

Report on Stagnation and Wastage in Primary Schools

*Submitted to the Government of Bombay by the Provincial Board
of Primary Education.*

BOMBAY

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REPORT ON WASTAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

Introductory.—It is universally admitted that our system of primary education has failed to promote literacy on an adequate scale. If we study the growth of education during the thirty years between 1901 and 1931, we shall find a substantial increase in the number of schools, the number of pupils, and the expenditure on primary education. But the growth of literacy is extremely slow and has not kept pace with the growth in schools, pupils, or expenditure. The following table is very interesting from this point of view :—

	1901-02.	1931-32.	Increase per cent.
Number of schools ..	5,372	12,498	133
Number of pupils ..	331,034	998,325	202
Direct expenditure on primary education. Rs. 22,68,051	Rs. 1,74,44,323		669
Number of literates ..	926,445	1,773,666	91
Number of illiterates ..	13,592,926	16,140,405	18
Percentage of literacy ..	6·4	9·8	53

Note.—The figures do not include figures for Sind and Indian States. In the case of the figures for 1901-02, few aided schools in Indian States might have been included.

The conclusion is obvious and the figures hardly need any comment.

The reasons for this sad state of affairs are several. In the first place our population has been increasing from decade to decade and hence we require a larger number of literates even to maintain the percentage of literacy of the earlier decade. Secondly, owing to the high death-rate in India, large gaps are made every year in the ranks of the new literates produced by the schools during the decade and particularly in the ranks of the old literates. These gaps are so big that they absorb a considerable number of new literates produced by our schools. Thirdly, a certain percentage of literates lapses into illiteracy in later life because we have not organised suitable reading rooms and libraries and because we have failed to provide suitable post-school education. The extent of this "lapse into illiteracy" is not so large as it is sometimes made out to be, but its existence is beyond doubt and it is one of the factors which absorb, though to a small extent, the literates produced by schools without increasing the percentage of literacy. Fourthly, a large number of pupils are withdrawn from schools before they reach the stage at which they attain literacy. These children swell up the numbers of schools and pupils and add largely to our expenditure without proportionately adding to the number of literates or the percentage of literacy. Some other

causes may easily be added as, for example, the ephemeral character of some aided schools or the incomplete structure of some of our primary schools. But the main causes are the four given above.

The first two causes are beyond the scope of the Educational Department and we do not propose to discuss them here. The third operates only to a very small extent. But the fourth cause, the premature withdrawal of children from schools, is the most important of all and is very largely responsible for the slow progress of literacy in proportion to the expenditure incurred. In fact it dominates all discussion of the problem and is very often treated as if it were *the only cause* of our slow progress. The Hartog Committee called it the "Wastage" in Primary Schools and calculated it by taking figures of pupils in different classes in five consecutive years. Since then almost every report of the Directors of Public Instruction discusses the evil and tries to give a numerical expression to it. The question has been engaging the attention of several Provincial Governments and States and various suggestions have been made and are being tried to remedy the evil. It will be no exaggeration to say that it is one of the most important problems in Primary Education and unless the evil is either eliminated or at least minimised the output of literates through the agency of our primary schools will always remain smaller than what it ought to be.

In this report, we propose to examine the nature of this evil of wastage, the extent to which it prevails, its causes and its cure.

2. *What is Wastage.*—The term "Wastage" is purely relative and it cannot be defined unless we fix the standard which every pupil in a primary school is expected to attain.

As pointed out in our remarks on the Joshi Committee's report, we believe that every child ought to undergo a seven years' course of General Education if it has to become an efficient citizen of a Modern State. But the financial and other implications of this proposal are so colossal that it is impossible to think of introducing it in the near future. We have, therefore, recommended that all our immediate attempts should be directed towards the compulsory introduction of a junior course of primary education. We have defined the aims of this course as under :—

- (1) To ensure literacy of a type such that the child will not easily lapse into illiteracy after he has left school ;
- (2) To enable him to understand ordinary financial transactions in his life and to maintain simple accounts of his dealings ;
- (3) To provide instruction in subjects which will give the pupil a living interest in his environment ;
- (4) To form healthy and hygienic habits of body and mind ; and
- (5) To develop qualities which will tend to make the child a good citizen.

We have drawn up a detailed syllabus to achieve these aims and we have stated our considered opinion that this course can be completed in four years by teaching a child for three hours a day.

We, therefore, expect every child that is enrolled in a primary school to complete this course of four years. But we must make it clear that the expression "to complete this course of four years" is not equivalent to "the passing of the examination at the end of class IV". If a child wants to join class V of a primary school or class I of a secondary school, the passing of the examination at the end of class IV is absolutely necessary. But we do not think it to be so for a child which is to be considered literate. There are several reasons which have led us to this conclusion. In the first place, we do not believe that the difference between a child that has passed and the one that has failed is always so great as to make us regard the attainments of the latter as a mere "Wastage case". Secondly what life expects is that the child has developed certain powers of body and mind and has a general grounding in the curriculum. A child may have these and yet it may fail in the examination for entirely different reasons. When we know that a majority of the children reading in the 4th year class do not proceed further, it would be wrong on our part to expect every child to pass the examination at the end of class IV. Those who want to proceed further *must* pass the examination. A large majority of the others also *will* pass the examination in the natural course though they may not proceed further. But for our purposes of literacy, we shall be satisfied if a child passes the examination at the end of class III and attends class IV for 120 days or more. All children who do not satisfy this minimum requirement shall be regarded as "Wastage Cases".

It may be interesting to note here that Mr. R. V. Parulekar has correlated census statistics with those of the Educational Department and has come to a conclusion which more or less agrees with the view we have stated above. In his book on "Literacy in India" he has taken the decennium 1921-31 for his study. The number of literates in 1921 was 1,646 thousand and in 1931 their number was 2,043 thousand. This gives a net increase of 397 thousand. But the gross increase must be far larger than this because there have been deaths among the old literates of 1921 as well as among the new literates produced in this decade. Allowing for these at the rates of 23 per cent. and 5 per cent., Mr. Parulekar concludes that the gross number of literates produced in this decade must be 775 thousand. Coming to the educational statistics Mr. Parulekar points out that during the decade of 1921-31, the number of pupils who were promoted from 4th year class was 666 thousand, and the number of pupils who were promoted from the third year class was 832 thousand. This means that all pupils who passed the fourth year class (666,000) plus 65 per cent. of those who passed the third year class but did not pass the fourth year class ($832,000 - 666,000 = 166,000$, sixty-five per cent. of this = 107,900) are returned as literates according to the census standard. This means that in our Province, literacy is attained by all pupils who pass the fourth year class (i.e. present Standard III) plus by nearly two-thirds of those who pass the third year class (i.e. present Standard II) but not the fourth. This calculation also tends to support our view.

3. *Wastage and Stagnation.*—We find that “Stagnation” is often confused with “Wastage” and discussion is carried on as if both were one and the same. “Stagnation” means the retention of a pupil in the same class for the period of more than a year. This naturally involves a waste of a precious part of the pupil’s life, the energy of the teacher, and the money of the State. But this waste of time, energy and money is not to be confused with the technical term “Wastage” which has been defined by the Hartog Committee as “the premature withdrawal of children before the completion of the primary course” (as required for the attainment of literacy). As we shall see later on, stagnation is not wastage but a *cause* of wastage. The two are not identical and the distinction between them will have to be carefully remembered in all the discussions that follow.

4. *The existing methods of evaluating wastage.*—There are three accepted methods for the evaluation of wastage :—

- (i) By correlation of census statistics with those of the Educational Department ;
- (ii) By comparing the number of pupils in the infant or 1st year class with those in class IV or class V later on ; and
- (iii) By comparing the number of pupils in each class to the total number of pupils in the whole of the primary course.

We shall now examine the merits or demerits of each of these three methods.

First Method.—This method was adopted by Sir Henry Sharp in the Sixth Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India (1907-12). He thought that he was evaluating “lapse into illiteracy” by this method but an analysis of the method given below will show that he was only evaluating wastage as we understand it now.

