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G.O. No. 586 Edl. mis

DATED 4-6-15

[Despatch Abstract.]

School-going population

Recording office notes on the question
of the Calculation of the ———
at 15 per cent of the total population

1915.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *The Hindu*
 2. Published at— *Madras*
 3. Dated— *24-4-15*

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION.

THE IMPETUS GIVEN TO THE EXPANSION of elementary education in India in the year 1911, has received a rude set-back owing to circumstances over which the Government of India had no control, so far as the carrying out of their policy is concerned. The result is that in all the provinces, a complete relaxation of efforts for the cause is the most prominent feature noticeable, the local administrations waiting for the time when the Government of India would feel strong enough to distribute what doles they could spare for the purpose. The case for the modest Elementary Education Bill of the late lamented Mr. GOKHALE was rested on the view that the voluntary system, however energetically pursued, was foredoomed to failure, and though the Government agreed that compulsory and free elementary education was the ideal, financial considerations rendered it impossible for them to introduce that principle at present. It must be frankly admitted that the rate of progress, though it is faster now than in previous years is frightfully slow, if the state of ignorance in the country is taken into consideration. We believe that this fact is readily recognised by the authorities, though statements often appear which show that a few officials hesitate to accept the truth of this disagreeable fact. For instance, two Members of the Imperial Legislative Council referred to the small educational progress which had been made in India during the years subsequent to the initiation of the liberal policy in the year 1911, which was only very feebly attempted to be refuted. It was stated that while according to the quinquennial report on Indian Education 27 per cent. of the population were at school in 1911, we had 3 per cent. present. The percentage of children to those of school-going age, was only 19.6 per cent., a miserably low figure when compared with the state of things in other countries. One important consideration which should be borne in mind is that this figure of 19.6 per cent. has been calculated on the assumption that the population of school

going age in India is 15 per cent. of the total population. This figure, however, has been arbitrarily adopted by official orthodoxy on some curious considerations which are set out in the last quinquennial report. There are a number of factors which determine this percentage, such, for instance, as the number of years which may be reckoned as representing a reasonable time to be spent in school, the ages which begin and end this period, the proportion of population which is at any time included between those ages and the number of those who stay in schools for a period beyond this interval. According to Indian official opinion, where the bulk of the population is agricultural the period of education, it would appear, is 'necessarily' shorter than under more complicated conditions, and we are also told that the amount of education required is less. After the enunciation of this rule, the fixing of this irreducible period of education between five and 11 or between five and 12 is easy, and so we arrive at the percentage of 15. On this view, 17.7 per cent. of the population of school-going age were at school in 1911, as against, on the one hand, 14.8 in 1906 and against, on the other, 19.6 at present. This proportion by itself sufficiently demonstrates the low position which India occupies. But, if the reasons for arriving at this percentage of 15 as representing the number of children of school-going age are examined, the disparity becomes still more marked. This arbitrary figure has often been challenged, and the accomplished editor of the *Modern Review* returns to the charge in the current number of that journal. It is found that in almost all the States in America, the enrolment in elementary schools alone much exceeds 15 per cent. reaching as much as 26.43 per cent. at least in one case. Pupils in a country, where education and enlightenment have greatly developed, stay longer in schools than is the case elsewhere, so that it is wrong to set such rigorous limits to the period of school-life as is done by the authorities in India. Similar figures for other countries are as follows: Austria 15.30; the German Empire 16.30; England and Wales 16.84; Scotland 17.74; Ireland 16.16; Holland 15.42, Nova Scotia 21.12. In the darkest Russia it is 3.77, while in British India it is 1.89. The editor therefore

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says that as in one State of America, the actual proportion of persons under instruction is 27.28 per cent. of the entire population, "it would be nearer the truth to fix the possible maximum population of school-going age at 30 per cent. of the whole population." The necessity for refuting the clear underestimate of the Government is obvious, because, when for instance only one-fourth of the road has been travelled, the Government, under the influence of the arbitrary standard which they have laid down for themselves, may say that half of it has been accomplished and then exaggerate, unwittingly, the extent of their work. The prescribing of a shorter period of school life in agricultural countries, naturally provokes criticism. It is preposterous to say that the attainment of general knowledge and pursuit of culture should, in this country, be confined to certain types of humanity or to those who pursue certain specified occupations. It is also a fact, referred to already, that in other essentially agricultural countries such as France, certain States in America, Ireland and Canada, the percentage of pupils in elementary schools alone is much above 15 per cent. The reasoning adopted by officials in India, to minimise the importance of a wide diffusion of education is unreal in the extreme, untrue in its essentials and inapplicable so far as other agricultural countries are concerned. And the application of the false doctrine therefore to India can only be defended on the assumption, as the editor says, that 'India is India', an invulnerable argument, the last resort of defeated officialdom.

