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Bombay
Marches on...

UPLIFT OF THE BACKWARD CLASSES

BOMBAY MARCHES ON...

*A Review of the Work and Activities of the Government
of Bombay for the quinquennium 1946-1951*

UPLIFT OF THE BACKWARD CLASSES

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BOMBAY

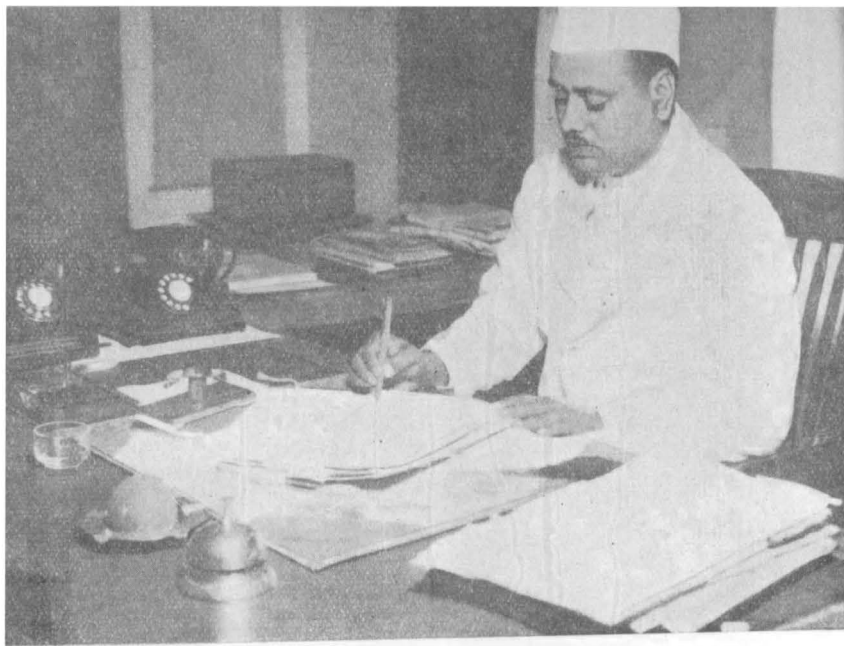
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Shri G. D. Tapase, Minister for Rehabilitation, Backward Classes and Fisheries, Government of Bombay.

UPLIFT OF THE BACKWARD CLASSES IN BOMBAY STATE

A Review of Ameliorative Measures, 1946-1951

The quinquennium ending March 31, 1951 will record considerable improvement in the condition of the Backward Classes in Bombay State as a result of the steps taken by the Government for that purpose during the period.

These classes were groaning under economic and social tyranny during the past several centuries. The coming into power of the popular Ministry in 1946 opened up a new era for them. The new Ministry's reconstruction plan while not differentiating between the various parts of the Province or between the many sections of the population, made a special provision for Backward Areas and for the uplift of the Backward Classes and aboriginal tribes and their rapid integration with the rest of the community.

A special provision was made for the Backward Areas and areas liable to periodic scarcity or stricken with epidemic diseases and for the uplift of the Backward Classes and aboriginal tribes in the Reconstruction Plan of the Bombay Ministry. The plan also envisaged far-reaching measures of social reform such as improvement of the status of women and of the so-called Depressed Classes, promotion of communal harmony, education in the proper use of leisure, prohibition of the manufacture or sale of liquor and narcotic drugs (except for medicinal purposes), etc. Thus, since 1946 there has been steady change of attitude towards the Backward Classes. While five years ago, these classes of people continued to suffer under various disabilities—social, economic and political—they have been today placed in a position of equality with other advanced sections of society.

A number of reforms were introduced by the State Government beginning with the Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1946, which was fittingly described as Bombay's birthday gift to Mahatma Gandhi in the year 1946. This measure may rightly be looked upon as an epoch-making measure in the Government's programme of amelioration of the conditions of the Backward Classes and an important milestone on the road to progress of these sections of the population.

The attainment of national freedom on August 15, 1947, ushered in an era of all-round prosperity for the whole country. In common with the rest of the population, the Backward Classes also began to forge ahead. The passing of the new Constitution of India was the greatest boon conferred on this community as a result of the attainment of freedom.

NEW CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India which came into force on January 26, 1950 contains

certain special provisions for the administration of what are termed as "Scheduled Areas" and "Scheduled Tribes". The relevant articles in the Constitution are 244, 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 339, 340 and 342 and the 5th and 6th Schedules. These provisions are based on the recommendations contained in a report submitted by the Tribal and Excluded Areas Advisory Committee which was appointed by the Constituent Assembly of India. The privileges granted to them will be enjoyed by them only for a period of 10 years, in the first instance, when the position will be re-examined. The most important privilege is the reservation of seats for them in the lower houses of the Union Parliament and the States' Legislatures on the basis of their population. Among the other privileges that will be enjoyed by them are that their claims will henceforth be recognised while making appointments to the services and posts both in the Union and the States, and there will be a special officer appointed by the Union to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards which have been provided for them. Further, with a view to giving them an effective voice in the State having Scheduled Areas or Scheduled Tribes, there will be established a Tribes Advisory Council which will advise the Governor on matters pertaining to their welfare and advancement.

TOTAL POPULATION

It is estimated that the total population of the Adiwasis in India is about 2½ crores. They are mostly to be found in the hilly and jungle tracts of almost every State in the country and they live a secluded life of their own immune from the effects of the upheavals that have shaken India in the past. The real object of having Scheduled Areas within the State is not to keep them out of the reach of democratic rule as was done under the various Government of India Acts of old. It is that special attention should be paid to these Areas and their inhabitants by the Governments concerned so that these very backward people are brought to the same level as the rest of the community and are absorbed very speedily into it. These inhabitants of the jungle have not altogether remained beyond the pale of happenings in other parts of the country. They

were roused to a sense of freedom and they celebrated Independence Day, August 15, 1947 with great joy and enthusiasm as was done elsewhere. With adult franchise, with seats in the legislature, with compulsory primary education and with the implementation of the various ameliorative measures and, above all, with individual and collective self-effort, as revealed in the Co-operative Movement, the day is not far off when these people will take their due place in Indian-society and will be in a position to contribute in adequate measure to the progress of the nation as a whole.

A special provision was made for the Backward Areas and areas liable to periodic scarcity or stricken with epidemic diseases and for the uplift of the Backward Classes and aboriginal tribes in the Reconstruction Plan of the Bombay Ministry. The plan also envisaged far-reaching measures of social reform such as improvement of the status of women and of the so-called Depressed Classes, promotion of communal harmony, education in the proper use of leisure, prohibition of the manufacture or sale of liquor and narcotic drugs, etc.

INCREASED EXPENDITURE

During the last five years, much progress has been made in this State in the amelioration of the conditions of the Backward Classes by the adoption of legislative and administrative measures in affording them protection from social injustice and exploitation and in organizing them co-operatively to meet their common needs, such as those in respect of (i) production through cottage industries, (ii) labour for the working of forest coupes, and (iii) housing both rural and urban. This may be seen from the expenditure incurred by the Government on Backward Class welfare which has risen from year to year as follows:

Year				Amount in Rupees
1946-47	...	...	...	11,11,653
1947-48	...	...	...	19,39,422
1948-49	...	...	...	31,67,255
1949-50	...	...	...	38,23,352
1950-51	...	...	...	44,16,000
1951-52	...	...	...	45,77,000

Today, the Backward Classes of Bombay State, numbering about 75 lakhs, enjoy all the rights and privileges to which every citizen is entitled under the Constitution of Republican India. Their onward march is only limited by the measure of their ability to take advantage of the opportunities which have been made available to them by the Government, and although protection has been provided in the Constitution for their special development, there is no doubt that with the enthusiasm and perseverance which they have been showing, and together with active encouragement from both the Government and the people, they will march hand in hand with the other sections of the population before long, so that the old distinction between them and the others will disappear altogether. Bombay State may perhaps take rightful pride in the endeavours it has launched to promote the progress and well-being of the Backward Classes during the past five years.

TEST OF FREEDOM

The test of true freedom has been appropriately expressed in the adage "Freedom has no meaning unless those in the lowest stratum of society are also able to enjoy its fruits". It is not merely a slogan but a living principle which has animated the Constitution of Republican India and which has also provided motive power to the policy and programme of the Government of Bombay in its programme of rapid amelioration of the conditions of the Backward Classes and their assimilation with the rest of society on a footing of perfect equality.

During the period of the last five years from 1946, three events of outstanding political significance have taken place

in the history of our country, namely, (i) the attainment of Independence, (2) the adoption of the Constitution for a Sovereign Democratic Republic based on universal adult suffrage and (3) the administrative unification of the country by the integration or merger of Indian States. These events naturally had inevitable repercussions on the Backward Classes and they also influenced the approach to the various problems connected with their amelioration.

CLASSIFICATION AND POLICY

The Backward Classes consist of three sections, viz., (i) the Scheduled Classes, (ii) the Aboriginal and Hill tribes, and (iii) other castes which are educationally, economically, socially and culturally considered as backward and lumped together in a miscellaneous section designated as Other Backward Classes. Under the new Constitution there are throughout the State three sections of recognised Backward Classes. Section 1 called 'Scheduled Castes' includes about 36 castes; Section 2 entitled 'Scheduled Tribes' includes about 24 Tribes and Section 3 entitled 'Other Backward Classes' contains as many as 160 Classes.

AMELIORATIVE MEASURES

In order that the Backward Class Officer and the Backward Class Department may be able to devote their attention wholly to the task of amelioration of the Backward Classes, the Department was reorganised with effect from June 5, 1947. The work relating to juveniles and beggars was taken away from the Backward Class Officer and entrusted to a separate department constituted for the purpose. The Backward Class Officer continued to be responsible for the administration of the Criminal Tribes Act until it was finally repealed on August 13, 1949.

LINES OF POLICY

It is the declared policy of the Government that the Backward Classes as part of the population of the State must share in the beneficent activities of all departments, and directives have been issued that the Backward Classes should on no account be excluded from the benefits of the normal activities of any department. In addition having regard to the need for combating their backwardness and for bringing them to the level of the rest of the population in the shortest possible time, special facilities have been afforded to them.