Sir Henry Sharp originally proposed to adopt the following method. Take the number of pupils between the ages of 5 and 10 who are actually under instruction in the year say 1911-12. Find the *percentage* of this number to the total number of children in the same age group. Ten years later, all these children under instruction *ought* to become literates in the age group of 15-20. There will, of course, be deaths in their ranks during the ten years, but there would be the same extent of deaths in the children of the same age group who were *not* under instruction and hence the *percentage* of literates in the age group of 15-20 in 1921 to the total population of the age group of 15-20 would not be affected by the factor of death. He, therefore, argued that in a perfect system of education, the following equation must hold good viz. :—

$$\frac{\text{Number of pupils of age-group (5-10) under instruction}}{\text{Total number of children of the age-group 5-10 in the same year}} = \frac{\text{Number of literates in the age-group of 15-20.}}{\text{Total number of persons in the age-group of 15-20 in the same year.}}$$

Any difference between the two percentages was to be called "lapse into illiteracy", because Sir Henry Sharp assumed that each child under instruction *does attain* literacy. But we can see that what Sir Henry Sharp termed "lapse into illiteracy" is what we now term "Wastage".

For want of sufficient data, however, the method that Sir Henry did actually follow was different from this and was based on a number of assumptions. As ages of children are not ascertained with accuracy, he assumed the number of pupils under instruction in the first five primary classes as equivalent to the number of pupils of the age-group of 5-10 who were under instruction. As the figures of pupils under instruction in 1901-02 were not available, he took the rough figures of 1911-12. The figures for 1911-12 must obviously have been larger than those of 1901-02 which he ought to have taken; but as his figures for 1911-12 were incomplete, he assumed that the two errors cancelled each other. Working on these assumptions he found that though 148 children per mille of the age-group of 5-10 were under instruction in 1901-02, only 91 per mille are returned literate in the age-group of 15-20 in the census of 1911. This gave him the wastage percentage of 39. Without criticising the assumptions of Sir Henry Sharp because he was himself conscious of their short-comings, we can say that his method itself is open to two grave objections. In the first place, it can be used only once in ten years: This is too long a period to take stock of our position. We want a method which can be used every year so that we can take prompt and vigorous action to eliminate the evil. Secondly it is based on the assumption that our aim is the attainment of literacy as defined in the census. We have already stated that we want something more than mere census literacy and obviously the census statistics cannot measure the other things that we insist on being included in our object. In our opinion, these objections are so strong that we do not want to adopt any method based on the correlation of census statistics with those of Education Department. Such a correlation no doubt has its own value but it cannot give us a measure of wastage as we have defined it above in paragraph 2.

Second Method.—The most popular method of evaluating wastage is to compare the pupils in the infant or 1st year class with those in standard IV or 5th year class later on. In our Province, it is usual to compare the pupils in the Infants Class with those that read in or pass Standard IV five years later. This method appears in the departmental report for 1926-27 in which the number of pupils in the Infants Class were compared with those that *passed* Standard IV five years later. But in 1928-29, the report compared the number of pupils in the Infants with the number of pupils *reading in Standard IV* as well as with the number of pupils who *passed* Standard IV. Both these figures are now invariably given whenever wastage has to be calculated. But for reasons already stated, we do not consider that passing Standard IV is necessary for the attainment of literacy. We shall, therefore, consider this method only in so far as it compares the pupils in the Infant Class with those reading in Standard IV five years later.

We find that this is not a happy method for the evaluation of wastage. Our reasons are :—

(i) This method considers wastage and stagnation together. It is based on the assumption that a child completes the primary course in *five years only*.

For example, suppose that a child is admitted to Infant Class in 1927-28. Let us suppose further that he takes one failure (say in Standard II) and reaches Standard IV in the sixth year i.e., in 1932-33. It is not a case of wastage as we have defined it. But this method of evaluation treats him as a case of wastage because the child was not in Standard IV in the fifth year or 1931-32. Even when the figures for 1932-33 are compared, the calculations will still be vitiated because these figures will be compared with those in the Infants Class in 1928-29, when he was not there. The large extent to which these calculations are defective may be realised if we remember that the average boy takes more than five years to complete our present course. About fifty per cent. of our pupils take one or more failures in their passage to the fifth year class.

If a brilliant child completes the course in four years, he will be shown as "Wastage" in this method. We know that the error introduced in this way is almost negligible, but we state this fact here to show the intrinsic unsoundness of the method.

(ii) The method is not reliable even as a measure of the combined effects of wastage and stagnation. If the fresh admissions in the Infant Class are compared to pupils reading in Standard IV after deducting the number of repeaters, five years later—the method may have served its purpose. But as things stand, we compare the pupils in the Infant Class with those in Standard IV five years later. We do not try to determine the number of repeaters in any of these classes. In other words we do not take note of the stagnation either in the Infant Class or in Standard IV.

(iii) It may also be mentioned that the method does not take note of natural causes like deaths etc., which lead to a diminution from class to class.

We, therefore, feel that this method is unsatisfactory both as a measure of wastage by itself and as a combined measure of wastage and stagnation.

Third Method.—In this method, we compare the distribution of pupils in the different classes of primary schools. It is argued that if there are 125 pupils in the lower primary stage, there must be 25 pupils in each class. That is to say, in an ideal system of education, the number of pupils in the Infant Class must be equal to the number of pupils in Standard IV in the same year. If it is not, the difference between the two is called wastage. This method is the simplest in application and has also been occasionally used by Educationists.

We find this method unsuitable because of the following reasons :—

(i) It does not allow for deaths.

(ii) It does not allow for the inevitable stagnation from class to class.

(iii) It fails to take note that the pupils in Standard IV are the product, not of the pupils in the Infants Class of the same year, but of the much smaller number of children in the Infants Class of five years ago. A number of new schools is opened yearly and the pupils in Infants Class are swelling up by leaps and bounds. It would, therefore, give us an incorrect idea of wastage if we compare the pupils in Infants Class with those of Standard IV in the same year.

We are, therefore, of opinion that none of the existing methods of evaluating wastage is accurate and reliable.

5. *The proposed method of evaluating wastage.*—In order to obtain an accurate measure of the extent of wastage in our primary schools, we propose that the Department should adopt the following method :—

(a) Every year the Head Master of each school should furnish a statement giving the total number of pupils who left his school during the preceding year without attaining the standard laid down in paragraph 2 above. This number should be analysed according to age-groups and according to the causes of leaving school. The Head Master should also submit a statement regarding the number of pupils who joined his school with leaving certificates from other schools. A specimen of this form is given in Appendix II.

From this information, it is possible to calculate the total number of children who left school during the given year without attaining the necessary standard. From this number, we should deduct those that died, or became infirm, or joined another school. The remaining number of pupils will give us the number of "Wastage cases" during that year. The percentage of wastage should be calculated as under :—

$$\text{Percentage of wastage in a given year} = \frac{\text{Number of wastage cases in that year} \times 100}{\text{Average number of pupils on the rolls of all classes up to and inclusive of Standard IV.}}$$

We also recommend that the statistics regarding the analysis of wastage according to causes and age-groups should be published in the Departmental Report on Public Instruction.

6. *Advantages of this method.*—We do not claim that this method is absolutely correct. But we feel that it is much more useful than any of the existing methods, and that the percentage of error introduced in its calculations is almost negligible.

We would like to point out at this stage that a numerical measure of the extent of wastage is not so important as an analysis of its causes, which alone can suggest to us the ways and means of combating the evil. It is unfortunate that the existing methods of evaluating wastage deal only with the numerical expression of wastage but give us no clue to its causes. They are, therefore, of less value to a practical reformer than the method we have proposed.

An additional advantage of our method is that it will help us to undertake an enquiry into the reasons for the premature withdrawal of children from schools and the extent of operation of each one of them. It will help us to detect some of the shortcomings of our educational system and will enable us to undertake reforms that will go a long way in reducing the evil. We strongly recommend the adoption of this method for this practical advantage also.

7. *Cause for leaving school.*—In order to make our results accurate and useful, it is desirable to take immediate action in the following matters.

In the General Register maintained in a Primary School, there is a column entitled "Cause for Leaving School". It is our experience that this column is often incorrectly filled in by the Head Masters. We, therefore, recommend that clear instructions should be issued to teachers and Inspecting Officers explaining the importance of this column and insisting that it should be filled in after a careful and personal enquiry into the matter made by a teacher of the school. We do not *think* that there will be any practical difficulties in this except perhaps in big cities. Here too it is possible to organise a system of maintaining the names and addresses of all guardians of pupils and of distributing the work of enquiries among the teachers in some convenient manner. In this connection we would like to quote the following passage from the report of the Travancore Educational Reforms Committee (1933).

