form the Commission. The Report which was submitted on November 3, 1942 concluded: ' From the evidence placed before us we consider that the allegation which have been the subject of inquiry by the Commission emanate from a comparatively small number of authors, writers, booksellers, publishers and others who have financial interest in the production, sale and distribution of text-books. It did not appear to us that there was a widespread belief throughout the country that school authorities and officials of the Education Department were activated by improper motives in determining the text-books, exercise books and school apparatus in the schools'.[2]

Chapter 12 describes the provision for education in 1931, the year in which Kannangara became the Minister of Education. Now let us survey the cumulative result of the reforms of the ' Kannangara era'.

1. SP. VIII 1946 p. 19
2. SP. IV 1943

The Department by 1947 had grown to be one of the largest and could not find sufficient accommodation in the Secretariat. The Examinations Branch had in fact become a department by itself. In 1947 the offices were shifted from the Secretariat to the disused WAAF Camp on Lake Road. The Examinations Branch was shifted to the 'Boat House' near the Secretariat.

At the end of 1947 there were over 6,000 schools (including estate schools) of which roughly 50 per cent. were directly administered by the department. At the time Kannangara took over the percentage of government schools was less than 37 per cent. The number of government schools doubled between 1931 and 1947, but the number of assisted schools increased only by about 16 per cent. during the same priod.

The increase is even more marked in the case of Government English Schools. In 1931 there were only 16 Government English Schools of which 14 were Junior Secondary. In 1947 there were 135 Government English Schools of which 59 were Junior or Junior Secondary.

During the same period the number of Pirivenas increased from 37 to 124, and estate schools from 554 to 900. In 1931 there were 21 Training Colleges of which only 4 were government. In 1947 of a total of 25 Training Colleges 10 were government.

Even in 1947 nearly 83 per cent. of the pupils attended Swabhasa schools, but of the 17 per cent. attending English schools there was a big shift from the assisted to the government. In 1931 of the children attending English Schools just over 4 per cent. were in Government English Schools. By 1947 the Government English Schools had enrolled as much as 27 per cent. of the total attending all English schools. The establishment of Central Schools and Scholarships for the first time not only had taken English education to the rural areas but also had provided the poor but able child a ladder to rise to the top through free board and lodgings (including clothes) provided in the Central Schools.

Below is a summary of the educational statistics at the end of the Kannangara era:

Year		*Population*	*Number of Children in School*	*Per cent*
1947	...	6,879,000	1,034,898	15

In 1931 approximately 53 per cent. of the children of school going age did not attend any school. In 1947 the percentage of non-school-going children was reduced to aporoximately 37 per cent.

Year	*Number of Government Schools*	*Number of Aided Schools*	*Expenditure* Rs.
1947	2906	2992	69,813,605

The expenditure had risen from Rs. 2.28 per head of the population in 1931 to Rs. 10.15 per head in 1947.

In 1931 nearly 63% of the children attending school were boys, and only 37% were girls. With the opening up of more schools in the rural areas and growth of education consciousness of the villager the percentage of girls rose to over 43% by 1947.

In 1931 of the school going children 21% were Kandyan Sinhala and 4% were Muslim. By 1947 their percentages rose to 27 and 5 respectively. The above figures indicate that Kannangara's fight for equality of opportunity in education had succeeded to some extent even by 1947. But the fruits of his reforms were yet to bear.

The table below shows the increase in literacy :

Year	*Literacy in any Language.*			*Literacy in English*
	Males	*Females*	*Total*	
1931	62.0	30.2	47.0	4.7
1947	70.7	44.7	58.4	6.5

The number of candidates presented for the public examinations in 1947 also show a marked increase over the figures for 1931. The total number of candidates who took up Cambridge Senior and London Matriculation in 1931 was 3724. In 1947 as many as 14,057 sat for local SSC and London Matriculation.

The 2906 Government Schools functioning in 1947 could be classified into :

Medium	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
English	135	44,457
Bilingual	32	8,340
Swabhasa	2,739	452,504

The 2992 Assisted Schools could be classified into :

Medium	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*
English	274	119,655
Bilingual	21	6,731
Swabhasa	1,797	337,724
Estate	900	45,712

In addition there were :

Pirivenas	124	4,991
Govt. Trg. Colleges	10	906
Aided Trg. Colleges	15	330

The total number of Government and Assisted Schools was 6,047 with a total enrolment of 1,028,450. This list excludes institutions of Higher education, vocational schools and Unaided schools.[1]

1. AR. DE. 1947

CHAPTER 20

VOCATIONAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION

In 1931 when Kannangara became the Minister of Education there were 128 Trade and Industrial Schools providing a vocational education and administered by the Department of Education. The following statement gives the subjects of instruction, the number of schools teaching each subject and the number of pupils taught:

Industry	*No. of Schools*	*Pupils*
Basket and Mat	34	n.a.
Carpentry	36	634
Commercial	11	178
Cookery	1	11
Dress Making	2	23
Dyeing	1	8
Embroidery	3	34
Iron Work	3	25
Lace Making	3	22
Lacquer Work	2	18
Pottery	1	16
Printing, Book Binding	5	147
Rattan Work	1	20
Tailoring	1	53
Weaving, Spinning	24	371

Lacquer work especially was given some extra attention because this ancient Ceylon craft was at the time limited to a few families and was in danger of extinction. It was taught at Leliambe and Idamegama in the Kandy District. Waragoda Pottery School was another centre which attempted to raise the standard of work of another ancient craft.

Government weaving schools turned out silk suitings and other materials. The articles turned out by these Industrial Schools were sold at the sales room of the Education Office.

The Horetuduwa Weaving School had attained a high standard of efficiency and it served as a model for other weaving schools. Successful work was done in the reproduction of old indigenous designs and experiments were carried out in dyeing and bleaching.

The cultivation of eri-silk was encouraged. Lantern lectures on the rearing of silk worms were delivered in many centres by E. E. Davidson the officer in charge of industrial education, eri-silk-moth eggs were distributed to 70 schools and private persons during 1931.

The schools worked on a profit sharing basis—students receiving a part of the income.[1]

In 1933 toy-making was added as a subject in the carpentry schools. The standard of work at the Batuwandara Rattan work school also was raised. The Horetuduwa weaving school was developed as a Training School for weaving teachers, besides being a research institute.

The Iron Work Schools at Nawangama and Palapota were improved in 1934. The Final Examination for Weaving School Teachers was held for the first time during the same year. Bleaching dyeing and Textile printing were added to the curriculum of the Horetuduwa Weaving School.

Hemp-spinning and net making was a new industry taught at Kurana-Katunayake, and a new school for coir work was started at Hiramadagama. Another new subject introduced in 1934 was knitting.[2]

Bentota Carpentry School experimented in making seraphinas which turned out to be a success in 1935. Rearing of eri-silk-worm spread steadily by 1935 and the spinning and weaving of local silk was undertaken at Hiramadagama Weaving School. The instructor attached to the school went round the village instructing and demonstrating in the art of silk-worm rearing. By 1935 a good number of villagers were rearing eri-silk-worm in their homes, and the cocoons were spun into yarn with which cloth was made at the Weaving School.

By 1935 Hiramadagama Industrial School started by E. A. Delgoda had developed to be an important centre of many industries. Weaving, coir-work, brass-work, iron-work, carpentry, basketry and mat weaving were taught at this centre. In all these sections which were attended by about 125 pupils useful and artistic articles were produced.

An Industrial Teachers' Certificate in carpentry was started in 1936. During the same year the Central Weaving Institute was

1. AR. DE. 1931 p. A21
2. AR. DE. 1934 p. A26

transferred from Horetuduwa to the premises of the Ceylon Technical College.[1]

On February 1, 1941 most of the flourishing Industrial Schools were handed over to the Department of Commerce and Industries, and the rest were converted to workshops of Central and other rural schools.[2]

Lionel Heath (see Chapter 13) who submitted 'a Report Upon Industrial Education in Ceylon' in 1931 recommended the establishment of a Central Craft School 'from which shall emanate the trained teacher, the designs and patterns, samples of craft excellence, schemes of progress and inspection, control and examination. ... Its aim and functions should be (i) keeping a small Industrial Museum ; (ii) training selected students ; (iii) providing courses at the commencement in Cabinet work, metal work, fitters work, silversmithy, lacquer work and weaving ; and (iv) organising an annual exhibition.

'The school can be later expanded to include other crafts such as pottery, bookbinding, modelling &c.'[3]

It was surprising why Kannangara who paid much attention to the Rural Scheme did not pay equal attention to industrial education. If Kannangara had adopted the recommendations of Heath an interest in industries may have grown helping Ceylon to overcome some of the economic problems that she is faced with to-day.

In a way, the Education Department made an attempt (though it was not much of a success) to convert the Ceylon Technical Schools into a Central Craft School in addition to providing a scientific technical education in engineering trades. Let us now trace the development of the Technical Schools under Kannangara.

In 1931 Government Technical Schools under F. E. Kennard had three departments : (i) Technical, providing courses in Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electric Wiring, Engineering Workshop Practice, Building Construction, Carpenter's drawing, Sanitary Engineering, Practical Plumbing, Telephone and Telegraph Engineering, Motor Mechanism and Telegraphic Signalling; (ii) Commercial, providing courses in General Commerce, Shorthand-Typewriting and Advance Book-Keeping; and (iii) Art, providing courses for art teachers and painters.

Students were prepared for City and Guilds of London Institute Examinations and the London Chamber of Commerce Examinations.[4]

1. AR. DE. 1936 pp. A31-32
2. AR. DE. 1941
3. SP. VII — 1931
4. AR. DE. 1931 p. A20

In 1932 a fourth department, Weaving was added mainly for the poor students.[1]

In January, 1933 E. R. Bartlam was appointed Principal. Soon after his appointment he submitted a report to the Executive Committee of Education on the 'Reorganization of Technical Schools.' On May 2, 1933 the Executive Committee considered Bartlam's report and decided to undertake the reorganization as outlined by him.

On June 29, 1933 Kannangara submitted a report on the reorganization to the State Council. The Report said "(i) The instruction that it is proposed to provide fall into four groups and classes will be conducted in : (*a*) Engineering (Civil, Mechanical and Electrical) ; (*b*) Commerce ; (*c*) Arts and Grafts ; and (*d*) Industries. (ii) The organization proposed will be such as to enable the Technical Schools to train students for an Engineering degree. (iii) New classes were started in Surveying and Levelling, Structural Engineering and Geology in 1933. (iv) It is proposed to increase the fees to bring them more in accordance with the fees charged by the University and Medical Colleges. (v) Priovision has been made for Scientific and Industrial Research. (vi) The educational qualifications necessary for admission will be raised. (vii) The lines on which the scheme has been prepared are summarised as follows : (*a*) A very considerable increase in the extent of instruction provided ; (*b*) Full provision for practical work of all kinds ; (c) Facilities for research work in technical and industrial subjects in the determination of suitable materials and methods of construction; (*d*) A considerable increase in instruction in Arts and Crafts and also local industries, and provision for research in this direction; (e) A rigid curtailment of all unnecessary expenditure without the sacrifice of either efficiency or quality of instruction ; (viii) When the suggested reorganization be put into effect the name of the Institute should be changed to that of the Government Technical College."

Kannangara proposing the acceptance of this report said, 'The Technical School was established as a matter of fact in the year 1893. It started with 25 students and training was given in engineering for two years. . . . In 1896 a Technical College was formed of 4 Departments : Civil Engineering, Surveying and Levelling, Telegraphy Electrical and Mechanical Engineering and in 1901 a fifth department in Drawing and Art was added. . . .

In June 1910, the name of the institution was altered to 'Technical Schools' and the Institution fell from a high state. . ..

The present position therefore, Sir, is rather unsatisfactory. . . . I have here the course of instruction elaborately prepared by the

1. AR, DE. 1932 p. A20

Acting Principal who is a man with very high qualifications. . . . The course of training provided for here is to extend over a period of four years, and that is for civil, mechanical and electrical engineering. . . .[1]

The scheme of re-organization was accepted by the Council on July 19, 1933.

The reorganization was carried out in 1933 and 34. The number of students enrolled increased rapidly from about 600 in 1932 to 808 in 1934.

New courses in Surveying, Theory of Structures, Geology, Sanitary Engineering, Sculpture, Photography and Pottery were added in 1933 and 34. The total fees collected increased from Rs. 6,672 in 1932 to Rs. 17,644 in 1934.[2]

By the end of 1935 the new laboratories were equipped and advanced technical instruction in civil, mechanical and electrical engineering as well as research work was undertaken. The first student presented for the London B.Sc. (Eng.) Examination was successful thus bringing new stature to the College.[3]

A new workshop was added in 1937 to provide accommodation for the growing numbers. Two new industrial subjects — printing and lacquer work — were added to the curriculum in June the same year.[4]

The number on roll rose to about a 1000 in 1938 and the income from fees rose to over Rs. 27,000 from about Rs. 6,000 before the reorganization in 1933. But the pace of development could not be kept up. During the war years (1939—45) engineers were difficult to be recruited as lecturers. Even the few who manned the College were called upon to perform military duties in addition to their work in the College. A number of vacancies remained unfilled and the standard of education declined.

During the debate on the Appropriation Bill 1941-42 A. E. Goonesinghe criticised the administration of the Technical College. He said, 'When this institution was reorganised in 1933, it was said that research work would be done in such subjects as the manufacture of soap, candles, glass, paper, biscuits, margarine, rubber goods, cement, pottery and procelainware and tyres. I would like to ask the Minister which of these industries has been taught at the Technical College ? Nothing has been done. . . .

'Yet we have spent large sums of money in reorganizing this institution for the purpose of getting our people trained there.'[5]

1. H. 1933 p. 1107
2. AR. DE. 1934 pp. A24-5.
3. AR. DE. 1935 pp. A26-27
4. AR. DE. 1937 pp. A32-4
5. H. 1941 p. 2273

Soon after the Appropriation Bill was passed the Executive Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to investigate into the condition of the Technical College and recommend improvements.

The sub-Committee found that the Technical College had not an efficient or a sufficient staff. Even the few available were overworked.

The Principal excused himself by saying that he had good ideas and that he was not to blame. He wanted to do certain things expeditiously, but the Director of Education stood in his way. The sub-committee finally decided that he should be made independent of the Department of Education.[1]

This was approved ny the State Council on March 13, 1942 and the Ceylon Technical College which was a part of the Education Department was separated from it and made into a new department. The Principal of the College E. R. Bartlam was made the head of the institution.

The most important of the reorganization proposals were : (i) The College shall offer courses leading up to the London University degree in Engineering and the Associate Membership of the Chartered Institution of Engineers, and, for this purpose it shall have an adequate staff ; (ii) The salary scales of posts for which qualified Engineers are required shall be brought up to the level of posts of equal status in the Government Technical Departments ; (iii) Day and evening courses shall be offered suitable for the training of sub-professional or sub-technical grades, such as foreman, overseers, signallers, inspectors and draughtsman, and continuation evening courses shall be provided for the training of artisans ; (iv) The College shall also offer elementary and advanced courses in Commerce to enable students to acquire the qualifications expected of book-keepers and shorthand typists, as well as the higher qualifications of recognised institutions of Secretaries, Accountants and Auditors ; (v) The certificates of efficiency in theoretical engineering training shall be recognised as a qualification for employment in the sub-technical grades of foremen, overseers and other similar skilled workers ; (vi) The advanced certificates in Commerce, Art and Industries shall be recognised as sufficient qualifications for employment in the posts of teachers of these respective subjects ; (vii) All theoretical instruction in connection with technical training shall be centralised at the College, and Government Technical Departments shall as far as possible modify their schemes for imparting technical training accordingly.[2]

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1. H. 1942 pp. 551-9.
2. AR. Director, Technical College 1944-48

The College did not show much improvement after even the second reorganization. The Principal Bartlam came in for severe criticism during the debate on the Appropriation Bill, 1944.

H. W. Amarasuriya proposing the deletion of the total salary of the Principal from the estimates said, ' Sir, it is very regrettable that the Technical College does not function properly at all. ... In the first place a number of posts have not been filled for years. At the present juncture if this institution functions efficiently, it would be doing a great service to this country. ... It was with that hope and with that end in view that the reorganization scheme was introduced some years ago. ... The Head of the Technical College has no administrative capacity at all, and there seems to be a great deal of dissatisfaction in that place. '

Kannangara in reply said, ' For many years we were unable to discover the real nature of this officer. Statements were made, in and outside this House, against this officer, but I did not want to base my judgement on mere hearsay. I went on the actual qualifications of the man. ... With regard to his talents and his qualifications, so far as paper qualifications are concerned, I have nothing to say. But one thing I can say is that where the administration of a department is concerned he is utterly unsuited to discharge that duty....'

Amarasuriya's amendment ' that provision of Rs. 10,800 for salary of the Principal be deleted ' was passed by 22 to 2. [1]

On October 1, 1944, the post of Principal of the Technical College was abolished and Bartlam retired from service on abolition of the post. R. H. Paul, Professor of Electrical Engineering was placed in control of the Department in addition to his own duties. In January, 1945 the post of Director of Technical College was created. The post was duly advertised and filled by the appointment of Paul.

The acceptance of Free Education Proposals resulted in large numbers of students seeking admission to the College. This led to the expansion of existing courses and to the introduction of new courses.

The College was provisionally recognised in 1942 by the University of London for presenting students for the External Degree Examination in Engineering. A four-year course in Chemical Engineering was established in 1944.

By the end of 1947 the Technical College provided courses in all branches of Engineering, Surveying and Levelling, Building Construction, Architecture, Builders Quantities, Town Planning, Photography,

1. H. 1944 pp. 2281-2302

Printing, Electro-Technology, Heat Engines, Motor Mechanics, Valuation, Chemistry, Geology, Mathematics, Carpenter's Drawing, Geometrical Drawing, Machine Drawing, Draughtsmanship, Commerce, Stenography, Accountancy, Book-Keeping, Typewriting, Drawing and Painting, Weaving, Pottery, Lacwork, Woodwork, Coirwork, Ironwork, Brass and Copperwork and Rattan-work.

