

REPORT

ON THE

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

IN THE

HYDERABAD ASSIGNED DISTRICTS

FOR THE YEAR

6

1897-98.



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FROM

R. D. HARE, Esq.,

OFFICIATING COMMISSIONER,

Hyderabad Assigned Districts,

TO

THE SECRETARY FOR BERAR TO THE RESIDENT,

Hyderabad.

Dated Amraoti, the 12th August 1898.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit, with a very few remarks, the report of the Director of Public Instruction for the year 1897-98.

2. The salient facts are (1) the decrease of Rs. 15,011 in expenditure due principally to a much smaller outlay in buildings, to decreased grants-in-aid to indigenous schools, and to savings consequent on the place of one of the Educational Inspectors remaining vacant for several months; and (2) the falling off in indigenous schools. Aided schools decreased by 126, unaided ones increased by 44, so that there was a net decrease of 82. There is no difference between aided and unaided schools; the latter are those that fail to earn grants, and the increase in their number is due to fewer of them having come up to the requirements of the rules. The Resident in his review of last year's report hoped that the adaptation of the Code to the Bombay scale would lead to the further encouragement of indigenous schools. The result has this year been otherwise. The new rules were brought into force without warning, and the schools that were examined after their promulgation were unable to earn grants for results: so that the amount distributed in this way fell by over 33 per cent., though I am informed that in consideration of all the circumstances capitation grants were given even when they were not strictly due under the rules. The object of the alteration was to raise the standard of teaching to the same level as in board schools; but it seems probable that most of the indigenous schools will disappear in the process. The old fashioned "Pantoji" must go, and it is doubtful whether at the price paid for education in Berar a school can earn enough in any but a few of the larger villages to remunerate sufficiently a man capable of teaching up to the revised standards. Whether the closing of a number of inefficient schools is cause for much regret is doubtful. The reports show that many of them were opened by indigent men during the stress of famine and high prices, and closed again as soon as things became easier and other employment could be found; and such ephemeral schools can serve no useful purpose. They supply no real education, and had better be kept out of our figures altogether; and I understand that the new rules were introduced partly with this object. But the fact that indigenous schools are teaching altogether well or badly about 10,000 boys at present makes the matter one for serious consideration. If a large decrease in their number is to be avoided, then it seems clear that a very liberal interpretation will have to be given to the proviso that the rule that capitation grants are to be given only when the average attendance is over 15 may be relaxed in backward localities. The average attendance is something under 19 per school.

3. *Secondary education.*—There has been a satisfactory improvement in the Amraoti High School notwithstanding the fact that the private high school there has been continuing to gain ground steadily, and now has 150 students on its rolls.

Anglo-Vernacular schools have fallen off everywhere except at Basim, and the cost to Provincial revenues of educating each boy has increased from Rs. 10-9-7 to Rs. 11-8-2. But this was the natural outcome of the circumstances of the year; and the results of the examinations were satisfactory: more boys went up and more passed under the first three standards, though very few qualified under standard IV.

There are now two private Anglo-Vernacular schools in the province, and it is to be hoped that the newly established one at Darwha may flourish.

High prices sent up the cost of the boarders' keep at both the Amraoti and Akola High School boarding houses. The Director writes strongly as to the necessity of making provision for the accommodation of resident masters, and I agree with him in thinking that it is a very serious matter indeed to collect boys of all ages from 13 to 20 together in this way without any one to look after them.

4. *Primary education.*—The number of primary schools under public management has increased by 11, but the number of pupils has fallen by 1,789. The long period of high prices was followed by an abundant harvest, and the difficulty of getting labourers to gather it in is said to have kept many boys out of the schools. Under these circumstances it is not clear why the average attendance should have gone up.

That there should have been an increase in the number on the rolls in Basim seems to show that the pressure of famine did not touch the agriculturists of that district, but only the labouring classes.

The cost of educating a boy in the primary schools rose from Rs. 5-15-3 to Rs. 6-2-1. Of the total number on the rolls (34,445) about 7 per cent. had learnt up to the IVth standard, which is the modest qualification demanded for a village patel: so that, it may be calculated roughly, each boy who receives a sufficient education for an agriculturist must cost the District and Municipal Boards about Rs. 85.