MR
26.4.15

Superintendent.

What do you say to this argument against the 15 per cent. calculation?

P.R.
29-4-15.

Submitted that the 15 per cent. in question has been adopted at the instance of the Government of India. The question of its correctness has been examined on several occasions; and it has been considered desirable to adopt this figure.

2. In his Review of Education in India, 1886, Sir Alfred Croft (Director of Public Instruction, Bengal) raised this question. He observed in para. 94 of his report as follows:--

"94. Meaning of the "School-going Age".--

"The figures for the Parsi population are striking. The Parsis numbered 67,531 in the Bombay Presidency at the last census; and 15 per cent. of that number gives 10,130 as the number of children of school-going age. The number of Parsi children at public schools in

"... either that Parsi children are
"kept at school for a longer term than is com
"with other sections of the people, or that
"accepted proportion of 15 per cent. is too l
"for India. The statistics of population and
"the average duration of life in India appear
"lend support to the second alternative. The
"English ratio of 15 per cent. was arrived at
"in the following way. It was ascertained (1)
"nearly 11 per cent. of the population were
"between the ages of 6 and 12, (2) that of the
"school population 70 per cent. were between
"6 and 12 and 30 per cent. above or below those
"limits; whence it followed, by a not very cog
"inference, that about 15 per cent. of the whol
"population (as 70: 100: 11: 15) ought to be
"at school. This method of calculation has now
"been abandoned in England. The present method
"assumes (1) that 23.73 of the population are
"between the ages of 3 and 13, (2) that about
"one-seventh of these are children of the middle
"and upper classes who do not attend schools
"working under the Code. Hence about 20 per cent
"of the population ought to be on the registers
"of public elementary schools, and that ratio is
"now taken to represent the children of school-
"going age. In India there is no need to make
"any deduction for scholars of the middle and
"upper classes, since about them we have full
"information. The census returns show that
"26 per cent. of the population of India are

"between 5 and 15 years of age, and between these
"limits lie the ages of the vast majority of
"scholars in India. But it by no means follows
"that the vast majority of scholars are at school
"for the whole period between 5 and 15 years. Some
"remain for ten years and even longer; but it is
"probable that five years more nearly represent
"the normal duration of school life for the ~~general~~
"generality of Indian scholars, some beginning
"earlier and some later within those limits. Thus
"the people as a whole would be fully educated
"according to their needs, even though the returns
"showed that only half the population, from 5 to
"15 years of age, were at any given time at school.
"It follows that, under any ordinary acceptance
"of the limits of ^{the} school age, we can never expect
"to work up to anything like the full percentage
"as regards the agricultural and labouring classes,
"however freely schools may be multiplied. On the
"other hand among a people so advanced and generally
"so wealthy as the Parsis, it is antecedently pro-
"bable not only that all the children are edu-

"school is not less than 9,300.

"In any case, it appears that the assumed proportion of 15 per cent. is too low for India. Children from 5 to 15 years of age form 15 per cent. of the population and from 5 to 15 years of age 11 per cent; whence it follows that from 5 to 12 years of age the proportion would be about 20 per cent. That seems on the whole to be a fairer proportion to take. On the one hand we cannot expect the masses of the people to remain at school more than five years, but up to five years we should endeavour to teach them there if they are to receive a sound primary education. On the other hand the margin left will provide for and include that large number of scholars who carry on their education to the secondary and collegiate stages. Applying this proportion of 20 per cent to the case of Hindus, and making the necessary deduction for girls, we find that about 15 per cent. of the Hindu male population of school-going age are actually at school. The balance of 85 per cent. represents those backward castes and sections of the people who have no school-going traditions, and also those scholars who attend school for less than five years."

The Government of India in their resolution dealing with this review assumed that the conventional 15 per cent. was correct for India. With regard to Sir Alfred Croft's observation they merely observed "in Western countries it is commonly assumed that children of a school-going age form 15 per cent. of the population. In paragraph 94 of the report, Sir Alfred Croft seems inclined to hold that for India that proportion is somewhat less than the reality."

3. In the report on Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for 1890 - 91, Dr. Duncan the then Director of Public Instruction referred to this question in the following terms:- "The number of pupils of school-going age is generally taken at 15 per cent. of the population. - "Detailed statistics of the population, according to ages, with "are not available, but I am inclined to think, ~~which is~~ "Sir Alfred Croft (vide para 94 of the Review of Education "in India in 1886) that 20 per cent. or one-fifth, is nearer "the mark than 15 per cent."