"We have already explained how in our opinion, it is one of the duties for which a school master is remunerated personally to interest himself in each of the pupils in his class; and we consider that this interest should be extended to the reasons which govern the withdrawal of a pupil from his class. We have examined the registers of a number of primary schools and we find practically in all cases, when a student is absent for a prolonged period, his absence is simply noted, and that when a student is withdrawn altogether from classes other than the fourth, an entry "left" is merely made in the register. No steps are being taken to make enquiries as to the cause of the pupil's prolonged absence or as to the cause of the pupil's withdrawal or as to whether the pupil has proceeded to another school for education elsewhere. In our opinion this *impersonal attitude* is largely responsible for the high wastage in the primary schools. In the majority of cases, the children in primary schools live comparatively close to the school and it should be in most cases fairly easy for the class teachers to visit the parents' houses and discover for themselves the actual reason for the withdrawal and in addition, in cases of indifference, to persuade the parents to send their children back to the school. This personal touch will further enable the teachers to meet any of the difficulties which parents may have and to suggest, for example, the adjustment of school hours and school days, if such adjustments will enable the children to come back. We recommend that, in all primary schools, registers should be maintained showing the addresses of the parents or guardians of pupils, that a number of parents and guardians should be allotted to each teacher, and that, whenever

necessary, visits should be made to the parent's or guardian's houses. The majority of the primary schools are not large, and the labour involved to the teachers will not be such as to make the scheme unworkable." (page 141 of the Report).

Secondly, the Inspecting Officers should be instructed to verify, after a personal enquiry, a few of the entries made by the teachers in this column. The work will not take much time of the Inspecting Officer and will have a very salutary effect upon the accuracy of the teacher's work.

Active co-operation of the teachers is essential for the successful working of this proposal. We feel that the teachers will readily come forward to play their part if the scheme is properly explained to them and they are made to realise the importance of the enquiry. We, therefore, recommend that a detailed circular should be issued in this matter. The question should be given full publicity through magazines meant for teachers and should be discussed in teachers' conferences. It may even be necessary to supply each teacher with a list of probable causes so that he may have some guidance in his enquiry. The Inspecting Officers should personally discuss the question with the teachers when they go on tour for inspection. It is only after these steps are taken that we shall have reliable and useful data for the work of our reform.

8. *Immediate enquiry by Inspecting Officers.*—It will be some time before orders are passed on our recommendations made above and the teachers begin to make correct entries. Assuming that necessary instructions are issued to teachers early in 1941-42, we may reasonably hope that entries made by the teachers in the year 1941-42 will be of use to us. But it will not serve our purpose to collect statistics from the registers as they stand now.

Are we, therefore, to wait till the year 1942-43 in order to analyse the causes of wastage? Time is so precious and the evil is so great that we feel that we must adopt some programme of immediate enquiry which may be put into effect during the next year itself.

For this purpose, we suggest that each Inspecting Officer should be put on special duty for one week to enquire personally into the causes of wastage. He should take some 200 or more cases of children in his beat who have been withdrawn from schools before attaining the required standard. He should make a personal enquiry into each case and report on the cause of withdrawal. A set of instructions to guide him as well as the form in which he should submit his report are attached herewith (*Vide Appendix III*).

This enquiry will naturally cover several thousand cases of withdrawal from all parts of the Province. The reports of the Inspecting Officers should be sent to our Board to enable us to submit a detailed and comprehensive report to Government.

The enquiry by Inspecting Officers should be repeated in 1942-43 if necessary, and should be discontinued as soon as the steps mentioned in paragraph 6 of our report are taken and the general Registers of schools begin to be correctly filled in.

There will be little cost involved in this proposal and the results are of such great importance that we request Government to give immediate effect to this proposal.

9. *The causes of wastage.*—Pending the results of the enquiry outlined above, we propose briefly to deal with the main causes of Wastage and the methods by which it can be eliminated or minimised. We have based our conclusions and recommendations on the observations in the Annual Reports of the Directors of Public Instruction in British India, on the reports of Educational Reforms Committees appointed by some of the Provincial Governments and States, and on the personal experience of the members of the Board. In these remarks we have emphasised those aspects of the problem which are more or less non-controversial and which are, in our opinion, of fundamental importance. On completion of the above enquiry, we propose to submit another and a fuller report to Government, if that be found necessary.

In our opinion, the following are the main causes of wastage :—

A. Economic.

- (i) Employment outside the family.
- (ii) Employment in the family.
 - (a) Cattle-tending.
 - (b) Dairy-work.
 - (c) Work on the farm.
 - (d) Taking care of a younger child.
 - (e) Cooking, etc.

B. Social.

- (i) Migration.
- (ii) Marriage or Betrothal.
- (iii) Indifference of Parents.

C. Physical.

- (i) Death.
- (ii) Ill-health.
- (iii) Infirmity.

D. Systematic.

- (i) Inelasticity.
- (ii) Ephemeral character of some aided schools.
- (iii) Incomplete schools.
- (iv) Stagnation.

We shall deal with these items one by one.

10. *Economic causes.*—The largest number of wastage cases are due to economic causes. The average Indian parent is so poor that he is compelled to employ his children in some form of labour as soon as they are old enough to be employed. Sometimes the employment is outside the family; but in a large majority of cases, the employment is in the family itself and the child is asked to do some work that will save the employment of outside labour (e.g., cattle-tending) or is asked to do some work (e.g., taking care of a younger child) which will enable the parents themselves to go out for work.

Under the pressure of this economic necessity the parents who are none too enthusiastic for education, generally withdraw their children from school, even before they have attained literacy.

The following results of an investigation carried out by Mr. S. N. Chaturvedi, the Educational expansion officer of the United Provinces, are very interesting in this connection:—

“Many boys help their parents in their occupations and household duties or are personally responsible for such things. A few schools were selected at random to ascertain the nature and extent of such work. The following table shows the result of this investigation:—

Class.	Number of boys who help.		Number of those who do not help.
	Who work themselves.	Who only help.	
Infant	36	193	516
Percentage	4·8	25·0	69·3
I	36	166	209
Percentage	7·2	33·1	59·7
II	45	189	130
Percentage	12·4	51·9	35·7
III	49	143	117
Percentage	15·9	46·2	37·9
IV	29	129	94
Percentage	11·5	51·2	37·3

It is found that except in the infant class and class I (in which the average ages of boys are 8·08 and 9·25 years) a large number of boys in all classes have to help in work at home. If compulsory education is introduced the percentage of such boys will become very high, for at present a large number of parents to whom the labour of their children

is indispensable do not send them to school. It may safely be inferred that all those boys whose home circumstances require them to help their parents do so. Those who have to take independent charge of some operations at home also increase in number except in class IV. This is due to the fact that owing to the nature of the last examination the parents try their best to relieve the boys in class IV of all their work at home. Even then 11.5 per cent. have to work themselves and 51.2 per cent. to help their parents."

—An Educational Survey of a District, page 107-8.

Three ways are suggested to overcome this difficulty :—

- (i) To improve the general economic condition of the people ;
- (ii) To introduce compulsion ; and
- (iii) To adjust our educational system to our economic environment.

The first of these ways is theoretically the best, and is very often suggested as *the sovereign remedy*. For example, the Director of Public Instruction, United Provinces, writes :—“ Suffice it to say that the whole scheme (of compulsory education in rural areas) needs revision, and the experimental areas closed and the money better applied . . . the economic condition of the people has been a great obstacle to success—the children’s labour cannot be spared and *nothing but economic improvement will remove this.*” (Annual Report for 1938-39, page 29.)

But to a practical reformer, this proposal has little or no value. The poverty of the people is the effect of a number of causes many of which are beyond the control of the Education Department. Secondly, this argument fails to note that educational advance is a condition precedent to economic improvement and must be brought about by suitable means in spite of our present poverty. We, therefore, do not propose to discuss this proposal in detail.