The policy of the Government with regard to the Backward Classes may briefly be described as a policy seeking to eliminate the backwardness of these communities and to secure their integration with the rest of society on a footing of equality in as short a span of time as possible. The disabilities of the Backward Classes may be divided under three broad categories: (a) Social, (b) Educational, and (c) Economic. The special measures adopted by the Government are designed to overcome all these disabilities, so that within a period of about 10 years the Backward Classes should be brought on to a level with the rest of the population and the progress of the nation as a whole might be secured smoothly and uniformly.

MODE OF IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is sought to be implemented through the existing administrative departments of the Government and the Backward Class Department attempts, in the main, to co-ordinate the work relating to the Backward Classes and to encourage the Backward Classes to take advantage of the facilities offered by the Government through the various departments. Today there are 16 Backward Class Welfare Officers in charge of one or more districts and six Assistant Backward Class Officers to assist the Backward Class Officer in dealing with the problem of the Backward Classes all over the State.

SOCIAL HEADWAY

Broadly speaking there are three facets to the social problem of the Backward Classes. Of these the most important is the existence of untouchability. The existence of untouchability militates against three of the fundamental objectives in our Constitution as noted in the Preamble, namely, Justice, social, economic and political; Equality of status and of opportunity; and Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. The Bombay Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1946, is intended to provide for the removal of social disabilities of Harijans. Under this Act, notwithstanding anything contained in any instrument or any law, custom or usage to the contrary, no Harijan shall merely on the ground that he is a Harijan, (a) be ineligible for office under any authority constituted under any law; or (b) be prevented from: (i) having access to or using any river, or any bathing place, burial or cremation ground, any sanitary convenience, any road or pathway which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus have a right to use or have access to; (ii) having access to or using any public conveyance licensed by the Provincial Government or any local authority to ply for hire; (iii) having access to or using any building or place used for charitable or public purposes maintained wholly or partially out of the revenues of the Province or the funds of a local authority; (iv) having access to a place of public amusement or a place of public entertainment; (v) having access to a shop to which the members of all other castes and classes of Hindus are ordinarily admitted; (vi) having access to or using any place set apart or maintained for the use of Hindus generally but not for the use of any particular section or class thereof; (vii) enjoying any benefit under a charitable trust created for the benefit of Hindus generally but not for the benefit of any particular section or class thereof.

Any restriction imposed on a Harijan or any act resulting

in discrimination against him merely on the ground that he is a Harijan is punishable under this Act. The punishment may be imprisonment for a term of three months or a fine of Rs. 200 or both. The Act provides for enhanced penalties in certain cases after a previous conviction. Offences made under the Act are made cognisable by the Police. Untouchability has now been made a definite crime in all its aspects. The chief sanction behind it was religion.

FREE ACCESS TO RELIGIOUS PLACES

With the Bombay Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1947, and the Bombay Temple Entry (Amendment) Act, 1948, every temple which means a place, by whatever name known and to whomsoever belonging, which is used as a place of religious worship by custom, usage or otherwise by members of the Hindu community or any section thereof and includes all land appurtenant thereto and subsidiary shrines attached to any such place, is thrown open to Harijans for worship in the same manner and to the same extent as to any member of the Hindu community or any section thereof and Harijans are equally entitled to bathe in or use the waters of any sacred tank, well, spring or water-course. The term 'Hindus' as defined in this Act includes 'Jains'. Offences under this Act are made cognisable by the police. It is gratifying to record that almost all the important religious places in the State have been voluntarily thrown open to Harijans with the passage of this Act. Thus, the Minister for Backward Classes, Shri G. D. Tapase, entered with a group of Harijans the Vitthoba Temple at Pandharpur, the Shri Ram Temple at Nasik and the Shri Krishna Temple at Dwarka, among others.

The Scheduled Castes or Harijans are spread throughout the State and form local minorities in varying strength. Moreover, not only have they been suppressed for generations but they are also economically and socially at the mercy of the majority. If untouchability is to be removed root and branch, it is necessary not only to prevent the majority from exercising or threatening tyranny over the Harijans who wish to assert their civic rights, but also to embolden the Harijans to exercise them without fear or favour. Once untouchability dis-

appears from the *sanctum sanctorum*, its disappearance elsewhere should not take long.

SOCIAL EQUALITY

The most noteworthy feature of both the Bombay Harijan (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1946 and the Bombay Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1947 as amended by the amending Act of 1948 is that offences under these Acts are cognisable. This provision enables direct action through Government agency to see that these Acts are properly enforced and do not remain a dead letter. In order that these laws may not remain a dead letter, it is also necessary that the Harijans themselves should assert their rights and give the fullest co-operation to the forces of law and order in bringing the offenders to book. The Harijans are spread all over the State and form a minority wherever they are. In addition they are also, except in larger urban areas, economically dependent on the so-called "Savarna" sections of the Hindu community. If they are apprehensive of damage to their interests by assertion of their rights, such apprehension could be understood. The root cause of such apprehension is sought to be removed by positive preventive action wherever the attempts of Harijans to assert their civic rights are sought to be frustrated by the local community and by propaganda through official channels supplemented by non-official social workers working under the aegis of recognised voluntary agencies. These voluntary agencies receive grants-in-aid under the Rules for the recognition and payment of grant-in-aid to voluntary agencies working for the uplift of the Backward Classes in Bombay State. The propaganda is designed both to make the Harijans conscious of their rights and to secure loyal adherence to the law by the rest by bringing about a genuine change of heart on their part.

During the period undermentioned, the following prosecutions were launched under the two Acts:

Year	Cases under the Harijan (Removal of Social Dis- abilities) Act, 1946			Cases under the Bombay Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1947		
	No of cases sent to co- urt for pro- secution	No. of cases decided	No. of cases result- ing in convic- tion	No. of cases sent to court for pro- secution	No. of cases decided	No. of cases result- ing in convic- tion
1947-48	262	91	43	3	1	1
1948-49	161	87	54	31	6	—
1949-50	85	33	14	6	1	1

In a large number of cases particularly in the matter of access to places of public entertainment or amusement and establishments, and of discrimination practised in such places and establishments, it was found that persuasion by Government officers and non-official social workers was sufficient to secure the end of the social disabilities imposed on the Harijans.

By making the offences under both these Acts cognisable, it is assured that the Acts will not be still-born. The official organisation of the Backward Class Department which has been suitably expanded and voluntary agencies devoted to the cause of the removal of untouchability which are encouraged to carry on propaganda by suitable grants-in-aid towards these activities strive to see that the benefits of this legislation are availed of by Harijans of all sections in all parts of the State.

NO MORE CRIMINAL TRIBES

Another social stigma attached to a large section of the Backward Classes was that of criminality. Under the Criminal Tribes Act, certain tribes or castes could be notified as Criminal Tribes. Such notifications, apart from whatever else might have been secured, branded the members of these castes and tribes as criminal. A committee consisting of Shri B. G. Kher, Chief Minister, Shri Morarji Desai and Shri Gulzarilal

Nanda with the Backward Class Officer as Secretary was constituted in January 1947 to go into the question of these tribes. In the light of the deliberations of this Committee, the Government came to the conclusion that the time had come when whole communities should not be dubbed as criminal and treated as such. In pursuance of this conclusion, it was decided to repeal the Criminal Tribes Act which operated community-wise and to enact legislation dealing with habitual offenders as habitual offenders irrespective of the communities to which they belonged to replace the Criminal Tribes Act. Pending such an enactment, orders were issued on 16th July 1947 for immediate relaxation in the operation of the Criminal Tribes Act and Rules. The Bombay Habitual Offenders Restriction Act, 1947, was thereafter placed on the Statute Book on 31st December 1947. Section 23 of this Act provided that the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924 would cease to extend to this State with effect from such date not being later than two years from the date of the coming into operation of that Act as may be notified in that behalf by the Provincial Government in the official gazette. Such notification was issued on 5th August 1949 repealing the Criminal Tribes Act in its application to this State with effect from the midnight of 12th August 1949. Pending the final repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act, the Criminal Tribes Settlements and Free Colonies in the State were being gradually wound up until only three major settlements at Sholapur, Hubli and Ahmedabad were left. The repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act was celebrated with great joy by the persons belonging to the erstwhile Criminal Tribes.

The total population of the ex-criminal tribes in the three major settlements at Sholapur, Ahmedabad and Hubli and in the Free Colonies that were in existence before the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act on 13th August 1949 was as under:

Settlements	719
Free Colonies	7,253

With the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act on 13th August 1949 the whole population designated as Criminal Tribes was freed from the restrictions imposed on it under the Act.

Appropriate functions were organised at the three settlements referred to above where the barbed wire enclosing the settlements was ceremonially cut. The members of the tribes notified as criminal at the time of the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act are now all looked upon and treated as Backward Classes. A committee was appointed by the Government in 1949 under the chairmanship of Dr. K. B. Antrolikar, M.L.A. to go into the question of rehabilitation of the members of the tribes till recently designated as Criminal Tribes under the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924 in the conditions resulting from the repeal of the Act and to suggest ways and means for their uplift.

DEVDAISIS

An aspect which is so much in evidence particularly in the southern part of the State, is that of Devdasis or Muralis. The term "Devdasi", literally meaning a female servant of God, now stands for courtesans dedicated to the presiding diety in the temple. In its original import, marriage of the Dasi to the diety is a renunciation of ordinary family life and a consecration to the service of God. Whatever its origin, the system has now degenerated into one giving religious sanction to the vulgar profession of prostitutes. There are some Backward Class communities with whom such dedication followed by prostitution is a hereditary profession and the evil has also corroded its way among large Harijan sections of the population such as Holers and Madigs. The Bombay Devdasis Protection (Amendment) Act, 1950, now extends to the whole State and its provisions have now been made more stringent and offences under it have been made cognisable. The practice is also now penalised even if no formal ceremony intended to dedicate or having the effect of dedicating a woman as a Devdasi takes place. The Committee for the Amelioration of the Backward Classes in the Merged States Areas of Bombay State in its report says: "Nevertheless, the evil is so widespread that we feel that even the amended Act may not be able to bring it to an end. The lure of money may increasingly take the place of the sanctity given by dedication. For the evil to be effectively tackled, two-

pronged action, educative and punitive, is necessary." The Committee has also recommended the Bombay Prevention of Prostitution Act, 1923, to be made applicable to the whole State. The Government has also under consideration measures to launch suitable educative propaganda for social reform in these areas.

