



Census of India, 1931

VOLUME XXVIII

TRAVANCORE

PART I—REPORT

By

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INTRODUCTION

Census-taking is a very ancient institution. About 4,000 years before Christ the Babylonians had instituted a system of revenue returns which was developed in course of time into an efficient machinery for the estimation of the country's wealth. The Egyptians had started the collection of statistics of labour about 3,000 B. C. in connection with the construction of the pyramids, and the Chinese also had collected statistics of agriculture, industry and commerce from about that time. The Hebrews took regular censuses to ascertain the man-power available for military purposes. The ancient Greeks and Romans had undertaken the census periodically for the purpose of registering the rights of citizenship. With the expansion of the Roman Empire census-taking became a world-wide institution, but it disappeared with the disintegration of that Empire. In India too census-taking was a well-established practice in ancient times. The Edicts of Asoka, the great Mauryan Emperor of the third century B. C., refer to the census as a permanent institution. It "included not only the total number of all the four castes in each village, but an account of the exact number of cultivators, cowherds, merchants, artizans, labourers and slaves as well as an account of biped and quadruped animals." (J. N. Saaddar, *The Glories of Magadha*, pp. 88-89.)

As regards Travancore, the first census about which detailed information is available is the one taken by Ward and Conner in the years 1816-1820 A. D. But there are grounds to believe that frequent attempts were made by the earlier rulers of the State to collect statistics of the population and the resources of the country. Bartolomeo mentions one such instance which took place in 1787 when the king of Travancore was about to impose a poll-tax on the Christians of St. Thomas on the coast of Malabar. The State records show that a regular census was taken in Travancore in 1836 and another in 1854. Very little reliance could be placed on the results of these earlier censuses. The first systematic census which might claim a certain degree of accuracy was the one conducted in 1875. The next census was taken in 1881 and since then there was one regularly at the end of every ten years. The census of 1931 is, therefore, the seventh systematic census and the sixth in the series of decennial censuses taken in this State.

2. The first step in connection with the taking of the census is the appointment of the officer to be in charge of the operations. I was appointed Census Commissioner in November 1929 which gave me one year and three months to make the necessary arrangements and get through the preliminary stages.

3. The final census was taken in Travancore on the morning of the 27th February 1931. In British India it took place on the previous night. Owing to peculiar physical features of the country and the scattered distribution of houses a night enumeration is impracticable in this State, and it has, therefore, always been the practice to make the final count during daytime. At all the censuses previous to 1921 the final census was taken in this State synchronously with that in Cochin State and British Malabar on the day following the night on which the British Indian census took place. In 1921 a deviation was made by Travancore alone taking the census on the morning of the day on which it was taken in British India, while Cochin State and British Malabar continued the previous practice of having it on the following morning. I changed the procedure with the permission of the Census Commissioner for India and the sanction of the Government of Travancore and, following suit with Cochin and Malabar, took the final census between 7 A. M. and 9 A. M. on the 27th February 1931.

4. The Administrative Volume of the Census Report gives a detailed description of the machinery employed for taking the census and of the procedure followed in tabulating the results. That volume is intended for the guidance of the future Census Commissioners and other officers who will have to collaborate with him. A brief sketch of the procedure adopted in the various stages of the operations is given here for the information of the general reader who may not have access to the Administrative Volume and who may not be interested, even if it be accessible, in the detailed account contained therein. For purposes of the census the State was divided into urban and rural areas. The municipal towns, together with certain other places which were treated as towns under the Police Regulation and were provided with conservancy arrangements, constituted the urban area

and the rest of the country was treated as rural. The number of municipal towns was 19 as in 1921, but the number of other towns was increased from 19 to 27. The ordinary revenue village (pakuthi) being too large for statistical comparisons the residential village known as *kata* or *muri* was adopted as the territorial unit in rural area as in the previous censuses. In municipal towns the ward was taken as the unit.