The second method is the one that holds the field today. It is generally argued that compulsion can effectively prevent wastage due to economic causes. But it is often forgotten that compulsion *alone* can never stop the wastage of this type. It can at the most help us to bring into schools the children of those parents who *can* send them and *will not* do so, but can hardly assist us in cases where the parents *cannot* send their children to school on account of economic difficulties. Experience in Baroda has shown that in spite of rigorous prosecutions, the children of poor parents continue to evade schools ; and that the Act is made powerless because the fines become unrealisable in a large majority of cases. Persons who have a blind faith in the efficacy of compulsion ought to study the problem in closer detail. They will then realise that though compulsion is *necessary* in such cases, it is hardly *sufficient* by itself to meet all the demands of the situation.

This brings us to the third method viz. the adjustment of our educational system to our economic environment. In our opinion, this is the crux of the problem. If our educational system can be so adjusted

that grown up children can assist their parents and also study at school, the wastage due to economic causes can be greatly reduced ; and it can be reduced to a minimum if compulsion is introduced in addition to such adjustments. We, therefore, propose to discuss in detail how our educational system can be so adjusted as to enable the children of poor parents to attend schools in addition to giving assistance to their parents. The first recommendation that we make in this connection is that the junior primary course should be reduced to four years. Owing to his poverty, the average parent is unable to keep his child at school for a long time. And consequently a lengthy course of primary education necessarily contributes to a large wastage. This reform has already been recommended by the Joshi Committee and supported by us and, as far as we know, public opinion is overwhelmingly in its favour. We, therefore, do not propose to set forth our case in detail. We hope that Government will accept this proposal at a very early date.

Our second recommendation is that the school session should be reduced to three hours a day. We have examined this problem in detail in our report on the Recommendations of the Joshi Committee and we do not desire to repeat here the arguments that we have already advanced. But we shall only deal with those aspects of the question which concern wastage.

It has been pointed out by Mr. Chaturvedi that only 11·5 per cent. of the children who work are employed in whole-time occupations. Similarly an investigation by Mr. J. P. Naik in 1934-35 in the Dharwar Taluka led him to the conclusion that about ten per cent. of the children who are prevented from attending schools are engaged in whole-time occupations. Such, for example, are the children employed as shop assistants or domestic servants. Their hours of work are so long and their work is so taxing, that it will not be possible for them to attend schools in addition to their work. It might be urged by some that such children should be made to attend night schools. But we do not advise the organisation of night schools for such children because we are afraid that the strain on their energies would be too great. Secondly, even those parents who are now sending their children to schools at some inconvenience will be tempted to withdraw them and send them to night schools only. We are therefore afraid that a system of primary night schools will give an indirect encouragement to the economic exploitation of children. The only proper remedy is the enforcement of compulsion which will penalise the employment of child labour. But till that is done, cases of wastage due to employment *outside the family* will always continue.

Conditions are quite different with the children who have to work *in the family*. These children are not generally required to work all the time. Their work is of such a nature that it does leave them some time to attend schools, if the school hours are adjusted to suit their convenience. It is not possible to lay down any definite rules for this purpose. But we recommend that the Inspecting and Administrative

Officers should make a careful study of the conditions of child labour in each locality and determine the school hours in that locality in such a way as to suit the convenience of the large majority of working children. If these steps are taken, the withdrawal of children on account of part-time employment will be greatly reduced and the extent of wastage will materially decline.

There is another aspect to this problem which is generally neglected. When we talk of wastage, we only think of the children who are sent to schools but are withdrawn before the attainment of literacy for some reason or the other. But what of those children who do not come to schools at all because they cannot be spared for six hours a day? For example, some village parents put one child to school and use the others for work at home. If we can have a short session adjusted to local conditions, we shall not only prevent the premature withdrawal of children but we shall also be able to bring in a large number of children who now keep out of schools. We, therefore, recommend that Government should adopt a three hour session for the lower standards of primary schools as early as possible.

We would like to state here that the above experiment is being tried on a nation-wide scale in Egypt with the most encouraging results. The Egyptians adopted this "half-day school" system for two main reasons:

(1) Economic, because the cost of educating all children would be three million pounds annually instead of six, and

(2) Social, so as to give the children the chance of working with their parents in the farms or the shops during half the day.

(*Vide* "Year Book of Education", London, 1939, p. 746.)

The results were marvellous. In 1928, the number of children attending primary schools was 2,80,000 of whom 1,67,000 were attending half-day schools. In 1938, the total number of pupils rose to 9,84,000 of whom as many as 8,58,000 attended half-day schools only.

We in this country complain of financial stringency on the one hand and talk of the absolute necessity of child-labour on the other. The Egyptian experiment has a valuable lesson for us, if only we can get rid of our preconceived notions on the subject.

Our third recommendation relates to the adjustment of school vacations to local needs and conditions. The large majority of our rural population is engaged in agriculture. Every one knows that there are certain seasons of the year when the agriculturist is extremely hard pressed by work and has to use all available man-power. Every child in the house has to be used for some work or other. Even those children who are not ordinarily required to work at home are temporarily withdrawn from schools at seasons of intensive agricultural activities. If school hours and vacations are not adjusted to these needs the attendance of children suffers and leads on to stagnation and wastage. We, therefore, feel that the proper timing of vacations is a question of great

importance and we recommend that the Inspecting and Administrative Officers should study it closely and offer proper advice to the Local Authorities concerned. We know that the adoption of our recommendation might necessitate different vacations in different parts of a district. Most of the districts in this Province are not homogeneous tracts and it would not perhaps be possible to have uniform vacations all over a district. It would certainly be desirable to have uniform vacations for the sake of administrative convenience; but we feel that uniformity has to be subordinated to the interests of education. The schools are not run for the convenience of administration, and we must be prepared to put up with some inconvenience if the broader interests of children demand it. It will be seen from Appendix VI that a number of districts are already experimenting with the idea. It is for the others to follow their example.

It is our considered opinion that if the three measures suggested above are adopted by Government the economic difficulties that cause many a parent to withdraw children from school, either temporarily or permanently, will disappear and wastage due to economic causes will greatly decline. It will disappear altogether if, in addition, compulsion is introduced.

11. *Social Causes.*—Of the social causes of wastage, we do not propose to deal with migration which may be temporary or permanent. It operates only to a small extent in this Province except in an industrial city like Bombay, and is not a cause which the Education Department can control. It will cease to be a cause of wastage when educational facilities will be provided in all villages. If the Educational Survey that we have proposed is carried out and if proper encouragement is given to aided schools, all villages will have school facilities, and the wastage due to migration will be reduced to a minimum.

Marriage or Betrothal is a cause of wastage mostly in the case of girls. The Sharda Act has prevented early marriages to a certain extent; but it does not prevent early betrothal. And it is our common experience that girls in villages are generally withdrawn early from schools, especially after a betrothal or marriage. The only way to eliminate the wastage due to this cause is to educate public opinion in the matter. It is also necessary to see that the Sharda Act is more rigidly enforced. In this connection, we solicit the attention of Government to the remarks made by our colleague, Mr. J. P. Naik, in his report on the Enforcement of Compulsion in Baroda State. A copy of his remarks is enclosed as Appendix IV for ready reference.

The third cause is perhaps the most important. It is quite true that a certain percentage of parents are indifferent to education and do not care to send their children to school, or to see that they attend regularly. Such parents send the children to schools because they are a nuisance at home and withdraw them as soon as they become of economic value. The importance of this cause of wastage is well described in the Quinquennial Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, for 1932-37—

“The problem that needs to be solved, therefore, is why so many children leave school before completing either the 4th Standard examination or the Primary School Leaving Certificate Examination. The answer has been given time and again and it is that parents fail to realise the value of Primary Education to their children. They find that their children are of more value to them as wage earners at an early age than if they continue to go to school. In other words they do not think that it is worth sacrificing the immediate income to be derived from small children to the doubtful material benefits to be derived from completing either the lower or the higher Primary School course. To a certain extent parents who think thus are justified, since it has been found that a large number of children who pass standard IV not only do not attain, or at least do not maintain, literacy but also lose certain natural mental qualities which the child that does not attend school but educates himself by experience and works in the fields still retains. It will thus be seen that until the parents can be convinced that it is worth their while and children's while to send their children to school, no real solution of the wastage problem will be found.”