DEMON OF DRINK

The third aspect of the social problem relates to the evil of drink which has resulted in a progressive impoverishment of certain sections of the Backward Classes. In fact, as the report of the Committee, says: "Alcoholic liquor and other intoxicating drugs and drinks are verily the Public Enemy No. 1 of the Backward Classes. Indulgence in intoxicating drugs and drinks diverts their meagre resources from the essential requirements of themselves and their families. It saps their vitality, plays havoc with their physique as well as their minds and is an effective obstacle to their amelioration". Now there is total Prohibition in Bombay State and, from reports available it may be stated that it is held, particularly by the Backward Classes, as a boon and there is evidence to show that that has contributed appreciably to their economic improvement and domestic well-being. In order to wean the recalcitrant elements in the Backward Classes from their slavery to drink, a proposal has been made to remove existing border liquor shops at a distance of 10 miles beyond the borders of Bombay State.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

The problem of the Scheduled Tribes was briefly stated by the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes Committee, of which Dr. Ambedkar, now Law Minister of the Government of India, and Thakkar Bapa were members, in its report published as far back as 1930.

"Whatever their own desires may be, the march of civilisation inevitably brings the Aboriginal Tribes into contact with others. If they remain in the present condition, they will become more and more a prey of the unscrupulous from among the more educated communities. The problem for them is to implant a desire for education to break down their exclusiveness and to enable them to take part in the national life befitting their numbers. Yet one fears for them in this closer contact with other communities which is inevitable lest they lose some of those characteristics of cheerfulness, hardihood and truth-loving, which bind them to the hearts of all those who come into close contact with them." Many reasons have been adduced and varying are the analyses of the problems of the Backward Classes as a whole; but it would appear from a close study of them that the need for education especially suited to their environmental needs is the first and foremost need of the hour. Therefore, the Government of Bombay has given special consideration to their educational advancement.

Part of their backwardness has been due to lack of knowledge of the three R's and despite the long labours of social workers and social welfare institutions working among these people, their progress has not been as satisfactory as one might have wished. A very large leeway still requires to be made up if they are to take their place on a footing of equality with other sections of the population. The problem of educa-

tion and literacy now requires to be viewed not so much in the light of comparative progress as between different areas as in the context of a Sovereign Democratic Republic based on adult suffrage and the directive principle of State policy enunciated in Article 45 of the Constitution requiring that the State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, for free and compulsory education.

COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME

In Bombay State, the Government had launched a comprehensive scheme of free and compulsory primary education even prior to the adoption of the Constitution. In the first phase of this scheme, the Government decided to introduce free and compulsory primary education in all villages with a minimum population of 1,000. This programme is due to be completed as part of the first Five-year Post-War Re-construction Plan by 29th February 1952. In the next five years, it is contemplated that free and compulsory primary education will be introduced in all villages with a population of less than 1,000. The scheme made a start with enforcing compulsion in compulsory areas in the age group 7 to 8. With each succeeding year, this age group was widened to include the next year. After the age group 7 to 11 is brought within the purview of the scheme, the age group would be extended to cover the ages from 6 to 11. After that the Government proposes to undertake the extension of free and compulsory education up to the age of 14.

It was realised that in the Backward tracts preponderantly inhabited by the Adivasis where the population was dispersed in small and scattered hamlets, special measures were necessary for the introduction of compulsory education, since the general condition postulated for the introduction of compulsion, viz., a population of 1,000 or over, was not likely to be found capable of fulfilment in these tracts.

A start was made with the Thana District where a special survey was conducted by a committee under the chairmanship of Shri D. N. Wandrekar, M.L.A., Parliamen-

tary Secretary to the Minister for Rehabilitation, Fisheries and Backward Classes. The recommendations of this Committee have been accepted by the Government and a start in the implementation of these recommendations was made with one taluka, viz., the Umbergaon taluka of the Thana District. Within three years, the scheme was extended to the other Adivasi tracts of the Thana District. Similar survey committees have been appointed in the districts of Nasik, West Khandesh, Kanara, Panchmahals and Kolaba, where almost similar problems obtain.

In addition to free compulsory education, wherever compulsion is introduced arrangements are made to give slates and books to pupils from the Backward Classes at State cost. The following table shows the amounts spent on this item.

Year	Amount sanctioned in Rupees
1947-48	... .. 2,27,847
1948-49	... .. 2,67,871
1949-50	... .. 4,57,920

SUPPLY OF UNIFORMS

Grants as detailed below were made by the Collectors of the districts concerned from the discretionary grants at their disposal for the supply of free school uniforms to needy Backward Class pupils in primary schools in their respective districts. These grants were disbursed through the local officers of the Backward Class Department and in some cases through the Administrative Officers of the District School Boards who arranged for the supply of uniforms to them.

In addition, there are several sets of scholarships for pupils in the higher primary classes distributed on merit all over the State.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

In 1949, the Government also directed that a certain percentage of the building grants placed annually at

the disposal of the District Building Committees should be earmarked for constructing primary school buildings in the Backward Areas, i.e., villages with Backward Class population to the extent of more than 60%. The amount to be reserved for such areas is to be fixed by the District Building Committee, in consultation with the District Backward Class Committee, subject, however, to a minimum of 15% of the total grant made to the District Building Committee and a maximum of 50% of such grant. The Government has further directed that the school buildings in such areas should be built largely of materials locally available and a school building should not ordinarily cost more than Rs. 2,500 in each case. A part of the expenditure on the school building should be met by the villagers' contribution in the shape of unskilled labour, grant of a free site or building materials.

ADDITIONAL SETS OF SCHOLARSHIPS

One hundred and sixty-two sets of scholarships for Backward Class pupils in the higher primary standards, viz., V, VI and VII, have been already instituted. The Government sanctioned the provision of an additional 100 sets of scholarships as one of the items of this scheme. Each set consists of three scholarships of Rs. 3 p.m. for pupils in Standards V and VI and Rs. 4 p.m. for pupils in Standard VII. A total of 786 scholarships was thus made available to the Backward Classes in primary schools. Further 50 sets were sanctioned after the merger of States in 1949. The question of sanctioning additional sets on account of the merger of Baroda and Kolhapur States is also under consideration.

SECONDARY EDUCATION

As regards secondary education, this has been made free for all boys and girls within specified age-limits from the Backward Classes, subject to good conduct and progress.

All Backward Class boys and girls are now given free-studentships in Government as well as non-Government secondary schools and the Government makes good the loss

in fees to the managements of non-Government secondary schools on this account.

The number of sets of scholarships tenable for four years for Backward Class pupils in vocational high schools was increased from 25 to 42. Fifty additional sets of middle school scholarships were also sanctioned, bringing the total number of sets available to 160. For higher education, not only freeships but also scholarships varying in value according to the needs of each course are given on the same universal basis as freeships in secondary schools. In addition, special scholarships are given for professional courses. In 1949-50 the Government spent Rs. 1,39,000 on this item. Deserving Backward Class students in secondary schools and colleges are also awarded lump-sum grants for purchasing books and school equipment as well as for their examination fees.

LUMP-SUM SCHOLARSHIPS

In addition to scholarships awarded by the Education Department, the Backward Class Department gives monetary help to poor and deserving students from the Backward Classes studying in secondary schools, colleges and technical institutions by way of lump-sum grants for books, tools, etc., and for payment of examination fees. The following figures show the total amounts spent in awarding lump-sum scholarships to Backward Class students during the past four years:

Year					Total Amount Spent
1946-47	...	...	...	...	Rs. 20,037
1947-48	...	...	...	...	Rs. 27,913
1948-49	...	...	...	...	Rs. 52,271
1949-50	...	...	...	...	Rs. 51,711

SCHOLARSHIPS IN CRAFT SCHOOLS

In 1943, the Government sanctioned the award of Rs. 5 per month each to Backward Class candidates at the following 10 Industrial Bias Classes subject to the following conditions:

- (i) Backward Class candidates should pass the test examination which will be specifically held for the purpose.
- (ii) The financial position of the candidate should be taken into consideration while awarding the scholarship; the annual income of the guardians should not be more than Rs. 2400 per annum.
- (iii) The scholarships should be awarded subject to regular attendance, good work and good behaviour on the part of the candidate.

Surat District

- | | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| 1. Udwada | Carpentry |
| 2. Mandvi | Dyeing and Printing |

Thana District

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 3. Kalyan | Tailoring |
| 4. Bordi | Wood turning and lacquer work. |

Nasik District

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 5. Saundana | Cotton weaving |
| 6. Kalwan | Cane and bamboo work |
| 7. Peint | Carpentry |

West Khandesh District

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| 8. Nandurbar | Tailoring |
| 9. Navapur | Wood turning and lacquer work |
| 10. Taloda | Rope-making |

Also the expenditure that the Government has been making on secondary education by way of concessions to Backward Class pupils has gone on increasing progressively and the following table shows the results achieved:

*No. of Backward Class Pupils in Secondary Schools
and the Expenditure incurred*

Year	1946-47	1947-48	1948-49	1949-50
Pupils	8,652	10,354	11,418	17,561
Expenditure	Nil	Rs. 58,945	Rs. 2,61,093	Rs. 5,62,699

Nor is college education neglected. Scholarships and free-ships are given to Backward Class students who comply with certain conditions with regard to age, progress and conduct. Some idea of the Government's expenditure incurred on these concessions may be had from the fact that in 1949-50, there were 1,444 Backward Class pupils in colleges and the Government incurred an expenditure of Rs. 1,39,000 on them.

OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS

Three overseas scholarships were sanctioned to Backward Class students as an item of Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 210 during the period under review. A special Selection Board was established for selecting suitable candidates for the purpose. On the recommendations of this Board, three candidates were selected, two for a post-graduate agricultural degree course in the United States of America and one for Leather Technology in the United Kingdom. The three selected scholars are now undergoing training in foreign universities.

NETWORK OF HOSTELS

Control of the Government Backward Class Hostel at Poona as also control over grants to aided Backward Class Hostels was transferred from the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay State, Poona, to the Backward Class Officer, Poona, from April 1934. There were 12 Backward Class Hostels in 1934 which had been recognised for payment of Government grants to them. The number of such aided Backward Class Hostels gradually increased to 149 by the end of March 1949 and to 167 by 31st March 1950.