He returned to the charge in his report ~~of~~ for the subsequent year and observed as follows:-

"Under the orders of the Government of India, 15 per cent. of the total population has been taken as the population of school-going age approximately, and all calculations and conclusions in the previous Chapters have been based on this datum. In para 183 of my last report I observed that 20 per cent. would be nearer the mark than 15 per cent. The adoption of one and the same percentage, however, to represent the number of pupils that ought to be in each of the different stages of instruction, struck me as prima facie incorrect and misleading. With a view, therefore, to ascertain, as approximately as possible, the number of young people that ought to be in each such stage, I requested the Superintendent of Census to be good enough to tabulate the male and female population into six groups according

para 183 of the
report for 1890-91

para 177 of the report
for 1891-92.

From 5 to 9
From 10 to 14
From 15 to 19
From 20 to 24
25 and above.

"the completion of their fourth year

"The primary stage consists of a five

"years' course, and, considering the elementary character

"of several ~~stand~~ of the standards, a period of five

"years may fairly be assumed to embrace the time during

"which children are, or should be, in the primary stage

"of instruction. The lower secondary and upper secondary

"stages consist each of a three years' course; but pupils

"of average abilities do not often complete either course

"in three years. Allowing for failure to get regular

"annual promotion from ~~Form~~ Form to Form, a period of

"five years may be taken as the general duration of

"instruction in each of these stages. A similar period

"of five years may be taken as the general duration of

"the collegiate stage of instruction. These limits have

"been carefully considered with reference to the average

"of candidates for the various public tests, and also

"with reference ^{to} what seemed to me in the interests of

"the rising generation to be the most judicious division

"of the years that may be devoted to school and college

"life. There is, no doubt, a tendency to enter Upper

"Secondary and Collegiate studies at too early an age,

"and to hurry through ~~them~~ at a pace which is not conducive

"to solid and lasting attainments.

"The population, male and female, according to the

"above periods of life, is given below with the per-

"centages of population under each stage to the total

"population:---

Periods of life.	Male population.		Female population.	
	Total.	Percentage to total.	Total.	Percentage to total.
to 4	2,591,549	14.71	2,726,418	15.14
to 9	2,434,093	13.81	2,408,576	13.37
to 14	1,895,566	10.75	1,651,286	9.17
to 19	1,449,168	8.23	1,400,994	7.77
to 24	1,437,541	8.16	1,741,146	9.67
and above and not stated.	7,811,478	44.34	8,082,625	44.88
Total.	17,619,395		18,011,045	..

"It will be seen from the above that the 15 per cent. limit does not apply to any one period of school life, much less does it apply to all the stages of instruction taken together.

"178. The number of boys between the ages of 5 and 9 both inclusive was 2,434,093, and the number of boys under -- instruction in public primary schools and classes at the close of the year was 496,833. There were besides 55,766 boys reading in private and indigenous schools, and, to know exactly how many children were actually under instruction, these should also be taken into account. Districts stand in the following order according to the proportion of boys under primary instruction to the total population of primary school-going age as above defined:-

District.	Children of primary school-going age.	Number of boys under primary instruction.	Percentage of pupils population.
x	x	x	x
x	x	x	x
Total.	2,434,093	552,599	

In reviewing this report this Government observer

"The ... in paragraphs 177 and 178 of

"age does not even approximate the real --
"proportions calculated by the Director of Public Instruction
"it appears that 23 per cent. of the boys of primary school-
"going age were under instruction in primary schools and --
"classes in 1891-92, the rate varying from 12 per cent. in
"Vizagapatam to 75 per cent. in Madras. It also appears
"that only 1.2 per cent. of the boys of lower secondary --
"school-going age were receiving lower secondary instruction;
"that only .59 per cent. of the boys of Upper Secondary
"school-going age were under instruction in Upper Secondary
"institutions; and that only .26 per cent. of males of --
"college-going age attended Arts Colleges. These figures
"show clearly the rudimentary state of education in the --
"Presidency. While however the Director's figures show --
"that the 15 per cent. of the population ordinarily assumed
"under-rates the numbers of children of school-going age,
"the Government would not follow the Director in striking
"separate proportions for the several stages of study.