How are we then to overcome this indifference of parents? There are obviously two ways of doing this. Firstly we must organise intensive propaganda for the spread of education. The whole machinery of Government must be utilised for this purpose and every touring officer should be compelled to do propaganda for the spread of education. Particularly, it should be an important duty of the Inspecting Officers to get in personal touch with the prominent villagers and the School Panchas and to advise them to increase the number of children in the local school and to see that no child is withdrawn till it completes the Junior Primary Course. We know that these duties have already been laid down for the Inspecting Officers; but we feel that they ought to be carried out on a larger scale than at present. Such propaganda will go a great way to reduce wastage, if it is carried on intensively for a long time.

Secondly, we must so alter our syllabus that it will greatly appeal to the average parent. As pointed out by the Elementary Education Sub-Committee of the Provincial Economic Council, appointed by the Government of Madras, the best way of overcoming the indifference of a parent is to convince him that there are practical advantages in educating his child. It is precisely with this point of view that we have built up the syllabus that has been submitted to Government along with our recommendations on the Joshi Committee's Report. We recommend that Government should adopt that syllabus at an early date.

12. *Physical Causes.*—We have no remarks to offer regarding the physical causes of Wastage.

13. *Systemic Causes.*—A number of wastage cases may also be traced to defects in our educational system. For example, we have already referred to the need of adjustment of our educational system to our economic needs. That is possible only if the system is elastic enough

to allow the fullest freedom for experiment. Although there is room for such elasticity in the Act and the Rules, in practice, the system has remained largely irrelastic.

Secondly, the ephemeral character of some of the aided schools leads also to a good deal of wastage. The only way to check it is to encourage the formation of well-conducted Associations to run primary schools. We recommend that Government should take early action on the following proposals which are calculated to improve the quality of aided schools and to put them on a sound basis :—

(i) Associations conducting primary schools should be encouraged. They should be given special grants to meet overhead costs.

(ii) Adequate facilities for the training of teachers in aided primary schools should be provided.

(iii) Aided schools should get a more liberal grant than at present. (*Vide* in this connection the Board's resolution Nos. 9 and 57).

These measures will go a great way in eliminating the wastage due to unstable aided schools.

Thirdly, wastage is also due to incomplete schools. We trust that the new Primary Education Rule 91-A will eliminate this wastage. We suggest that the Department should see that the rule is rigidly enforced.

Fourthly, wastage is also due to stagnation which has been defined by the Hartog Committee as the retention of the pupil in the same class for more than a year. In our opinion stagnation is one of the greatest evils in our educational system and requires our immediate attention. We therefore propose to examine the question in detail, suggest a method for the evaluation of stagnation, analyse its causes, and recommend certain measures the adoption of which is calculated to reduce it to a minimum.

14. *Stagnation.*—Stagnation leads to wastage in two ways. Firstly, it lengthens the period required to complete the Junior Primary Course. This course is at present of five years ; but it can be easily shown that the average pupil takes six years to complete it. As the parents are poor, and as they cannot afford to keep their children at school for such a long time, they withdraw them before the completion of the course.

Secondly, many parents withdraw their children from schools because they fail and are hence considered to be no good at " Books ". Many a village parent puts his children to school as a trial. If the boy fares well and proceeds from class to class in quick succession, he continues him at school. But he immediately withdraws him if he finds that he is stagnating. The boy also feels it a humiliation and is more willing to leave school rather than continue in the same class.

Besides being a cause of wastage, stagnation is an evil in itself. It implies a waste of the precious years of a pupil's life, the energy of the teacher and the money of the parents and the State. One shudders to think of the immense waste of money and time that is caused by the

several lacs of children that fail every year. We therefore urge upon Government with all the emphasis at our command, to give their earnest consideration to the problem and to adopt vigorous measures to combat the evil, some of which are given later on in this report.

15. *Stagnation Index by Standards.*—As far as we are aware no scientific method has been evolved in this country to evaluate stagnation. The annual Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay, is perhaps the only report in the whole of British India that gives the percentage of pupils that are promoted from each standard. (*Vide* table 3 of the supplement in the Annual Report of the Director of Public Instruction for 1938-39). But it is our opinion that this table does not give us a correct idea of the extent of stagnation. Our reasons are :—

(i) The table does not give us the number of repeaters in each class.

(ii) The first column of this table is headed "Number of pupils at the time of the Annual Examination. This may mean the number of pupils *on the rolls* of the class at the time of the Annual Examination. We understand that the intention was to give the numbers on the rolls. But the practice seems to us to be that it gives only the number of pupils that are *actually* examined. For example the following table gives the comparison of table 3 with the tables 4 and 5 of the supplement :—

Year.	Average Number on rolls as given in tables 4 and 5.	Number of pupils as given in table 3.	Difference.
1	2	3	4
1937-38	11,64,110	10,00,627	1,63,483
1938-39	13,09,083	10,50,055	2,59,028

N.B.—The figures given in column 2 above are those of monthly average number because the Annual Examinations were held all the year round.

The large difference given in column 4 appears to show that—

(i) Our contention that the figures given in table 3 are those of pupils actually examined seems to be correct ; and

(ii) that a large number of pupils are kept back from examination in order to put up the figure of the percentage of passes.

We, therefore, feel that this table cannot give us a correct idea of the extent of stagnation. We suggest, however, that Government should get the table examined and satisfy themselves whether our inference, that the figures given in the table are of those who appeared for the examination and not of those on roll, is correct.

We, therefore, propose that every year a "stagnation index" should be calculated as given below.

We should collect information for the whole province in the form given here :—

Class.	Number of pupils reading for one year in	Number of pupils reading for two years in	Number of pupils reading for three years in	Number of pupils reading for four years in	Stagnation, Index.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Infants ..					
Standard I ..	a	b	c	d	
Standard II ..					
Standard III ..					
Standard IV ..					
Total ..					

N.B.—The figures given in columns 2-5 should be as on 31st March of each year.

Let us suppose that the number of pupils in standard I is *a*, *b*, *c*, and *d* in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year respectively. Then the stagnation index for standard I is given by the formula :

$$100 \times \left\{ \frac{a + 2b + 3c + 4d}{a + b + c + d} - 1 \right\}.$$

The derivation of the formula is easy. "a" students have put in one year each. Hence all these pupils have cumulatively put in $1 \times a = a$ years in the class. In the same way "b" pupils have put in two years each. Therefore they have cumulatively put in $2b$ years. In the same way the "c" and "d" pupils have put in $3c$ and $4d$ years respectively. That is " $a + b + c + d$ " pupils have cumulatively put in $a + 2b + 3c + 4d$ years or the average period put in by each pupil is

$\frac{a + 2b + 3c + 4d}{a + b + c + d}$. The excess of this over one year which is the normal

period is the extent of stagnation and we multiply it by 100 merely to get rid of the decimals.

This index can be easily calculated for each school, each district, each standard and so on. This method will give us an accurate gauge of stagnation and will enable us to compare its extent from school to school, district to district, and from year to year. We, therefore, recommend that this table should be added to the Annual Report of the Director of Public Instruction and it should be made quite clear that the figures in table 3 are of all pupils on rolls and not of those only who are examined.

It is not possible to calculate the present stagnation index for the different standards because the necessary data is not available to us. But every person who has watched the working of our primary schools knows that considerable stagnation exists in all standards and that it is particularly heavy in the Infant Class. We shall therefore discuss the causes of stagnation in general and then deal separately with the stagnation in the Infant Class.

Causes of stagnation in general.—The following are the chief causes of stagnation in the primary schools :—

- (1) Irregular Attendance,
- (2) Inefficient Teaching,
- (3) Faulty method of Examination, and
- (4) Faulty nature of syllabus.

Irregular attendance may be due to indifference of parents and to the lack of adjustment of vacations with local economic needs. It may also be partly due to the fact that our average school is too unattractive to the child. It may also be due to some extent to the poverty of the parent and to his inability to provide the child with books, slates, etc. In out of way places, these materials are not readily available and the child absents itself till these are purchased from the nearest town or bazar place.

