

Government of Madras.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Recd.

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} 1915.

Enclosures

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G.O. No. 484, 5th May 1915.

Report.

Recording the — of the Dyeing Expert for the quarter ending the 31st March 1915.

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following paper :—

Letter—from K. T. B. TRESSLER, Esq., Director of Industries.
To—the Secretary to Government, Educational Department.
Dated—Madras, the 19th April 1915.
No.—26.

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of Dr. Marsden, the Tinctorial Expert, for the quarter ending 31st March 1915.

ENCLOSURE.

Letter—from F. MARSDEN, Esq., Ph.D., M.Sc., Dyeing Expert to the Government of Madras, Madura.
To—the Director of Industries, Madras.
Dated—Technical Institute, Madura, the 15th April 1915.
No.—38.

I have the honour to submit my report for the period January — March 1915.

In January and February I was on special duty in Madras in connection with the work of the Committee appointed to deal with the question of Industrial Education, and attended the meetings of the Conference which met at Delhi on February 22nd to discuss the Indigo question.

Dyeing had been scheduled as one of the subjects to be taken up under the proposed scheme of Industrial Education and I laid before the Sub-Committee appointed to deal with this branch a detailed syllabus of the instruction which should be given. Objection was raised by certain members that the subject matter was far beyond the comprehension of the ordinary weaver and would require a man to be of high intelligence and with a very good preliminary education to understand and assimilate the subject. This is true, but my point is that the time has come when, if any progress is to be made, Weaving and Dyeing must be separated and the weaver brought to realize that it is more economical to devote himself entirely to weaving and leave the dyeing to those who make a whole time business of it, study the question, keep in touch with the changes in colours and methods which are taking place and, dyeing in bulk, can do the work more cheaply and efficiently than those who dye irregularly, in small quantities, and mostly by wasteful and unsuitable methods.

The question was raised whether it was not possible to formulate a course of instruction of a practical character which would serve to improve the dyeing methods of the weavers who now prepared their own dyed yarns. I said that it was, but I would not promise any lasting benefit, for it would be simply perpetuating the prevalent rule of thumb idea of dyeing and give no hope of progress in the future. The sections of the syllabus in which practical instruction might alone be given were indicated but a trained European dyer who had been co-opted on the sub-committee remarked that a course following such an abridged syllabus could not be called "instruction in dyeing" and that the original syllabus drawn up by me appeared to him to embody the minimum course which would be of real use. The sub-committee finally decided that dyeing did not appear to be a subject for Industrial Education but was Technological. An abridged syllabus has however been prepared, according to which instruction may be given to weavers who have qualified for the higher certificate under the industrial education scheme but the instruction should be strictly limited to this class and I am distinctly opposed to making such teaching available to all and sundry, training the masses to compete with the multitude, and with it all doing nothing that can be of benefit towards the industrial development of the country.

As I stated in my original report upon the condition in this Presidency, to run a dyeing business requires technical knowledge, business capacity and capital and it is a waste of energy training men who are deficient in all three respects.

The evidence we have of men wasting years in training for a sphere in which there is little or no hope of finding employment confirms me in the idea that the soundest plan for the present is to restrict instruction to those individuals who are intimately connected with the trade and are in a position to put to practical use the knowledge which they gain.

Since the commencement of the war there is no industry I think which has suffered so much as that of dyeing, for it had come to rely almost entirely upon imported materials for meeting its requirements. Indigenous materials which were used in the past are not available in sufficient quantity to meet even a fraction of the requirements and the demands, since their day, have so widened that it is out of the question to think of such materials meeting the requirements of the present. It is true that stocks of imported dyewares are still available to some extent, but prices have risen so much that even with the fall in the price of cotton there has been but little demand, and the alteration in the conditions of trade from a credit to a cash system has still further tended to restrict the market for weavers and dyers.

It was thought that some relief might be obtained from the importation of dyewares from England but the demand there is so great that prices are up and it is doubtful whether under such conditions much relief would be obtained. It appears that the demand for munitions of war are such that competent labour is scarce and it has been so far impossible materially to increase the output of Alizarine, for example, which is the individual dyestuff imported in largest quantity here.

The idea that this dependence upon outside products ought to cease, and that dyewares should be manufactured in this country has of course again found expression, but experience of the position in western countries should I think finally dispose of any attempts in that direction being made. In England, the United States, France, Russia and Austria dye manufacturing firms are and have been in existence for years, but they never have attained the size or enjoyed the reputation of the German and Swiss Works and if with all the advantages over India possessed by these countries German works were able, in spite of their competition, to supply 85 per cent. of the world's dyestuff consumption, and even England imported 90 per cent. of its requirements, it would be futile to think of founding any works in India, where all the requirements of the industry are lacking.

In one of my Journals received just before the war I found the report of a meeting of the Vienna section of the Association of textile colorists at which the dyestuff position in Austria was dealt with. The views are those of an expert and I give a translation of them without comment :—

"Extract from a reference by C. Grosner on the renewal of the Tariff and Commercial Treaties :—Dr. Grosner characterised the increase of the taxes on Azo, Sulphur and Basic colours in 1907 as an injustice severely felt by a textile industry which already suffered from unfavourable conditions. Before 1907, there was only a small tax of 30 per ton and the increase was made with the object of assisting the home colour industry, founded at a period when tariffs in general were low.

"The hope that the increased tariff would be of material assistance has been doomed to disappointment, for a large well known Chemical firm which made arrangements to manufacture colours on a large scale has, in spite of the expenditure of much money and energy, been forced to close down this branch owing to the heavy losses incurred. The Protective Duties have proved of no benefit to the manufacturing industries but they remain as an incubus in the form of a fiscal tax on the consuming textile industries.

"Since the question of colour production could not be successfully solved even in conjunction with the manufacture of heavy Chemicals, Dr. Grosner considers that there can be no possibility of manufacturing Synthetic dyes in Austria in the near future and mentions the hindrances and obstacles which in his opinion are responsible.

"He places first the absence of sufficient quantities of the necessary raw material of a satisfactory degree of purity and at a price so low that it would be possible to use it with any prospect of profit, and the impossibility of producing this necessary raw material in the country.

"Secondly he refers to the lack of experience on the Technical and Commercial sides, without which there can be no rational organization for the control of the Manufacturing and Sales Departments.

"Then he speaks of the special apparatus required for colour manufacture, the construction of which should take place practically on the spot to meet the special conditions, and its form developed to meet the ever-changing production.

"Next he refers to patents, and points out how all new and valuable colours are protected by the makers and new comers are at first thrown back on to old, patent free articles in which competition is keen and profits low, and finally he refers to the competition from the German Empire, in the factories of which practically 85 per cent. of the dyestuff consumption of the world is manufactured.

"He draws attention to the fact that even in States like England and America, with highly developed Chemical Industries and old established colour-producing works, these latter have not progressed like the German ones, are not able to meet the colour requirements of their own countries and their products are not met with in the world's market.

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Report

Recording the report of the Dyering report for the quarter ending the 31st March 1915.

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