

Educational (191) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 444

DATED 22-5-12

[Despatch Abstract.]

Primary Education

Recording a memorandum regarding
— by M. Parameswaram Pillai a Councillor
of the Madurai Municipality.

BACK PAPERS.

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[E & L.]
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EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

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Edl cm 1339
8-5-12

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TO

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT,

OOTACAMAND.

S I R,

I beg to submit that I have been taking a keen interest in matters educational for the past several years. In addition, the circumstance of my being a Councillor of the Local Municipality for the last about 15 -- years ~~has~~ has given me opportunities to go into the -- question of Elementary Education. The above matters have enabled me to write the accompanying Printed Paper on the subject and I solicit Your kind consideration of the same.

Madura,

6th May 1912

Thanking you in anticipation,

and with my best regards,

Yours faithfully,

M. Parameswaram Pillai
MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR.

From

M. Parameswaram Pillai
Municipal Councillor

7/12

Memorandum regarding Primary Education.

(By M. Parameswaram Pillai, a Councillor of the Madura Municipality.)

The Government has remarked in the Administration Report for 1906—07:—"A considerable number of boys continued to attend unaided indigenous schools. Endeavours should be made to bring under departmental control those schools in which the majority of teachers employed are unqualified." What steps have been taken till now? What steps could be taken to discourage such institutions? Some of the pial school-masters do not need the aid of Government by way of grants. What control can the Government or the local bodies have over them? To many, these are difficult problems to solve.

2. Dr. Bourne, the present Director of Public Instruction, says in the course of his speech in the Legislative Council regarding the expenditure on Primary Education:—"It would be possible, at the present moment, to double the number of pupils at school, without spending anything extra, because the schools are not full and there is room in the great majority of village schools for plenty of pupils and, if only people would send the children to school, I fancy, we could double the number of children at school before we need spend anything more." The Doctor is perfectly right in saying that the school buildings are to a great extent empty. But we have to see where the fault lies, whether on the people as the Doctor supposes, or anywhere else. The fault lies on the people alone. Who is to remedy this and how, is the next question. Just as a parent takes care of the child incapable of taking care of itself, so, does the Government stand in the place of parents in relation to its subjects—the ignorant masses who cannot help themselves, and cure the defect. For this purpose, there must be an efficient staff, philanthropic in nature, broad in views and willing to work for the cause of primary education, who should try to remove the defects whatever their nature may be (whether in the parents or in the children), by taking such measures as are suitable to the locality and the circumstances of the time. The duty involved on the present Inspecting Officers or teachers is, in my humble opinion, not up to the mark. All that they do and can do, is that they are prepared to educate the children, provided the parents send their children to the schools. If the boys do not go to schools regularly or if the parents totally neglect the education of their children through ignorance, there is no provision in the existing rules for fixing the

responsibility of remedying the evil on the part of either the teachers or the Inspecting officers. Of course, the Inspecting Officers are not to blame as they have numerous schools to inspect and they cannot be expected to devote much time to the enquiries as to the cause of the reduction in the number of pupils in the schools or, as the Inspection Code dictates, "to endeavour to enlist the sympathy of the village officials and the leading men of the locality in the education of their children, girls as well as boys" (See Inspection Code). The appointment of too many Inspecting Officers whose duty is merely to inspect the schools would not serve the above purpose and means only extra and unnecessary expenditure to a certain extent.

3. As stated above, people are yet ignorant and they themselves have to be educated (advised) as to the benefits of education before they are required to educate their children.

4. In view of this, Educational Committees should be formed of the principal residents of the villages within a radius of one mile or so according to the circumstances of the case. They should be made to meet in a village which is the centre of all the villages thus grouped. This idea is now confirmed by the speech made by the Hon'ble Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar at the Budget Meeting for 1910-11:—"Your Excellency will be pleased to see that, in rural parts, the major portion of the population are illiterate. It is very necessary that education should permeate the lower substratum of society. Of course, for labour to be efficient, the lower classes should also be sufficiently educated." What he proposed then was to establish what are called village schools. Some four or five villages might be grouped and a central school established in one of the important villages.