Inefficient teaching is due to a number of factors. It may be caused by :—

- (a) defective administration and inspection,
- (b) lack of missionary zeal in our primary teachers,
- (c) discontent among teachers on the score of pay and pay-scales,
- (d) faulty recruitment,
- (e) plural class teaching which is inevitable in single-teacher schools,
- (f) poor general education of our primary teachers,
- (g) the large number of untrained teachers,
- (h) lack of teaching aids and apparatus in the average primary school,
- (i) inadequacy of the Inspecting staff, and
- (j) to the lack of an effective local agency to supervise and assist the school.

We do not want to make any remarks about our *examination system* because the Department has recently abolished external examinations which were contributing largely to stagnation. But we wish to make it clear that what we want is a change of out-look. Our tradition is that a good examination ought to have a large number of failures. Strictness is the laudable qualification of an examiner and its measure is in direct proportion to the number of pupils he fails. It is not so much the agency of examination as this out-look that has been the cause of our large stagnation, and things will not improve so long as it remains unchanged.

Similarly, we do not want to make any remarks about the *syllabus* at this stage because we have already submitted a detailed syllabus to Government and we feel that the adoption of that syllabus will go a great way towards reducing wastage and stagnation.

The remedies are obvious. Some of these have already been covered by our recommendations for the reduction of wastage. In addition to these, we suggest the following reforms :—

- (i) Free supply of educational material to children of poor parents,
- (ii) Determined efforts to make the school more attractive and pleasant to the children,
- (iii) Deciding at an early date the question of the pay scales of primary teachers,
- (iv) Starting of Lokashalas, i.e., schools for higher education through regional languages or encouraging those that may be started by private effort,
- (v) Strengthening the Inspecting staff so that there is one inspecting officer for about 50 or 60 schools,
- (vi) Appointment of trained graduates to eighty per cent. of the posts of Inspecting Officers, and
- (vii) Increase in the scale of school Contingency to enable the teachers to prepare necessary teaching aids.

Stagnation in the Infant Class.—Stagnation in the infant class is particularly heavy and is due to the following causes in addition to those mentioned above.

- (i) Irregular Admissions and
- (ii) the Low Age of Admission.

One of the worst features of our system is the admission of children to the infant class throughout the year. This considerably interferes with the efficiency of teaching because an average Infants class contains pupils at all stages of instruction. In order to make teaching effective and to reduce stagnation, it is necessary to admit children to this class not later than two months from the beginning of the school year. This will mean that each child is in the school for at least ten months in a year and will go a very great way in reducing stagnation.

This salutary reform is opposed on various grounds. The Local Authorities are not very eager to enforce it because they are afraid of popular objections. The public want the freedom to send the child to school at any time they like and particularly at the time of some auspicious days. But the greatest opponent of the reform is the primary teacher. He is more interested in the abstract number of pupils than in individuals. He wants to maintain the number of pupils on the rolls or to increase it. Therefore as soon as a few pupils leave (he cannot prevent that) he wants the freedom to enrol a few in the infants class to maintain the balance. But we are not aware of any educational objection to the proposal. The question is of so fundamental importance that we request Government to take a bold step and make a primary Education Rule to that effect at a very early date. It is not enough to advise the Local Authorities to frame a rule under Section 27 (3) (d) of the Act and thus leave it to the discretion of the Local Authorities. If a rule is inserted in the Primary Education Rules it will make it obligatory on all Local Authorities and will greatly reduce stagnation in the Infants class.

In this connection we would like to point out the desirability of reducing the number of holidays and the length of vacations to primary schools. At present, we allow 35 holidays and vacations of not less than three weeks or more than six weeks. We feel that those holidays are excessive, particularly so far the children who work under the three hours Sessions. We therefore recommend an increase in the number of working days in a year so that children may get instruction for a longer time and the extent of stagnation may be reduced.

The second reform that we suggest is that the minimum age of admission should be raised to 6 + in general and to 7 + for compulsion. We have already discussed the question in detail in our report on the recommendations of the Joshi Committee and we wish to state here only those aspects of the problem that relate to stagnation.

It is the experience of educationists that children of a small age fare very badly in the Infant class. For example, after an analysis of several thousands of children in the infant class, Mr. S. N. Chaturvedi came to following conclusion :—

“ In the infant class the group below 6·79 years is eliminated to the extent of 72·5 per cent. or about three-fourths. So that the progress of boys below 7 years is extremely precarious. Of the boys between 6·79 and 7·73, 54·2 per cent. or more than half are withdrawn before they reach class I (the second year class). In other words, boys less than eight years of age have a greater chance of being thrown out than of reaching class I. The minimum age of six is too young for education on a voluntary basis. It should be raised to at least eight years. The older boys fare much better in the Infants class.”

—Educational Survey of a District P. 187.

Similarly an Analysis of the Examination Results in the city of Bombay conducted by Mr. R. V. Parulekar shows that other things being equal, children of 5 + stagnate to a far greater extent than children of 6 + (Vide Appendix V).

This also is a question of fundamental importance and we suggest that a Primary Education rule should be made to this effect, rather than advise the Local Authorities to frame a rule under Section 27 (3) (d) of the Act.

Thirdly, we have already referred to the common attitude of examiners. Bad as that attitude is for any standard, it does incalculable harm in the Infant's class. The enthusiasm of many a child is destroyed at the first step and many a hopeful career is nipped in the bud. We want to emphasize that we should have a liberal outlook in these matters. We should, as a matter of policy, promote all children who are reasonably prepared. They may not be hundred per cent. thorough with their studies; but in the interests of mass education, we should promote them to the higher class if they are reasonably fit to be promoted. It is a common experience that a child which is not quite prepared, progresses much better by promotion to standard 1 than by detention in the infant class. Secondly, there is lesser danger of the child being withdrawn from the school if it gets regular promotions. We therefore recommend that we should give, for some years, liberal promotions in the Infants' class as a matter of policy.

Fourthly, we find that the attitude of the average teacher also is not very happy. He is not so much interested in getting "good" remark as he is in evading the "poor" one. He can do so if one-third of the pupils pass. The average teacher, therefore, is not interested in each individual pupil and is satisfied if one child in every three gets a promotion. We strongly condemn this impersonal attitude and the system that gives rise to this.

As an alternative, we recommend that we should expect every child which has put in an attendance of 120 days or so to get a promotion, and where such children are detained the teacher should be asked to explain, in each individual case, why such a child failed. The only possible explanations in our view are :—

- (i) The attendance is bogus.
- (ii) The child is dull, or
- (iii) The teaching is inefficient.

The Inspecting Officer should ask the teacher to explain which of these causes is applicable in the case of every child that has failed even after an attendance of 120 days in a year. This reform will make the teachers more careful in their work and will materially help us to reduce stagnation.

Fifthly, we want to put a stop to the evil system of keeping some of the pupils absent at the time of the examination in order to show a higher percentage of results. This is a bad practice and completely masks the marking of bogus attendance. We, therefore, recommend that a rule should be made to the effect that all children who do not appear for the examination should be taken as failed, while assessing the work of the teacher in the charge of the class.

Conclusion.—We are enclosing herewith a summary of recommendations made in this report. (*Vide* Appendix I). We are conscious of the fact that many of them have been discussed times out of number from various platforms. Some of them have been mentioned year after year in the Annual Reports of the Directors of Public Instruction. We do not merely want to add one more strain to these defeatist lamentations. The essential requirement of today is, not an endless repetition of laudable generalities, but a sustained and well-planned effort by Government to translate principles into practice. If that effort be made, we see no reason why even in the absence of compulsion wastage and stagnation should not be reduced to a minimum and why our system of Primary Education should not become more effective than what it is to-day.

APPENDIX I.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. A child which has passed Standard III and put in an attendance of 120 days or more in Standard IV should be taken to have completed the lower primary course. Passing of Standard IV should not be considered as essential for this purpose. (Pages 3-4.)

2. The present departmental method of evaluating Wastage is defective and should be abandoned. (Pages 5-6.)

3. The department should adopt new method which has been proposed in this report for the evaluation of Wastage. (Pages 7-8.)

4. Clear instructions should be issued to teachers and Inspecting Officers explaining the importance of the column regarding cause for leaving school in the School General Register and insisting that it should be filled in after a careful and personal enquiry into the matter made by a teacher of the school. (Pages 8-9.)

5. All Inspecting Officers should be put on special duty for one week and should be asked to hold an enquiry into the causes of Wastage, on the lines suggested by the Board. (Pages 9-10.)