The Government Hostel for Backward Classes at Poona admits students in the higher secondary classes and those attending collegiate and technical institutions in Poona. The Government has recently constructed its own building for the Backward Class Hostel at Poona. The Hostel has accommodation for 80 students. Half the seats are reserved for students offering collegiate and technical courses. If there are any vacancies in this section, they are allotted to students in secondary schools studying in the Matriculation Class. The Hostel is open to students from all sections of the Backward Classes without distinction. The students are provided free lodging and boarding facilities and are given other equipment, such as books, stationery, etc. required for their studies free of charge.

A Government Backward Class Hostel on similar lines has been started since June 1949 at Hubli in a part of the premises of the old Criminal Tribes Settlement there. The accommodation available there is for 40 students and half of it is reserved for students offering collegiate and post-secondary school courses.

AID TO HOSTELS

The number of aided Backward Class Hostels managed by voluntary agencies which received grants-in-aid from the Backward Class Department at the end of the year 1946-47 was 100. The number of these hostels increased to 149 at the end of 1948-49 and to 167 at the end of 1949-50. The number of Backward Class Hostels under the control of the Backward Class Department during the period of the last three years and the total grants-in-aid paid to them during each of those years are as follows:

Year	No. of Backward Class Hostels	Total Grants Paid
1946-47	100	Rs. 1,55,266
1947-48	136	Rs. 2,64,467
1948-49	149	Rs. 3,13,986
1949-50	167	Rs. 3,79,920

In order to enable voluntary agencies to provide suitable buildings for hostel purposes, the Government has approved of a scheme under which building grants are paid for the construction of hostel buildings to recognised agencies on a scale prescribed by the Government. During the period from April 1946 to March 1949, a sum of Rs. 1,27,322 was accordingly paid as building grants to Backward Class hostels at various places in the State.

As a result of these measures, education among members of the Backward Classes is advancing steadily as may be seen from the following figures:

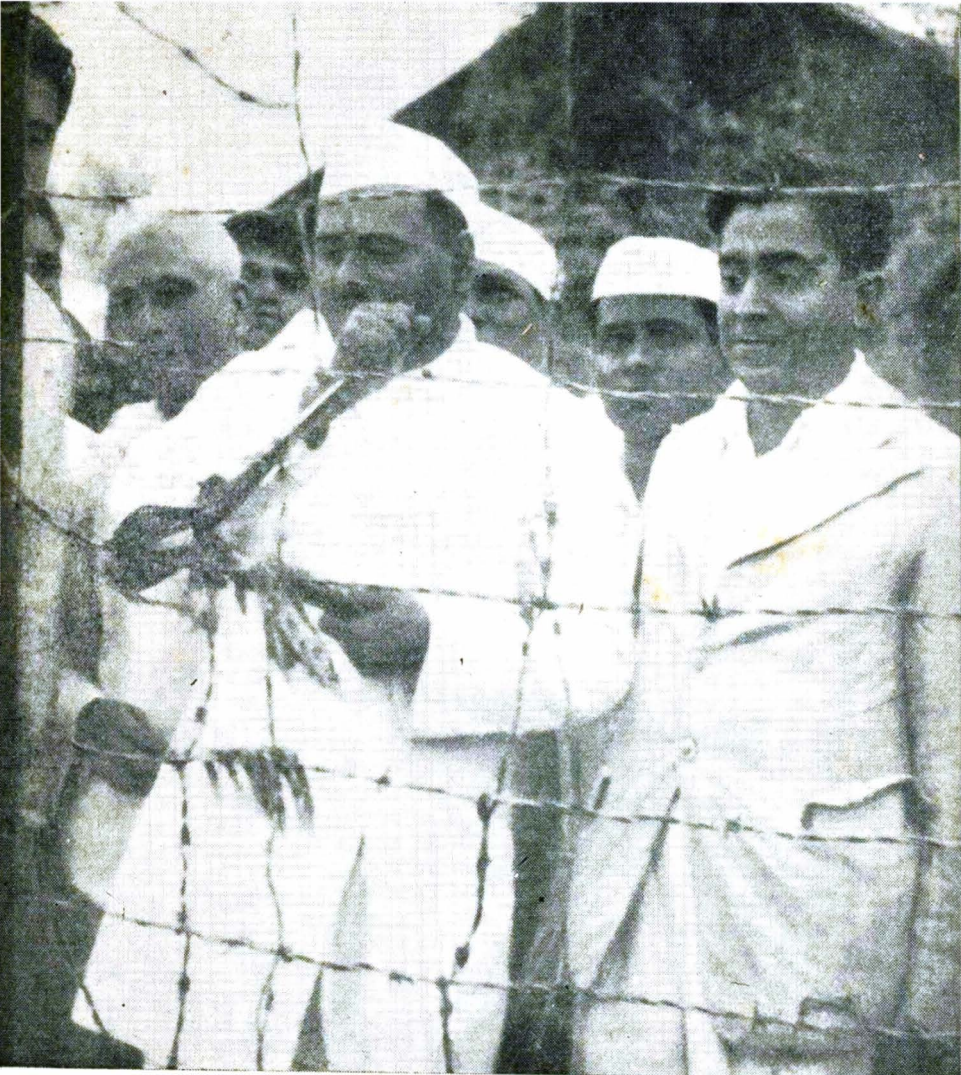
<i>Institutions</i>	<i>Year and Number of Students</i>		
	1946-47	1947-48	1948-49
Colleges (excluding medical, agricultural engineering, etc.)	491	537	629
Secondary Schools	8,652	10,354	11,418
Primary Schools	2,34,713	3,48,996	5,01,842

PRIZES TO TEACHERS AND PUPILS

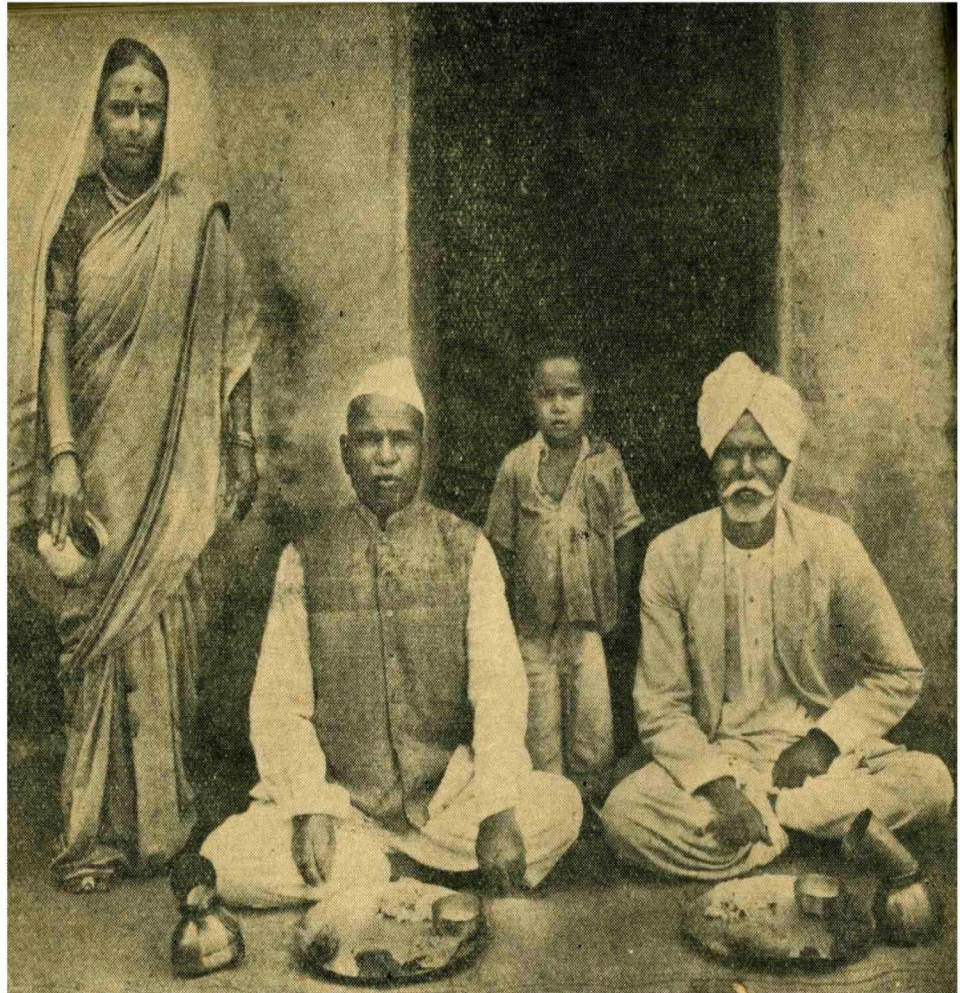
Prizes were being awarded to teachers and pupils of the Aboriginal and Hill Tribes and Scheduled Castes and free refresher courses for teachers in the five districts of Panch Mahals, Surat, Thana, Nasik and West Khandesh at a cost of Rs. 2,000 per district. As an item of Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 208, sanctioned in October 1947, the Government sanctioned the award of prizes to teachers and pupils at a cost of Rs. 1000 per district for the remaining 14 districts of the Province as then constituted. With regard to refresher courses, it was directed that the teachers should take advantage of the general refresher courses which may be organised by the Education Department for teachers including teachers in backward tracts.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Previously a percentage of 15 had been prescribed for the admission of Backward Class men teachers to Training



Liberation came to the "Criminal" Tribes on August 13, 1949, when the Criminal Tribes Act, 1924 was annulled. Minister G. D. Tapase is seen above cutting the barbed wire enclosure of the Settlement at Sholapur, setting free its inmates on that most memorable day.



Bombay's march towards a classless society is symbolised in this picture of an inter-caste meal. Old traditional inhibitions are being fast forgotten in the rural areas also.



The Adiwasi Colony, Borivli (Bombay Suburban District), to which a visit was recently paid by the President of the Indian Republic. Note the approach road, tiled roofs and the general spruce appearance of the Colony.

An Adiwasi mother from Pimpalshet village under the Kasa Sarvodaya Centre (Thana District) gives the morning feed to the fowls, while her baby looks on.





Timber felled by members of the Adiwasi forest labourers' co-operative societies is being neatly exhibited for sale to merchants at Manor, Palghar Taluka (Thana).

