



Report on the State and Progress of Education in the Central Provinces and Berar

For the year ending 31st March 1928.

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GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

(MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.)

Nagpur, the 22nd December 1928.

READ—

Education Report of the Central Provinces for the year
1927-28.

RESOLUTION.

The keynote of the Education Report for 1927-28 is substantial progress in all branches of education. The total number of pupils has increased by 15,585 and numbers have increased in practically all kinds of educational institutions. Some criticisms, however, in the report deserve serious consideration, in particular those of the inefficiency of a proportion of the high schools in the province, of the continued wastage in class I and in the other lower classes of primary schools under the voluntary system, and of the inefficient administration of some compulsory education schemes.

2. The completion of the Nagpur University buildings was a happy event for the province, and Government congratulates Sir B. K. Bose, the Vice-Chancellor, on his successful efforts in this direction. One of the buildings was the library building, and Government hopes that the appeal which the University has made for contributions from the public to the library will receive the response that it merits. Government associates itself with the University in deploring the deaths of Rao Bahadur V. R. Pandit, Rai Bahadur T. K. Buxy and Sir Bezonji Mehta.

3. The Science College buildings were almost completed during the year. When these have been completed and equipped, they will be an asset of the utmost value to the province. The number of college students increased in all colleges, especially in Morris College, where the number of pupils reached 512. The constitution of college councils in which the college staff are given the privilege of sharing in the responsibilities of administration is a noteworthy event.

4. The demand for high and anglo-vernacular education grows apace. The number of high schools increased by 3 and the number of anglo-vernacular schools and departments by 8. The number of pupils attending high schools increased by 394 from 4,778 to 5,172, which is a record for the province. The number attending anglo-vernacular schools increased by 1,593. The greatest increase was in the Nagpur and Berar Circles.

5. The analysis in the report of the results of the high school certificate examination is interesting. A number of schools have been able to secure a good percentage of passes. This seems to indicate that the standard of the examination is not unduly high. In a number of schools, however, the percentage of passes is disgracefully low. The reason for the failures in these schools is said by the Director to be the lack of driving power and lack of thoroughness on the part of teachers, and the lack of strictness in the conduct of class promotion examinations. Government commends this comment to the serious consideration of the schools concerned.

6. The increased attention now being paid to physical education is illustrated by the appointment in 1927-28 of a Superintendent of Physical Education. Coming from America he was not able to do much more during the year under report than to tour round the province to acquaint himself with local conditions as a preliminary to making definite proposals for schemes of work. The appointment marks the definite determination of Government to do all that is possible for the physical education of pupils in schools.

7. Permission for the introduction of English as an optional subject in the curriculum has made vernacular middle schools more popular, especially in Berar. The English teaching, however, in these schools is inefficient, and the desire of numbers of pupils to use these schools as an avenue of approach to high schools has created a serious problem. A large influx of boys inadequately grounded into high schools would undoubtedly cause a serious deterioration in the standard of high and consequently also of university education. Steps are now being taken to train the English teachers of these schools.

8. Enrolment in primary schools has increased by 7,335, Chhattisgarh Circle alone accounting for more than half the increase. The chief defect in schools under the voluntary system continues to be the wastage in the number of pupils in the lower classes. Nearly half the number enrolled never rise above class I. It may be thought that the obvious remedy for this state of affairs is compulsory education, and so it is if compulsory education is properly administered. Unfortunately, however, the administration of compulsory education schemes has in some cases been inefficient. Attendance authorities have been inefficient, and there has been a noticeable reluctance to resort to prosecutions. Government has no intention to continue to support local authorities who have introduced compulsory education, but are unable to administer it efficiently.

9. The number of girls enrolled increased by 1,115 in primary schools and by 129 in anglo-vernacular middle schools. The Female Education Committee appointed by Government surveyed the whole field of female education, and their report has been made the subject of a separate Government resolution. Government is gratified at the increased desire for education displayed by Muhammadans. There has been a slight increase of 171 in the number of depressed class pupils. In Berar there has been a definite setback and the decrease of 1,255 is reported to have been due to economic causes and the closure of indigenous schools. It is hoped that this setback is only of a temporary nature.

10. Government is grateful to those members of local authorities and managers of aided schools who have

worked during the year under report to further the cause of education in the province and to Mr. Beckett and the officers of the Education Department for their assistance.

By order of the Government
(Ministry of Education),

R. H. BECKETT,

*Offg. Secretary to Government,
Central Provinces.*

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CHAPTER I.

Mr. Beckett officiated as Director of Public Instruction from 1st April 1927 to 22nd March 1928. Mr. E. A. Macnee officiated from 23rd March 1928.

Mr. H. S. Staley was on special duty in the office of Director of Public Instruction from 24th November 1926 to 7th April 1927 to revise the Education Manual. Mr. F. P. Tostevin was on special duty from 5th August to 30th November 1927 to write the quinquennial report and the Female Education Committee report. Mr. E. G. Kilroe was on special duty in connection with compulsory primary education from 9th August 1927 to March 1928.

Miss Chamier, Inspectress, Jubbulpore circle, went on leave from 16th May 1927 to the end of the year and Miss Murphy acted. Mr. A. G. Dix continued as Deputy Director of Public Instruction and Secretary of the Central Provinces High School Board throughout the year. Mr. F. K. Clark and Mr. L. G. D'Silva held charge of Jubbulpore and Berar circles, respectively, and Sardar Sahib Ishar Singh of the revived Chhattisgarh circle for the full year. The Nagpur circle was under the charge of Mr. M. A. Kelkar from 1st April to 25th November 1927 and of Mr. H. S. Staley for the rest of the year. The Nerbudda circle was under the charge of Mr. E. G. Kilroe from 1st April to 31st July 1927, of Mr. Syed Zaffar Hussain from 1st August to 2nd December 1927 and of Mr. M. A. Kelkar from 3rd December 1927 to 31st March 1928.

2. Important events.—The Chhattisgarh Division was reconstituted into a separate circle under an Inspector of Schools as the redistribution into four circles instead of five made in 1922-23 was found inconvenient.

A Female Education Committee was constituted in 1927 to examine the question of the education of girls in the Central Provinces and Berar and presented its report. It had 15 members with Mr. R. H. Beckett, Director of Public Instruction, as its Chairman.