The number of students under instruction in the various courses rose from 724 in 1931 to 1857 in 1947 and the government expenditure on the College from Rs. 172,488 to Rs. 710,187. The income from fees rose from Rs. 6,667 in 1931 to Rs. 47,723 in 1945 and thereafter went down again to Rs. 12,671 in 1947 after the introduction of free education. [1]

One more topic remains to be discussed before we close this chapter — the development of the University.

The University College and the Medical College were combined in 1942 to form an autonomous University of Ceylon. When Kannangara relinquished his office of Minister of Education the University was five years old. It had twenty five full fledged departments of study under four faculties — Oriental Studies, Arts, Science and Medicine. The number on the academic staff nearly trebled from about 35 to 97 during the 16 year period under review. (1931—47).

The increase in the number of students was even more marked. In 1931 the University College and the Medical College together had only 509 students. In 1947 the number had risen to 1554. The percentage of women-students in 1931 was less than 4 but by the end of the period the percentage was over 16.

The 'racial' and religious composition of the students also changed steadily during the period, with the provision of greater equality of opportunity. The percentages of the various groups in 1942 and1947 are as follows :

Ethnic group	1942	1947
Sinhala	57	61
Tamil	32	29
Burgher	6	5
Moors & Malays	3	3
Others	2	2
Religious group		
Buddhist	38	44
Hindu	22	18

1. AR. Director Technical College 1944-48.

Christian	37	33
Muslim	3	3
Others	—	1

In 1931 the percentage of Buddhists and Muslims was even less than what it was in 1942.

The increase in the number of economically poor students was also seen by the increase in the number of bursaries. In 1943 only 65 students of a total of 904 students (or 7%) received financial assistance from the University. In 1947 the number had risen to 291 of a total of 1554 students (or 20%).

The University Library grew from 10,000 volumes in 1931 to nearly 50,000 in 1947.

The expenditure on the University College in 1931 was less than Rs. 460,000 and the Medical College just over Rs. 100,000. With the establishment of the University the expenditure rose to Rs. 1,300,000 (1942) and by 1947 to Rs. 2,750,000. [1]

Thus in every educational sphere marked changes were taking place both quantitative and qualitative. But the results and repercussions of Kannangara reforms were yet to be experienced.

1. University of Ceylon : Annual Report of the Council, 1947.

PART V HIS CRITICS

CHAPTER 21

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Roman Catholic Church was one of the earliest organizations to rise against Kannangara. The Catholic Church had fought hard for the denominational system of schools that flourished after the Morgan Reforms of 1867. By 1931 it had built up a network of aided schools covering not only the districts where Catholics lived in fair numbers but even predominantly Buddhist and Hindu districts. They had the best organization and a disciplined priesthood which carried out the orders of the hierarchy to the best of their ability.

In the race for more and better aided schools that started in 1870 they had not only beaten the late-starters like the Buddhists and Hindus but even the Protestant Missions which received government patronage from as early as 1812. Thus the Catholic Church was wedded to the system of schools that prevailed at the inauguration of the Donoughmore era. They had become a 'vested interest' and were determined to preserve the status quo as long as they could. They knew that in 'open competition' none could beat them. They not only had made the best use of every opportunity that came their way, but also had made many sacrifices which they rightly claimed.

Kannangara on the other hand saw very vividly that 'open competition' and 'equality of opportunity' could never go together in the denominational set up that prevailed in Ceylon. The Buddhists and Hindus had neither the organization nor the resources to match their numbers. The income of the temples was rarely utilized for work of social upliftment of the Buddhists and Hindus, and there was no central organization to show the way. The most devoted Buddhists were 'individualistic' in that they looked for 'self-perfection' rather than community development. They were 'other worldly' and lethargic.

Kannangara saw self-government as an opportunity for a cultural revival. The British government had encouraged Christian Missions and 'Westernization'. The mission of an independent government he thought was to undo what a colonial government had done. He was all-out for reforms in the educational system.

All his reforms were opposed and criticised by the Catholic Church. His system of direct payment, maintained schools, rural scheme, legal enactments, special committee, free scheme and even adult education were all opposed by the Church.

The criticisms began almost immediately after he took office as Minister of Education. In 1931 the Ceylon Catholic Messenger the Bi-weekly (at the time) of the Church said, " There is little doubt that Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara owes his title of Minister of Education to the fact that he was known to have had some educational experience. The appointment to the post of one who had no previous experience at all would probably have caused some misgiving. On the other hand, however, might not one ask whether the selection of one with no experience at all would not be preferable, at least under certain circumstances, to one who has only had a one-sided experience. The former would learn and what is more, he would be in a position to study a question under all its aspects, in all its bearings and form his opinion on the intrinsic merits of the subject discussed, unmoved by prejudices and pre-conceptions. The latter on the contrary would look at things with a ' jaundiced eye ' and allow himself to be guided by prejudices and preferences, by conclusions drawn from the incomplete data of his partial experience. . . . "[1]

Commenting on Kannangara's educational policy the Church said in 1934, ' The following are some noticeable characteristics of his policy : (i) Extended support of the Pirivenas which have been defined as schools for the training of Buddhist monks ; (ii) State support for pansala schools ; (iii) State patronage of Buddhist schools ; (iv) Creation of a new category of schools not provided for in the Education Ordinance — to wit Government managed schools — to meet exclusively, the needs and requirements of Buddhist education.

' These features of the ministerial policy, which are unmistakable, can only point to one thing : to the distinctly Buddhist trend of the educational policy of to-day.

' Are we at the commencement of a subtle campaign of peaceful penetration '.[2]

' Exposing ' Kannangara's partiality to the Pirivenas the Church said, ' Before Mr. Kannangara came into office the Director of Education had refused to register new schools. After Mr. Kannangara came into office the Director of Education consented to register six Pirivena schools. We wanted — and we still want — to know how or why this was done.

1. CCM October 20, 1931
2. CCM November 6, 1934

'On what democratic and constitutional principles does Mr. Kannangara as Minister of Education give or allow preferential treatment to one particular type of schools — to schools designed primarily for Buddhist priesthood. . . . We want an explanation.'[1]

'Pirivenas or temple schools we are told are rapidly springing up in various parts of the country. . . . The rapid growth of Pirivenas to which public attention has now been drawn is a feature of recent educational history and may also be regarded, we think as due to a large extent to the policy followed by the Ministry of Education both under the last (1931-6) and the present Council.

But Theological Schools or Missionary Schools whether Christian or Buddhist purely as such, cannot be subsidised out of government funds. And it is an immoral policy to promote religious propaganda on the plea of fostering a national literature'.[2]

The Church not only attacked the Minister's Pirivena policy, but even went to the extent of commenting adversely on the content of Pirivena education. 'What has been the national and cultural value of this education?' the Church asked. 'Where is the literature it has produced ? What is the contribution it has made to the cause of national progress or the world of universal culture ?'

Comparing Christian Missionary education with the Pirivena education it said, 'If the system which the Christian Missionaries helped to work has defects which are capable of being magnified it has also rendered services to the country which could hardly be over estimated. What Pirivena education has done to the country as a whole has yet to be shown.'

Commenting on a speech made by Kannangara at a Pirivena gathering the Messenger said, 'It is hardly necessary however to go on. Mr. Kannangara knows the facts of history as well as we do. But he was speaking (in praise of Pirivenas) to an audience — albeit a Pirivena audience — whose ignorance could be exploited with impunity and Mr. Kannangara also besides being the Minister of Education has also shown himself to be an anti-Christian propagandist and was apparently indulging in his favourite form of propaganda. That perhaps is the explanation of the tissue of misrepresentation for which no Minister of Government with any sense of decency or respect should make himself responsible.'[3]

On the revival of pansala schools the Church had much to say. In 1931 there were about 400,000 children who did not receive any education. A greater part of them lived in remote villages devoid of

1. CCM May 13, 1932
2. CCM January 24, 1939
3. CCM August 23, 1940

any educational facilities. The pansala schools were revived to provide them an elementary education. The department was to send a teacher to the pansala who could organise a school with the help of the Bhikkhu in the pansala premises.

Criticising this proposal the Church said, 'It all seems an easy way out of the difficulty. That is precisely the reason why we view the proposal with suspicion. Really good and valuable things are not readily found or easily acquired. Easy expedients are things to be wary of. The motive too appears excellent on the surface; which puts us in mind of the adage, 'all that glitters is not gold.'

'Pansala schools are an old institution in this country. What were those ancient Pansala schools doing all these years ? Why did they not take in those children to educate whom others had to make heavy sacrifices ?

'Government cannot subsidize religious education. All schools receiving Government support must be open to all children. Only schools imparting an approved secular education under approved conditions as judged by the State's authorised educational authority are entitled to aid from public funds. . . . They are principles that must be maintained at all costs, and upheld against all odds.

'This is not the first time that pansala schools have formed the subject of an official inquiry. A number of years ago an impartial commission of experts declared them to be worse than useless.'[1]

'Why then we ask, are pansala schools selected for special treatment? Is it because the members of the Ministry of Education happen to be Buddhists interested in the promotion of Buddhism and Buddhist education? We hope they will understand that they do not constitute the Government.'[2]

Teaching of religion in state schools was another measure the Church picked up for constant attack. In 1935 the Messenger wrote in its editorial, 'Kannangara is reported to have said, that all government schools were empowered to include religious instruction in their curriculum.

'By whom are the government schools empowered to include religious instruction in their curriculum ? By the Minister of Education himself ? Is the minister then above the law ? Is he empowered to set the law at nought and make and enforce laws of his own against the letter and spirit of statutory law ? This is not merely an educational question. It is a constitutional question as well. If the Ministers of the State Council are able to ride roughshod over the laws of

1. CCM August 29, 1933
2. CCM October 12, 1934

the country and impose their own sweet will upon the people, then there is something very wrong with the Committee System of Government and something wrong with the constitution itself. If such a thing was tolerated government by statutory legislation would be a sham and a mockery.

" Will not the law officers of the government take steps to safeguard the sacred and inviolable character of the statute books and see that the prescriptions of the law are followed to the letter and in the spirit by all, not excluding those entrusted with its administration. '[1]

' Consistently with the principle of religious neutrality government cannot identify with the teaching of any religion. Hence its prohibition to teach Christianity to Buddhist children in Christian schools. But is not the teaching of Buddhism in government schools also a violation of religious neutrality. Is the propagation of Christianity as such forbidden in Ceylon? And are people not free to change their religion. '[2]

' Until the appointment of Mr. Kannangara to the Ministerial Office there was no doubt whatever in regard to government's correct attitude towards religious teaching in schools. The report of the 1926-29 Education Commission, one of the signatories of which was Mr. Kannangara himself had *finally* settled the matter. The Commission's unanimous decision was that — With regard to religion in schools it was essential for government to maintain an attitude of neutrality, and the preservation of this neutrality could best be maintained by refusal to subsidize either directly or indirectly, religious instruction in any school.

' During the first period of Mr. Kannangara's office as Minister there appeared certain signs that this regulation was being quietly set aside, that Mr. Kannangara, the Minister of Education, was going back on the principle laid down by Mr. Kannangara member of Education Commission. '[3]

The movement for the inclusion of religious instruction in state schools made much headway both in England and America in the early forties. In England it was publicly declared that it was the government's intention to give religious teaching a definite and assured place in the school day and to afford all children an opportunity of being brought up in the faith of their parents.

' Repercussions of this movement ' the Messenger said, ' have been felt in these parts too, and indeed, we should not be surprised

1. CCM August 16, 1935
2. CCM September 29, 1939
3. CCM March 28, 1943

if the report of our Special Committee on Education came out with a similar recommendation. ' (the report was not out when the editorial was written).

" The axiom 'there can be no education worth the name without a religious basis ' is understood as a Christian maxim having a distinctively Christian meaning. In it religion stands not for any religion indiscriminately but solely for the Christian religion.

" The first question that arises then, is whether the same axiom admits of universal application whether everything bearing the name of religion provides the solid basis of a true education ; whether any education is worth the name of education so long as it is based on some religion.

" This is one question. There is another : would the maxim even if theoretically true, admit of practical application. . . . For Catholics religious instruction means nothing less than the inculcation of the teachings and principles of Christ, the son of God as treasured and safeguarded within the Catholic Church. No substraction of those truths and principles to bring them into harmony with the teachings given by Protestant bodies would be tolerated. '[1]

' Religion enters into education in order to help the educated to gain their last end. Now their last end must be the same for all men since all men have the same human nature. It follows then that the only religion which can adequately inform education, the only religion that can be the basis of education whilst discharging its own proper function is that religion which leads man to his final destiny. And this is exactly the Catholic position. '[2]

" The question of religious instruction in government schools resolves itself ultimately into a constitutional issue. What the attitude of government should be in regard to this matter under a policy of religious neutrality has been fully thrashed out. There is no need to go over the ground. . . . Nor would it be of any use to urge that in the proposed scheme government would not only ally itself with any particular religion but would treat all religions with impartiality, undertaking to give to every child attending a government school instruction in his own particular religion. From afar this scheme may appear feasible. But it will not stand close scrutiny. In order to function as the universal teacher of religion government through its teachers would have to assume now the yellow robe of a Buddhist Bhikkhu, now the clerical garb of a Christian Minister, anon the saffron garments of a Hindu guru and so on. . . . These chameleon-

1. CCM October 10, 1943
2. CCM November 7, 1943

like metamorphoses of the supreme religious teacher would make him the laughing stock of the children and bring ridicule on every religion taught in the school.

"Those who want government to give religious instruction in government schools are also those particularly interested in promoting Buddhist education, and those who are interested in Buddhist education are also those who want to put down Christian education, who prefer Buddhist children to be brought up in the non-religious atmosphere of a government school, rather than in the religious atmosphere of a Christian school, and so long as this anti-Christian attitude prevails, little opportunity will be given for Christian teaching in any future scheme of education. With the direction of educational policy in the hands of those whose professed aim is to serve the cause of Buddhism the question of religious instruction in government schools could in practice have but one meaning, the instruction given in those schools would be instruction in Buddhism and thus there would be an end to government's attitude and constitutional attitude of religious neutrality."[1]

Opposing Kannangara's plan to expand the Rural Scheme with the idea of giving a practical bias to education the Church said, 'The object of education said our Minister of Education the other day, is preparation for life and citizenship. If in the term 'life' we include life in the next world, and in 'citizenship,' citizenship with the blessed in heaven we have the true, the full, and the Catholic concept of the purpose of education.

'On leaving College or School, young men are driven to the ever swelling ranks of the unemployed. In this predicament advocates of a purely utilitarian system of education gain ready support. To blame the College for the faults of our economic system becomes a popular pastime. Our schools it is loudly contended are not giving a proper education because they are not training our youth for life — for any special pursuit. Our entire educational system, it is argued should be changed : it should be given a practical turn.

'We fear, however, that the cry for an educational training for a practical purpose is repeated too often. Too often, because while the phrase sounds reasonable enough, when we inquire what is meant by practical, we usually find that practical means money-getting. But to make money-making the sole or principal object of education would be to lower education to the plane of rank materialism.'[2]

The Church's real enmity towards Kannangara began with the introduction of the new Education Bill in the State Council in 1938.

1. CCM April 4, 1943
2. CCM December 14, 1934

Even before the Bill was formally presented to the House the Messenger said, 'There are signs, omens and prognostications that the dark horse of the Ministry of Education is at last about to be trotted out.

'Those interested in the mysteries of the turf will be interested to know the names of these *equine* experts. We can only name some of them here. There is of course first and foremost Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara himself upon whom is to devolve the role of master jockey. . . .

'Subject to the approval of these highly qualified experts the Educational Horse is expected to be solemnly led forth and set on the course. It is expected to carry all before it — kick out of the way the Board of Education, crush out the Education District Committees, put out of the running all others who would presume to enter upon the same educational course. In a word it is expected to be the sole occupant of the field.

'There is, however, one obstacle which it has to clear, and which perhaps it has not taken into calculation : the wall of sane, rational, just, fair minded opinion. Will that obstacle also be cleared ?'[1]

'What would happen under an Ordinance' the church asked, 'the principal object of which is precisely to place the Ministry above the law, to render legal and irrevocable any momentary whim, vagary or fancy of the Ministry of Education ?'[2]

These comments were made in February, 1938 but the Bill was gazetted only at the end of May, and the first reading took place in August (Apparently the Church has had prior knowledge of the contents of the Bill). Commenting on Kannangara's introductory speech in the House the Church said, 'The Minister of Education appears to have been in a particularly pugnacious mood when he moved the first reading of the new Education Bill. Otherwise it is probable he would have been more dignified in his utterances and more circumspect in his statements.

'Mr. Kannangara does not explicitly tell us who those miscreants are whom he so roughly castigates. But there is no mistaking them. They are ourselves. They are the Catholics who have been the chief if not the sole, critics of the extravagancies of the Ministry of Education.'[3]

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1. CCM February 11, 1938
2. CCM February 18, 1938
3. CCM August 12, 1938

Under the Education Ordinance of 1920 'the Code' was laid by the Board of Education, a body controlled by the managers of the assisted schools. The new Bill sought to remove this power and reduce the Board to the level of a purely advisory body. The new Bill rightly gave the code making power to the Executive Committee of Education. It was this provision of the new Bill that was severely attacked by the Church.

'We have no hesitation in saying that the opposition raised to-day by the Ministry of Education against the Board is neither honest nor justified.[1] ... The new Education Bill rests on the argument that since the Central Government provides the funds for education, therefore it should be responsible for educational matters.

'This statement is neither honest nor sound. It is not honest because whilst the argument supposes that all the funds for education are provided by government, the fact is that a considerable proportion of the funds spent on education in Ceylon come from non-government sources.

'Even if the supposition were true — that is to say even if government did actually provide all the monies spent on education in Ceylon — the argument on which the Bill is based would still be unsound and untenable.

'The elementary liberties of individuals, the fundamental rights of parents are beyond price. They are sacred. They are inviolable. They are inalienable. Money connot buy them ; government cannot filch them away ; constitutions cannot disregard, ignore or overlook them. ...