Wood unsuitable for use as timber is turned into charcoal. A kiln being worked at Maswan (Thana District), also on co-operative lines.

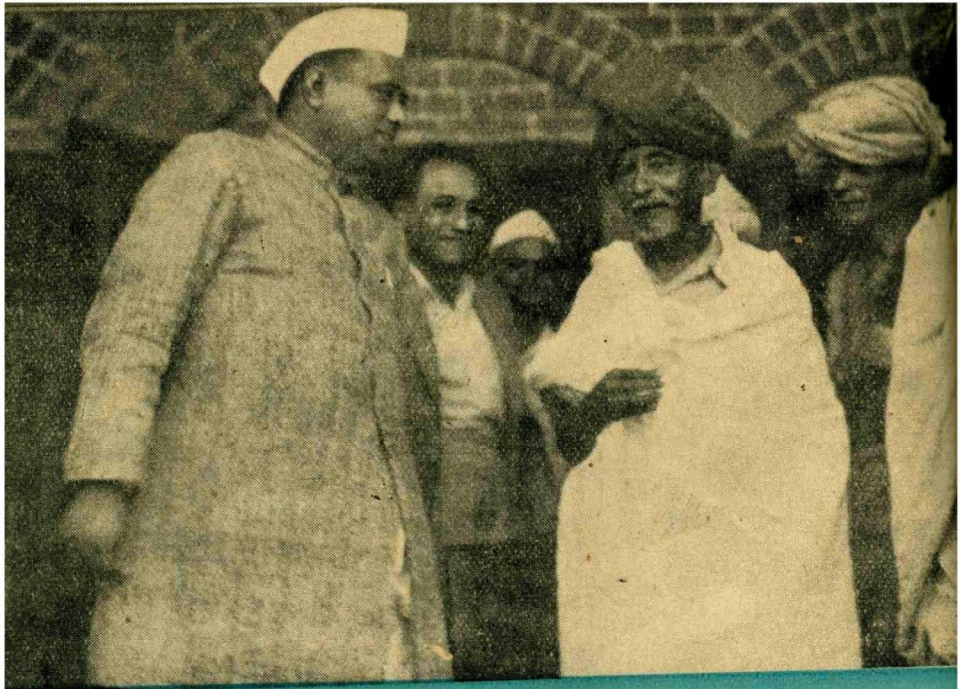




More Adiwasis are being encouraged to learn the art of farming. Here are some boys at work in a vegetable garden at the Adiwasi Ashram, Borivli.

The Dangs, too, are forging ahead in matters agricultural as in other fields of life. The Minister and officials are seen standing in the threshing yard of a Dangi farmer.





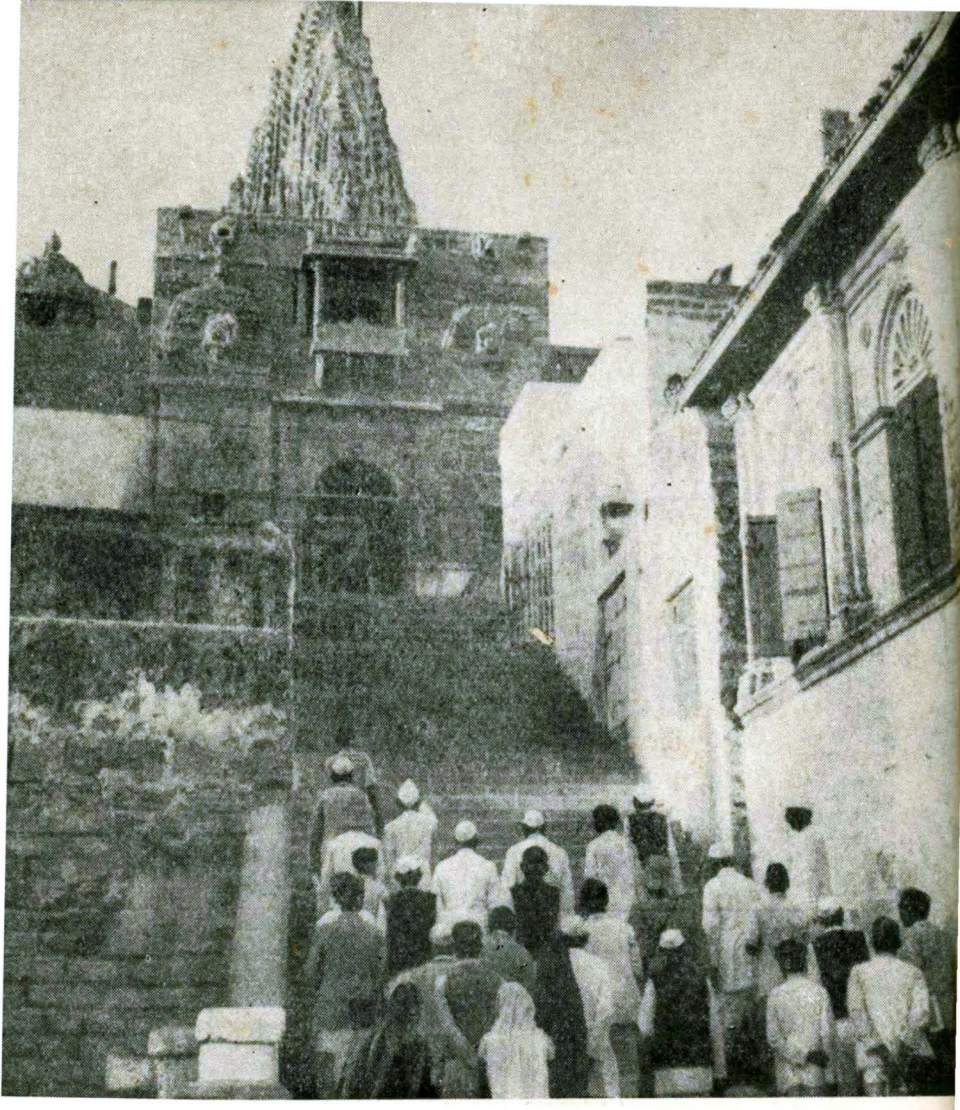
Shri Tapase, while on a tour of Dangs, pauses to have a chat with a Dangi Chieftain who appears to be in a reminiscent mood.

A People's Mobile Hospital van renders medical aid to inhabitants of the far-flung, almost inaccessible areas of the Thana District.





Learning to be a useful citizen is this member of the Backward Classes. The Government's efforts to rehabilitate them are bearing fruit.



Freedom of worship in the temple of God was assured to one and all when the Harijans entered temples in Bombay State on the passing of the Bombay Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1947. Above is a view of a party led by Minister Tapase (third from right, front row) entering the Ranchhodji Temple at Dwarka.

Institutions and the selection of teachers for training was to be in the order of seniority, all teachers in service under the age of 40 being eligible for admission. No percentage was separately fixed in the case of women teachers from the Backward Classes; but if suitable women belonging to these classes were available for training, preference was given to them in the matter of admission to Training Colleges. The entire scheme of training primary teachers was revised as part of the measures taken by the Government for improvement in the conditions of service of primary teachers. In May 1947, the Government took a decision to the effect that qualified untrained teachers who are more than 45 are to be 'deemed' to be trained teachers from the date on which they complete 10 years' continuous service. They are not required to undergo either a training course or a refresher course in training. Qualified untrained teachers recruited before 1st April 1935 and belonging to the age group of 35-45 are to be given only a term's course in psychology and thereafter to be deemed as trained. Qualified untrained teachers recruited after 1st April 1935 are required to undergo the full training course of two years. Under these orders all primary teachers including Backward Class teachers who are not 'deemed' to be trained have to be deputed for training to Training Institutions. The previous orders prescribing percentages for the admission of Backward Class teachers to Training Institutions are no longer necessary and are no more in force. Nevertheless, the figures of admission of students to Primary Training Institutions for men and women as on 31st March 1949 (which are the latest figures available) showed that there was a substantial increase in the number of Backward Class students undergoing training in Primary Training Institutions, both abso-

lutely and relatively to the general increase. The position will be appreciated at a glance from the following table :

Year	Total No. of students in Primary Training Institutions	No. of Backward Class students in Primary Training Institutions	Percentage of column 3 to column 2
1946-47	5,731	720	12.6
1948-49	9,134	1,362	14.9

All teachers of the Local Authorities deputed for training under the new scheme are eligible to receive duty pay while on such deputation. With regard to private students in Training Institutions not in receipt of duty pay, at the beginning of the period under review, 60 sets of stipends viz., 40 for men tenable for 2 years, and 20 for women tenable for 3 years in non-Government Training Institutions had been provided for Backward Class students. As part of Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 208 to which reference has been made earlier, 50 additional sets were sanctioned, of which 30 were tenable for 2 years for men and 20 sets for 3 years for women. The duration of the training college course in the case of women was reduced from 3 to 2 years with effect from June 1948. This has resulted in a corresponding increase in the stipends available for women. Though the scheme only sanctioned an increase of 50 sets, actually stipends were paid to all eligible Backward Class persons joining Primary Training Institutions who had not been deputed by the Local Authorities and were, consequently not in receipt of duty pay. For this purpose, additional 33 stipends were sanctioned in 1948-49 and 41 in 1949-50.

TRAINING IN INDUSTRIES

With a view to improving the technique of the hereditary occupations of the Backward Classes, the Government set up as many as 17 peripatetic demonstration parties and schools in different cottage industries, awarded technical scholarships

to Backward Class students for training in selected recognised technical institutions, and made provision for special supervisory staff. All the 14 peripatetic demonstration parties and schools continued to train the Backward Class students in various industries, namely, cotton and wool weaving, tanning and leather work, cane and bamboo work, carpentry and wood turning, and fibre work.

There were as many as 98 scholarships at the revised rates of Rs. 20, Rs. 25 and Rs. 30 per month each provided by the Department for award to Backward Class students for undergoing training in different technical and industrial courses at 13 recognised institutions. The response has been encouraging and applications were to be invited by the Backward Class Officer, Bombay State, Poona, to avoid overlapping.

Supervision of peripatetic demonstration parties and schools for training Backward Class students was being done by the District Officers for Industrial Co-operatives and Village Industries.

Training in some village industries was also arranged by the Village Industries Committee, namely, in the rope making industry in the Dharwar and Panch Mahals Districts, Button, Horn and Coir industry at Honavar and training of Adiwasis (Halpatis) of the Surat District in tailoring, carpentry and oil pressing.

INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATIVES

In addition, the Government also provided loans and subsidies to persons trained in the various peripatetic demonstration parties, the two together not exceeding Rs. 400 for the purchase of tools and appliances and for providing them with working capital. Attempts are also being made to organise such trainees on co-operative lines and form industrial co-operatives for them whenever possible. Provision has also been made for grant of assistance to Backward Class artisans who are eligible to receive such assistance but have not received training in peripatetic demonstration parties or technical insti-

tutions. The Government has also sanctioned a scheme for granting assistance to educated unemployed persons including the Backward Classes to start or develop cottage industries. Moreover, the Backward Classes can also take advantage of the State Aid to Industries Rules which provide for grant of loans on certain conditions. The question of supplementing the facilities already available by another scheme for the industrial improvement of the Backward Classes by grant of suitable subsidies and loans on easy terms is under the consideration of the Government and a provision of Rs. 2 lakhs had been made for this purpose in the budget of 1949-50.

The Government also opened various grain depots for proper distribution of grains and seeds to the Backward Classes in the West Khandesh; Broach, Panch Mahals, Surat and Thana Districts.

ECONOMIC AMELIORATION

On the economic front, in addition to arrangements for imparting training in various crafts and trades and in the hereditary occupations of the Backward Classes, facilities are given through various schemes for trained personnel to set up in the crafts and trades concerned. The Government has sanctioned 29 scholarships of Rs. 30 per mensem each for being awarded to selected Backward Class students undergoing training in (1) Accountancy, (2) Secretariat work, (3) Architecture and Commercial Art, (4) Dentistry, (5) Forestry, and (6) short-term courses in shorthand and typewriting. Also 10 scholarships of Rs. 25 per mensem each have been sanctioned for being awarded to selected Backward Class girls or women undergoing training in (1) Nursing, (2) Health Visitors' Course, (3) Midwifery, and (4) Dai's course. In addition to the facilities available to industrial co-operative societies in general, special facilities are given to co-operative societies formed preponderantly by and of the Backward Classes.

RESETTLEMENT ON LAND

In the field of agriculture to permit of their resettlement on land, the Government has issued orders specifying the preferential basis on which waste lands are to be given out for cultivation to different classes of applicants. The Government has issued orders for giving preference to members of the Backward Classes in respect of grants of waste land for cultivation and has directed that in all districts including the partially excluded areas a systematic attempt should be made to give out for cultivation all waste lands including those leased under the "Grow More Food Campaign" and forest lands which can more suitably and advantageously be used for cultivation, provided they are not required for assignment for public purposes (e.g., village grazing, cattle sheds

and stands, manure pits, extension of gothans, provision of sites for schools, playgrounds, gymnasias, burial and cremation grounds, etc.) and are capable of being profitably cultivated. Procedure has been laid down with regard to grant of land both in the partially excluded areas and elsewhere, the broad principle underlying such disposal being that he who actually cultivates the land should also own it and that waste land when disposed of for cultivation should always be given on the new and impartible tenure to a person who cultivates the land himself. The topmost in this order of priority are Backward Class agriculturists from the villages in which the waste lands are situated. The Backward Classes are now growing conscious of these concessions granted to them, and as a result, a number of applications for agricultural lands were received by the Backward Class Welfare Officers during 1949-50. These applications were forwarded to the revenue authorities concerned with due recommendations. Other facilities, such as interest-free tagavi for purposes of purchasing implements and cattle, and subsidies and tagai for irrigation wells, etc., are given on a large scale. A Post-War Reconstruction scheme for agricultural improvement of the Backward Classes is also under consideration.

A statement of figures in respect of grant of fallow lands to the Backward Classes including Harijans, districtwise, is given below:

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Areas</i>	
	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Gunthas</i>
Ahmedabad	1,623	13
Ahmednagar	42,286	0
Amreli	89	3
Banaskantha	7,470	0
Baroda	14,268	0
Belgaum	5,057	18
Bijapur	3,589	27
Bombay Suburban	200	0
Broach	4,544	0
Dangs	There are no waste lands	
Dharwar	15,154	23

East Khandesh	...	...	1,753	0
Khedā	...	...	810	31
Kanara	...	...	4,241	0
Kolaba	...	...	592	39
Kolhapur	...	...	13,115	0
Mehsana	...	...	25,910	0
Nasik	...	...	14,501	38
Panch Mahals	...	...	14,055	19
Poona	...	...	11,074	6
Ratnagiri	...	...	101	0
Sabarkantha	...	...	5,230	28
Satara North	...	...	1,167	10
Satara South	...	...	985	33
Sholapur	...	...	2,955	20
Surat	...	...	8,996	8
Thana	...	...	6,333	20
West Khandesh	...	...	87,760	23
Total			2,93,866	39

A considerable proportion of the Backward Classes is engaged in forestry. Till almost yesterday, they were hewers of wood and manufactures of charcoal whose condition approximated to that of slaves. The forest labourers got a pittance for their labour and were often cheated of their rightful earnings, which the unscrupulous contractors could easily do because of their general level of ignorance.

NEW EXPERIMENT

A new experiment with vast potentialities was started with the attainment of independence. This new experiment aims at making the Adivasi forest labourers their own masters and at the elimination of the middlemen class of contractors. The Adivasis have for long suffered from segregation which was the result partly of imperfect and undeveloped communications between their habitats and the rest of the State and partly of differences in their culture. These factors which kept them

aloof from the main stream of educational and social advancement were responsible for their abysmal ignorance, which in turn made them particularly liable to economic exploitation by unscrupulous sowcars and landlords. Forest labourers' co-operative societies have been formed which are entrusted with the exploitation of forest coupes, a task which previously yielded much profit to the middleman. The Government had the minimum wages fixed for the various categories of forest labourers. These societies not merely ensure that proper wages are paid at prescribed rates and at required intervals but also serve as very valuable instruments in the task of management of their own affairs, and as a means of development of self-reliance in them. The other financial advantage, viz., that the profit is distributed to working members, is an incidental advantage in itself of great value no doubt. The Government gave 21 coupes for being worked to such co-operative societies of forest workers at a total upset price of Rs. 1,87,500 in the year 1947-48 and the number of coupes so given out in 1948-49 went up to 38 and to 91 in 1949-50, the corresponding upset prices being Rs. 3,82,100 and Rs. 11,15,222, respectively. The coupes are given out to these societies at upset prices and, in addition, other concessions are given to them. Inevitably, at the present level of ignorance among the Adivasis, these societies have to be sponsored by responsible social service agencies. But with experience and training it is hoped that the day will not be far off when these societies will be able to look after their own affairs unaided even by such disinterested friends of theirs.

POVERTY AND LANDLESSNESS

Many of the problems of the Backward Classes spring chiefly from their poverty and the fact that they belong to the dispossessed classes. The general economic and social programme of the Government in the interests of the dispossessed classes benefits the Backward Classes no less than other sections of the population. Legislation such as the Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act, the Moneylenders Act, the Agricultural Debtors' Relief Act, etc., which is designed to benefit the

underdog also benefits the underdog from the Backward Classes. Knowledge of such legislation and ability to take advantage of it are no doubt required. These conditions are increasingly secured through propaganda by officials of the Government in the Revenue and the Backward Class Departments as well as by social workers working under the auspices of recognised voluntary agencies which are eligible for grants under approved rules on the basis of certain proportions of expenditure incurred by them on approved items. Organisations such as the Bhil Seva Mandal, Dohad, the Bhil Seva Mandal, Nandurbar (West Khandesh), the Adivasi Seva Mandal, Thana, the Dang Seva Mandal, Nasik, and the various Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs are given grants-in-aid under this scheme. An amount of Rs. 50,874 was given away as grants to such recognised voluntary agencies during the year ending March 31, 1949 and Rs. 21,986-4-3 during the year ending March 31, 1950.

FREE LEGAL ADVICE

The question of the grant of legal aid in civil and criminal proceedings to poor persons, persons of limited means and persons belonging to the Backward Classes at Government cost has been exhaustively dealt with by the Committee on Legal Aid and Legal Advice in the State of Bombay appointed by the Government under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice N. H. Bhagwati. Under the scheme for grant of free legal assistance to the Scheduled Tribes, the Backward Classes are now receiving such aid as they need for redress of their grievances in common with other sections of the population.

FACILITIES FOR JOINING STATE SERVICE

Special percentages have been reserved for the Backward Classes in Government services (5 per cent in the case of clerical cadre, 10 per cent in the posts of Talatis, 10 per cent in those of bailiffs and 10 per cent in respect of posts of peons, etc). Percentages corresponding to the proportion of the Backward Class population to the total population in each district are fixed for posts of primary teachers. The percent

age of marks has been fixed at a lower level, viz., at 45 per cent in the case of the Backward Classes. Other things being equal, Backward Class candidates are accorded preference in respect of appointments. Age-limit has been relaxed by three years in the case of Backward Class candidates. In the posting of Harijan servants, special care is taken to see that they are not handicapped in the matter of residential accommodation.

The provisions made for ameliorative measures implemented through the various departments and financed from the special development fund during the last three years under the different major heads of accounts as shown in the printed Civil Budget Estimates were as under :

Major Heads of Accounts	Grants in Rupees for		
	1947-48	1948-49	1949-50
1. Education	3,77,000	11,75,000	11,85,000
2. Medical	20,000	2,79,000	—
3. Public Health	30,000	30,000	2,00,000
4. Agriculture	70,400	1,04,700	11,32,000
5. Veterinary	—	800	700
6. Co-operation	99,300	2,38,400	3,57,700
7. Industries	33,700	45,000	40,000
8. Miscellaneous			
Charged	10,000	—	—
Voted	3,11,700	7,28,500	8,35,800
9. Miscellaneous			
Ameliorative Measures			
for Backward Classes	12,58,800	6,72,000	11,48,000

The above figures point to a progressive increase in the amounts provided in each of the last three years.

PROVISION OF FINANCE

Apart from the above grants, the measures taken by the Government for the amelioration of the Backward Classes and financed from other sources are also considerable. The expenditure incurred through these sources is mixed up with the ordinary and Post-war Reconstruction budget provisions of the various administrative departments and is not shown separately in the budget estimates. For instance, a good portion of the expenditure is incurred by the Government on the introduction of compulsory primary education, by way of grants to approved primary schools, on provision of medical facilities throughout the State of which advantage can be taken by the Backward Classes in the same manner as other citizens of the State.