5. Regulation III of 1105 legalising all proceedings connected with the census was passed in May 1930. A general plan of the census operations, together with a calendar showing the dates of commencement and termination of the different stages, was published in June 1930. The Census Code, Part I, dealing with the procedure in enumeration and containing instructions to various census officers, was published in September 1930. Part II of the Code which described the methods of tabulation and compilation was published by the end of January 1931. Immediately after I assumed charge of my appointment the Tahsildars and Municipal Presidents were requested to prepare lists of *karas* in taluks and of wards in towns. The lists received from them were consolidated into a *kata* register for the whole State. The buildings in each *kata* or ward were listed in prescribed forms and were afterwards numbered serially for each *kata* in taluks and for each ward in the municipal towns. The *kata* register was ready by the 15th June 1930. The preparation of the house lists which was the next operation was commenced on the 30th June and completed by the 15th August and the numbering of houses was finished in September. Both these works were attended to by the village staff in rural areas, by the municipal subordinates in municipal towns and by the conservancy staff in census towns. The agencies employed were not paid any remuneration except in a few places where suitable hands were not available otherwise. The abstracts of house lists received from all the taluks and municipal towns were verified to make sure that there was no omission of *karas* on the one hand or overlapping on the other. The next item of work, *viz.*, the formation of census divisions and the appointment of census officers, was then taken up. The *karas* and wards were divided into blocks, each consisting of about 30 houses on an average in rural parts and 50 in the towns, the size of the block being fixed with reference to the number of houses that could conveniently be visited by an enumerator on the census morning. The blocks were grouped into circles each containing about 10 blocks. The circles in a taluk including those in the census towns constituted a charge, while those in a municipal town were grouped into a separate charge. On the whole, there were 49 charges consisting of 30 taluks and 19 municipal towns. The Tahsildars were the Charge Superintendents for their respective taluks and the Municipal Presidents for the towns. The Divisional Forest Officers were appointed as Charge Superintendents for the forest areas within their jurisdictions and were instructed to communicate the total figures of the preliminary and final enumerations to the Tahsildars concerned for incorporation in the taluk figures. Similarly, the Sanitary Circle Officers were appointed as Charge Superintendents for the census towns in their districts for purposes of inspection only, all administrative control being vested in the Tahsildars of the taluks in which those towns were situated. The heads of certain departments, the employes of which had to be engaged for census work, were appointed as District Census Officers to supervise the work of their subordinates.

The British Indian schedule was adopted in its entirety in this State, together with six additional columns to record particulars of emigrants from the State.

**Preliminary
enumeration.**

6. By the end of October 1930 the charge and circle registers were prepared and the agency for the preliminary enumeration was selected. The experiment of employing the teachers in vernacular schools as enumerators and supervisors for the preliminary enumeration, which was first tried in 1921 and was found to be successful, was repeated this time also. In a few charges the revenue and municipal subordinates were also engaged for this purpose. As the enumerators had to collect on separate schedules additional information for the purpose of the special economic enquiry ordered by the Government, the period of the preliminary enumeration was fixed at two months from the 15th November 1930, and in order to enable the Tahsildars to cope with the additional work of supervision involved, particularly on account of the economic enquiry, each Tahsildar Charge Superintendent was given an assistant selected from among competent undergraduate teachers in departmental English schools for the whole period of the preliminary enumeration. Weekly reports on the progress of the preliminary enumeration were received from the Charge Superintendents, and as soon as the operations were completed summaries of the results were sent to the Census Office, where they were scrutinized and abnormal variations, if any, were duly corrected in consultation with the Charge Superintendents. Altogether 3,588 enumerators and 793 supervisors were employed for the preliminary enumeration. For

the final counting on the census day each enumerator had to do only one block and each supervisor had about 10 blocks under him. But for the preliminary enumeration which was conducted in the course of two months about 9 to 10 blocks were assigned to each enumerator and 40 to 45 blocks to each supervisor.

7. In pursuance of a circular issued by the Government the heads of departments and offices had furnished to the Division Peishkars and the Commissioner, Devikulam, by the 15th December 1930, lists of employes under them drawing Rs. 100 and below per mensem for recruitment as enumerators and supervisors for the final census. Persons available for the different charges were selected from these lists and their names communicated to the Charge Superintendents by the 1st January 1931. In places where the requisite numbers of Government employes were not available, the Charge Superintendents indented upon the services of private persons. The final enumeration in the forest areas was conducted by the employes of the Forest Department, and that of the inmates of jails, police lock-ups, reformatories, hospitals and asylums by the officers in charge of those institutions. With the co-operation of the railway authorities suitable arrangements were made for platform and train enumeration. Final enumeration.