'We are forced to recognise the fact that a ministry which could inspire such a bill as the present could have no intention of maintaining intact the denominational system of education, as it was established nearly 70 years ago, and as it has subsisted for so many years in the past. ... The Bill vests in the state the entire responsibility for education. ... The Bill strikes at the very roots of the denominational system.

'The Minister of Education categorically declared that in his opinion the time had now come when the state should control all schools ; and he further made clear what that control ... should be ; it was to be total and absolute control, embracing every aspect of education — administrative, legislative, financial and academic.

'There thus seems little doubt about the immediate prospect before us, with the present Ministry in power to operate the new ordinance and at the same time carry out their own intentions.'[2]

1. CCM August 30, 1938
2. CCM September 2, 1938

D. J. B. Kuruppu writing to the Messenger on 'How a Mountain was in labour — and What issued forth' described the Bill as a 'little mouse brought forth in secrecy and now offered to the public gaze to the accompaniment of a gawky squeek from its official precentor.'

This Bill he said, 'has not even the attraction of freshness. It smells rank and musty.'[1]

The Church calling the Catholics to rise against this vicious Bill said, 'It is our turn to rise and rally round our priests and bishops and show a united and determined front as our forefathers did of old and as we ourselves did not fail to do only a few years ago.

'For what is at stake?'

'Our schools, the dearest heritage, next to our churches, which we have received from the past : the fruit of past Catholic victories and of the generosity and self-sacrifice of our ancestors who have built that mighty array of Catholic schools whose only fault is that they rouse the envy and jealousy of petty minded bigots. These schools — our sacred patrimony are in peril. Is that all ? . . .

'The souls of our children are at stake — their immortal souls. Our children have to be brought up in a Catholic atmosphere. We have had that blessing, thanks to our forefathers. Are our children to be deprived of it through our cowardice, our laziness ? . . .

'Our liberties are at stake. . . .

'The rights of the church, and therefore the rights of God are at stake. Education belongs pre-eminently to the church, by reason of a double title in the super-natural order conferred exclusively upon her by God himself ; absolutely superior therefore to any other title in the natural order. . . .

'Such in brief are some of the things at stake to-day. Our great heritage of Catholic schools; the future of our children and the fate of countless children in generations to come ; our legitimate liberties as Catholics and citizens ; the rights and prerogatives of Holy Mother Church — all these are in peril.'

Because of (in their own words) 'a little mouse that smells rank and musty.'

'What then ?' the Church asked.[2]

On September 30, 1938 the Catholics held a protest meeting at the Town Hall at which Stanley Obeysekera K. C. described the new Education Bill as 'a Huge Joke.' Criticising the speech of Kannan-

1. CCM September 13, 1938
2. CCM September 23, 1938

gara made in the Council in introducing the Bill, Obeysekera said, 'The claims he made for his Executive Committee were based on misconceptions and the arguments used in advocating the rights of the Executive Committee were entirely fallacious. Moreover, the people of this country did not appreciate the use of such powers by persons who might be described as toy dictators. Mr. Kannangara might be succeeded by another toy dictator of a different complexion, such as a toy dictator of German complexion or a toy dictator of a Russian complexion' (laughter).[1]

Attacking Kannangara's scheme of Maintained Schools the Church said, 'Mr. Kannangara gave evidence of his revolutionary tendencies even as early as 1929 when he was a member of the defunct Legislative Council. At that time however he was pulled up short by the Director of Education who administered to him a well-deserved snubbing.

'The fates, however, with that lack of discrimination characteristic of them, were kind to Mr. Kannangara. Elected to the State Council and appointed Minister of Education he was soon in a position to dictate to his erstwhile critic.

'One of the characteristics of Mr. Kannangara's Ministry under the two councils has been the great encouragement given to private schools, until they were repudiated altogether. The number of private vernacular schools alone rose from 674 in 1930 to 1034 in 1937. . . .

'We refer to the Maintained schools. This new type of school was one of the proudest creations of Mr. Kannangara's Ministry. Its inauguration was announced almost with a blare of trumpets. True the Education Ordinance neither recognised nor made provision for the new type of school which to the normal man appeared to be neither fish nor fowl.[2] He was quite proud of his offspring. These schools, he boasted were the discovery of the age. They had come to stay he predicted. Actually however they had come only to depart.'[3]

Kannangara's policy of Ceylonization of the teacher service also affected the Church. There were many foreign missionaries serving as teachers in the Church schools. 'The new mandate of the Ministry of Education (to employ only Ceylonese) is a betrayal of the interests of parents, of tax-payers.' the Church said, 'It is also as we have already remarked, based on an utterly wrong premise. The question of the appointment of teachers should be settled on educational and

1. CCM October 4, 1938
2. CCM August 22, 1939
3. CCM March 14, 1939

not on national and racial grounds — the more so as ideas of racialism and nationalism easily lend themselves to political exploitation.[1] The Church must be allowed perfect liberty to employ religious teachers, regardless of their nationality whenever she deems their presence necessary for maintaining the desired Catholic atmosphere of a school. And we certainly think it would be an act of high-handedness for government to refuse to recognize any religious teachers without previous reference to the Catholic authorities.'[2]

After the enactment of the Education Ordinance of 1939 the attacks on Kannangara became more frequent and vehement. In August 1939 the Messenger said, 'The time has come, we make bold to say for a comprehensive survey of the activities of the Minister of Education during the past 8 years. How far is the Minister personally responsible for the recent decisions ? Do they stand alone and isolated ; or are they but the freshest links in an educational chain which Mr. Kannangara has been forging according to a design of his own ?

'It has been suggested that the Education Minister's career has been a chapter of blunders. *But there has been method in his blundering*. If his tactics have been 'petty' they have also had a clear and definite goal in view. And the grand objective planned by Mr. Kannangara has been the over-turning of the time honoured denominational system of education, with further aim of building upon its ruins his state or national system of education.'[3]

Kannangara himself retaliated these attacks at public meetings. He told for example the Southern Province Vernacular Teachers' Union in 1940 'Powerful bodies that were being maintained by collections of money from teachers themselves would never agree to a change in the system of education, because that would mean the closure of these bodies. They all know for what purposes those bodies existed.'

The Church answering this said 'Using the cowardly subterfuge of base insinuation Mr. Kannangara in effect told his hearers that Christian Missionaries in Ceylon are carrying on a nefarious work ; that they are robbing and starving teachers, so that they themselves may be the richer ; that further they, and other managers of schools, are tyrants who have enslaved their teachers and that finally if teachers are to be emancipated and education is to be saved, they must get rid of managers and assisted schools and have only state schools, throughout the Island.'[4]

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1. CCM July 14, 1939
2. CCM July 18, 1939
3. CCM August 25, 1939
4. CCM February 2, 1940

When in 1940 the idea of appointing a Commission or a Committee arose the Church said, 'No number of Commissions will ensure educational progress so long as we have a minister of education who has forfeited the confidence of his co-adjutors, the managers and principals of Assisted denominational schools. If a Commission there is to be let its first task be the investigation of the real intentions of the present minister of education so that working educationists may at least know where they stand. Education could hardly thrive in an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion. Our chief educational need is a minister of education working in harmony with the representatives of all educational interests.'[1]

'Our large assisted English Schools' the Church said, 'should delight the heart of any Minister of Education. To Mr. Kannangara they seem an eyesore. He is seeking to bring about their ruin by starving them, even by robbing them of their own money.'[2]

When the Executive Committee of Education ultimately decided to form themselves into a Special Committee with a few educationists added, the Church called it, 'a monster commission.'

"There was ever the persistent cry : 'Give us a Commission'. What does the Minister now do? He strikes a Napoleonic attitude : he gets into the shoes of a Clemenceau. *A moi*, he shouts to his Old Guard, his own committee ; *A moi*, he trumpets out to be heard by all his critics, opponents and enemies ; *A moi*, come to me, gather round me, together we shall enter into a *union sacree*, together we shall discuss all our educational difficulties, together, under my leadership we shall solve all our educational problems . . ." the Messenger said.

"As a piece of strategy this latest move of the Minister of Education may win our admiration. A many headed Commission, such as is proposed would also no doubt provide a good deal of entertainment if it ever started to function. But it is neither strategy nor entertainment we want. We want a Commission that will impartially and intelligently investigate all the aspects of the education question and make recommendations worthy of acceptance by all interested in education."[3]

But 'Mr. Kannangara's Education Commission composed of the members of his own ministry and a number of school principals, with himself as Chairman, had already begun to function. Mr. Kannangara, at least it will be seen has mastered the technique of Hitler's strategy."[4]

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1. CCM February 16, 1940
2. CCM March 12, 1940
3. CCM April 19, 1940
4. CCM May 17, 1940

The Church could not stop either the appointment or the functioning of the Special Committee. It provided little entertainment if at all, and a comprehensive report was published in 1943. The recommendations of the Committee were described as 'far reaching' by many educationists. The Church said, 'Would it not be more correct to say that they are revolutionary and in some respects at least, *subversive*.'[1]

The Committee has recommended the retention of the denominational schools ; but it has also elaborated another system ; a system of state schools in which provision will be made for giving religious instruction to children of all religious denominations attending such a school — to each child in his own religion. Catholics have at once to say that they can never participate in such a scheme. The church's law forbids Catholics to send their children to mixed schools, that is schools under non-Catholic management, open both to Catholics and non-Catholics alike even though provision is made in them for religious instruction.

'The Catholic Church expressly and in the most explicit and emphatic terms demands that Catholic parents should send their children only to Catholic schools, that is schools under Catholic management and control.

'Hence a state system of education such as described above will not be open to Catholics and if that were the only approved and recognised system, Catholics would be left without the same opportunities as others to educate their children. Such a system alone would not give equality of opportunity to all communities and hence would stand condemned on the very basic principle laid down by the committee — the principle of equality of opportunity.'[2]

'Education' the Church claimed 'belongs pre-eminently to the Church by reason of a Double Title. . . . As the family generates children in the natural order, so the Church generates children in the supernatural order. Hence just as the family has an inalienable natural right to educate its children so the Church too,has an inalienable supernatural right to educate her children. And since what is supernatural whilst not being against what is natural is above and superior to it, it follows that the parents' right to educate can in no way interfere with the Church's right to educate. On the contrary the former must be subservient to the latter. . . . The parent has to give to his children not any education, but that education which will prepare men for the attainment of the sublime end for which they were created. And since it is the Church alone that can give such an

1. CCM December 5, 1943
2. CCM January 23, 1944

education parents *must* place their children under the tutelage of the Church if they really mean to fulfill all their parental obligations..

" There is however, another title which confers on the Church a unique right in regard to education. This first title (of the Church to educate) is founded upon the express mission and supreme authority given her (the Church) by her divine founder. ' All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore teach ye all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have command you and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world. . . . '

" The Church's right to educate is a necessary consequence of the Kingship of Christ. No earthly power can accordingly interfere with it. Government must not only recognise it but are bound to place no obstacles against due exercise of that right. . . .

" Every form of instruction no less than every human action, has a necessary connection with man's last end, and therefore cannot be withdrawn from the dictates of the divine law of which the Church is guardian, interpreter and infallible mistress. "[1]

Attacking Kannangara's plan for Central Schools the Church said ' More than once before this we have tried to draw public attention to the totalitarian drift of Mr. Kannangara's educational policy. Certain facts mentioned in the report of the Auditor-General for 1940-41 greatly strengthen our case and point to the urgency of concerted action against the ministers Caesarean or perhaps we should rather say Hitlerian attitude.

' On principle school administration must be governed by the Code and any Code amendments before being enforced have to be submitted to, and approved by the State Council. In practice, however Mr. Kannangara finds ways of doing things without reference to the Code and independently of the Council . . .

' The dodges resorted to by Mr. Kannangara are varied. There is first the *subterfuge of experiment*. . . . The minister we are told, initiated a system of Central Schools ' as an experiment '. In these schools education was to be free. But the medium of instruction in them was English, and as such, the Code demanded that fees should be levied from their pupils. When the flagrant violation of the code became known at the time certain representations were made to the Minister. The Minister met them with sheer bluff. For, thanks to the Auditor-General we now know what happened. Unable to justify himself and fearing apparently the publicity of an appeal to

1. CCM June 25, 1940

the Council — which would have let the cat out of the bag — Mr. Kannangara had recourse to the Governor. The Governor saved the Minister by waiving the fees. . . .

'Meanwhile the government Central Schools have been multiplying. . . . Was the experiment then a success ? If it was not could the multiplication of these schools be justified ? If it was, why has no 'definite scheme' yet been formulated. Here apparently lies the significance of the minister's move. A definite scheme, with Code amendments would mean provision for the opening of Assisted Central Schools side by side with and on the same terms as Government Central Schools — which would not suit Mr. Kannangara at all. In making Central Schools a monopoly of Government, the Minister of Education besides stealing a march on managers of Assisted Schools, have given an indication of the policy behind the new educational scheme he is planning in the shadow of the Special Committee on Education. . . .

'Mr. Kannangara will allow neither Code nor law to stand in his way when he wants to force his pet schemes on the country. He has but to go ahead and leave authority and constitutional procedure, right and justice, to look after themselves.'[1]

Later when Kannangara decided to grant scholarships to poor but able students in these Central Schools the Church said, 'Now we have this scheme of 50 Government Central Schools with the offer of a phenomenal number of Scholarships to advertise and popularise them. We have nothing to say either for or against these Central Schools as such. We do not know enough about them. We do not know what purpose they serve, what place they serve in the scheme of things education. We have only one thing to say about them, but on that we must strongly insist. If these schools only represent a fad of some particular individual, . . . they are not entitled to a charge on the public revenue. But if on the other hand they serve a public educational purpose . . . and are thus entitled to a place in the national system of education, then they cannot be the monopoly of government, as they now are.'[2]

'Denominational Central Schools should be allowed to exist side by side with State Central Schools. We repeat our protest. If need arise, our protest will be echoed and re-echoed from every parish and Catholic Association in the land . . . until redress has been granted and the wrong has been righted.'[3]

On May 30, 1944 Kannangara moving his 25-clause resolution on the Reform of the Educational system — including Free Education

1. CCM March 14, 1943
2. CCM October 24, 1943
3. CCM January 16, 1944

up to the University — made one of his longest speeches. He quoted Father S. G. Perera to prove his case against the denominational system of schools. He said they were and are meant to Christianize the people of Ceylon. The Church called this a 'false historical perspective presented with a great show of cleverness for the possible delectation of the gallery.'

'But Mr. Kannangara's remarks' the Church said, 'were worthless — we mean intrinsically, apart from their propaganda value.

'The main purpose of Mr. Kannangara's harangue was to underline certain defects inherent, according to him in the present system of education. . . .

'Now the defects most strongly, most vehemently, most frantically denounced by Mr. Kannangara are not educational defects. . . .

What makes the present system unsound, vicious, insufferable is, according to Mr. Kannangara, that it utterly ignores what is due to the majority community as such, and enables minorities to rise to the top, to pull more than their weight, by making better use of the opportunities offered equally and without favour to all. The present system is defective because it does not penalise the minorities precisely because they are minorities. The present system is damnable because it does not treat the minorities as under dogs, because it does not keep them submerged. The present system is intolerable because it places the minorities on the same footing as the majority community. . . .

'That Mr. Kannangara in profounding his thesis shows himself to be both blind and insincere is besides the question. . . . What is of present and paramount importance is that the Minister of Education, in his official capacity on a grave and solemn occasion, has publicly stated and laid down as a fundamental principle that since Buddhist and Christian communities stand in a certain ratio to each other, therefore in education, in public life etc. a like ratio should be observed ; that there should be so many Christians attending the University and no more ; . . . so on and so forth. Perhaps too, the number of fishermen, of chauffeurs, of Newspapermen (especially perhaps), . . . will have to be regulated by the mathematical formula set up by the Minister of Education ; perhaps, even, the number of coconut trees a Christian may own, the number of Christians who may occupy a railway carriage or travel on the King's highway may be similarly controlled. . . . Racial minorities have thus reason to be forewarned. The fate of the religious minorities may sooner or later be their own. . . .

'The State Council at least owes it to the men who won for them their seats to repudiate not only Mr. Kannangara's principle, but Mr. Kannangara himself as Minister of Education. For as long

as he remains in power he will persist in carrying out his vicious principle. He is committed to it. He has made it the chief aim of his ministry, of his life. *Therefore if the Christians are to have justice and fair play Mr. Kannangara must go, get out of the Ministry of Education.* Then only will we be able to devise a sound scheme of education reform. '[1]

Two weeks later the Church said, ' A mere Minister of Education may not be personally in favour of denominational schools being conducted side by side with State schools ; he may personally resent the very idea of a Catholic teacher in a Catholic school being amenable to Catholic discipline and — poor man ! — in his abysmal ignorance of the Catholic position he may appeal to the highest legal authority against such a teacher being dismissed on other than educational grounds — but the fact remains that so long as the Catholic Church in this country is allowed to enjoy unshackled freedom, so long too must her right to have Catholic schools and Catholic teachers imbued with her teaching and subject to her laws hold good. And that right, we expect to see respected by the State Council.

' We want our schools to be staffed not by mere believing Catholics but by Catholic teachers imbued with Catholic principles, with the Catholic mentality, with the Catholic spirit. . . . *We want Catholic teachers bearing the Catholic stamp.* We want Catholic teachers of proved loyalty to the Church. '[2]

By October 1944 the aggressive attitude of the Church turned to be one of defeatism. ' We are tired', the Church said, ' of the tactics employed against us. Let us have done with the palpable lies and half-truths, with calumnies and misrepresentations, with insinuations and threats both veiled and open. . . . A Minister when charged with weakening denominational schools through his policy of removing teachers from them to man his own Central schools, is satisfied with a cynical reply could hardly be expected to heed the call of justice and fairplay or even the interests of education. But public opinion in this country has been happily unaffected so far by the influence of this ' nationalist ' minister. And hence it is our firm belief that in spite of all the activities of this minister and his satellites our Catholic schools and Catholic missionaries will survive — *Veritas praevalebit.* '[3]

Criticising what they called the minister's persecutory policy and calling upon other groups to join them in opposing the activities of the Minister of Education the Church said, ' The minister's educational policy had its model and prototype in the totalitarian ideology

1. CCM June 4, 1944
2. CCM June 18, 1944
3. CCM October 29, 1944

of Nazism and Fascism. As such it could affect adversely anybody or everybody. As the Minister subjected hinself to no moral obligation, as he followed no rule or law save what was dictated by his own will and pleasure, his own whims and fancies, his own prejudices and predilections, there was no defining before hand the exact scope of his educational policy. It might be directed against one set of denominational schools and in favour of another. Or it might be aimed against all denominational schools. The application of the policy would be wholly dependent on the Minister's ruling. . . . .