I think with Mr. Mahajani that irregular attendance is at the bottom of the ill success of our schools, though the Director is of opinion that the fault lies with the underpaid and incompetent masters. It seems to me that masters will be helpless to improve matters till the parents learn to act more sensibly towards their boys. "Marriages and feasts have attractions that no Berari can forego" according to Mr. Mahajani, and the fact is that low as the standard of living among our cultivators may be, it makes no great call for continuous labour; and holiday making and the attending of all the neighbouring bazars are regarded as part of the business of life, and the boys are brought up with the same ideas. Any method by which they could be compelled to attend school regularly would be the greatest reform that could be made in lower class education; and it seems to me that something might be effected by masters refusing to have anything to do with boys who continue to absent themselves from the classes. I think that there is a good deal of pretence and make believe about our primary schools that ought to be got rid of; and that harm and not good is done by masters and school committees trying to persuade parents to allow the names of their boys to swell the number on the rolls if they do not mean them to get all the benefit they can out of the teaching. It seems to me that until we have compulsory education and can make the boys attend regularly, less attention should be paid to the nominal strength of the school, and that results, and results only, should be looked at.

The Director attaches great importance to the inspection of schools by Deputy Commissioners; and some officers take a good deal of trouble over this duty. The Deputy Commissioner of Akola visited 36 schools, and the Deputy Commissioner of Basim almost as many. The Deputy Commissioner of Amraoti only visited 4 (and I note that he had no remarks to offer on the report of his district). The duty is not altogether an agreeable one, and the officer feels that the examination he makes of the classes in accordance with the

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custom of the country is a farce, and that every one else present knows it to be so. But a little kindly interest shown in the success of the school and a few encouraging words to the master and the committee are more appreciated and have more effect than is sometimes believed; and there is a word always in season to be said about regular attendance, and the Deputy Commissioner is the right man to say it.

There was a serious falling off in the number of low caste boys, but a natural one considering also the circumstances of the year; and it is to be hoped that it is only temporary. The boarding house established and maintained by Mr. Janu Mahar was noticed in last year's report. Two of the boarders are learning English, and one is in the highest class of the Akola High School. Employment will be found for this boy in a Government office if he cannot do better for himself.

5. *Education among Muhammadans.*—There were about the same number of lads receiving education as in the previous year, and there was some improvement in those who were examined and who passed under the different standards. But things are not in a satisfactory state with Hindustani schools chiefly because the supply of efficient masters is so very limited; and it is a question whether this fact alone would not justify some of them being closed or amalgamated with Marathi schools—a question that is before the Resident.

6. *Industrial Schools.*—I have no personal knowledge of the Amraoti school, but it seems clear from the Director's remarks that it is not in a state to do much good work. Mr. Rogers' school, which I hope will soon be much enlarged, is in my opinion one of the most important educational institutions in the province, for he is showing people how machinery can be applied to common handicrafts in a way to make an opening for capital, to afford remunerative occupation, and to improve the quality of articles in common use. Rao Saheb Deo Rao Venayek's engineering class is attracting more pupils, especially Brahmins, and is turning them out with qualifications to obtain well-paid appointments as fitters in factories, for which class of skilled labour there is great demand in Berar. Signs are not wanting of an awakening on the subject of technical education. The matter is engaging the attention of some of the more thoughtful of the leaders of the community, and I have every hope that the movement will gather strength before long.

7. *Female education.*—Mr. Patwardhan is unable to say much for the progress of female education. He finds it still clearly indicated that people do not as yet see any benefit in having their daughters educated, and if they leave school at an early age, and their education is altogether dropped from that point, it is not clear what the benefit can be. Of the 3,588 girls in the schools, only one passed in the VIth standard, and only girls in that standard learn enough to be able to read an ordinary Marathi letter: so there is little practical use in the schooling received by all these girls unless it lies in the plain needlework they learn and any habits of order and regularity that they may pick up. However, 91 girls passed by the IIIrd standard against 80 last year, so it is hoped that the number educated up to the higher standard may increase in time. But what I said about boys seems to me to apply to a great extent to girls also. I do not see much object in persuading parents to send their girls to school just to oblige and please us, if they do not want them taught to read and write; and I think that we are educating the people in quite the wrong direction in inducing them to join in bringing about sham results.

8. Rao Saheb S. V. Patwardhan deserves sympathy for the fact that the seasons have again worked against the success of his measures to spread education. It was during the first half of the year under report that the effects of the distress were felt in a greater degree than at any other period, and the results that he has to show have no doubt been deprived thereby of some of the promise they would have shown. But we know him to be an earnest,

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practical, and clear-sighted officer, and know that his aim has been to bring about real improvement in the teaching in our schools; and I have no doubt that the Resident will recognize the worth of his administrative work during an unfavourable year.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. D. HARE,

Officiating Commissioner,

Hyderabad Assigned Districts.

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