Among the benefits received by the Backward Classes, the cost of which does not figure as positive expenditure in the budget estimates, are freeships to Backward Class students in all Government institutions, exemption from payment of room rent in hostels attached to the Government institutions, etc. These benefits involve the foregoing of revenues which might otherwise have accrued to the Government. Similarly, assistance is given to the movement for starting forest labourers' co-operative societies by granting forest coupes to such societies at upset prices. If these coupes were sold by public auction, the Government would secure more revenue. The loss to the Government by not putting these coupes to auction but giving them to such societies on the upset price basis, not being loss of actual revenue received is an indirect subsidy which also does not figure in the budget. All the same, the concession on this account is not inconsiderable.

HOUSING

Previously the members of the Backward Classes in need of suitable house sites were being helped to obtain such sites either from Government waste lands or from lands acquired for the purpose which were allotted to them on nominal occupancy price. The Government had ordered that with a view to

breaking the isolation of scheduled castes quarters that is so frequently to be found in villages the houses of scheduled castes should be shifted closer to the main village sites, by making available waste lands for housing purposes on payment of reasonable occupancy prices. Instructions were also issued that whenever it was noticed that the Scheduled Castes are residing in low-lying, marshy or deserted far-off places every attempt should be made to acquire sites in or near the villages for housing them.

Two new schemes for the improvement of housing among the Backward Classes were sanctioned during the period under review as part of Post-War Reconstruction schemes. Under Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 219 assistance is given to persons from the Backward Classes in need of houses or desirous of improving their houses through the agency of co-operative housing societies which they are encouraged to form. The assistance given under this scheme may be briefly summed up as follows:

1. Free site is provided to the society from available Government waste land or from a land acquired for the purpose in suitable cases. A scale of 3 gunthas of land for a family engaged in agriculture and $1\frac{1}{2}$ gunthas (whereof half a guntha should be available for pooling for common purposes) for a family engaged in non-agricultural pursuits is prescribed. The site to be owned by the society which may lease individual plots in turn to its members on a long lease of say 99 years on a nominal yearly rent of annas four.

2. As the intention of the scheme is not merely to provide housing of any kind but to enable the Backward Classes to improve their housing conditions, the houses are expected to be built according to approved type designs allowing for free ventilation and light. Ordinarily, a minimum built-up area of 400 sq. ft. is expected to be constructed per house.

3. The estimated cost of construction of such a house should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 1500 in the Backward Areas

and Rs. 2000 in other areas. A loan up to 75% of the actual cost subject to these maxima is granted free of interest repayable in 20 annual instalments. The balance of the cost is expected to be met by way of contribution either in cash or in goods and services provided by the members.

4. The scheme provides for an insurance fund to be raised from contributions by the members against loss of damage by fire.

5. Materials required for construction of buildings are to be made available at prevailing rates, but preference is to be given to the demands of the societies by the Forests and other Departments concerned. The facility of obtaining timber from the Forests Department at scheduled rates for housing schemes sponsored by the Housing Organisation is also available to Backward Class housing societies sponsored under this scheme.

6. The societies are also eligible to receive subsidies for management expenses at the rate of Rs. 10 per tenement for 2 years and thereafter at Rs. 5 per tenement till the Government loan is repaid.

Under Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 274, similar concessions are available to members of the Backward Classes living in areas where the action of co-operative societies is not feasible for want of sufficient population of the Backward Classes or demand for improved housing from them.

As many as 15 societies under Post-War Reconstruction Scheme No. 219 were registered up to 31st March 1949. Rs. 8550 were granted by way of loan to one society and a subsidy of Rs. 300 towards management expenses was paid. During 1949-50, 86 more societies were registered; Rs. 1,45,350 were sanctioned as loans and Rs. 550 as subsidy respectively.

HOUSING FOR HALPATIS

Prior to the sanction of the general Post-War Reconstruction Scheme referred to in the preceding paragraph, the

Government had sanctioned a special scheme for housing of the Dublas or Halpatis of the Surat District. As an experimental measure, 10 co-operative housing societies have been organised under this scheme and given the following assistance.

(i) Assuming the cost of a dwelling to be Rs. 800, a loan of Rs. 400 free of interest repayable in ten years is provided for each dwelling and an amount of Rs. 100 each as subsidy.

(ii) A subsidy of Rs. 1000 per society for construction of a well for drinking water only where there are no facilities for drinking water near the location of the societies.

(iii) A subsidy on account of employment of an Overseer at Rs. 100 per month for two years, and three Secretaries on Rs. 50 per month each for five years for the ten societies.

(iv) Building materials like wood and bamboos to be made available at half cost.

In order to encourage Municipalities to undertake slum clearance schemes for the clearance of slums which are mostly inhabited by the Backward Classes in urban areas, the Government directed in August 1948 that Municipalities should be encouraged to take up such schemes and approach the Government, if necessary, for grant-in-aid. The payment of grant-in-aid should depend upon the merits of each case. A provision of Rs. 2 lakhs was made in the budget for 1949-50 for the purpose.

HOUSING FOR HARIJAN EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL BODIES

In 1940 the Government advised Municipalities to take vigorous steps to provide sanitary dwellings for their Harijan employees. For this purpose, the Government had type-plans and estimates prepared by the Consulting Surveyor and forwarded them to all Municipalities for guidance. The Government had also advised the Municipalities to raise loans, if necessary, to finance such projects. Subsequent

enquiries showed that very few Municipalities had done anything substantial in this direction. The question of providing suitable housing for Harijan employees of Local Bodies assumed urgent importance on account of (i) the appalling conditions under which the Harijans lived and the serious social consequences involved and (ii) the growing discontent among the conservancy staff of the Municipalities, resulting in strikes and inefficient and indifferent work. In order, therefore, that the question of housing the Harijan employees of Local Bodies might be tackled immediately and effectively, the Government sanctioned concessions for this purpose to Local Bodies other than the Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1948. The concessions sanctioned are:

(1) Subject to certain conditions where the Local Body does not have land of its own for the purpose, Government land is made available free of charge. The value of the site is shown as a grant-in-aid to the Local Body. When Government sites are not available and private sites have to be purchased the cost is included in the cost of the acquisition for which the Government subsidy is payable.

(2) Subsidies are payable by the Government at the following rates:

(i) 33 1/3% of the total cost inclusive of the cost of site in the case of Borough Municipalities;

(ii) 50% of the total cost inclusive of the cost of site in the case of District Municipalities, Village Panchayats, District Local Boards and Notified Area Committees.

The concessions under this scheme are also available to any association or individual working for the welfare of Harijans or any co-operative housing society which desires to construct houses for Harijan employees of a Local Body. In such cases a subsidy up to 50% of the total cost is payable.

These concessions have been supplemented by legislation in the Bombay District Municipal (Amendment) Act, 1949 and the Bombay Municipal Boroughs (Amendment) Act, 1949

under which the construction and maintenance of residential quarters for the conservancy staff of the Municipalities is included among the obligatory duties of the District and Borough Municipalities, respectively.

With regard to water supply, all public sources of water are open to all without distinction of caste or creed. In addition the Government has agreed under the village water supply scheme to provide one public well for every village or hamlet with a population of 100 or more.

The Government has evinced keen anxiety to bring about an improvement in the conditions of conservancy workers. With this object in view a committee was appointed in 1949 with Shri V. N. Barve, President of the Maharashtra Provincial Harijan Sevak Sangh, Dhulia, to inquire into the living conditions of scavengers and to submit proposals for their improvement. The Government has decided to give its most careful consideration to the recommendations that this Committee will make.

MERGER OF STATES

As a result of the merger of Indian States and Principalities within the periphery of the old Bombay Province with the State of Bombay, the area of the State increased from 76,000 square miles and odd to 1,13,000 square miles and odd. The population on the basis of the 1941 census increased by about 83 lakhs from 209 lakhs to 292 lakhs. On the same basis, the population of the Scheduled Castes increased by over 7 lakhs, that of the Scheduled Tribes by about 11 lakhs and that of the other Backward Classes was estimated to have increased by over 3 lakhs. (The figures for the population of the other Backward Classes are only an estimate obtained from local officials, as the population figures of this section are not separately available from the records of the Census of 1941). In Baroda and Kolhapur States, an organisation similar to the Backward Class Department was being built up. Elsewhere the Backward Classes suffered from almost total neglect. The general living conditions of the Backward Classes in many of the States where the tone of Administration itself was low were very miserable.

With the commencement of the process of merger, the Government announced its policy to see that the administration in the Merged States was brought to the same level as that of the rest of the Province as expeditiously as possible. Instructions were also issued to treat the people of the States areas on the same footing as the people of the Province. The concessions and privileges sanctioned by the Bombay Government for the Backward Classes were extended to the Backward Classes of the Merged States Areas. Some of the voluntary agencies engaged in social service work among the Backward Classes also extended their activities to the Merged States Areas. The problem of the speedy amelioration of the Backward Classes in these areas was also

discussed by the Backward Class Board at its 49th meeting held on 11th December 1948. In the light of this discussion, the Government placed Dr. D.P. Khanapurkar, M.A., Ph.D., an officer of the Backward Class Department, on special duty to go round the areas of the Merged and Integrated States and submit a comprehensive report on the speedy amelioration of the Backward Classes in those areas. Dr. Khanapurkar assumed charge of his duties on 4th April 1949. The lines along which the enquiry was to be conducted were discussed by him with the Backward Class Officer. In the light of this discussion the heads of subjects on which information was to be collected were decided. The Collectors, the Chief Administrators and other local officials were requested to furnish the necessary data on these heads to Dr. Khanapurkar who was to visit all the areas.