'In all probability there are many who feel as keenly as we Catholics do the bitterness of the minister's persecutory policy. These should be thankful for the lead given by the Archbishop, and no doubt they will avail themselves of the opportunity afforded them to make common cause with Catholics.

'So long as the people here had no voice in the government of the country, the denominational system stood unassailed. . . . To-day when a good deal of power and responsibility has been placed in the hands of local men, the denominational system is in danger. What is the explanation ? Have the people lost the right they enjoyed before? . . . No ! the explanation is, rather a psychological one. Responsible Government is a new thing in this country. It is a new experience to those entrusted with executive authority. Men like Mr. Kannangara playing an unusual role have come to attach such great importance to their official position and so to themselves, that they consider it unseemingly, unbecoming nay unconstitutional to concede any rights to the voter after their voters have placed them in power.

'The State' exclaimed an over proud French King, 'Why I am the State'. 'Education' declares in effect Dr. Kannangara , 'Why I am education.'[1]

'In one word, all that we want of the State Council is that it should not sit itself up as the tribunal of a new Inquisition under the Inquisitor-General Kannangara.'[2]

After the free education resolution was passed by the State Council in 1945 the Church said, 'We quite agree that Mr. Kannangara has won a great political victory. And so to his own self-congratulations we add ours also. He has fought hard for this victory and he deserves credit for it as a notable political achievement. But to pretend that he has also won a great educational victory is we think, rather premature and to expect people to burn incense before him at this juncture is, it appears to us, to underrate their intelligence. The framers of

1. CCM March 18, 1945
2. CCM June 3, 1945

the denominational system we dare say, were as firmly convinced of the soundness of their scheme as is Mr. Kannangara of the soundness of his reforms. . . .

'But this (the denominational) system is condemned to-day by Mr. Kannangara as being honey-combed with defects. . . . Thus according to Mr. Kannangara the test of the old system has come after 75 years.

Would Mr. Kannangara's reforms stand the test say, of 50 years ? If after 50, nay even after 25 years it was found that what Mr. Kannangara had given to the country was indeed a pearl beyond price then indeed would be the time to throw flowers or whatever the people of that future time might choose at the feet of Mr. Kannangara. . . .

'Were Mr. Kannangara possessed of a greater sense of public responsibility with less egoism and self-conceit he would be the last person to congratulate himself on his recent success.

'What particular kind of kink in Mr. Kannangara's brain is it that which so madly drives him, while bestowing bouquets on himself, to shower poison-gas on Christian missionaries and Christian schools ?'[1]

After the free education resolution was passed by the State Council Kannangara urged the Board of Ministers to make financial provision in the estimates of 1945-46, 'to implement certain aspects of the proposals embodied in the new educational policy approved by the State Council. He wanted in particular the remission of school fees.' After 'a long discussion' the Board of Ministers deferred consideration of the matter.

Expressing their happiness the Church said, 'We are glad that a halt has been called to Minister of Education's policy of carrying out educational reforms at his sole discretion.'[2]

Once the State Council decided to implement the free education scheme and to provide the finances necessary for the purpose the Church said, "There is to-day, awaiting implementation, a new scheme of education. . . . But this system is placed before us encumbered with conditions which we cannot accept without forswearing our religious convictions. . . . We are and we would be, compelled to reject the scheme because we are morally compelled to reject the conditions.

'Let us Catholics then take our stand to-day. Let us forthwith put forward our claim to have the door of free education opened to us

1. CCM July 8, 1945
2. CCM July 22, 1945

also, from the very inception. Let us not wait for things to happen. Let us rather act and make things happen.'[1]

'God has established on earth two orders, the one distinct from the other, each supreme in its own pre-ordained sphere. The civil order being of the natural plane, has been established by god in the natural way, through human instrumentality. The religious order, being supernatural and hence lying beyond the human domain, has been established immediately by God Himself. It is represented by the Catholic Church.

'In virtue of the *God-given authority*, the Catholic Church claims the right to open, everywhere and at all times, schools of all types. In virtue of that same authority she claims the right, too, to organise religious instruction in her schools according to her own laws.'

'Christians are born for combat and the greater the violence of the assault, the more assured, good aiding, is the triumph. Have confidence; I have overcome the world.'[2]

In early 1946 at a meeting in Jaffna, Kannangara was reported to have said, 'I have to admit with tears in my eyes that many schools in Colombo have formed themselves into a ring and refused to go free. . . . If they were government schools all of them would have gone free. This is a good illustration of the evil effects of the damnable system of denominational education.'

The Church attacking this statement said, 'What are we to think of all this ?'

'The damnable system of denominational education! The denominational system is established by law ; it has been approved by the Special Committee on Education ; its continuance has been decreed by the State Council.

'Is the law damnable? Is the recommendation of the Special Committee damnable ? Is the decision of the State Council damnable ? Or is it the personal prejudice of the Minister of Education that is damnable ? . . .

'If Mr. Kannangara's 'damnable' system (this is a reference to the free education which was also recommended by the Special Committee and decreed by the State Council) had given those schools the same official financial backing as he is giving himself for his own schools, all those damnable schools would have gone free. . . .

'If the resolutions of the State Council were implemented by law there would be no new denominational schools : many would have to go into liquidation ; others would have to forfeit the government

1. CCM September 9, 1945
2. CCM October 21, 1945

subsidy and maintain themselves at their own expense. The supporters of the denominational system are not prepared to submit tacitly to such treatment. To voice their protests to manifest their organised opposition they are awaiting the appearance of the new Education Ordinance. In the meantime the Minister of Education is free to carry out his decisions.

'With the Council decisions behind him, and with his scheme of free education to help him, he can discourage the opening of new denominational schools, he can make things harder for the existing ones. . . . But we cannot be as indifferent as Mr. Kannangara appears to be, to the harm our children of the present generation may suffer from a scheme which has become like something turned into a fetish, into a weapon of attack, into a toy to satisfy one's whims or one's vanity. We cannot silently acquiesce in what Mr. Kannangara is doing without incriminating ourselves.'[1]

'If it was a 'facade' the Minister of Education was looking for, behind which to carry out his designs against the denominational schools he could hardly have put on anything better than his particular scheme of free education, also, if in a spirit of sheer perversity he wanted to lower the standard of high school education, achieved after 75 years of hard work, he could scarcely improve on the procedure he is now following.[2]

In August 1946 Kannangara said at a meeting at Kalutara, 'Drive Kannangara out, but see free education firmly established on solid foundations.' Commenting on this statement the Church said, 'When that day comes we shall at last see free education well and truly established on solid foundations.'[3]

Finding however that there was no opposition as such in the country to the educational reforms the Church said, 'Yet, incredible as it may appear, there has been no united protest, no general outcry against the minister's unconstitutional and undemocratic activities. It is to be hoped that at least at this eleventh hour, but before the Parliamentary elections our voters will develop a keener sense of responsibility and evince a greater appreciation of the democratic principles which have now been entrusted to their keeping.'[4]

'On the Minister of Education chiefly devolves the duty of implementing the council's decision and making free education efficient education also, and so a success. If he fails not through want of goodwill but through sheer inability to accomplish his task, the

1. CCM January 27, 1946
2. CCM March 17, 1946
3. CCM August 18, 1946
4. CCM November 24, 1946

country may let him go and itself shoulder the consequences of following the lead of a man who is incapable of leading them. But if he fails because of his stubborn adherence to a policy which contains within itself the germs of failure, a policy for which he has no other sanction than that of his own whims and fancies, preferences and prejudices, then surely the country must seek the first opportunity to get rid of him as Enemy No. 1 of free education. '[1]

' *A call for action will no doubt come in the near future and when that call comes the whole Catholic population of the Island must be prepared to rise enmasse*', concluded the Church.[2]

When actually the call came for the whole Catholic population to ' rise enmasse ' is not known. But in the 1947 general election Kannangara faced his only defeat. What part the church played in this defeat is difficult to assess as Matugama was predominantly a Buddhist electorate. Perhaps the wishes of the Church were partly fulfilled through the so-called ' left ' forces.

1. CCM December 15, 1946
2. CCM January 12, 1947

CHAPTER 22

THE 'NATIONAL' PRESS

'THE Times of Ceylon' and 'the Ceylon Independent' were generally critical of the Board of Ministers and the State Council from the inception of the Donoughmore Era. Kannangara was no more attacked than the other ministers till about 1938. The criticisms and attacks were spaced and were fair if one were to look at them from a Christian or 'imperial' point of view. But with the presentation of the Education Bill in 1938 attacks on and criticisms of Kannangara became frequent and often unfair.

The Times of Ceylon which generally supported the Christian point of view was the first of the existing dailies to come out against Kannangara.

Writing on Kannangara's educational policy in 1938 the Times said, 'The Minister of Education has shown himself to be a man of little self-discipline. His educational policy has caused much dissatisfaction to Christian denominations. His critics number several hundreds and spring from the most *enlightened* sections of the public.'[1]

The Education Bill presented by Kannangara to the State Council in August 1938 they said 'was heavily charged with the spirit of dictatorship.'[2]

The Bill soon became a bone of contention between the Buddhists and Christians. Buddhists supported it — not because it granted any privileges to them — but because the Christians opposed it. The Times said, " Before the campaign degenerates further a protest must be made against the use of the controversy over the Education Ordinance as an opportunity for the baiting of Christians in general and Christian missionaries in particular. It is insinuated that 'the Christian minority — influential, ably led and resourceful' — assuming a self righteous pose, 'talk as though they alone are guided by pure motives and all others must necessarily be prompted by trickery'. The Catholics in particular are singled out as the villains of the peace and held responsible for creating what is regarded as an unnecessary and artificial agitation. All this is quite in

1. TC September 5, 1938
2. TC October 14, 1938

keeping with the methods adopted to silence all opposition by minorities to the misguided actions of the State Council. When it is sought to inflict a wrong, and any section of the people protests against it, their case is brushed aside on the plea that it is actuated by communal prejudice. The opposition is then treated to abuse. Apparently in this Island no minority can protest against an injustice without insult being added to injury. ... What is the crime of these Christians ? It is simply that they are keenly alive to the dangers inherent in the Bill, to religious and civil liberty. ...

" The present high standard of education in Ceylon is largely due to the Christian missionaries who cannot be held responsible for the faults of the system. Having taken the lead in establishing excellent schools and spending money and labour lavishly on them, they have given sound education to generation after generation of Ceylonese. Surely, these men are better judges of what is good or bad for their schools than politicians and publicists whose objectives are different. The Christian missionaries have run their schools not for financial gain or personal advancement, but in the best interests of their pupils. ...

" Be that as it may, an emphatic protest must be made against the use of the present occasion for missionary baiting. ...

" Cannot this educational controversy be debated without abuse of the missionaries, whose gravest crime is that they educated their critics and equipped them with the intellectual weapons now turned against their former benefactors ? ' (This was a veiled attack on Kannangara).[1]

' The Christians have always taken a lead in education in this island. They were the earliest to establish schools, their schools are among the best and they are naturally concerned over the fate that threatens them. The other reason is that the supporters of the Bill have made no secret of their intention to use the Bill for the extinction of Christian schools. All sorts of malicious and mendacious arguments and reasons have been put forward in support of a policy which, apart from its ill effects on education is designed to inflict a great wrong on a community which is as much indigenous to Ceylon as any other Ceylonese community. '[2]

The Times in collaboration with the Christians in general and the Catholic Church in particular opposed the Education Bill presented to the State Council in 1938 and attacked the Buddhists for supporting the Bill. They even went to the extent of asking the British government not to grant self-government to Ceylon if the Bill

1. TC October 18, 1938
2. TC October 19, 1938

was passed. ' From the constitutional point of view, the State Council's attitude to the opposition to the Bill will have a profound effect, ' the Times said, 'on Ceylon's claim for self government. This Bill, for the first time makes it possible for the Birtish authorities to judge whether the people of Ceylon have the necessary mental and moral equipment for responsible government. '[1]

Criticising Kannangara's dislike for the denominational system of schools the Times said in 1945, ' Run by men and women inspired with a sincere love of teaching, these schools subserve no political end. Hence the confidence non-Christian parents have in them. Hence also the fury which the spectacle of the success of those schools provoke in politicians who cannot bend them to their will. '[2]

Just before the Report of the Special Committee was published the news leaked out that it had recommended free education from the Kindergarten to the University. If there was one educational proposal which the Press of this country attacked most mercilessly it was the free education proposal. Even before the report was out the Times said, ' Like the poor, the Special Committee on Education will always be with us, unless something drastic is done to make an end of it. It was appointed so long ago that most persons have forgotten when. As a matter of historic interest it may therefore be stated that the Special Committee was appointed on April 4, 1940. Since then, after a period spent in taking evidence when it earned for itself, the name of ' the Travelling Circus ' on account of the antics of certain of its members during peregrinations in the provinces. . . . the Special Committee has itself forgotten why it was appointed even as the public has forgotten when it was appointed.

' It is well therefore to point out that the Special purpose for which the Committee was appointed was to cut down the cost of education. . ..

'What the Special Committee on education appointed to reduce the cost of education is reported to have recommended is to make all education vernacular as well as secondary free. Even the children who at present are quite able and willing to pay fees are to be educated free. Such is the altruism of this Special Committee which, appointed to reduce the cost of education, has been so long at its task, that it has forgotten why it was appointed. Would it not be wise to dismiss this Committee forthwith and save at least the paper, money and labour which would be involved in printing its report. '[3]

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1. TC October 25, 1938
2. TC July 3, 1943
3. TC October 27, 1943

'Fully in keeping with their spurious notions the members of the Committee who favour free education for all have not worked its cost.'[1]

Attacking Kannangara particularly, the Times said, 'Certain of the reigning politicians in Ceylon climbed to power over the bowed back of the teachers. Chief among them is Dr. Kannangara, who, thanks to the teachers has risen from a provincial proctor's office to the status of Minister of Education. The particular cause he espoused was their salaries. He laid down the principle that teachers should be well paid. This principle was enforced so steadily that the cost of education went on rising and there appeared to be no way of checking it. This was the principal reason for the appointment of the Special Committee on Education. The politically minded members of the Committee of which Dr. Kannangara was the chief and Chairman, were quick enough to see that there was a surer move to power than touching the heart of the teachers; it is touching the great heart of the masses and the classes. Give them everything for nothing, and they are bound to support the men who planned the gift. The non-political members of the Committee have protested that Free Education for all would involve the country in heavier expenditure than it can bear.'[2]

Sometime before the recommendations of the Special Committee were brought before the House the same paper said, "An attempt is going to be made to rush the report of the Special Committee on Education through the State Council. This will be quite in keeping with the sudden outburst of irresponsibility which caused the Special Committee to recommend 'Free Education', after all but one chapter of its report had been written. Beyond a vague hint about the possible cost of Free Education from Kindergarten to University the Committee has given no indication of the extent of the financial obligations to which this sudden change of policy would commit the tax-payers. The folly of any precipitate acceptance of the new educational policy in the uncertain economic conditions of a world war is therefore obvious. What is the particular need for hurry just at this moment when all resources are needed for the war effort, and the solution of its numerous problems.'

Not only Free Education the Times even attacked universal franchise which led to free education when they concluded, 'It is now generally accepted that universal franchise is the most serious blot on the Ceylon constitution'.[3]

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1. TC November 9, 1943
2. TC November 10, 1943
3. TC November 25, 1943

The Times described Kannangara as ' the arch-enemy of denominational schools. ' ' His chief objection to them ' the Times added ' may be gathered from his remark in his rider to the Special Committee's report where he refers to the rivalry and bitterness of feeling between different religious communities which the system has engendered. Dr.Kannangara forgets that it is impossible to keep out rivalry in any sphere of activity where enthusiasm exists. . . . If differences of feeling between different religious communities exist it is due to the malevolent activities of a certain type of politician who have exploited religion for their self-advancement. These men denounce denominational schools for vote catching purposes. Themselves the products of denominational schools, where in many cases they were given free education, they foul the nest where they were reared and fitted for life. ' (The fact that Kannangara received free education was often mentioned).[1]

The missionaries' motive in giving free education to a few selected students was not the creation of free men with independent views, but the moulding of conformists who would stand by them always under any circumstances is clear from these criticisms. If a ' free scholar ' did not toe the line he was ungrateful.

' That Ceylon must sooner or later ' the Times said on another occasion, ' face the duty of educating the *vagabonds* whom the minister of education should have put to school during his term of 13 barren and inglorious years in office goes without saying. But what sort of education should they have ? . . .

' If in these ' good times ' elated by the feeling of easy money, Ceylon adopted a costly scheme of free education for all from the Kindergarten to the University would she be able to continue it in the lean years to come. '[2]

When in March, 1944, Kannangara brought the recommendations of the Special Committee on Education before the State Council the Times had this to say : ' It is reported that the Minister's motion of motions finds its place on the Order Paper of the Council by means of a suggestive piece of strategy. The majority of the Ministers are said to be opposed to the discussion of this highly controversial issue at this juncture when the war has upset all sense of values and created among politicians a mentality not conducive to calm deliberation. It is said that on a day when there was not a full attendance of ministers at a Board meeting the motion was brought up and ordered to be placed on the agenda by a bare majority among the ministers who were present.