8. Every precaution was taken to ensure a correct enumeration of the floating population. Printed instructions for the purpose were distributed among the enumerators and supervisors. By means of a notification the public were requested to be in their houses on the census morning and to abstain as far as possible from celebrating marriages and other ceremonies on that forenoon. All shops, bazaars and markets were closed and motor traffic was stopped for a few hours on the morning of the census. Special enumerators were appointed for landing ghats in rivers and backwaters, frontier chowkeys, convenient road stations and places where crowds of people were likely to congregate in connection with fairs and social or religious festivals.

9. 3,618 supervisors and 35,981 enumerators were engaged for the final census, of whom only 17,994 or 45.4 per cent. were Government servants. In most of the taluks the services of private gentlemen, such as vakils, landlords, merchants and even grown-up students, had to be utilized, the total number of private persons thus employed being 21,605 as against 15,679 in 1921. The instructions issued by the Government were faithfully observed everywhere and the public willingly and heartily co-operated with the Government officers in making the census a complete success.

10. As soon as the final enumeration was over, the Charge Superintendents prepared the totals for their charges and communicated the same by telegram to the Census Office. Proper arrangements had been made by the Charge Superintendents to obtain the figures from the outlying parts of their charges in time to be able to despatch the telegram on the same evening. The first telegram was received from the Kulithura Municipal Town at 2.8 P. M. on the 27th February and that was soon followed by others which continued to arrive till 10.33 P. M. on the same night. The figures received from the different charges were immediately consolidated in the Census Office. The provisional totals for the State could have been communicated to the Census Commissioner for India on the same night but for the much regretted delay in getting the figures for the Ampalapula and Minachil taluks. The express telegrams despatched by the Tahsildars of these two taluks on the evening of the 27th February were unfortunately delayed in transmission owing to some disorder in the telegraph line. These two telegrams were received at about 7 A. M. on the 28th February and the provisional totals were communicated to Government by messenger and to the Census Commissioner for India by telegram at 8.30 A. M. The difference between the provisional totals telegraphed and the actual figures obtained after slip-copying was only 0.2 per cent.

11. In the meantime, the Tabulation Office with the requisite copying and controlling staff was organized at the central office. It was divided into four sections, one for each of the Southern, Central, and Northern administrative divisions of the State and another for the High Range Division and the municipal towns together. As the enumeration books arrived from each charge they were checked with the charge and circle summaries to make sure that there was a book for every block enumerated. Slip-copying, *i. e.*, copying the entries in the schedules on slips, which was the first process in the chain of post-census operations, was started on the 14th March 1931 and completed by the 6th June. Slips of different colours with the prescribed conventional symbols to denote sex and civil condition were used for this purpose. Sorting for the different tables which was taken up next was begun on the 23rd June 1931 and finished by the 16th September. The establishment in the Tabulation.

sorting stage consisted of four sections, of which three were engaged in sorting and one in compilation. By the time sorting was finished nine out of 20 Imperial Tables had been compiled and printed, and the compilation of two other tables had been completed. Compilation for the remaining tables continued for about three months more and the whole work was finished by the 12th January 1932. The compilation of the Provincial Tables and the preparation of the Subsidiary Tables for the Report were done in the Census Office.

A special circumstance deserving mention in this census is that a number of qualified women were employed in copying, sorting and compilation. The work turned out by them compared very favourably, both in quality and quantity, with that of some of the ablest of men workers.

Special enquiries.