CONCRETE PROGRAMME

The Government also considered it very necessary to work out a concrete and definite programme for the welfare of the Backward Classes in the Merged States in the economic, social and educational spheres similar to the one existing for the Backward Classes in the older areas of the Province. To consider whether some definite transitional liberal basis for grant-in-aid for these areas for a concrete programme of work to be chalked out on definite lines was necessary, an informal conference of the representatives of the Provincial Harijan Sevak Sanghs for the three linguistic regions in the State and of a representative of the Bhil Seva Mandal, Dohad was called by Shri G. D. Tapase, Minister for Backward Classes, on 16th February 1949. The orders of the Government sanctioning a more liberal grant-in-aid basis for these areas were issued in May, 1949. The Government decided that the

old voluntary agencies which were already doing good work in this field and which had already been recognised by the Government should be requested to extend their activities to these areas. The voluntary agencies were to be held eligible for Government grant on the following basis for a period of 2 years only from 1st April 1949, the whole position being reviewed at the end of this period:

(1) The grant to the hostels to be opened in these areas should be on the basis sanctioned by the Government in the case of Backward Class Girls' Hostels. During the first year, five Backward Class Hostels for boys should be opened in the Merged and Integrated State areas through the voluntary agencies. The locations should be approved by the Backward Class Officer.

(2) The minimum average attendance in the hostels should not be less than 20. The Backward Class Officer should, however, have discretion to relax this condition in deserving cases up to an average attendance of 15.

(3) If any new voluntary agencies come forward to do ameliorative work in these areas they should be governed by the rules for the recognition and payment of grant-in-aid to voluntary agencies already approved by the Government. Under these rules, new agencies should not be held eligible for grant-in-aid until after a period of three years' satisfactory work. If any local workers wish to do amelioration work in these areas and take advantage of the rules for the recognition and payment of grant-in-aid to voluntary agencies, they should get themselves affiliated to recognised institutions and work under their direction and control.

GOVERNMENT TO BEAR EXPENDITURE

The expenditure incurred by the voluntary agencies on the appointment of propaganda workers in these areas should be borne by the Government in full, in accordance with the scale already approved by the Government.

The number of boys' hostels fixed at five was subsequently increased by 7 in 1950. Though 12 hostels were sanctioned, only 4 hostels complying with the conditions of recognition, etc., were found eligible for grants in the year 1949-50.

The Government further appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Shri D. N. Wandrekar, M.L.A., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Backward Classes, to study the condition of the Backward Classes in the States merged with Bombay State and suggest a programme for amelioration of their conditions. The report of this Committee which was submitted to the Government after the close of the period under review has since been published as a priced document.

THE ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP

In order that the Backward Class Officer and the Backward Class Department might be enabled to devote their attention wholly to the task of amelioration of the Backward Classes, the Department was reorganised with effect from June 5, 1947. The Backward Class Officer continued to be responsible for the administration of the Criminal Tribes Act until it was finally repealed on August 13, 1949.

The Backward Class Department is concerned with all work of amelioration of the Backward Classes throughout the State. The Department is not ordinarily charged with executive work (except with regard to the administration of grants-in-aid to hostels catering for Backward Class students and of some scholarships, etc.). The execution of the programme in any particular field is the responsibility of the individual departments or offices concerned. The Backward Class Officer seeks to co-ordinate the work in relation to the Backward Classes in accordance with the directives of the Government. He is to see in what manner the general development and plans require adaptation so far as the Backward Classes are concerned. Plans and programmes for new schemes are to be prepared by individual departments or officers in consultation with the Backward Class Officer. The Backward Class Officer advises the Government on the general policy and planning of individual schemes and exercises general inspection to see that detailed plans are properly and promptly executed. The Backward Class Officer and the staff under him are to take the fullest help and obtain the co-ordination of Revenue and other officers as and when required. They are to be in close touch with other departments of the Government and ensure that the Government's policy and programme for amelioration of the Backward Classes are effectively implemented.

CREATION OF CIRCLES

The Director of Backward Class Welfare is assisted at the Headquarters by one Personal Assistant of the grade of Assistant Director of Backward Class Welfare. In addition, the whole State is divided into five circles each in charge of an Assistant Director of Backward Class Welfare. The Assistant Directors of Backward Class Welfare are drawn from the general cadre of Junior Deputy Collectors. In addition, there are 16 Backward Class Welfare Officers in charge of one or more districts. These officers are of the status of II Grade Mamlatdars.

In addition the Prant Officers of the Dahanu and Kalyan Prants of the Thana district work as ex-officio Aboriginal Welfare Officers. The work of Bhil uplift in the West Khandesh district is co-ordinated by the Collector. There is the Bombay State Backward Class Board to advise the Government on all matters relating to the amelioration of the Backward Classes. For every district, a Backward Class District Committee has been constituted to advise the Government on the special problems of the Backward Classes in the district.

BACKWARD CLASS BOARD

The Backward Class Board appointed in September 1946 was reconstituted in November 1947 when Shri D. N. Wandrekar, M.L.A., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Backward Classes, was appointed as Vice-President of the Board, relieving the Backward Class Officer of this office; the Backward Class Officer was appointed as Member and Ex-Officio Secretary in place of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Headquarters. The tenure of this Board expired in 1948 and the Board was reconstituted in November 1948. In September 1949, the Government nominated two additional members from the merged States areas for the rest of the term of the Board.

The Backward Class Board held 11 meetings during the period at Bombay and Poona and also other centres in the mofussil, viz., Ahmedabad, Hubli, Maswan (Thana district), Kolhapur and Baroda.

DISTRICT BACKWARD CLASS COMMITTEES

Previously District Backward Class Committees were being nominated in some districts by the Backward Class Officer who had to obtain the Government's sanction before a committee was nominated in the district for the first time. Under the Rules for the formation and working of District Backward Class Committees, non-official District Backward Class Committees were functioning only in the districts of Bijapur, Dharwar, Belgaum, and Ahmednagar on 1st April 1947. The Rules for the formation and working of District Backward Class Committees were revised by the Government and fresh rules sanctioned in April 1947. Under these revised rules, during the period under review, District Backward Class Committees were nominated and were functioning in 22 districts.

SARVODAYA

A word or two about Sarvodaya will not perhaps be out of place here. The genesis of the Sarvodaya organisation in Bombay State may be traced in the announcement made by the Finance Minister, Shri Vaikunth L. Mehta, in the Legislative Assembly while introducing the Budget for the year 1948-49 wherein it was stated that it was the Government's desire to incorporate in its plans of development some distinctive features which would serve to bring into prominence the peculiar aspects of the constructive programme that appealed to Gandhiji and that the Government had set apart a sum of Rs. 1 crore for this purpose. Explaining the meaning of Sarvodaya while inaugurating the conference of social workers in Bombay on February 26, 1949, the Chief Minister (then Premier) said: "The concept of Sarvodaya goes far beyond the principle of democracy as it is understood in Western thought. Sarvodaya does not stop short at the greatest good of the greatest number. The principle of equality is implicit in the concept of the Sarvodaya Samaj".

The various activities proposed to be developed under the Sarvodaya Scheme comprise education, farming, including improvement in production and methods of farming, village industries, including cottage and subsidiary industries, health and hygiene, and social welfare, including prohibition.

A number of Sanchalaks have been appointed to work out the schemes and the scheme was introduced to start with in each district in a compact block of 30 to 45 villages with

more or less homogeneous social and economic conditions and inhabited largely by the Backward Classes or where the local economy was of a backward type. Each Sanchalak is assisted and advised in his work by a Sarvodaya Committee composed of social workers. In order to co-ordinate and guide the operation of the Sarvodaya Schemes in the districts, a high-level co-ordination committee was set up under the chairmanship of Shri Morarji Desai, Minister for Home and Revenue.

NEED FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Recognising that Sarvodaya work called for a large number of social workers, a committee was appointed with Shri Appa Saheb Patwardhan as Chairman to go into the details of the Sarvodaya Scheme for Education and Training. Accepting the recommendations of this Committee, the Government selected the following institutions for the training of social workers:

- (1) Swaraj Ashram, Vedchhi, District Surat.
- (2) Vastra Swavalamban Vidyalaya, Poona.
- (3) Tilak Maharashtra Vidyalaya, Poona. The Training and Education Centre to be at Pimple.
- (4) Gram Seva Samiti, Ankola, District Kanara.

Sarvodaya centres are functioning at the following places in the State of Bombay : Gundi (main centre) and Shial (sub-centre) in the Ahmedabad District, Warsang, Bamangam and Aslali in the Kheda District, Mirakhadi in the Panchmahals District, Sathvav, Ambapardi and Puna in the Surat District, Kasa in the Thana District, Sudkoli in the Kolaba District, Kankavli in the Ratnagiri District, Kondgaon,

Wangni and Gunjavane in the Poona District, Lakhwad, Kelghat and Kumbhroshi in the Satara North District, Khiroda in the East Khandesh District, Khandbara in the West Khandesh District, Ekhatpur in the Sholapur District, Kop, Kaladgi, Devnali, Kunderagi, Chabbi and Muchkhandi in the Bijapur District, Narsinhpur in the Belgaum District, Arwatgi and Alnawar in the Dharwar District and Hichkad in the Kanara District.

THE TASK AHEAD

The Government in its desire to promote the all-round well-being of the members of the Backward Classes has throughout been actuated by a desire to bring them up to the level of other advanced sections of the community by every means in its power. It is aware that perhaps it has not been able to achieve much in a brief period of five years. It is conscious of its drawbacks and shortcomings due to circumstances beyond its control; but perhaps it can say with little fear of contradiction that it has strained every nerve and tapped all available resources to see that this large mass of 75 lakhs of the so-called Backward Class people become, in the shortest time possible, worthy citizens of Free India.

ADVANCEMENT AND ASSIMILATION

The Constitution of India has already certain special provisions, the underlying intention of which is to make available certain extra facilities and aids to these people, so that the process of advancement and assimilation should be completed within the stipulated period of ten years. Despite a heavy drain on Government finances and the period of financial crisis through which Bombay State, in common with the rest of the country, is passing, the Government feels confident that it has generated adequate energy and drive both in these people and social workers to realise early the object of raising the level of the Backward Classes to that of other sections of the population. It realises that the canalisation of the new energy liberated as a result of removal of the various age-old fetters is the task facing both social workers and the Government.

Looking to the magnitude of the task, an army of social workers inspired with missionary zeal is what is

required to tackle it. The services rendered to this cause by such social service institutions as the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the Adivasi Seva Mandal, the Bhil Seva Mandal, the Dang Seva Mandal, the Vedchhi Swaraj Ashram, and the Sarvodaya Kendras are extremely valuable and the gratitude of all must go to them and particularly of the Government.