1. TC December 11, 1943
2. TC March 6, 1944

'Those who have succeeded in this move may claim that they have staged a clever tactical turn. More responsible persons must however count it no small disaster that a matter of such deep import should be dealt with in this light-hearted fashion. . . .

'Before any of the changes now proposed are adopted — much less implementation — the public must be told how the government means to find the money for them in the lean years to come. . . .

'The Board of Ministers in a frantic effort to get out of the mess into which the too clever tactics of the Minister of Education and his supporters have landed them declare that the object of bringing up the motion is to 'provoke discussion'. . . . They however little know their Minister of Education. With the cleverness with which he has got his motion past the Board in spite of the opposition of the more responsible ministers Dr. Kannangara is capable of circumventing them by putting the scheme into execution piecemeal without reference to ministers and thereby damaging the entire educational structure beyond repair.'[1]

The Times in sympathy with the Ceylon Catholic Messenger demanded that 'Dr. Kannangara and his companions must go before any scheme of education is implemented.'[2]

'The general plan of the campaign is a scorched earth policy, destroying what has been built up so laboriously and so successfully. For what reason ? To build on the ruin wrought by envy national monuments of *mobocracy*.'[3]

The acquisition of the Arasadi Training School, Batticaloa by the government was another issue on which the Times attacked Kannangara even without the slightest respect for the glaring facts of the case. 'A flagrant example of injustice is provided', the Times said, 'in the compulsory acquisition of Arasadi Training School'.[4] (The acquisition was not 'compulsory' as Kannangara revealed in the Council with documentary evidence.)[5]

'Why adopt this tyrannical method which revolts against all the principles of decency and justice?' the Times asked. They accused Kannangara of religious discrimination. 'The Muslims are to be won over to trust the Sinhalese by kicking out a long established Christian school from its premises.'[6]

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1. TC March 11, 1944
2. TC May 8, 1944
3. TC May 25, 1944
4. TC December 2, 1944
5. See H. 1944 pp. 2775 and 2852
6. TC December 2, 1944

In this case the Times misrepresented the facts so much that even the Ceylon Daily News had to come out against the Times to defend Kannangara. The Daily News in an editorial ' Campaign of Calumny' said, " Could any one miss the ' transparent ruse ' that is here in the pitting of religion against religion and race against race ? Last Tuesday (December 3, 1944) and again yesterday (December 7) in the State Council the Minister of Education stated the true facts concerning this compulsory acquisition.

" It is clear that the story of there being a plot to ' compulsorily acquire ' the school and evict the Christians arose from the later decision of the government to settle the transaction not by private treaty but by the more formal method of acquisition proceedings. And round this fact ' the Times of Ceylon ' spins a whole tale of intrigue communal tyranny and religious intolerance. . . . In this instance it is fortunate that the Minister of Education had the facts at hand with which he could nail all the falsehoods uttered against him to the counter. But it is not always that unfounded calumny spread by the Times of Ceylon can be so completely answered by quoting chapter and verse. "[1]

Kannangara could not even issue a corrective of any misreporting often maliciously resorted to by the Press. ' Our readers will want no reminder ' the Times said, ' of the numerous occasions when Dr. Kannangara after being reported in the newspapers as having made a ludicrous statement in the course of his irresponsible speeches up and down the country, promptly sought shelter each time behind another statement denying the accuracy of the press report. These protestations came in with such unfailing regularity that they were accepted by us and our readers as part of Dr. Kannangara's political technique. '[2]

Criticising the establishment of Government Central Schools the Times said, ' The denominational schools have won the confidence of the public because the children who attend them receive a *superior* type of education compared with that given in the state schools. Realizing the people's partiality for these schools the minister has offered his *base imitation* in the form of Central Schools which are expected to lure both teachers and pupils from the denominational schools. . . . The latter cannot complain if the competition between them and the minister's creations is fair and open, but the fact is that it is not. Unworthy tactics have been employed by the minister. '[3]

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1. CDN December 8, 1944
2. TC April 28, 1945
3. TC June 7, 1945

Speaking of Kannangara's academic qualifications the Times said, 'For an educational post academic qualifications might well be considered essential if Ceylon had not in its Dictator of Education, the minister a supreme example of one who has not graduated at a University. Dr. Kannangara's lack of a University degree was supplied by the titular rank of doctor conferred on him when he became ex-officio Pro-Chancellor of the local University. Too much should not be made of the precedent set by Dr. Kannangara's honorary ex-officio distinction.'[1] His scheme (of free education) is based on ignorance, his own ignorance as well as the ignorance of the public. . . .[2]

Kannangara first fell out with the Lake House Group of Newspapers on the University site issue. Lake House Group supported the Dumbara Valley where as Kannangara was a supporter of the Buller's Road site. But fortunately this did not lead to personal animosity and on other issues Lake House Group often defended Kannangara.[3]

Even on the Education Bill presented by Kannangara to the State Council in August 1938 the Ceylon Daily News, (though gave much publicity to the Roman Catholic opposition) editorially supported the Bill. 'The State Council is responsible for education' Daily News said, 'and the personality and prejudices of the present minister have nothing to do with it.'[4]

Lake House became pointedly critical of Kannangara and his politics mainly after the announcement of the scheme of Free Education. When the Report of the Special Committee of Education was published the Daily News said, 'It will be conceded that in the main the recommendations represent a brave effort to effect a much needed revolution. . . . Many of the recommendations, such as those on the medium of education, the content of education and the treatment of denominational schools, are important and would command the assent of large numbers.

'But there are two features which not only weaken the Special Committee's general position but almost vitiate it. (i) 17 persons have signed the report and a dozen members of the Committee which had a personnel of 18, have written riders and dissents. . . . (ii) a more serious flow even than lack of general agreement is an 11th hour change in the basis of the Special Committee's Report. Even a rich country like Great Britain is only now considering free education up to the age of 15, to be extended later to the age of 16. At

1. TC July 25, 1945
2. TC August 6, 1945
3. See e. g. Dinamina December 5, 1929.
4. CDN October 15, 1938

its 88th meeting, summoned for the signing of the report the Special Committee arrived at its decision to introduce free education from the Kindergarten to the University. The references to this in some of the riders are illuminating. . . . It is abundantly clear that the Special Committee has in this connection acted not only without sufficient consideration but foolishly and recklessly. Its whole scheme may be wrecked on the rock of finance. If the Special Committee at its 88th meeting deliberately decided to sabotage its recommendations it could not have thought of a better way of doing it.'[1]

'Viewed from the financial angle the Special Committee's Scheme of free education from the Kindergarten to the University is not practical politics and must remain merely an aspiration for a long time to come.

'The Minister of Education puts forward a very feeble defence of the Committee's *ill considered* decision at its 88th meeting. Although the Committee started with the idea of regulating the expenditure on education to conform to the country's financial resources, it ended by recommending a scheme whose commitments would unquestionably be greatly in excess of the current cost of education, and hardly capable of being controlled. The minister's excuse for this change of attitude is that the war has altered the financial position of the country. It would, in the first place, be highly imprudent to build such a permanent thing as a system of education on the shifting sands of war prosperity. In a time of depression the whole edifice must necessarily collapse, and throw the system into a chaotic condition. . . . The luxury of free education from Kindergarten to the University cannot be maintained by a community which is not geared to a high degree of economic production.

'It is argued further that the school fees do not greatly exceed 4 million rupees, 'figures which testify to the democratizing process in education begun about 15 years ago.' All this is eyewash, for no one believes that free primary, secondary and higher education can be given to all the children of this country for an extra expenditure of 5 or 6 million rupees. . . . If the Executive Committee wishes to carry through any educational reconstruction it must give up this *crazy idea* of free education up to the University stage.'[2]

'It is unlikely that even a partial realization of the Committee's scheme will be practical at present or for sometime to come. In the meantime many of the more glaring inequalities of the educational system could be removed by a generous provision of scholarships,

1. CDN November 8, 1943
2. CDN November 13, 1943

not only in the higher stages of education at the University where the cry of discrimination against the under-privileged is often raised, but even at the lower levels. '[1]

Daily News not only said that the free education scheme was not feasible but went even to the extent of suggesting that it may not be desirable.[2]

'Free education for all' continued the Daily News 'is an irresistible slogan to the political demagogue. . . . The Special Committee's method of reaching the desired goal is direct immediate and according to many good judges a leap in the dark.

' The greatest fear in the minds of those who run the aided secondary schools is that there will be a deterioration in the standard of such schools if fees were not charged. '[3]

When the recommendations of the Special Committee were presented to the State Council for approval the Daily News assumed the role of an adviser to the Council, ' Even though the Board of Ministers reserves to itself the right to accept or reject the resolutions of the State Council nevertheless even a decision on matters of mere principle if taken hastily might have in the opinion of the educationists (the Daily News did not name the educationists whom they consulted) the most harmful effects. For it is extremely probable that the Minister of Education will immediately begin implementing the resolutions and where money is wanted, if necessary by introducing supplementary estimates. . . .

'Any decision of the State Council which leaves out of consideration the financial aspect of the proposal will therefore merely play into the hands of the Minister of Education. He has circumvented the Board of Ministers and he will now endeavour to circumvent the State Council.[4]

' It will be neither possible nor desirable to make schooling or attendance at the University free of cost beyond the age of 14 or 15. '[5]

By the middle of 1944 the attacks became more personal. ' Ever since the Minister of Education started abusing those who do not accept without question the views expressed in the Report of the Special Committee on Education ' said the Daily News, ' the country has watched with increasing despair the unedifying spectacle of a small man frittering away a great opportunity. '

1. CDN December 6, 1943
2. CDN December 10, 1943
3. CDN December 13, 1943
4. CDN March 14, 1944
5. CDN May 30, 1944

Comparing Ceylon's Minister of Education with that of Britain the Daily News continued, " No one expects from the minister the dignity and restraint which characterised Mr. R. A. Buttler's handling of the British Education Bill, which has been described as ' the greatest and grandest, education advance the country has ever known '. The English Minister of Education is not only passionately interested in education but is a typical product of the best education available in his country. It is not the fault of our Minister of Education that he has been denied such advantages and some allowance must be made for the crudeness of his more vehement utterances. Crudeness may be forgiven in a politician but clumsiness, even in a good cause is the clearest proof that the man is trying to do something beyond his powers. The stock argument of the Minister of Education in his tub-thumping campaings for his scheme of free education is that a secret memorial has been sent by certain titled persons and others against free education and that the ' poor must be delivered from the clutches of these close-fisted capitalists. ' The truth is that there has been no secret memorial but a request by certain people, who command respect in the country, that the Special Committee's proposals be not rushed and that consideration be given to other vital national services before allocating a very much larger proportion of the public revenue to education. If it is to this move that the minister is constantly alluding in his demogogic appeals, he is quite obviously guilty of gross distortion.

It would appear that the minister is emulating Mr. Lloyd George's Limehouse methods in his appeals to the electorate. If so, he would cut as ridiculous a figure as a dwarf masquerading in a giants robe. "[1]

In addition to the non-availability of finance, there was one other point the Daily News raised against free education. ' One of the most vulnerable points in the reform proposals of the Special Committee on Education ' the Daily News said, ' is the recommendation on the supply of teachers. The value of these reforms will be determined first and foremost by the adequacy, in quantity and quality of the teachers who will have to man the new system. '[2]

Repeating more or less the same editorial four months later the Daily News argued, ' One of the most difficult questions that will confront the country when putting into operation a new scheme of education will be the task of finding a sufficient number of qualified teachers to carry out the scheme. '[3]

1. CDN June 27, 1944
2. CDN August 16, 1944
3. CDN December 15, 1944

Daily News usually advocated Ceylon to follow the lead of Britain in most things. 'England has for the present' the paper said 'decided upon compulsory education up to the age of 15, Ceylon a country far less rich in actual resources and in potentialities of development has recklessly adopted as its objective a program involving free education up to the University. This aim is so obviously chimerical at the present stage of our development that inevitably stalemate has resulted.'[1]

Kannangara at a public meeting asserted that with more education there would be less crime. Attacking this proposition the Daily News said, 'There is nothing like leather said the cobbler and the Minister of Education prescribes education for all the country's social and economic ills. What — he is reported to have asked at a recent meeting — were the means to drag the people from the darkness of crime to the light of decent citizenship ? The answer he said was education — free education for all. This is all right as rhetoric but is scarcely practical politics. It is obvious that the brand of education imparted at many of the vernacular schools in the island has not checked crime. . . . Some of the most criminal districts in Ceylon are well served with schools. *There is more crime in Colombo than in the N. C. P.* . . . A strong case can be made out for free education in accordance with the State's resources. But free education is not necessarily better than education that is paid for. There is no doubt that *the incidence of crime is negligible among those who have had a good education, just as it is negligible among those who wear trousers ;* and it should be the aim of the State to offer facilities for such an education to as large a number as possible, even if it cannot issue free trousers to them.'[2]

Lake House of course, was contradicting itself when she said 'there is more crime in Colombo than in the N. C. P.' and 'the incidence of crime is negligible among those who wear trousers.' For, a majority of the trouser wearing community lived in Colombo and its urbanised suburbs.

Daily News was perhaps unaware of the fact that there was more crime in Italy and Ireland than in Ceylon. As the Press Commission later pointed out, 'This Editor appears to have forgotten that in Catholic countries like Italy the rate of murders and sexual offences was higher than in Ceylon. The following Statistics would bear this out. In 1949, the population of Italy was 45 million to our 7.2 million. According to the official *Annuario Statistictico Italiano* there were 862,587 grave crimes in 1949 in Italy. While for the same year Ceylon had 21,549 such cases. . . . According to these figures the

1. CDN March 27, 1945
2. CDN April 16, 1945

rate of grave crimes per 100,000 population in Italy is 1916.9 as against 299.3 for Ceylon. . . . Eire a predominantly Catholic country, has a population of 2.9 millon. According to official statistics in 1951 grave crimes in Eire were 14,200. The figure for Ceylon for the same year was 18,090. The rate of grave crime per 100,000 population in Eire is 490 as against 238 for Ceylon '.[1] The most intriguing fact in terms of Lake House logic however was that all Italians and Irish wear trousers !

By the middle of 1945 it became very clear that in spite of the campaign of the 'national' press against it, free education would be accepted by the State Council. On May 30, 1944 the Daily News said, 'It will be neither possible nor desirable to make schooling or attendance at the University free of cost beyond the age of 14 or 15.' Exactly a year later on May 29, 1945 the Daily News also was supporting free education. They said, 'Every one welcomes the principle of free education and equality of opportunity. It is not only unjust but in the long run uneconomic to restrict higher education to the well-to-do classes. A vast reservoir of potential talent goes to waste because the great majority of children in Ceylon lack the opportunities for educating themselves to a proper standard.'

But when on June 6, 1945 the State Council actually passed the 'Free Education resolution' Daily News had no comments to make.

Daily News also opposed the reorganising and upgrading of the Government Technical College in 1938 which they called 'a gambler's plunge. The scheme is futile and extravagant. The present annual requirement of new entrants of the A.M.I.C.E. status can be fixed at less than 10. There is therefore no justification for starting an Engineering College in Maradana, even if it is capable of training students for the diplomas now obtainable in Great Britain.'[2]

But when the standard of the Technical College could not in fact be raised due to difficulties of getting qualified men to man its engineering department the Daily News said, 'It is deplorable that at a time when the Technical College could be most useful owing to the virtual disappearance of opportunities for study abroad to Ceylon Engineering students, it should be shamefully understaffed. The Executive Committee of Education has signally failed to place the Technical College on a sound footing and its continued neglect has deprived students of facilities which they are entitled to expect.'[3]

The Daily News in opposing the mother tongue medium in the primary school recommended by the Special Committee on Education

1. SP. XI — 1964 pp. 47-8
2. CDN August 19, 1938
3. CDN June 14, 1944

said, ' One cannot help wondering whether the actual effect of relegating English to a second place in all schools, except those where it is the mother tongue may not be to end its lease of life as a living language altogether. '[1]

Speaking of food production and the midday meal on June 17, 1944 the Daily News said, ' Every rural school should be able to provide enough food not only for a mid-day meal for children but also to make a profit. It is only along these lines that the feeding problem in rural schools can be solved satisfactorily. At present in many schools the scheme must be a sheer waste of money '.

But exactly a year later, when the schools had launched an organised Food Production Campaign the Daily News commented, ' Food production in schools must not be confused with the giving of an agricultural bias to education. . . . What is done now in the name of food production, or rather what is expected is that all pupils in schools should devote some prescribed period of their time table to work in school gardens.

' It is quite easy for a teacher bent on achieving results to get children of 12-16 years of age who are under his care to spend an inordinate amount of their time on food growing ; but it is a fact that too much manual labour at this tender age will retard both the mental and physical development of children. '[2]

Earlier reference was made to how the Times treated any ' correction' of misreporting resorted to by the press. The Times always asserted the fact that they could never misreport. Daily News held exactly the same opinion. As much as Times, Daily News too was incapable of misreporting. Daily News said, ' This (accusing the press of misreporting) has long been a favourite method of the Minister of Education who has carried it to such extremes that when he cannot deny the accuracy with which he has been quoted he persists that his words should bear some other interpretation than that which would be normally placed on them by persons listening to or reading his speech. '[3]

Before we conclude this chapter there is one other press personality to whom reference is imperative. That is one Collette — a cartoonist. Referring to Collette the Press Commission reports, ' Cartoons have now become almost an integral part of our newspapers. A cartoon which exudes wit and humour and tends to raise wholesome laughter is indeed welcome. On the other hand, a cartoon which is malicious, insulting or apt to corrupt morals must be severely condemned. A

1. CDN November 30, 1943
2. CDN June 29, 1945
3. CDN November 20, 1943

large number of the second variety which appeared in our newspapers from time to time were produced before us. The author of most of these cartoons was one Collette, an outstanding exponent of this art, who was first employed by the Times of Ceylon and later by the Lake House. '[1]

Apparently Collette had no respect for the culture or the feelings of Sinhala-Buddhists. Both at the Times of Ceylon and at Lake House, Collette met men who shared his views. " The mighty Press Baron and his myrmidons of Lake House would refuse to see anything worthy of emulation in our ancient religious and cultural heritage. To them, those who advocated Swabhasa were teachers of half Simian tribes, though possessed of political power; those who clamoured for the development of Ayurveda were only ' *Ayur-veddas* '. What really mattered were their annual ' Beauty Contests ' and their aftermath. "[2]

' They were dazzled by the outward glamour of Western culture and could not see anything good in its ' native ' counterpart. ... If the conditions in that institution (Lake House) were so bad in these respects it is not to be wondered at that they were worse at the Times of Ceylon '.[3]

' As expected of it, the Press has resisted, and continues to resist, the attempts of the majority to regain their due rights by removing the privileges that the minority acquired during a period of four centuries of foreign rule. '[4]

The Press of Ceylon not only did not see anything worthy of emulation in our cultural heritage but also considered all those who held different views as their enemies. " These newspapers also do not hesitate to brand Buddhist leaders of the laity and the clergy, as religious fanatics, agitators, rabble rousers and rank communalists. ..... These newspapers, do not hesitate to caricature Buddhist leaders like Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera and L.H. Mettananda in a very unfavourable light. On the other hand, whenever an opportunity presented itself to these newspapers they did not hesitate to support whole-heartedly the activities of the Catholic Church in particular. '[5]

Collette caricatured all Sinhala-Buddhist leaders in a very unfavourable light. Collette also seems to have had a personal reason to pick Kannangara for extreme humiliation.