12. A unique feature of the 1931 census is the large number of special enquiries conducted along with it. The State Government ordered that certain statistics relating to the economic condition of the people should be collected along with the population census. It was decided to utilize the services of the enumerators employed for the preliminary enumeration to collect this additional information. A special schedule was printed for the purpose. As it was apprehended that, on account of the novelty of the enquiry and the variety of information that was proposed to be collected, the people might naturally hesitate to furnish correct returns, regular propaganda was undertaken through the Press and by the publication of leaflets, explaining the object and utility of the enquiry. The filled-up schedules were returned to the Census Office where the results were tabulated by a special staff. As per orders of the Government a census of the wages of agricultural and industrial labourers was also undertaken. A census of unemployment among literates in English as suggested by the Census Commissioner for India was taken on a special schedule. This opportunity was also availed of to collect similar information regarding literates in the vernaculars of the State. The schedules were distributed and collected by the enumerators employed for the preliminary enumeration and the results are embodied in Imperial Table XII, Parts I and II. A somewhat detailed enquiry was conducted about the Primitive Tribes, with special reference to the effect on their condition and customs of their contact with civilization, and also about some of the chief declining industries of the State. Another enquiry that was undertaken in this State was the one regarding fertility and mortality. Particulars of more than 100,000 married women were recorded on a schedule specially prepared for the purpose. The results were tabulated and certain interesting inferences deduced therefrom have been incorporated in the chapter on Sex in the Report. As was done in the last two censuses, a census of agricultural live-stock and implements was taken this time also. The work was done by the agencies employed for house-numbering.

The Report.

13. The drafting of the Report was taken in hand as soon as the Imperial Tables were compiled and the Subsidiary Tables for the first few chapters were prepared. The Report which forms Volume XXVIII of the series of Reports on the Census of India consists, as usual, of four parts. Part I is the Report proper and contains twelve chapters as prescribed by the Census Commissioner for India and five appendices. Appendix I deals with the Primitive Tribes, Appendix II with the Depressed and the Backward Classes, Appendix III with the declining industries, Appendix IV with the economic condition of the people and Appendix V with the cattle census. In preparing the Report I have followed as closely as possible the instructions issued by the Census Commissioner for India and modelled it mainly on the lines of the India Report of 1921. I have attempted, as best as I could, to explain the significance of the statistics presented. To elucidate the figures I have included a large number of maps and diagrams, much more than were used in the previous census reports of Travancore, and this may be regarded as a characteristic feature of the present Report. Part II of the Report contains all the Imperial Tables (20 in number) and seven State Tables. In the Imperial Tables figures are given for the State as a whole and for the different administrative and natural divisions. Part III which is mainly intended for local use contains the Provincial Tables giving figures by taluk corresponding to the figures by division contained in Imperial Tables, as well as the Pakuthi Register showing the population of the pakuthis by religion and literacy, and the Kara Register giving the number of occupied houses and population by kara. Part IV is the Administrative Volume which describes fully the methods followed in the taking of the census and in the tabulation of the results, the defects discovered in these methods and the suggestions to avoid them in future censuses.

It may be noted that in regard to the spelling of local names used in the Report and Tables I have made a deviation from the ordinary method and tried to secure uniformity by making the transliteration conform to the sounds intended to be conveyed. I give below the key to the pronunciation of certain vowels and consonants for which I have used special symbols.

ā = आ, ञा	ṅa = ञ, ञ
ī = ई, ञी	ṛa = र, ञ
ū = ऊ, ञू	sa = ञ, ञ
ē = ए, ञै	la = ल, ञ
ō = ओ, ञो	ḷa = ल, ञ

14. The total cost of the present census is estimated to stand at about Rs. 1,50,800 Cost of the Census. including the sum of Rs. 11,000 put down for the printing of schedules, forms, the Report and the Tables, for which actual figures have not yet been received, as well as the probable expenditure that may have to be incurred hereafter. From the total expenditure a sum of Rs. 1,000 has to be deducted, being the amount which has been realised and which may hereafter be realised by the sale of waste paper and furniture, so that the net expenditure may be taken to be Rs. 1,49,800. This includes a sum of Rs. 28,440 incurred on account of the economic census specially taken in this State alone. For comparison with the cost of census in other parts of India the latter should be excluded from the total expenditure. If this is done, the net expenditure on account of the population census and the special enquiries conducted as per the instructions of the Census Commissioner for India will be Rs. 1,21,360, which will work out to Rs. 23-12 annas per 1,000 of the population. The corresponding cost of the present census in Baroda, Ajmer-Merwara, and Rajputana States, for which alone figures have been received so far, is Rs. 43-11-0, Rs. 35-6-11, and Rs. 25-2-10 respectively. To institute a comparison between the cost of the present and the previous census in Travancore certain deductions have to be made from the net expenditure of Rs. 1,21,360 mentioned above. The pay of the Census Commissioner is a variable item depending upon the status of the officer selected for the appointment. There is an excess of Rs. 3,948 under this head for the present census over that of the previous. At the last census a Government building was available to hold the Census Office; but now a private building had to be hired for which a sum of Rs. 2,460 had to be paid towards rent. The special enquiries conducted at the instance of the Census Commissioner for India, which necessitated the appointment of an Ethnographer for a period of nine months and of an officer of the Department of Industries on special duty for six months, had cost Rs. 5,730. There was no such expenditure at the last census. Deducting these three items from the total, the expenditure for the present census which could be compared with that of the previous one in this State would amount to Rs. 1,09,222 as against Rs. 89,459 for the 1921 census. The cost per mille of the population on the basis of the above figures works out to Rs. 21-7 annas for the present census and Rs. 22-5 annas for the last.