5. The Revenue Inspector of the Firka who frequently visits villages on his tour of inspection should be directed to preside at every meeting except on occasions of urgency when one of the Committee Members may preside. The principal duty of the Revenue Inspector should be to advise the members and the people on local affairs relating to education. The school should be managed by the members or one of the members of the Committee. One more suggestion I have to make is that, if the Deputy Collectors of the Division who have now many occasions to deal with the people, both rich and poor of every village, during the time of Jamabandy or during their tour in every month, spend some few minutes

with a willing mind in advising the people by way of pointing out the necessity for, and usefulness of, primary education to the ignorant masses, their words will be taken for gospel and will have the desired effect upon the people and the leading members of the place may be directed to bring to their notice any suggestions that they may have to offer and which will tend to the advancement of primary education during their next visit. A few minutes spent in this direction will not and should not be considered a waste of time, though it may have to be done in the midst of their heavy work, as it goes to add to the credit of the efficient administration of the country. The advice given by the Deputy Collectors who are invested with magisterial powers will be received by the people as imperative, assume the shape of an order and in consequence be implicitly carried out with all awe and fear, thinking that any violation or neglect will be resented by such officers as disobedience and that his displeasure would prove ruinous to their interest. This sort of harmless but useful influence the Inspecting Officers cannot be expected to exercise at any time upon the people.

6. As regards Municipal Schools, a sub-committee consisting of Municipal Councillors may be constituted.

7. The existence of such committees on the spot will be a safeguard against the dereliction of duty and mal-practices which often escape the eyes of the Inspecting Officers who visit them at long intervals. The institution of school committees is one of the best ways of creating local interest in elementary education as well as of supervising schools.

8. In every school, the teacher or one of the teachers should be well versed in எண்கணிதம், குழிமரத்து etc. In order to effect this end, such teachers may be exempted from the rules regarding the qualifications of teachers. Board Schools, both in the Towns and the Villages, should be started with a pial school teacher who is an expert in Arithmetic under the indigenous method, whether qualified or not under the rules. He may be paid at least Rs. 10 per mensem and, when the strength increases so as to admit of additional teachers, qualified teachers may be appointed on a pay of Rs. 12. The rule that permits the employment of half of the teachers among men not qualified, may be made applicable to Board Schools also. To keep alive a spirit of enthusiasm among the teachers--a spirit to increase the strength of the class or classes, they should be encouraged by promise of raising their pay by Rs. 2/ for every ten boys studying in a class consisting of not less than ten boys up to Rs. 18/

which is their maximum pay including the increments. This rule should not apply to the teachers above the 3rd Standard.

9. Holidays should be fixed according to the customs obtaining in the various localities. For instance, summer vacation for village schools should fall at the reaping season and some holidays are required for the ploughing season too, as the pupils are sure to be absent from the schools during these seasons.

10. In village schools, Agriculture should form one of the compulsory subjects just as எண்சுவடி, குழிமாத்து etc. Each school should be provided with implements of Agriculture and about an acre of land. For physical exercise, once or twice in a week, an Instructor in Agriculture (appointed for every 12 schools or so) should visit each village school and the mode of ploughing and other instruction in Agriculture may be taught orally. This kind of exercise will be useful to the pupil in his future life as an agriculturist.

11. The curriculam in the pial schools consists of the following subjects:—

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Alphabet | |
| 2. முந்திரிலக்கம் (Multiplication table of $\frac{1}{320}$) | |
| 3. சுவட்டுலக்கம் (Multiplication table of $\frac{1}{40}$ of a measure of grain). | |
| 4. கொன்றைவேந்தன் | } Poetry. |
| 5. ஆத்திச்சூடி | |
| 6. வேழமுகம் | |
| 7. உலகநீதி | |
| 8. எண்சுவடி | (Multiplication table of 1 to 99). |
| 9. கீழ்வாய்லக்கம் | (Multiplication table of fractional parts). |
| 10. பிரபவாச்சுவடி | (Books treating about the names of years, stars etc.). |
| 11. பெருகுழி | (Multiplication table of integral square foot). |
| 12. சிறுகுழி | (Multiplication table of the fractional parts of a square foot). |
| 13. மூதுரை | } Poetry. |
| 14. அம்பிகைமாலே | |
| 15. கதிர்காமமாலே | |
| 16. திருப்புகழ் | |
| 17. நிகண்டு | Vernacular Dictionary in verse. |

Nos. 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, & 17 deserve to be introduced in the elementary schools.

12. All the above subjects are taught, one after another, in the order given above. Arithmetic is very easily taught by repetition. One boy is made to say loudly $1 \times 1 = 1$, the other boys repeat the same; again, the same boy continues by repeating $2 \times 1 = 2$ and the other boys follow him and so, the Multiplication tables are repeated to the end. This method is rehearsed every day. Thus Multiplication tables not only of whole numbers but also of fractions are so easily got by heart by the students that they are able to answer even complicated problems in Arithmetic. This kind of learning taxes not the brain. A boy of the 2nd or even the 4th standard of a Board School will not be equal to a boy of the same standard in the pial schools in Mental Arithmetic. Whatever this may be, the introduction of the subjects 2, 3, 8, 11, 12 and 17 would immensely benefit the boys in Board schools who are backward in Mental Arithmetic.