1. SP XI 1964 p. 58
2. SP IX 1964 p. 12
3. SP XI 1964 p. 16
4. SP XI 1964 p. 13
5. SP XI 1964 p. 53

Collette was an art teacher at Royal College when he first contributed his cartoons to the Times of Ceylon. ' In some of these cartoons the policy of the Executive Committee for Education was presented in grotesque style. ' Kannangara said when the author interviewed him, ' The Department of Education had to pull him up. ' He soon left government service and became a full-time cartoonist. But this incident perhaps left a tinge of hatred in him of the Minister of Education — Kannangara.[1]

Many of the cartoons by Collette published in the Ceylon Observer show the contempt that paper had for national education and swabhasa medium of instruction. In one such cartoon the prominent Sinhalas who participated in the national struggle were portrayed as monkeys. Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara was shown roosting on the fork of a tree.[2]

Kannangara referred to his scheme of free education as a ' pearl of great price ' in the State Council. This was picked up by Collette to humiliate Kannangara. In most cartoons he was depicted with this ' pearl ' (a large ball as comprehended by Collette) either hanging from some part of his body or using it as a stool.[3]

He was also depicted as a kangaroo and even as a scavenger.[4]

' Our Newspapers, particularly the English language newspapers have been lacking in patriotism ' concluded the Press Commission.[5] ' Patriotism is not the monopoly of those who offer themselves for election ' said the Daily News.[6] The Journalists including cartoonists (who have now left the island) are perhaps greater patriots.

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1. IW. November 22, 1965
2. Cartoon No. 3, reproduced in 'Enemies of Buddhism'. Eksat Bhikkhu Peramuna. 1956.
3. See Ceylon Observer June 8, 1953
4. See Ceylon Observer October 18, 1953
5. SP XI — 1964 p. 15
6. CDN June 27, 1944.

PART VI EPILOGUE

CHAPTER 23

REACTION AND REPERCUSSIONS

When under the new constitution Ceylon's first Cabinet was formed on September 26, 1947 E. A. Nugawela was sworn in as the new Minister of Education. After Kannangara's defeat at the 1947 election the 'rightful heir' to the Portfolio of Education was A. Ratnayake. It was he who proposed the free education resolution at the 88th meeting of the Special Committee on Education and would have followed the 'Kannangara policy' in education. He had a thorough understanding of the recommendations of the Special Committee and if the government wished to implement them the best person to have succeeded Kannangara was Ratnayake.

When the author interviewed him, Ratnayake said, 'In fact I put forward my claims. I told Mr. D. S. Senanayake that if I were to be given a portfolio, it should be education.' Senanayake could not exclude a senior politician like Ratnayake from his Cabinet. But at the same time he could not be given education. Senanayake said, 'I am splitting my old ministry (Agriculture and Lands) into two new ministries. One of them will be given to my son (Dudley Senanayake) and the other to you.' Thus Ratnayake had to be contented with the Ministry of Food and Co-operative Undertakings. [1]

A few months after E. A. Nugawela took over the Ministry of Education, Ian Sandeman retired and W. A. de Silva succeeded as Acting Director of Education. The reforms envisaged in the Report of the Special Committee on Education (except those carried out between 1945 and 47) were not carried out. Practical schools were not established and the division of children according to their abilities was not effected. The Selective Test was held but the interest in the test was waning as no selection was actually done.

At the end of 1948 the Director of Education Reports, 'The assisted schools which have not joined the Free Education Scheme yet and which had to make a decision in the matter by 1948 were granted a moratorium of two years expiring on May 1, 1950. In the

1. Ratnayake, A : IW November 4, 1966

meantime the question of removing the practical difficulties which prevent their joining the scheme will be re-examined. These schools which agree on the principle of free education, have declared, from the inception, that the equipment grant paid to free schools is too meagre for the efficient working of their schools. Discussions are now taking place on this material point '.

By the end of 1948 the number of adult classes dwindled to 75.[1]

Thus the first two years of Nugawela's ministry can be considered as a period of indecision and stagnation. But the expenditure on education was steadily rising and it was generally felt that the country was not getting a return to commensurate with the expenditure.

At the beginning of 1949 Prime Minister himself took an interest in the affairs of the Education Department. The Prime Minister (D. S. Senanayake) apparently wanted an educationist from abroad to fill the post of Director of Education. When this was known W. A. de Silva, the Acting Director of Education sent in his resignation at the end of February 1949. [2]

Nugawela explaining the circumstances under which De Silva sent his papers for retirement said, ' The letter of retirement was sent by the Director immediately following an interview with me at which he inquired what his position was in relation to the filling of the permanent post of Director. My reply was that it is intended that an educationist should fill the post and that his position would be exactly the same as when he was originally appointed to the Department. In that event, he expressed a desire to be relieved of his duties as Additional Director. I undertook to do this, as, being a Civil Servant, he belongs to a transferable service. A few minutes after that, he told me he would send in his papers for retirement.' [3]

The post was advertised abroad and towards the end of July the post was offered to H. W. Howes, Director of Education, Gibraltar. [4]

On July 29 — the very day the news of Howes ' appointment was first reported in the Press—C. Suntheralingam (Vavuniya) moved in the House of Representatives, ' that this House be adjourned for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the grave harm that will be caused to educational administration and the serious damage to education which will result from the appointment of a non-Ceylonese as Director of Education and,

1. AR. DE 1948 pp. 23 and 25
2. CDN August 6, 1949
3. H. 1949 (Vol. V) Col. 1780
4. CDN August 25, 1949

particularly of the present Director of Education of Gibraltar as Director of Education of Ceylon.'

Leave was granted to move the motion after Government business at 8 o'clock that day. [1]

The Speaker deleted the words 'an particularly of the present Director of Education of Gibraltar' because that question should come up by way of a substantive motion.

The motion was taken up at 8.15 p.m. and A. E. Goonesinha (Minister Without Portfolio) and D. S. Senanayake rose to a point of order. Their contention was that the matter was not urgent, as the Officer has already been appointed.

Suntheralingam showing cause for urgency said, 'If the appointment has been made the fact still remains that the officer appointed may not take up duties in this country knowing the feeling in this country.'

The Speaker ruled, 'The Prime Minister says the appointment has been made. Therefore the urgency disappears. . . . I am afraid I cannot allow this motion to be taken up.' [2]

On August 1, 1949 D. S. Senanayake revealed that the appointment has actually not been made. 'What has happened, I find, is that our High Commissioner had been instructed to offer the post to this gentleman on certain terms and we have had no reply to that as yet. I regret very much to have said that he had accepted the post.' [3]

Suntheralingam was ultimately granted leave to move the motion on August 2, 1949 at 8 p.m. Moving the motion Suntheralingam said, "I have had the good fortune of knowing every Director of Education who functioned in Ceylon during this century. . . . In the case of each and every one of these Directors of Education, except for the late Mr. H. S. Perera the first Ceylonese to hold the substantive post, not a single officer had any qualifications of a professional nature other than academic qualifications. . . . The Hon. Minister of Education does not know that there are in the department a number of officers with very much better qualifications than any of these Directors who had no professional qualifications. . . . But what do we find ? We find that the intelligence of the people of this country is insulted. The honour of the country is at stake. There can be Ministers to administer the independence of this country, but there are not sufficient intelligent Ceylonese

1. H. 1949 (Vol. VI) Cols. 644-5
2. H. 1949 (Vol. VI) Cols. 789-96
3. H. 1949 (Vol. VI) Col. 798

to administer the educational work in this country or to direct its policy. I ask you, is it fair, is it proper that there should be this condemnation of our people ?

" A Civil Servant was only recently given the second post,that of Deputy Director of Education. And, within the very few months he was there, he brought order out of chaos. . . . Everyone in this country should be grateful to that officer for having brought the examination system into something like a system. . . .

" The Gazette notification calling for applications for this post is as follows : ' An educationist of high academic attainments and *wide* administrative experience is required '.

" Now let us measure this ' *width* '. I am not going into his qualifications. I am going into the breadth as well as the height of his experience. A statement has been made that the gentleman to whom this appointment has been offered on certain terms and conditions is a gentleman who is to come out from Gibraltar . . . . If they are attempting to get out an officer with academic experience, they need not go to a place which is only two square miles in extent. . . . There are people in this country who have been administering the education of an area greater than two square miles, persons who have been having experience as Circuit Inspectors — let alone Divisional Inspectors, let alone Educational Officers — whose experience extends to more than 2,650 students (Reference is to the number of students in Gibraltar) at a time all told, persons whose experience covers a larger population than 21,000 (population of Gibraltar) persons, persons whose experience covers something more than sixteen schools; the highest being a secondary school (number of schools in Gibraltar).

" There are problems which face this country but which do not face most countries in the West, such as the question of the national languages. Now for instance, how many outsiders have heard of the word ' *Swabhasa* ' ? Here is this most important problem of the place of three languages in the curriculum of our schools. Can a man who has had no knowledge, no experience, personal or otherwise, do anything to solve the problem ?

" Then another case is the question of culture. . . . The fact of the matter is that we do not want any more importation of alien talent into our education. We want our own men, our own specialists, versed in the educational system of this country to be able to tackle our problems in their own way. It is better that we should make mistakes and learn ourselves rather than that others should make mistakes for us and go away. "

Nugawela defending the action of the government in enlisting a man from abroad said, " The particular lines of policy have been laid down, and the work of implementing the scheme in an adequate manner is one of tremendous responsibility. It is the kind of work that requires at the head of the Education Department a person who is not simply an able educational administrator, but whose technical knowledge is such and whose experience is so varied in educational activities that I have made every endeavour to secure the best person possible whether locally or from outside. If we consider for a moment the points on which decisions have to be made and which have to be implemented within the next two or three years, we would feel certain that such a person is urgently needed.

" Firstly, there is a fitness test, a vocational test and an intelligence test which have to be carried out when a child reaches the VIIIth standard ; and on the efficiency and impartial manner in which those tests are carried out will depend the future of our children.

"Then, there is the organizational work to be done for the imposition of compulsory education at the age of 14 to 16. . . .

" Then there is the re-planning and reorganizing of senior secondary education not only on the academic but also on the higher technical side. . . .

" There is also the reorganizing and the replanning of Senior practical schools. . . .

" Then there is the organization of adult education combining with school subjects with audio-visual instruction and the system of school broad-casting . . .

" Then also, there is the organization of educational research in this country. Those are our needs at the moment. . . . None of these things has been done although these things were required to be done ever since 1945. We have been trying to get these things done. From the day I assumed office I have held conferences of departmental officers at which I put the question to them, ' What can you do in this regard ? ' Their only answer to me was, ' Appoint another commission. ' . . . I have asked them what a Central School should be, and their answer has been that it should be a Senior Secondary School with hostel accommodation. I have built a first class Central School and asked them to equip it, but nothing has been done. . . . I have asked them to diversify education, but nothing has been done in that direction. I have asked them to so arrange the training of teachers that they may fit into the present curriculum ; there again nothing has been done. . . . I cannot allow things to slide into chaos like this. I have been entrusted with a job of work, and I have to do that job

of work without making a fetish of Ceylonization. . . . I am only concerned to see that there is an efficient system of education in the country. If I am satisfied that it is not possible to get a suitable officer in the Department for appointment as Director, what am I to do ?" Nugawela asked.

"The man selected (Howes) to the post" Nugawela said, "had obtained the M. A. in Education and MSc. and Ph.D. in Anthropology. He was for nine years a teacher in a grammar school in England and the Principal of a Polytechnic, a London Commercial School, and an Art School. His publications include '*Notes for Teachers*, *A Course in Civics*, and *Anglo-Belgian Musical Relation*'."

"With his background, his academic background, his background in matters educational, with his polytechnic experience, I feel that the officer whom I have appointed is the best man to diversify our system of education. . . ."

The motion was negatived. [1]

The debate however had other repercussions. On August 22 in an interview he gave at Gibraltar Howes said that he had decided not to accept the post and had cabled to the Ceylon Government accordingly. [2] The Government on the other hand was so keen to enlist his services that Oliver Goonetilleke, Ceylon's High Commissioner in London at the time was summoned to Ceylon for consultations by cablegram. Goonetilleke hurried to Ceylon on August 24. Early September he flew to Gilbraltar on an urgent mission. On September 11, he returned to London after a five-day stay in Gibraltar.

'I went to Gibraltar' he told a press reporter 'to talk to Dr. Howes about the Directorship of Education in Ceylon, but at the moment I can say nothing of the results of my visit. I am not in a position to state whether or not Dr. Howes will take up the appointment in Ceylon.' [3]

Goonetilleke's mission to Gilbraltar to induce Dr. Howes to accept the post was a success. "However Dr. Howes may not come to Ceylon as Director of Education as originally envisaged, but under a changed designation. The new designation will be Educational *Adviser to the Ceylon Government.*

"Dr. Howes' term of office in Ceylon is to be for two years, during which he will be entrusted particularly with the task of building up the new educational structure in accordance with the

1. H. 1949 (Vol. VI) Cols. 1083-1108
2. CDN August 25, 1949
3. CDN September 13, 1949

recommendations of the White Paper on Education, produced by the Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Education" reported the Daily News. [1]

By the end of 1949 the government also was contemplating a change in the country's educational policy. The Political Correspondent of the Ceylon Daily News (J. L. Fernando) on his own admission a confidant of Prime Minister Senanayake[2] wrote in October, ' After tedious months of waiting the public now know that the Prime Minister himself is moving in the matter of changing the present educational policy which was adopted in a frightful hurry, more to please voters than to get the best return for the country.

' Free Education was a useful catchword but to-day the public themselves know both that the country's income cannot stand the free education bill and that free education alone is not providing those opportunities which it was expected to provide for the children of parents who cannot afford the expense of the board and lodging and clothes of their children. Moreover Heads of free schools themselves admit that although their teachers' salaries are now paid by government the other grants are hopelessly inadequate to provide their schools with other necessities like science laboratories and sports fields and apparatus on which depends the standard of education of a school.

' I understand that the Prime Minister's proposal is that this useless rush for an academic education by the large majority of children should be made to cease and that education policy must take into account the needs of agriculture and industry, the standards of both of which must be modernised. On the other hand a scholarship scheme intended to provide opportunities for the poor child who deserves to reach the heights in any sphere of life has been proposed in place of the free secondary education now offered haphazardly to the deserving and undeserving and to those who can afford to pay and to those who cannot. . . . ' [3]

A week later the same correspondent wrote, ' The Prime Minister's views on educational policy have something in common with the views of the British Conservative Party. ' [4]

The bitterest opponent of Kannangara and his educational policy was the Roman Catholic Church. The new Director of Education (designation was not changed) H. W. Howes who assumed duties on December 19, 1949 was an ardent Roman Catholic.

1. CDN September 14, 1949
2. See The Three Prime Ministers of Ceylon : loc. cit.
3. CDN October 1, 1949
4. CDN October 8, 1949

With the fate of the Free Education scheme in the balance it looked as if the Roman Catholic reaction had ultimately won the war — though had earlier lost many battles.

The moratorium granted to non-free assisted schools till May 1, 1950 (to enter the free scheme or become unaided private schools), was extended till July 31, 1950. [1]

The year 1950 saw the publication of the Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Examinations and the Government Proposals for Educational Reform in Ceylon (White Paper on Education).

The Committee of Enquiry into Examinations consisting of W. A. de Silva (Chairman), R. S. de Saram and A. W. Mailvaganam was appointed on February 3, 1948 to probe into (a) the conduct of examinations by the Examinations Branch of the Department of Education ; (b) the re-organization of the Examinations Branch, if considered necessary ; (c) leakages of examination papers, if any have occurred; (d) measures for expediting the publication of results of examinations ; and (e) such other matters as the Director may refer to the Committee.