6. The system of Primary Education in this Province should be adjusted to the economic environment by—

(a) reduction of the Junior Primary Course to four years;

(b) adoption of the shift system until such time as a three hour session in Primary Schools is universally adopted; and

(c) by adjustment of vacations to local conditions. (Pages 12-14.)

7. In order to overcome the indifference of parents it is necessary to organise an intensive propaganda, especially through Inspecting Officers, and to adopt a syllabus which will be more practical and more appealing to the average parent. (Page 16.)

8. Steps should immediately be taken to put aided schools on a stable basis. (Page 17.)

9. In Table 3 of the supplement to the Director of Public Instruction's Report, the first column should be headed "the number of pupils on the rolls at the time of annual examination". (Page 18.)

10. Every year a stagnation index should be calculated for each standard in the Province as a whole and information required by the table given on page 28 of this report should be annually published in the Director of Public Instruction's report. (Page 19.)

11. A change in the outlook of examiners should be effected as suggested by us. (Page 21.)

12. The measures suggested on page 21 of the report should be immediately adopted in order to increase the efficiency of teaching.

13. A new Primary Education Rule should be framed to the effect that all admissions to Infants' class shall be made within the first two months. It is not enough to leave the matter to the discretion of Local Authorities for a regulation being framed under section 27 (3) (d) of the Act. (Pages 21-22.)

14. Number of holidays and the length of vacations to primary schools should be reduced. (Page 22.)

15. A new Primary Education Rule should be made to the effect that the minimum age of admission to a public primary school, i.e., a school managed by Government or a Local Authority should be 6. (Pages 22-23.)

16. Teachers should be required to develop a personal attitude towards each child. (Page 23.)

17. Promotions in the Infants' class should be made liberally. (Page 23.)

18. Ordinarily no child should be allowed to be kept back at the time of Annual Examination particularly in the Infant or the lowest class. If any child is detained the child should be taken as having failed and the teacher called upon to explain the failure. If the teacher is unable to give satisfactory reply, the failure should be attributed to the teacher's unsatisfactory work. (Page 23.)

APPENDIX II.

FORM IN WHICH INFORMATION IS TO BE CALLED FOR FROM THE
HEAD MASTERS OF SCHOOLS.

Year.....

1. Name of School.....	Taluka	District		
2. Average number on Rolls during the preceding year.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	
	Infants	..		
	Standard I	..		
	Standard II	..		
	Standard III	..		
	Standard IV	..		
	Total ..			

3. Analysis of Wastage cases during the preceding years according to age-groups and standards :-

	Infants.		I		II		III		IV		Total.	
	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.	Below 8. 8-11.	Above 11.
Boys ..												
Girls ..												
Total ..												

4. Analysis of Wastage according to causes.

	Economic.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
A. Employment outside the family	..			
B. Employment inside the family--				
Cattle-tending	..			
Dairy-work	..			
Work on the farm	..			
Taking care of a younger child.				
Cooking, etc.	..			

Social.

- A. Indifference of parents,
 B. Migration.
 C. Marriage or betrothal.

Physical.

- A. Death;
 B. Infirmity.
 C. Ill-health.

Systemic.

- A. Stagnation.

Miscellaneous.

Any other cause (to be specified) ..

Total ..

5. *Admissions into the school during the preceding year.*

	Infants.		I		II		III		IV	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
With leaving Certificates from other Schools.										
Other Admis- sions.										
Total ..										

Seen. Checked with the General Register and
 verified by personal enquiry in cases.

Certified to be correct to be best
 of my knowledge.

Head Master.

Inspecting Officer.

N.B.—A "Wastage Case" is defined as the withdrawal of a pupil from school at any stage before he has put in an attendance of 120 days or more in Standard IV. In giving this number exclude all pupils who are withdrawn but who return later during the year to your own school.

The list of the causes given here is suggestive and not exhaustive.

A copy of this report should be preserved in the school for ten years and shown to the Inspecting Officer at the time of Annual Inspection.

APPENDIX III.

Instructions to Inspecting Officers for the enquiry into the causes of Wastage.

1. "Wastage" has been defined as the premature withdrawal of children from schools before they complete the lower primary course and attain literacy.

For the purposes of this enquiry, a boy or a girl should be taken to have completed the lower primary course and attained literacy if he has passed (or promoted from) Standard III and has put in an attendance of 120 days or more in Standard IV.

It follows therefore that a boy or a girl who has left school at any stage before attaining the above standard is to be considered as a "Wastage Case".

2. The object of this enquiry is to find out the extent of Wastage and the causes to which it is due.

Area.

3. If your beat is a rural one, select two single teacher schools, two schools with two teachers each, and two schools with more than two teachers.

Each beat officer is expected to analyse about 2 to 3 hundred cases of Wastage. The total number of children in the schools selected should be about 600.

4. In case of urban beats, schools of different types such as those attended by pupils belonging to well-to-do, middle-class, or poor families should be selected.

Method of Enquiry.

5. The Inspecting Officer should ordinarily spend one day for each school. The forms of enquiry are enclosed herewith. Those should be sent in advance to the Local School teacher who should be asked to collect the information required for them and fill them in. The Inspecting Officer should verify the information carefully during his visit.

6. The enquiry should spread over a period of two years, i.e., 1939-40 and 1940-41.

The term "Year" should be taken as the period from the beginning of June each year to the next annual examination.

7. The first statement to be filled in is the Statement A. This may be filled from the Register of daily attendance. This statement gives the total number of wastage cases during that year and is *very important*. The Inspecting Officer should verify these figures with the greatest care.

8. The next step is to analyse each of these cases of Wastage. For that purpose the Head Master of the school should be asked to fill in the Statement B for each boy or girl who appears in Statement A.

9. For facilitating further work, it is desirable to follow some order in the work. For example, the information about all pupils who left in the Infants class should be given first. Then information about all pupils who left in Standard I should be given, and so on up to Standard IV.

10. The teachers should be asked to make personal enquiries regarding cause of leaving school, and not merely copy it out of General Register. This enquiry is very important. A copy of the observations of the Provincial Board on this subject (enclosed herewith) should be supplied to the teacher in advance. The Inspecting Officer should personally verify as many cases as possible.

11. Information regarding other columns is readily obtainable from the General Register.

12. The third step in the enquiry is to analyse the information given in Form B in the two Statements C and D. The analysis is merely table work and can be easily compiled.

13. The fourth step is to compile Statement E.

14. The following things should be carefully remembered in preparing the statements :—

(i) The total number of Wastage cases to be entered in Columns 5, 6, 7 are the number given in Statement B *minus* those who have joined another school (i.e., for whom leaving Certificate is issued) and those who returned later to the same school (*vide* Statement B).

(ii) The number of avoidable cases of Wastage to be given in columns 8, 9, 10 is the number of Wastage cases given in columns 5, 6, 7 *minus* those that are due to death, infirmity, or ill-health (*vide* Statement D).

(iii) The percentages in columns 11-16 are to be worked out as under :—

$$\text{Percentage of Wastage (cols. 11-16)} = 100 \times \frac{\text{Number of wastage cases (cols. 5-10)}}{\text{Average number on rolls (cols. 2-4)}}$$

15. The last step is to write a covering letter which gives the opinion of the Inspecting Officer on each of the following items :—

(a) General Observations regarding the villages selected, their population, economic and social condition of the people, the life of the school, etc. The object of these observations is to obtain an idea of the back-ground of the school selected.

(b) Extent of wastage.

(c) The accuracy of the information collected especially regarding the cause of Wastage.

(d) Methods of eliminating Wastage.

16. All statements from A to E are to be prepared separately for each year.

STATEMENT A.

Admissions and withdrawals according to months.

Year

Months.	Children at the beginning of the month.					Left during the month.					Joined during the month.					Number at the end of the month.					Remarks.
	Inf.	I	II	III	IV	Inf.	I	II	III	IV	Inf.	I	II	III	IV	Inf.	I	II	III	IV	
June																					Please state :— Total number who left School in Standard IV. Of those the Number that left before an attendance of 120 days or more. The Number that left after an attendance of 120 days or more.
July																					
August																					
September																					
October																					
November																					
December																					
January																					
February																					
March																					
April																					
May																					

STATEMENT B.

Information about Wastage Cases.