13. A major portion of the parents of the boys who are only the mechanical part of mankind and accountants in petty shops judge according to their own standard and prefer the pial schools; because, within 3 or 4 years, the boys are trained in the latter schools for being fit to be accountants in common trading, and because முந்திரிலக்கம், சுவட்டுலக்கம், எண்சுவடி and the cadjan writing are practically useful for the employment of the boys as accountants or servants in any ordinary shop in their manhood and even when they discontinue their studies on account of poverty before the completion of their course in the pial schools, whereas, a boy of the 4th standard in a Board School has yet to learn Mental Arithmetic before he enters the shops for an appointment.

14. The income derived generally by a pial school teacher, besides the clothes and fees, given at the initiation ceremony of the boys when put to school, is as follows:—

1. Instruction fee at every time when the boys begin a new book.
2. Monthly school fees.
3. A cow dung cake every noon.
4. Some salt every Friday.
5. Some oil every Saturday.
6. At least 3 pies for each boy previous to Amavasai (New-moon day) or Pouranamai (Full-moon day) for granting holidays.

7. (a) Some paddy for Vinayagar Chathurthi.
- (b) „ „ Thaipongal.
- (c) „ „ 1st of Chitrai month.
- (d) „ „ 1st of Audi.
- (e) „ „ Annual Karthikai.
- (f) „ „ Dipavali.
- (g) „ „ Saraswathi Puja.
- (h) „ „ Pathinettam Perukku.

8. Maharnombu.— This is a big item of income equal to grant. During the Durgai Pujah, the boys are trained in Kolattam and songs and dancing. The teacher takes all the boys from door to door, that is, to the houses of the parents and those of their friends or relatives although they may reside in distant villages. Thus, he will get from every one of them anything that is possible in money or in kind according to their means.

15. When we calculate the payment made by the boys to the teacher of a pial school, it will be double or treble that paid to the Board school teachers. The parents do not feel the heaviness of the fees paid to the pial school-master because the teacher collects the same little by little and piece-meal and does not press the parents for payment on or before a fixed date on that account. The teachers never strike out the names of the boys for default of payment of school fees, but collect the same long after they become due and sometimes after the boys have secured appointments. This is another convenience which induces the parents to prefer the pial schools to Board Schools.

16. Generally, as stated above, parents of the children in primary schools belong to the working class. Both the father and the mother leave their houses for out-door work early in the mornings. There is none to look after their children at home. Somebody has to take care of them. The pial school masters step in to aid them in this respect. They go to their houses at 6 A. M. and bring them to school. They hold the school from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. except the time for lunch; so, the children are kept away from home safely, till the parents return home from their work.

17. The teachers in Board Schools attend the same for some fixed hours. They do not care about the boys after the school hours. Their pay is very small and it is difficult to secure the services of good teachers. Professors have said that there should be a close personal tie between the teachers and the taught. The teachers should take a personal interest in the advancement of their students both in and out of school and should find opportunities for exchange of thoughts and thus pave the way for the elevation of their minds, for their social happiness, mental culture and future greatness. Undoubtedly, such close movements would immensely benefit the boys in Elementary Schools. "A man is known by the company he keeps." For the want of the teachers' surveillance over the boys (of course, parents have no time to supervise them as stated above), the boys indulge at all times in cockfight, in playing with marbles and iron balls, in gymnastics, in witnessing festivals all through the year, in collecting stamps and so on, and thus waste their precious time. By this, it is not meant that the boys should be kept engaged all the day without any recreation.

18. Civics and subjects of general information may be taught once a week, viz., Saturday, and only to the pupils above the 5th standard. Civics are taught in schools from the 3rd standard and the boys make a note of what is taught and get it by heart like a parrot and repeat the same. What earthly use could be expected from the cramming of these subjects? This usurps the time which can best be utilised in studying other useful subjects such as English, Arithmetic etc. Instead of this, the teachers may take the young boys belonging to the 3rd, 4th and 5th standards to Offices and Courts etc. on holidays and show them the Court House, Collector's Office, Tahsildar's Cutchary, Sub Magistrate's Office, Police Stations etc. and give the names of the officers therein employed and their respective duties etc.