In its report the Committee recommended : (a) the mechanization of the work of the Examinations Branch as far as possible ; (b) the appointment of an Advisory Examinations Council with the Director of Education as the first ex-officio Chairman ; (c) Selection of examiners after advertisement, etc. [2]

After the publication of the report in May, 1950 the Examination Branch of the Education Department was converted into a separate Department on October 1, 1950. [3]

The White Paper on Education prepared in early 1949 was tabled in the House of Representatives on July 19, 1950 ' The chief points of the new plan are as follows :

' (i) Education to be divided into three stages — Primary, Secondary and Further; (ii) Primary education will be from age of 5 years to Standard V ; (iii) By tests in language and number, and through study of cumulative records, pupils at the end of the Primary course will proceed either to (a) a Junior Secondary School, or (b) a Post Primary Practical class ; (iv) Secondary education will be organised into two schools — (a) Junior Secondary, where, apart from a definite ' core ' of subjects, pupils will go along streams suited to their capacities and interests and (b) Senior Secondary, where SSC will be the examination goal. Here again, there will be a 'core'

1. AR. DE 1949 p. A 19.
2. SP VII — 1950
3. AR, DE 1950 p. A 15.

of subjects and 'streams,' academic and practical or combinations of each. Such Senior Secondary Schools as are allowed to have an HSC class will be called Colleges ; (v) Selection at the end of the Junior Secondary course will result in a number of children going to the Senior Secondary School and other pupils will be offered places in Vocational Schools conducted by other Departments or others again having reached the age of 14 years will leave school. However those unselected at the tests at the end of the Primary Course for Junior Secondary School and at the end of the Junior Secondary Course, will be allowed to carry on academic studies at private achools or at Assisted Schools ; the latter, if they accept such pupils may charge fees ;

(vi) The medium of instruction in Primary Schools shall be the mother tongue, but English shall be taught as a second language from standard II. In Sinhalese and Tamil Secondary schools the medium will be as at present. . . . The medium of instruction from standard VI upwards of English schools will be English for the time being only ; (vii) Scholarships and bursaries will be provided by Government at the University and other Government institutions for higher education to a specific number in each subject, determined previously by the needs of national development ; (viii) Where there is need, Polytechnics will be established for those who desire to take up technical subjects after SSC and for others over the age of 16 years desiring specialised courses ; (ix) In the matter of adult education, the Education Department will be the co-ordinating Department for governmental and voluntary agencies engaged in such work ; (x) The policy of the government in relation to Free Education will remain unchanged ;

(xi) Compulsory attendance shall be enforced for children from 5 to 14 years, subject to exemption in special cases by the Minister at the age of 12 ; (xii) All existing denominational schools shall be allowed to continue and any other denominational school which has been opened and is awaiting registration or which may be opened in the future shall be registered, only if it conforms to the requirements of the Department of Education, and if the financial commitment resulting from such registration is within the financial resources provided by Parliament. It will be necessary to repeal section 7 (1) (b) of Education (Amendment) Ordinance of 1947 (i.e. 'the registration of schools after July 1, 1947, subject to the condition that in the case of any denominational school any grant from State funds shall be payable only in respect of pupils whose parents profess the religion of the proprietor of the school.') (xiii) All teacher training institutions will in future be called Training Colleges and their standard raised ; (xiv) A student teacher system will be established ;

(xv) A Registrar of Independent schools is to be established and Minister given powers in relation to such schools, in order to ensure standards ;

(xvi) In order to receive assistance from government, Assisted Schools must conform to the new educational plan. Teachers' salaries will be paid in Assisted Secondary Schools only for those selected for Secondary education by the Department of Education in collaboration with the schools. Maintenance and Equipment grants will be paid on a basic rate for different types of schools but additional amounts will be paid, under certain conditions, where special facilities, (e.g. workshops and laboratories) are provided. Schools must either be in the Free Education Scheme or fee-paying, although in the latter case government will consider paying agreed tuition and in Special cases, boarding fees for selected pupils sent by the Department of Education to such schools ; (xvii) The Department of Education is to be reorganised on a functional basis, and the Inspectorate reorganised under a Chief Inspector. Inspectors will be called State Inspectors of Schools. (xviii) Facilities will be made available for exchange of teachers within the Island, and with foreign countries.'[1]

At the end of 1950 the new Director of Education, Howes reported, 'In general 1950 may be said to have been a year in which the whole basis of the education system of the country was under close examination. It was also noticeable that in place of the bitterness of educational controversy of the past few years there was a manifest desire for general co-operation. Goodwill has been a dominant note. . . . The work of reconstruction of the educational system has been materially assisted by the Press. Its representatives at the Press Conferences I hold at regular intervals have shown a genuine interest in education matters, and I use this Report for extending them my thanks.'[2]

Howes had no first hand knowledge of the 'educational controversy' he is referring to. Christians in general and the Roman Catholics in particular were responsible for the controversy. It was in fact a controversy between those who stood for a national renaissance and the 'denationalised' section of the people. If goodwill became the dominant note after the assumption of duties by Howes, it only shows that the new Director was acceptable to those who started the controversy — the Catholic hierarchy. The Press as shown in Chapter 22 was critical of the educational reforms envisaged by Kannangara. If as the Director says the Press materially assisted the reconstruction of the educational system, that again goes to prove

1. Parliamentary Series (House of Representatives) Fourth Session of the First Parliament, No. 2
2. AR. DE. 1050 pp. A4-5.

that Howes was backed by the opponents of Kannangara. In fact the Ceylon Daily News backed the appointment of Howes immediately after it was publicly known. On August 4, 1949 the Daily News wrote, ' We must not forego what the outside world has to offer us when we have nothing *comparable* available here. '

In 1951 the Education Ordinance of 1939 was amended in keeping with the proposals of the White Paper of 1950. The Education (Amendment) Act of 1951 provided for (i) A Central Advisory Council in place of the Board of Education. The function of the Council was to advise the Minister of Education and not the Director of Education as in the case of the Board of Education ; (ii) The provision that ' *the registration of schools after July* 1, 1947, *subject to the condition that in the case of any denominational school any grant from the state funds shall be payable only in respect of pupils whose parents profess the religion of the proprietor of the school* 'enacted by the Education (Amendment) Ordinance of 1947 was repealed thus removing any restriction on the grants to denominational assisted schools ; (iii) Granting of exemptions from compulsory attendance on religious and language grounds (i. e. due to the non-availability in the area of a school managed by the government or by a denomination acceptable to him or where the medium of instruction is his mother tongue) was repealed ; (iv) Freedom to charge facilities fees was expanded. Schools also were given the freedom to charge fees from pupils not certified as suitable for senior secondary education at the standard VIII Selective Test if they wish to enter a Secondary school in spite of such non-certification ; (v) The maximum age limit of compulsory education was reduced from 16 to 14 ; (vi) Teachers in unaided schools were permitted to contribute to the Teachers' Pension Fund; (vii) By Regulations appended to the new Act the grants to an assisted school was increased to consist of (a) the amount of the salaries payable to all teachers of that school who are eligible for grant, and (b) an amount to be known as the Maintenance and Equipment Grant which included a basic grant per unit of average attendance (much higher than provided for by the regulations of 1945), a Workshop Grant, Home Science Room Grant, Laboratory Grants for Physics, Biology, Chemistry and General Science, Clerical or Minor Employees Assistance Grant and Library Grant. [1]

This Act can be considered as a victory of the denominational schools. Not only were they able to remove any restrictions placed on them by the Ordinance of 1947 but also to get all the concessions they were clamouring for from the day the Free Education scheme came into force in 1945, especially enhanced grants.

1. Education (Amendment) Act No. 5 of 1951

1951 also saw the handing of ' certain items of work done at the head office to the Education Officers in the provinces from July 1, 1951. '

An Education Publications Board consisting of Bishop Edmund Peiris, Induruwe Pannatissa Thero and K. Kanapathipillai was appointed with power to approve books suitable for use in schools.

On December 14, 1951 the Minister of Education issued a directive to the effect that 'the medium of instruction in Standard VI in 1953, Standard VII in 1954, and Standard VIII in 1955 shall be the mother tongue.' The directive was effected in January, 1953 thus extending the mother tongue medium to the post-primary classes. 1

After the general elections of May 1952 M. D. Banda replaced Nugawela as the Minister of Education.

In March, 1953 Banda appointed a Committee consisting of T. D. Jayasuriya (Chairman), Fr. D. J. Anthony, C. T. Lorage, S. F. de Silva, C. Samarasinghe, M. W. Karunananda, S. Chidambarapillai and D. K. G. de Silva (Secretary) 'to examine the working of the National Languages as media of instruction in Standard VII and Standard VIII, with particular reference to the subjects of science and mathematics '.

The main recommendations of the committee were : (i) that, as the working of Standard VI in the new media is satisfactory, no change in the Minister's directive is necessary ; (ii) that, as the number of teachers qualified to teach all subjects other than science and mathematics in Standard VII and VIII is adequate, and as suitable books are available in the National Languages, all subjects other than Science and Mathematics should be taught in accordance with the Minister's directive in the media of the National Languages in Standard VII from January, 1954 and Standard VIII from January, 1955 ; (iii) that, all schools should teach all the subjects including science and Mathematics in the media of National Languages in Standard VII from January, 1956 and in Standard VIII from January, 1957; (iv) that, an official statement of the objective of teaching English in our schools should be made early. We suggest in the present context the objective should be that by the time a pupil leaves Standard VIII he should have acquired a standard of comprehension in English sufficient to enable him to read with ease and understanding English books suitable to meet his needs and interests at that age level, viz., 14+ ; (v) that, an official glossary of scientific and technical terms suitable for

1. AR. DE 1951 pp.A5 and A20

teaching Mathematics and Science in Standard VI, VII and VIII should be made available early to teachers, pupils and prospective authors. [1]

The Education Ordinance was further amended in 1953 providing for a school Examinations Advisory Council with the commissioner of examinations as Chairman. Its function was to advise the commissioner on all such matters relating to the control, organization and conduct of school examinations. [2]

The free midday meal started by Kannangara in 1934 was discontinued from October 1, 1953.

Howes resigned from the post of Director of Education on November 3, 1953.[3] He was the Director of Education in Ceylon for four years. Much was expected of him. At the end of his first year in Ceylon he himself said that 'the whole basis of the education system of the country was under close examination'. But he failed to carry out any significant reforms in spite of the backing he received from the denominational bodies and the Press. Lavish grants (not envisaged in the Kannangara plan) were provided for assisted schools which increased the expenditure on education several-fold. Education was not diversified. Howes was presented as a specialist in technical education by those who sponsored his application. But in this field his failure was even more marked. Equality of opportunity in Education could not be provided as most of the money voted for education was spent on the big urban schools and no attempt was made to develop the so called 'vernacular' school in the rural areas. In fact he was later accused of discrimination against Buddhists and favouring the Roman Catholic Church.[4]

On October 28, 1953 a full fledged Commission consisting of E. W. Kannangara (Chairman), L. J. de S. Seneviratne, R. S. de Saram, G. P. Malalasekara, A. W. Mailvaganam, L. H. Mettananda and E. O. E. Perera with N. D. Wijesekara as Secretary was appointed:

(i) To examine the courses of study, especially in technical subjects provided in the University and the Senior Secondary Schools of Ceylon, and to report when and how the Sinhalese and Tamil languages, hereinafter referred to as 'the national languages' can, without impairing the quality of education, be introduced as the media of instruction in the aforesaid educational institutions; and (ii) To report on the nature and extent of the changes or modifications which

1. SP I — 1954
2. Education (Amendment)Act No. 43 of 1953
3. AR. DE 1953 p. A34
4. Report of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry, 1956. pp. 28-30.

should be effected progressively in the syllabuses for the various examinations held for the recruitment of officers to the public service in order that such examinations may be conducted in the national languages as early as possible.

E. W. Kannangara ceased to function as Chairman in July, 1954 and E. A. L. Wijewardene was appointed as Chairman on July 28.

The Commission issued an Interim Report in October, 1954 recommending that government — (i) makes all necessary arrangements immediately for the creation of an organization for obtaining and publishing a sufficient number of textbooks and background literature, glossaries and translations of the required standard and quality for the use of the senior secondary courses ; (ii) takes immediate steps — (a) to see that University and Secondary School teachers now in service including those teaching Science and Mathematics become more proficient progressively in Sinhalese or Tamil so that on the appropriate date they may be competent to teach these subjects in the national languages ; (b) to encourage them, it is recommended that they be offered inducements both financial and otherwise ; (c) to train more teachers and graduates, particularly Science and Mathematics graduates at the Maharagama Training College and the University on a specially prepared scheme so as to make them proficient to teach in Sinhalese or Tamil in the Senior Secondary courses ; and (iii) adopts all measures necessary to ensure that all the pupils who possess the ability and the aptitude attain a standard of English that will enable them to use it as an effective tool for acquiring knowledge.[1]

In 1955 the policy was laid down that in Pre-SSC classes from January, 1956 and in the SSC classes after January, 1957, instruction should be given through the medium of Sinhalese and Tamil in all subjects except Science, Mathematics and Western languages. Subsidised tuition classes were arranged for teachers to gain competence in one of the national languages. A new Swabhasa department was created to translate books into Sinhalese and Tamil.[2]

The Report of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry appointed by the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress was published on February 4, 1956. The committee recommended that 'the administration of all assisted schools be taken by the Department of Education'.[3]

In April, 1956 the United National Party Government of John Kotalawala was defeated at the polls and the *Mahajana Eksath*

1. SP XXI 1954
2. AR DE 1955 pp. A3-4
3. Report of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry, 1956. p. 72

Peramuna led by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike came to power. W. Dahanayake was sworn in as the new Minister of Education.

The Free midday meal was restored on October 1, 1956. The Standard VIII Fitness Test was discontinued and 500 science scholarships were offered to pupils who have completed work in Standard VIII. A Vocational Guidance section was set up. [1]

This eventful year also saw the publication of the 'Final Report of the Commission on Higher Education in the National Languages'. The main recommendations of the Commission were: '(i) The language policy now applicable to the SSC in 1957 should be continued in Pre-HSC in 1958 and thereafter; and in the HSC in 1959; (ii) Provision should be made at the earliest opportunity to teach Swabhasa pupils in Swabhasa at the University in their respective subjects; (iii) The University at Peradeniya should give instruction in Sinhalese. There should be at least two other Sinhalese medium Universities in Colombo and Galle; (iv) There should be a Tamil medium University in Batticaloa or Jaffna. (v) It is desirable that the Muslims and Burghers should decide to adopt either Sinhalese or Tamil as the medium through which their children should be instructed;

'(vi) The government should withdraw, as early as possible, any concessions allowed to these communities; (vii) All future service examinations for recruitment of officers at all levels can be, and should be, held in the national languages; (viii) Arrangements for conducting London University Examinations through Local Agencies should be discontinued and the department of Examinations should be asked to conduct local external examinations including the Inter and Degree Examinations in Sinhalese and Tamil; (ix) Teaching of Science and Mathematics must extend to all schools and these must be provided with laboratories and equipment; (x) The Government should expand the scheme immediately in such a manner as to provide the necessary teachers and textbooks;

'(xi) An intensive course in English should be arranged at school at the HSC level or later at the University for improving the knowledge of English; (xii) All measures should be adopted to ensure that able students attain a standard of English that will enable them to use it as an effective tool for acquiring higher knowledge. (xiii) The provision of textbooks glossaries of technical and scientific terms and similar material for the senior secondary and University courses should be undertaken by the Department of Swabhasa with the close co-operation of the University; (xiv) By every means possible every child who wants to learn English should be free to do so

1. AR DE 1956

and that from Standard VI. (xv) English should be taught on modern lines as is now successfully done in London to foreign students.'

The report was signed only by Wijewardene, Seneviratne, Malalasekara and Mettananda. Mailvaganam, Pereira and de Saram issued a Minority Report. 'We disagree with the Final Report in toto,' they wrote.

'The position with regard to teachers as revealed to us in the course of our investigations was not such as to give us any ground for recommending that the national languages should compulsorily be made the media of instruction above Standard VIII in all schools in the near future. The position in regard to books was also bad. This is particularly true of Sinhalese and it is our firm conviction that by hasty adoption of the Swabhasa medium the Sinhalese will suffer most. We are convinced that English is of vital importance to Ceylon. . . . We find none of the arguments for forbidding the use of English medium to Sinhalese and Tamil children above Standard VIII convincing. Our opinion is that there should be a halt at Standard VIII for some years. National Language medium should not be compulsorily introduced in Standard IX and X till books, background literature and teachers in sufficient quality and quantity are available.

'Until such time as it is possible to conduct University education in the National Languages, the medium of instruction in the HSC classes should be English. As far ahead as we can see, University education should be in English.

'The right to claim English as their medium of instruction given to Muslims and Burghers should not be taken away from them so long as they claim it.

'We see no reasons for discontinuing the London Examinations so long as London is willing to conduct them and so long as there is the demand for them from Ceylon students.

'The Central Clerical Examination shall be held in Sinhalese, Tamil and English (with English as a compulsory second language for those who sit in swabhasa and vice versa). The Civil Service Examination should be conducted in the English medium as long as University education continues to be given in the English medium.

'Lastly we feel that we must preserve a sense of proportion' concluded the minority report.[1]

1. SP X 1956

In January, 1957 the Swabhasa medium was extended to the SSC class. General Science was introduced as a subject into the Swabhasa schools. 150 science assistants (in Swabhasa schools) were given a short course of training. Science teaching was placed in charge of a new Assistant Director (Technical Education) appointed in February, 1957.

Schools in which a majority of children were Muslims were grouped to form a separate category — Government Muslim Schools.

Greater attention was paid to the teaching of English as a second language. A special course for teachers of English was inaugurated at the Maharagama Training College. Vocational Guidance Service was extended to some of the larger schools and in-service Training Courses in Vocational Guidance for teachers were started.

Up-grading of Swabhasa schools, so that they could conduct University Entrance and H. S. C. classes was another new feature of the period.[1]

A Committee consisting of S. F. de Silva (Chairman), H. A. Passe, Mrs. E. H. G. Geddes, S.A. Wijayatillake, M.D. Gunawardhana and Miss Chitra Wickramasuriya with E. St. C. Rode as Secretary was appointed in October 1957 to investigate into all aspects of teaching English as a second language in Ceylon.[2]

Before the general election of 1956 S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike the Leader of the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna which captured power had pledged to implement the recommendations of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry. 'The state take over of assisted schools' was one of the most important recommendations of the Committee. As a preliminary step on May 8, 1957 the government decided to stop registration of new schools started after that date as assisted schools, thus freezing the number of assisted schools.[3] The question of government taking over of existing assisted schools, however was postponed indefinitely.