15. My first duty is to express my deep indebtedness to the Government of His Highness the Maha Rajah for the confidence they placed in me and for the generous support they extended to me throughout my work. To Dr. J. H. Hutton, C. I., E., Census Commissioner for India, I tender my warmest thanks for his valuable advice and many useful suggestions which made my task lighter than it would otherwise have been. He paid a visit to Travancore in September 1931 and inspected the local Census Office, which no previous India Commissioner did. My personal discussion with him on that occasion and my participation in the Conference of Census Officers convened by him at Delhi in January 1931 enabled me to avoid many pitfalls common in census operations. Acknowledgments.

No Census Commissioner would be able to bring his work to a successful close without the hearty co-operation of his brother officers and the general public. I am glad to acknowledge with gratitude that I received such co-operation in abundance. Foremost among the officers who helped me in one form or other are the Commandant, Nayar Brigade, the Land Revenue and Income-Tax Commissioner, the Chief Engineer, the Director of Public Instruction, the Commissioner of Police, the Inspecting Medical Officer, the Conservator of Forests, the Excise Commissioner, the Sanitary Commissioner, the Dewan Peishkars, the Commissioner, Devikulam, and the Principal Port Officer. To all of them I offer my best thanks. My thanks are also due to the Presidents of Municipal Councils, the Tahsildars, the Divisional Forest Officers, and the Sanitary Circle Officers

who, as Charge Superintendents, had to bear the brunt of the work in connection with the preliminary arrangements and the supervision of the actual enumeration. The schoolmasters and other Government and municipal employes who carried out the difficult task of preliminary enumeration, and the official and non-official gentlemen who acted as enumerators and supervisors for the final census are entitled to my special thanks.

Among the gentlemen who assisted me with material for the preparation of the Report, I must mention Mr. K. Padmanabhan Tampi, B. A., B. L., retired District Superintendent of Police, whose valuable contribution on "Hinduism in Travancore" is printed as an appendix to the Chapter on Religion. Mr. K. R. Krishna Pillai, B. A., B. L., retired Assistant Secretary to Government, furnished some interesting matter for the Chapter on Language. From Mr. T. Lakshmanan Pillai, B. A., retired Divisional Treasury Officer, and Dr. L. A. Ravi Varma, Deputy Surgeon, I received useful hints on the origin of caste in Kēřala. I am greatly indebted to all these gentlemen for the services they have ungrudgingly rendered. The Appendix on Primitive Tribes is based mainly on the notes supplied by Mr. L. A. Krishna Iyer, M. A., whom at my request the Government placed on special duty for a period of nine months to enquire into the condition and customs of these tribes. The material for the Appendix on Declining Industries was collected by Mr. M. P. G. Nair, Textile Expert in the Department of Industries, who was also specially deputed for the purpose by the Government. I am much obliged to both these officers for the valuable work they have done.