19. The intelligent class of people in Towns and Villages are anxious to educate their children in English as well as in the Vernaculars. Up to the 3rd standard, Board Schools are on a par with Pial Schools in not having English and being inferior to them in point of arithmetic. In a vast majority of village schools, the 4th standard is not opened. Why should they prefer Board Schools to Pial Schools in which they have so many advantages as enumerated above while, in schools that have 4th standard, English is neglected unless the teacher is charitably disposed to help them in English? The Government have so far been pleased to modify the rule

regarding the admission of pupils that have passed the 4th standard examination in Elementary Schools to the 1st form of a Secondary School, if they are found fit on examination. The boys of the 4th standard in Elementary Schools will be fit for promotion to the 1st form in the secondary schools, only if the education given in the Elementary Schools is such as to meet the requirements in the 1st form in the secondary schools.

20. Further, a father may first have an idea of educating his son, only up to the 4th standard. But, on finding him to be very intelligent, industrious and good from experience, he may change his opinion and be encouraged to educate him to higher standards. In such cases, the boys reading in the Elementary Schools will be deficient in English and so will be found unfit for admission into the 1st form in the secondary schools. Thus there would be loss of time and money. Therefore, elementary education should not be restricted to the study of practical and industrial subjects but extended to that of literary subjects as well.

21. While writing the above, I happened to see the report of the Director of Public Instruction for 1909-1910 from which I quote the following:—

“The Government agree that all Secondary Schools should be provided with preparatory departments. But whether in this country, the marked distinction that is drawn elsewhere between elementary instruction and the elementary stage of secondary instruction can be maintained seems somewhat doubtful. Parents of children to whom they desire to give a secondary course of education are unwilling in many cases to send their children to schools at a long distance from their homes until the children have reached the stage in which they can be admitted to the upper form of the school and until the number of secondary schools is very much greater than at present. Unless children can receive their preparatory course in a primary school, they must reside away from their homes. In any case, however, all secondary schools should be provided with efficient preparatory departments. At the same time, the improvement of the quality of instruction given in the larger Elementary Schools is obviously a matter of great importance. The important measures of reform in secondary education which have already been introduced or are in contemplation have already been mentioned and considerable improvement may be hoped for in the near future. The first public examination under the scheme for the grant of secondary school leaving certificates would be held in March 1911.”

The above quotation gives rise to a suggestion that all the children may be made to receive education preparatory for the college course. The denomination Primary or Elementary education is at present restricted to education up to the 7th standard. Almost all the Primary schools do not possess classes up to the 7th standard, but only up to the 4th and so, primary education is not being given to the highest degree even as contemplated by the Government. My own humble opinion is, that Elementary Education should extend up to the 6th Form or 10th standard. I have expressed the view in my pamphlet in Tamil published so far back as in 1907 that Education up to the Matriculation class, should be considered as Elementary education, the reason being that knowledge in its true sense either in the Vernacular or in English is attained by a pupil only when he passes the Matriculation Examination. Just then, he attains the age of discretion and actually possesses some knowledge. A boy is incapable of understanding without much difficulty any book either in English or in the Vernacular connected with industry such as agriculture, mercantile or other business if he is taught the same before he passes the Matriculation Examination. For instance, a boy who passed the primary examination is admitted into a Technical Institute for being taught some industry or other. He is taught there both industry and some subjects which are equal to the subjects prescribed for the classes above the 4th standard in a primary school. The boys are said to be educated in industry here and after all, they pass some examinations in industry. What they are worth can better be imagined than described. I am sure and I know, as a matter of fact, that of the students who passed their examination in the Madura Technical Institute, from the time it was established, very very few have taken up as their profession in their practical life in manhood the industry in which they were trained and that many of them were in quest of appointments elsewhere in public offices such as Courts, Collector's Office etc. as peons and process-servers, for want of some Firm or workshop ready to receive them on a decent pay. On the other hand, supposing there is some Firm ready to employ them at once, what they have been taught in the Institute in Carpentry, Blacksmithy, Bell-metal works etc., they can make use of. They cannot improve their knowledge in the industry in which they have passed, for want of capacity in that direction to study higher books treating about industry. It is hopeless to expect anything like that. They would have bettered their position by studying the vernacular ஏன்சுவடி, குழிமாத்து etc. and going for employ-

ment under the Nattukottai Chetties who pay their trusted accountant from Re. 1/to Rs. 150/ and more. In this way, they are spoiled doubly.