Year

Serial No.	Name.	Class.	Age at the time of leaving the school.	Standard in which the pupil left school.	Cause of leaving school.	Was leaving certificate issued ?	Did the pupil return to the same school ?	Signature of the Inspecting Officer in token of verification.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

N.B.—1. In column 3 state only the following classes :—Advanced Hindus, Intermediate Hindus, Backward Hindus, Muslims, and others.

2. Children who return later to the same school or those for whom a leaving certificate was issued are not to be considered as Wastage cases and their number should be excluded while preparing Statements C, D and E.

STATEMENT D.

Analysis of Wastage according to Causes.

Year

Causes.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
<i>Economic—</i>			
(A) Employment outside the family ..			
(B) Employment inside the family—			
Cattle work			
Dairy work			
Work on the Farm			
Taking care of a younger child, cooking, etc.			
<i>Social—</i>			
(A) Indifference of Parents			
(B) Migration			
(C) Marriage or Betrothal			
<i>Physical—</i>			
(A) Death			
(B) For becoming Infirm			
(C) Ill-health			
<i>Systemic—</i>			
(A) Stagnation			
<i>Miscellaneous—</i>			
Any other cause (to be specified) ..			
Total ..			

STATEMENT E.

Percentage of Wastage.

Year

Standard.	Average number of pupils on the rolls.			Total number of Wastage cases.			Total number of avoid-able wastage cases.			Percentage of total wastage.			Percentage of avoid-able wastage.		
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boy.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Total ..															

APPENDIX IV.

ENFORCEMENT OF CHILD MARRIAGES PREVENTION ACT IN BARODA STATE.

The achievements of Baroda in the enrolment and education of girls are even more striking than these general results. The following table compares the figures of boys and girls reading in Primary Schools of major British Indian Provinces and the Baroda State.

Province.	Number of pupils in Primary Schools.		Number of Girls in Schools to every 100 boys in schools.
	Boys.	Girls.	
Baroda	1,47,991	1,06,527	61·2
Madras	19,93,410	8,81,549	44·3
Bengal	19,05,126	6,85,426	35·9
Sind	1,19,611	42,306	35·0
Bombay	8,87,359	3,04,150	34·3
Assam	3,06,177	80,590	26·4
Orissa	2,32,369	57,801	25·0
Punjab	7,37,494	1,70,052	23·0
Central Provinces ..	3,56,055	79,731	22·5
United Provinces ..	11,93,760	2,04,709	17·2
Bihar	7,06,983	1,07,215	15·1
North-West Frontier ..	59,864	7,001	11·6

N.B.—All the figures are for 1937-38.

It will be seen that there is a great disparity between the enrolment of boys and girls in all provinces and it is only Baroda that has succeeded remarkably in enrolling a very large number of girls. This is mainly due to two causes :—

(i) Compulsion.

(ii) Strict enforcement of the Act preventing child marriages.

I shall write a few words regarding the latter cause. In the rural areas of the Bombay Province, girls are married or betrothed early and as soon as either ceremony takes place, the girl is withdrawn from the school. The Sharda Act is too pusillanimous a weapon to deal effectively with this social evil. In the Baroda State, a more powerful weapon is put on the statute Book and is known as the "Child-marriage prevention Act". Under the provisions of this Act, the marriage of a girl or a boy under 8 years of age is declared void and persons responsible for the marriage of a boy under 18 years of age or a girl under 16 years of age including the priests who officiate at such marriages are liable to be punished by simple imprisonment up to one month, or fine up to Rs. 1,000 or both. There are, of course, some exemptions allowed in very special

circumstance. The extent to which the Act is enforced can be seen from the following figures for 1938-39 :—

Total number of marriage celebrated in the state..	..	20,093	
Number of child marriages allowed by courts	..	57	
Penalised	.. .. .	1,386	
		<u>1,437</u>	1,437
Percentage of child marriages to the total number	..		<u>6.8</u>
Number of prosecutions starting during the year with arrears from the proceeding year.	..		2,054
Number of cases disposed of	.. .. .		1,772
Percentage of cases ending in conviction	.. .. .		60.6
Number of persons convicted—			
To imprisonment only	.. .. .	12	
To imprisonment and fine	.. .. .	69	
To fine only	.. .. .	2,818	
		<u>2,899</u>	2,899

Amount of fine Rs. 43,932.

It is this successful enforcement of the Act that it also responsible for the large enrolment of girls, especially in rural areas.

APPENDIX V.

BOMBAY MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS.

Statement giving statistics of pupils on roll and promoted in the Infant Classes of selected schools in April.

M Dk No. 18-6

Side.	Number of schools selected.	Pupils in Infant Class of the schools.			Pupils below 6 in age.			Pupils six and above in age.		
		Roll.	Promoted.	Percentage.	Roll.	Promoted.	Percentage.	Roll.	Promoted.	Percentage.
1	2	3			4			5		
Marathi Boys' Schools ..	15	3,026	1,407	47	1,114	353	32	1,903	1,054	55
Marathi Girls' Schools ..	9	1,319	619	48	485	160	35	834	459	54
Gujarati Boys' Schools ..	10	974	519	53	451	188	41	523	331	63
Gujarati Girls' Schools ..	25	1,822	1,142	62	779	380	49	1,043	762	73
Urdu Boys' Schools ..	9	899	347	39	258	58	22	641	289	45
Urdu Girls' Schools ..	10	884	379	43	322	102	32	562	277	49
Urdu Girls' Schools ..	10	884	379	43	322	102	32	562	277	49
Hindi Schools ..	7	395	234	59	38	12	31	357	222	62
Total ..	85	9,319	4,647	50	3,447	1,253	36	5,863	3,394	58

N B.—(1) The schools selected are taken at random.

(2) In the case of Gujarati Girls' Schools, all schools are taken.

R. V. Parnlekar,
Secretary, Schools Committee.

APPENDIX VI.

VACATIONS TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

The following eight districts have already adjusted their vacations to suit local conditions as shown below :—

1. *Surat*.—(a) Summer vacation is observed from 16th May to 5th June as it is the time of carrying manure and putting the land in order (3 weeks).

(b) Winter Vacation is observed for three weeks either affixing or prefixing the Diwali Holidays as grass and rice cutting is done in October and November.

The schools are held in the noon only in the cotton season as the children are engaged in the morning in gathering cotton.

As the whole district is a homogeneous tract, the question of different vacations in different parts does not arise.

2. *Nasik*.—Nasik has two tracts; the first tract includes two talukas and has heavy rainfall, and the second is the eastern tract of light rainfall; it has nine talukas.

Vacations are given under :—

Tract.	Vacation.	Period.	Duration.
Western	Vacation in Rainy Season in lieu of Summer Vacation.	17th July to 30th July ..	15 days.
	Winter Vacation	.. Last week of October to end of 2nd week of November.	21 days.
Eastern	Summer Vacation	.. Last two weeks of May ..	15 days.
	Winter Vacation	.. Last week of October to end of 2nd week of November.	21 days.

3. *Ratnagiri*.—(a) Summer Vacation is given for four weeks from the second week of May. But in heavy rainfall tracts this summer vacation is dropped and a Monsoon vacation is given in July.

(b) Winter Vacation is given for two weeks in October-November.

4. *Poona*.—The District has two tracts. In the heavy rainfall tract, summer vacation is given in July for 4 weeks but in the drier tract, it is given for four weeks in May.

Winter Vacation is given for two weeks in October-November.

5. *East Khandesh*.—The District is one homogeneous tract.

(a) Summer Vacation is given for three weeks for the last three weeks of May.

(b) Winter Vacation is given for three weeks in October-November synchronising with the busy season of the agriculturists.

6. *Thana*.—Same as in Poona.

7. *Satara*.—There are two tracts in the District. The heavy rainfall tract gets a long Monsoon vacation of six weeks from the 15th July to the end of August. There is no winter vacation here.

In the other tract, the long vacation is given for four weeks in May and the short one of two weeks at the time of Depavali.

8. *Kaira*.—(a) Summer Vacation is given for 2 weeks in May.

(b) There are three vacation each of one week duration first commencing on the 1st day of the second half of Ashadha, the second from the 11th day of the second half of Bhadrapada, and the third from the twelfth day of the second half of Ashwin.