Coming to my own staff, I have great pleasure in recording my genuine appreciation of the highly satisfactory manner in which every one of them discharged his duties. Mr. R. Sankara Iyer, B. A., B. L., my Personal Assistant, was in charge of the office from start to finish. His faithful devotion to duty, immense capacity for work, and scrupulous attention to details enabled me to leave the entire management of the office safely in his hands. He is not only an indefatigable worker himself, but knows the art of making others work like himself. I am highly grateful to him for his loyal co-operation and valuable assistance. Next to him I must acknowledge the services of Mr. N. Parameswaran Pillai, M. A., Statistical Superintendent. His proficiency in statistical methods and his clear grasp of complicated mathematical problems were of great help to me in explaining the large increase of population in the last decade. He was in sole charge of the tabulation of the results of the enquiry regarding fertility and mortality and of the economic census. Mr. R. Govinda Pillai, B. A., the head clerk, was an able lieutenant to the Personal Assistant, and he spared no pains in the efficient discharge of his duties. The other members of the staff also (Messrs. S. Thandaveswara Iyer, P. K. Subramonia Iyer, N. Subbiah Chettiar and M. Thanu Pillai, B. A.,) did their part equally well. The work of the draftsman, Mr. K. Rama Iyengar, deserves special mention. The maps and diagrams included in the Report are all his productions, and they bear ample testimony to his ability and taste in drawing. I am grateful to Mr. A. Padmanabha Iyer for the assistance he has rendered in the preparation of the index which, I hope, is a useful addition to the Report.

The maps were printed at the Trivandrum Art Printing Works whose excellence in lithography is seen in every one of them. The half-tone blocks reproduced in the appendices were made at the Bangalore Press, and they testify to the excellent workmanship of this leading press in Bangalore.

I have reserved to the last my acknowledgments to the Travancore Government Press, where all the printing in connection with the census in this State was done. It is creditable that this institution was able to cope with the tremendous work it had to do at the early stages in printing the schedules, forms and slips, of which there were several series, each running into many thousands. The printing of the Report and the Tables was a more difficult task; but the Government Press proved equal to the occasion. Mr. T. Nilakanta Pillai, the Superintendent, took special interest in the printing of these volumes, and to his close supervision as much as to the efficiency of his staff is due their excellent finish, for which I express my deep personal obligations to the Superintendent.

N. KUNJAN PILLAI

CORRIGENDA

- PAGE 11, marginal table, column 6, line 2, *read 1,037 for 1,087.*
- .. 22, first marginal table, column heading, *read Year for Decade.*
- .. 24, line 14, *read 11,40,76,495 for 11,40,76,496.*
- .. 30, line 47, *read 39,857 for 39,880.*
- .. 59, marginal table, combined heading of columns 4 and 5, *read Variation for Increase.*
- .. 62, marginal table, column 4, line 2, *read 35.5 for 35.6.*
- .. 127, line 42, *read 3,783 for 4,783.*
- .. 132, against Krishnavaka, in column 2 of the table, *read 969 for 889.*
- .. 135, line 40, *read 1,163 for 1,152.*
- .. 140, line 39, *read 1,131 for 1,132.*
- .. 147, first table, column 2, line 1, *read 18,456 for 18,476.*
- .. 147, last table, column 5, line 5, *read 47 for 74.*
- .. 154, Note to Subsidiary Table I, line 1, *read at for for.*
- .. 160, column 13, line 2, *read 789 for 879.*
- .. 168, line 38, *read II of 1100 for I of 1088.*
- .. 181, column 6 of table, line 8, *read 413 for 449.*
- .. 183, second table, column 13, line 6, *read 136 for 138.*
- .. 187, first table, column 2, line 4, *read 30 for 80.*
- .. 194, column 3, against Hindu males of 5-10 years, *read 999 for 997.*
- .. 217, line 20, *read III for II.*
- .. 237, line 1, *read over thrice for nearly twice.*
- .. 239, line 17, *read 49 for 48.*
- .. 251, marginal table, column 3, line 5, *read 14,426 for 14,428.*
- .. 252, line 4, *read 46 for 48.*
- .. 252, marginal heading of paragraph 338, *read Sub-class for Sub-clause.*
- .. 265, column 4, against group 98, *read 9.532 for 9.932.*
- .. 269, column 3 against Domestic service under Brahman, *read 402 for 202.*
- .. 387, line 45, *read 257 for 227.*
- .. 398, foot-note, *read 28 for 23.*
- .. 426, para 116, sub-para 1, line 1, *read areas for are as.*
- .. 483, last column against Central Division in table, *read 1,260 for 1,206.*
- .. 504, line 21, *read 10 for 5.*