22. In case the elementary schools are formed as preparatory schools for the collegiate course, then, those pupils who want to enter the Government service may pass the 'school leaving certificate examination' and enter that service and those who wish to become graduates may pass it or the Matriculation Examination and enter the College. In any case the boys of the present elementary schools being only in the initial stage to acquire knowledge should not be made to undergo training in industry with that limited knowledge as such a course will not prove advantageous to them in their manhood and as they are likely to forget even the little bit of knowledge they had acquired during a period when they had not attained the age of discretion.

23. Moreover, ~~the case of~~ such of the parents as live in the villages do not send their children to secondary schools in towns, on account of their young age and of their being generally fond of play, for fear of their life, for want of schools preparatory to secondary education, although they can afford as much money as is necessary.

24. The Inspecting Officer should be ~~made~~ ^{advised} to hold periodical examinations of the boys in the schools in all the subjects taught and award prizes to the successful pupils in the presence of their parents to create an incentive in the minds of the boys as well as of the parents. The present mode of Improvement Examination practically produces no effect. The Hindu boys generally strive to study well when there is a competition to secure a pass in the first class. They are not yet like those in the English Universities which not only provide facilities for education used in a much wider sense than the mere passing of examinations but also form a training ground so to say, for the students to prepare them as well as possible for the battle of life. Again, young men go to the English Universities to get culture and training and not merely to get degree. As a matter of fact there are many who never take a degree at all. In India, however, passing the examination is of the greatest importance and perhaps the only object of the College and the University life. It would take a pretty long time for the Indian students especially boys and girls in Elementary Schools to follow such a mode of study.

25. In these circumstances, this memorandum has been drawn up in the fervent hope that the existing Rules would be amended in conformity with the above suggestions by way of introducing the lamp of knowledge into the dark corners of the world and otherwise and thus a great boon conferred on the ever neglected helpless masses.

[E. & L.]

250-2-7-03.



NO 1339-1
14-5-12

From

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

Educational DEPARTMENT,

To

M. R. R. M. Parameswarum Pillai Aul
Municipal Councillor
~~Madura~~

DATED FORT ST. GEORGE,
OOTACAMUND

190

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Letter No. _____, dated
6th May 1912, which will receive due attention.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

7/5
11.5.12

Ca
14/5/12

15.5.12

P. J. O

Interact

NOTES. 9 Page 12

Educational Dept.

(Cuo. 1339)

Sp 13/5

Encl. 1339-2 8/14-5-12

Referred to the D.P.O.
for remarks.

T.H. Co
11-5-12 17/12

Let
15.5.12

To The D.P.O. with current
in original to be returned.

Recd
14/5/12

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Received

17 MAY 1912

190

, Registered

17-5-1902

Subject.

Returning with remarks papers received with Government Endorsement
No. 1339-2 Edl. dated 14th May 1912 on Memorandum regarding Primary
Education by Mr. M. Parameswaram Pillai, Municipal Councillor,
Madura.

ENCLOSURES.

No.

Spare copies

Ref on Tour Cur No. 16 /12

Station Ootacamund Dated the 17th May 19012

From (Name) The Hon'ble Mr. A.G. Bourne, D.Sc.F.R.S.C.I.E.,

(Designation) Director of Public Instruction,
Madras

To the Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Educational Department

Sir,

I have the honour to return your Endorsement No.
1339-2, Edl. dated 14th May 1912 with the suggestion that its
receipt be acknowledged.

It is a curious production and not altogether
intelligible.

The writer is not in sympathy with many of the
modern methods of education and perhaps rightly advocates more
attention to the multiplication table which "Kind of learning"
taxes not the brain".

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

A. G. Bourne

Director of Public Instruction.

N.V.S.

C. No. 1339 From the Mr. Parameswaram Pillai No. 11, dated 6-5-1912.

SUBJECT.

Elementary Education

V Mr. Parameswaram Pillai's memorandum on elementary education may be referred to the D.P.I. for remarks. For a precedent please see memo. no. 304-2 Edl dated 16-2-12.

2. A draft is submitted for approval.

A letter of acknowledgement is also submitted.

7H. CA
11-5-12 14/5/12

14/5/12

(memo no 1339-2 & 14-5-12)

From the D.P.I. Memo. 16/12 dated 17-5-1912

Mr. Parameswaram Pillai's letter has already been acknowledged. The papers may now be recorded. A draft is submitted for approval.

7H. CA
21-5-12 21-5-12

24/5/12

READ AGAIN G.O. No., dated 191 .

READ ALSO:—

C. No. 1339, From the Mr. Parameswaran Pillai No. , dated 6-5-1912.

77 77 1413 77 77 ~~D-P 2~~ 77 16/12 77 17-5-1912

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