On June 14, 1957 a 'representative group of citizens interested in a unified system of schools' met at Kandy and formed themselves into an association 'to fight the issue'. Using apparently a popular nomenclature of the time it called itself '*Adyapana Peramuna*' (Education Front).[4]

In their Manifesto issued on September 6, 1957 they wrote, 'The question whether schools which receive assistance from govern-

1. AR DE 1957
2. SP V 1960
3. AR DE 1957 p. A19
4. CDN June 17, 1957

ment should now be taken over by government and run as state schools is a national question. This question must be answered *objectively* without importing religion into it. It is almost an axiom that education is the direct responsibility of the state and that it has no right to shirk its responsibility by delegating its duty to private bodies and individuals. History shows that it is dangerous to entrust education to a few bodies or individuals however well intended they may be, for these bodies and individuals are motivated by an understandable desire to make education a vehicle for the propagation of a particular set of tenets or beliefs. . . .

'The logical corollary to the Free Education Scheme should necessarily have been the emergence of all schools as state schools and the consequent disappearance of the much vaunted denominational schools. But the government of the day was afraid to face the logic of the situation and decided to yield to the importunities of the managers of Assisted Schools. To-day the situation has become chaotic. . . .

'What is meant by religious atmosphere is really and truly the opportunity to indoctrinate children with a particular set of tenets and beliefs. What the advocates of the denominational system forget is, whilst they have the right to evangelise directly or *indirectly* they have no right to ask that money belonging to the state be released for such a purpose. . . . Most of the troubles of present day Ceylon, the gross inequalities of opportunity, the denial of the fruits of freedom to the masses, are the legacy of the much vaunted denominational system of education. Let those who want to run denominational schools for the propagation of their faith, whether it be Buddhism or Christianity, Hinduism or Islam, Zoroastrianism or Judaism do so.

'That is a democratic right which they enjoy but can they continue to do so at the expense of the tax payer ? That is the simple question which calls for a clear and unequivocal answer.' 1

The *Peramuna* printed — booklets, held public meetings and demonstrations and used the medium of newspapers — between 1957 and 60 — 'to educate the public on the need for a unified system of schools.'

The interest taken in teaching science and English continued in 1958. A Special Science course for Secondary Trained teachers — so that they could teach science up to H. S. C. classes — was started at the Ceylon Technical College.

The number of children going to school rose to over 2 millions in 1958. But still there were certain groups of children who did not attend school at all, due to various social and economic factors.

1. The Case for a Unified System of Schools. (Manifesto of the Education Front) Kandy, 1957.

On February 11, 1958 a Committee consisting of E. H. de Alwis (Chairman), Mrs. L. J. de S. Seneviratne, T. O. Devendra, S. J. Somasundaram, B. C. Wijemanne, J. Wickramasinghe, R. L. Gunasekara and S. J. Ratnasingham with G. D. Wijewardene as Secretary was appointed to investigate into the problem of non-school going children.[1]

The Education Ordinance of 1939 was further amended in 1958 empowering the minister to make regulations restricting the charging of facilities fees.[2]

Towards the end of 1958 an Act to make provision for the establishment and regulation of the Vidyodaya University of Ceylon and the Vidyalankara University of Ceylon was passed by Parliament thus providing for two new Universities.[3]

A Commission consisting of Joseph Needham, G. C. Chatterji and L. J. de S. Seneviratne was appointed on February 25, 1958 to investigate into the University Education in Ceylon. The Report of the Commission was published at the end of 1959. But it was signed by only Needham and Chatterji. The third member Seneviratne called it 'a private report submitted by the other two members' and did not sign it. The government did not accept its recommendations. [4]

1960 was a year of political instability and the progress made between 1956 and 59 was retarded somewhat. In September 1959 Prime Minister Bandaranaike was assassinated. Dahanayake the Minister of Education was sworn in as the new Premier. But he continued to hold the portfolio of education. He dissolved Parliament in December 1959 and a general election was held in March, 1960. The United National Party ousted in 1956 won the largest number of seats (50 of 151) and formed the new government with Dudley Senanayake as Prime Minister and B. H. Aluvihare as the new Minister of Education.

The government could not rally a majority to keep itself in power and was defeated on the Vote of Thanks. A second general election was held in July, 1960 which brought Sirima R. D. Bandaranaike wife of the assassinated Prime Minister into power. Sri Lanka Freedom Party under her leadership won an absolute majority of seats in the House of Representatives. Badiuddin Mahmud was appointed as the new Minister of Education.

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1. SP III 1960
2. Education (Amendment) Act No. 37 of 1958
3. Act No. 45 of 1958
4. SP XXIII 1959

Before we come to the Education reforms of the new Government reference has to be made to two Education Reports published in 1960 : (i) The Report of the Committee on Non-school-going Children published in March, 1960 and (ii) The Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Teaching of English in Ceylon Schools published in April 1960.

The Report of the Committee on Non-school-going Children concluded that (i) contrary to popular belief, lack of schools is not one of the major causes of non-attendance ; (ii) there is no evidence indicating any connection between the increasing juvenile delinquency rate and non-attendance at school; and (iii) there has not been any significant increase in the incidence of grave crime.

The Committee recommended : (i) as a matter of paramount importance that regulations should be framed prescribing the compulsory school-going age ; (ii) that Attendance Officers, Headmen and Police Officers be requested to help in attendance work ; (iii) that labour laws regarding employment of children be enforced so that not only the reason for ' non-attendance ' be removed but also a social blot wiped out ; (iv) that Educational administration be decentralised by creating Local Education Authorities ; (v) that in the construction of new school buildings priority be given to areas in the Uva and Sabaragamuwa and the city of Colombo ; and (vi) that after a careful survey of the distribution of physically handicapped and mentally deficient children in the Island a few special schools for them should be established in areas where they are most needed. [1]

The Committee on the teaching of English recommended : (i) that the general aims of teaching English should be the acquisition of a competence in the language ; (ii) that English should be compulsorily taught to all up to and including Standard VIII. Thereafter it should be optional ; (iii) that educationally, the earlier the language is started the better ; (iv) that the language should be introduced in meaningful units. The direct method is favoured ; (v) that a special series of text-books should be written for our pupils ; (vi) that the standard of English has fallen owing to the poor quality of the teaching. Specially trained teachers only should handle the subject ; and (vii) that (a) a Language Research Institute be started ; (b) supplementary reading material should be stocked in schools and class libraries ; and (c) refresher courses in the teaching of English be arranged.' [2]

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1. SP III 1960
2. SP V 1960

The SLFP which came to power in July, 1960 had pledged to establish a unified system of schools under direct state control during the election, [1] and one of the first acts of the government was the passing of the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act of 1960. This Act made the Director of Education, the manager of every Assisted School to which the Act applied — except a Grade I or Grade II school the proprietor of which 'has at any time before the date specified in the Gazette notification elected to carry on the administration of such schools as an unaided school.'

Of the 2750 assisted schools only about 50 elected to remain unaided and the management of the rest was legally taken over by the Department on December 1, 1960.

'In framing the Education Act the government out of consideration to the various religious denominations did not make provision for transfer of ownership of schools. On the contrary the Education Act was limited in its scope to the transfer of management and by this Act the Director of Education became the manager of certain schools.

'The government gave its assurance that the question of transfer of ownership of schools would not be considered at a later date.' [2]

The Roman Catholic Church however took advantage of the weakness in the law to obstruct the re-opening of the Catholic schools whose management was taken over by the state. When the schools re-opened on January 3, 1961 after the December vacation only 70 of the 704 Catholic schools that cane under the management of the Director of Education could function normally.[3] The rest were occupied by 'Catholic parents'. In fact complete families had encamped in the school premises.

On December 31, 1960 Fr. John Herat of All Saints' School, Borella made an application to the Acting Chief Magistrate (W. E. Abayakoon) of Colombo asking for a written order under section 114 of the Civil Procedure Code restraining any unauthorised persons from entering this school which is in the possession of the petitioner, without his permission. This application was allowed by the Magistrate.[4]

This became the prototype for about a hundred similar applications made on January 2 and 3.

The Department was caught almost unawares. On January 3, 1961 A. L. S. Sirimanne Acting Solicitor-General made another

1. SLFP — Election Manifesto, 1960 (July) (Sinhala) p. 13
2. CDN January 3, 1961
3. CDN January 5, 1961
4. CDN January 3, 1961

application to the Acting Chief Magistrate, Colombo to exempt the officials of the Department of Education, the teachers, the children attending such schools and their parents from his earlier order. This too was allowed by the magistrate who altered the order made by him on December 31, 1960 by the application of the following words : ' The order of December 31, 1960 shall not apply to (a) the Director of Education in his capacity as such or as manager of All Saints School, Borella or the inspecting officer of the Department of Education or the Education Officer of the Western Division or any other person or officer authorised by the Director in the performance of their duties ; (b) the teachers of the said school, children attending the said school and parents of such children coming to the said school in their capacity as such.' [1]

Still the schools could not re-open as the buildings were ' occupied ' and temporary arrangements in the from of double sessions — two schools (in the morning and afternoon) in the same premises — had to be made for the displaced children, in close by government and non-Catholic director-managed schools.[2]

On January 2, 1961 C. P. de Silva the Leader of the House made a satement on the situation in which he said, ' The government regrets to note that its generosity and consideration has been grossly abused by certain proprietors. The only course now open to the government and into which the proprietors themselves have forced the government is to introduce further legislation in Parliament with the least possible delay. The government proposes to summon Parliament immediately and introduce necessary legislation whereby all school premises and buildings will be taken over completely and the ownership thereof vested in the government without compensation.' [3]

After this statement was made the Bishops of Galle, Chilaw, Trincomalee, Jaffna and Kandy led by the Archbishop of Colombo made a statement 'reiterating their willingness to arrive at a fair and just settlement of this vexed question'.[4] But it came too late.

As promised ' Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Supplementary Provisions) Act of 1961 [5] to provide for vesting in the Crown without compensation, the property of Assisted schools of which the Director of Education is or becomes, the manager under the Assisted Schools and Training Colleges (Special Provisions) Act

1. CDN January 5, 1961
2. CDN January 6, 1961
3. CDN January 3, 1961
4. CDN January 5, 1961
5. Act. No. 8 of 1961

of 1960, [1] to provide for such Director for and on behalf of the Crown to conduct and maintain schools on such property, to provide for the imposition of penalties on persons who offer resistance or obstruction to the entry of such Director to such school and to the taking possession of property vested in the Crown, to provide for government making good or repairing any loss or damage caused to the property of assisted schools and for the recovery of the cost thereof by the government from the persons responsible for such loss or damage in a summary manner and to regulate the establishment of schools on or after the date of the commencement of this Act' was passed by the Parliament in February and received assent on March 2, 1961.

In April 1961 the Ceylon University Ordinance of 1942 was amended empowering the University 'to conduct external examinations for enabling those who are not students of the University to obtain degrees, diplomas and other academic distinctions of the University'. [2]

On March 15, 1961 the National Education Commission with J. E. Jayasuriya, Professor of Education, University of Ceylon as Chairman was appointed : (a) to examine and make a comprehensive review of the entire educational system obtaining in Ceylon ; (b) to make such recommendations as the Commission may consider necessary for the establishment of a unified national system of education; and (c) having due regard to the finances available for education within the ambit of the National Development Plan to make such recommendations with special reference to the Organization of Schools, Grading and classification of schools etc.'

A Second Commission 'to inquire into and make recommendations for a comprehensive and co-ordinated scheme of Technical Education" was appointed on July 12, 1961 with T. P. de S. Munasinghe as Chairman.

The Administration of schools was decentralised on October 1, 1961 in the sense that the Regional offices were given more powers and responsibilities. The ten Regional offices were upgraded to Assistant Directorates and 13 other sub-offices at district level were opened with Education Officers at their head.[3]

In 1962 the Report of the National Education Commission was published in two parts. Part 1 (originally called the Interim Report)

1. Act. No. 5 of 1960
2. Act No. 12 of 1961
3. AR. DE 1960-61

was published in January, 1962 [1] and Part II (Final Report) in October the same year. [2]

The Report of the Commission of Enquiry on Technical Education was published in July, 1963. [3]

A third Commission appointed on August 25, 1962 with D. C. R. Gunawardena as Chairman to investigate into 'the working and the administration of the University of Ceylon, and Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara Universities also published its report in October, 1963.[4]

In 1963 Mahmud changed over to the Ministry of Health and P. B. G. Kalugalla assumed duties as Minister of Education.

The recommendations of the above mentioned commissions are still receiving the attention of the Ministry and are beyond the scope of this book. A White Paper (Proposals for a National System of Education) which embodied some of these recommendations was presented to Parliament in 1964, but before a decision could be taken the Sirima Bandaranaike Government was defeated and the country went to the polls in March, 1965. The United National Party won the largest number of seats (66 of 151) and with the help of the Federal Party (Tamil Communal) and a few splinter groups formed a coalition government with Dudley Senanayake as Prime Minister. I. M. R. A. Iriyagolle was sworn in as the new (eighth) Minister of Education.

Let us now summarise the educational statistics as they stood after 20 years of free education. These statistics will in certain respects reveal the results of the free education scheme.

By the end of 1965 the number of schools rose to 9481 of which 8289 were directly administered by the department. The progressive vesting of 2,649 Assisted Schools in the Government was complete. There were 871 estate schools, 196 Pirivenas and 13 night schools which received government grants. Unaided schools numbered 112 of which 58 charged school fees. The 25 Teachers' Colleges were run by the Department.

Of the 8,289 government schools 6,564 were Sinhala, 1,274 Tamil and 451 Muslim. The number of pupils in all schools rose to nearly 2,400,000. The population of Ceylon in mid-1965 was 11,300,000 approximately. Thus over 21% of the total population were in schools. 86,000 teachers served these schools. [5]

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1. SP I 1962
2. SP XVII 1962
3. SP X 1963
4. SP XVI 1963
5. AR DE 1964-65

A break up of the figures according to the Provinces will give a better picture of the expansion that has taken place during the first 20 years of free education.

1946

Province	*Population*	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*	*% of Pop. in Schools*
W. P	1,876,900	1,296	283,685	15.1
C. P.	1,135,200	1,109	134,694	11.9
S. P.	961,400	735	150,517	15.6
N. P.	479,500	572	90,394	18.8
E. P.	279,100	266	32,810	11.8
N. W. P.	667,900	590	93,484	14.0
N. C. P.	139,500	181	15,858	11.3
Uva	372,200	352	44,092	11.9
Sab.	745,400	658	87,824	13.1

The differences among the Provinces were even greater if one were to compare the average attendance instead of the numbers on roll. Uva had less than 12% of the population in school. Even of this number less than 50% attended school regularly. In the Eastern Province of the numbers on roll only 64% attended school. On the other hand Western, Central, Southern, Northern and Sabaragamuwa had over 80% attendance. 1

1965

Province	*Population*	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Pupils*	*% of Pop. in Schools*
W. P.	3,015,000	1,734	638,378	21.2
C. P.	1,813,000	1,508	345,765	19.1
S. P.	1,520,000	1,254	317,109	24.4
N. P.	786,000	854	184,455	23.5
E. P.	580,000	546	112,504	19.4
N. W. P.	1,226,000	1,179	262,819	21.5
N. C. P.	417,000	555	96,566	23.1
Uva	704,000	624	113,566	16.1
Sab.	1,195,000	1,217	258,241	21.6

By 1965 the educational conditions in the NCP had made much headway but Uva was still lagging behind.

1. AR. DE 1946

In 1965 the expenditure on education has risen to 350 million rupees — constituting 20% of the revenue and about 5% of the Gross National Product for the year. [1] The expenditure per head of the population was Rs. 2.28 in 1931, Rs. 10.15 in 1947, and Rs. 31.00 in 1965.

The results of free education is more clearly seen in the expansion of University education. In 1946 the total number of students in the University was 1,302 of whom only 178 (14%) were women. In 1965 the number of students at the University of Ceylon alone had risen to 10,723 of whom 4,579 (43%) were women. Another 3,000 students were enrolled as internal students at Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara Universities. In 1946 only 1 in 5113 was in the University but by 1965 this had risen to 1 in 822. The numbers in the University had increased by over 600% (Proportionate to population) in less than 20 years.

Over another 10,000 persons remained on the registers of the three Universities as external students.

The following tables show the changes that have taken place in the composition of the students of the University of Ceylon.

Communities of Students

	1946		1965	
	Number	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
Sinhala	803	61.7	8,371	78.1
Tamil	383	29.4	2,051	19.1
Muslim	37	2.8	219	2.0
Burgher	64	4.9	41	.4
Other	15	1.1	41	.4

Religions of students

	1946		1965	
	Number	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
Buddhist	552	42.4	7615	71.0
Hindu	241	18.5	1609	15.0
Christian	453	34.8	1274	11.9
Islam	36	2.8	219	2.0
Other	20	1.5	6	—

1. AR DE 1964-65

Home Residence of Students

	1946		1965	
	Number	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
W. P.	812	62.5	4,728	44.1
C. P.	90	6.9	1,170	10.9
S. P.	140	10.8	1,993	18.6
N. P.	161	12.4	1,343	12.5
E. P.	14	1.1	172	1.6
N. W. P.	28	2.2	561	5.2
N. C. P.	3	0.2	97	0.9
Uva	14	1.1	109	1.0
Sab.	37	2.8	533	5.0

Ceylon has now reached a stage where equality of opportunity is fairly well established in general academic education for most of her citizens. But equality of opportunity in science education is still lagging far behind. The percentages of Sinhala (especially Buddhist) and Muslim students in the science faculties of the Universities are far below their percentages in the general population.

In 1946 only 15.7% (205) of the students were holding bursaries and, invariably all deserving cases received one. In 1965 as many as 34.5% (3705) students were holding bursaries and there were many who could not be provided for, though under 1946 conditions they should have been included.[1]

Vidyodaya and Vidyalankara being Sinhala medium Universities the student population is predominantly Sinhala and came from rural areas. On a rough estimate their economic status seems comparatively worse than that of the students of the University of Ceylon.

The significant repercussions of the mother tongue medium and free education are however yet to come.

1. Annual Report of the Council 1946 and Draft Annual Report of the Council, 1965.

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