4. With reference to the above the following appears
in the second Quinquennial Review showing the progress of
education in India ~~for~~ 1887-88 to 1891-92:-

" 13. MEANING OF "SCHOOL-GOING AGE". In the last Review
"Sir Alfred Croft discussed the question what proportion of
"the entire population be regarded as of school-going age
"and arrived at the conclusion that the assumed proportion
"of 15 per cent. was too low and that 20 per cent. would be
"nearer the truth, this being approximately the proportion
of

"Director of Public

Instruction

"Government has invited the particular attention of the
"Government of India to his remarks on the subject in the
"Report for 1891-92. Dr. Duncan agrees with Sir Alfred
"Croft that 20 per cent. is a better approximation than
"15 per cent., but apparently considers even this number too
"low. He reckons that on the average a boy may be expected
"to spend five years in each of the four stages of instruc-
"tion - primary, middle, high and collegiate - and takes
"4 and 24 years as the average limits of the school-going
"age: over 40 per cent. of the entire population fall within
"these limits. Five years may be taken to be a fair
"average for primary and collegiate stages, but in the two
"secondary stages together the average ought to be nearer
"7 than 10 years. In Madras the secondary course is sup-
"posed to last six years and in other provinces it varies
"from 4 to 7 years. Even for Madras the average does not
"appear to be above 7 years, for half of the successful
"candidates in the Matriculation Examination of 1891-92 were
"under 17 years of age, and the percentage of passes was
"much higher among the candidates under 17 than among those
"over 17. This however does not materially affect the
"question which really turns upon the proper meaning to be
"assigned to the term "school-going age" and I am inclined
"to think the term is altogether inapplicable to India. In
"all the statistics based upon the assumed proportion of 15
"per cent. what is really required is a comparison of the
"number of children actually at school with the number of
"children who ought to be under instruction if a suitable
"system of education could be provided for all classes of
"the community. In England every child between certain

"limits of age ought to be under instruction so that a
"fixed and definite meaning can be assigned to the school-
"going age. In India education is not compulsory and --
"there are no limits of age prescribed by law so that the
"term loses its definite meaning. Assuming that the number
"of children of school-going age is synonymous with the
"number of children who ought to be under instruction, the
"arguments used by Sir Alfred Croft seem to show that 15
"per cent. is a very fair proportion to take and if it errs
"at all it is a little too high. For the great bulk of the
"population including almost the whole of the rural popula-
"tion the education given in a primary school is all that
"is necessary and perhaps all that is desirable. The
"primary course lasts five years and boys ~~are~~ attend
"school between the ages of 5 and 15. "Thus the people as
"a whole would be fully educated according to their needs,
"even though the returns showed that only half the popula-
"tion from 5 to 15 years of age were at any given time at
"school". Half the number of children between those
"limits would be about $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the entire popula-
"tion so that for the classes for whom a primary education
"is sufficient, this is an approximation to the number of
"children who ought to be at school. Among the more --
"highly educated classes of the community the number of
"children under instruction ought to rise to 30 or perhaps
"35 per cent; but as these classes form a very small
"proportion of the population of India the average for all
"classes would not rise above 15 per cent. and probably
"would not exceed 14 per cent.

5. The Hon'ble Mr. Sharp in his sixth Quinquennial review of the Progress of Education in India for 1907-1912 again ~~reix~~ reverted to this question and came to the conclusion that it would be preferable to adopt the 15 per cent. limit. The reasons which led him to this conclusion were ~~described in the following manner:-~~

"The school-going population has been calculated
"in India as 15 per cent of the population. Doubts
"have recently been cast upon this conventional figure
"The calculation ~~depends~~ depends upon the number of
"years which may be reckoned as representing a reason-
"able time for education, the age which begin and end
"this period, and the proportion of the population
"which is at any time included between these ages.
"On the one hand, in a country which is tropical and
"sub-tropical, the proportion of the population con-
"tained in the earlier age-periods is larger than in
"cold climates. On the other hand where the bulk of
"the population is agricultural, the period of education
"is necessarily shorter than under more complicated social
"conditions, and the amount of education required ~~is less~~
"is less. The actual time spent under primary instruction
"is, so far as the figures adduced in Chapter VIII can
"show 3.8 years. This period however, cannot be taken as
"sufficient to secure permanent results; for the figures
"of literacy warrant the assumption that many of these
"who receive education relapse into illiteracy. The Pri-
"mary course (and this is all that need be considered)
"ordinarily occupies from 5 to 6 years; and the average
"age of school-life is from the completion of the fifth
"to the completion of the eleventh or twelfth year. These
"ages include (if we reckon to the end of the ~~twelfth~~
"eleventh year) 13.7 per cent. of the population. (at
"end of the twelfth

"16 per cent. The old figure of 15 per cent, may
"therefore be taken as fairly correct."

6. It may also be noted in this connection that this
percentage is being adopted in other provinces also.

7. It will be seen from the above extracts that the
question now raised in the article had been considered on
several occasions previously and that it was finally de-
cided to accept for the present 15 per cent. as the pro-
portion of the population of school-going age. The ~~XXXXXX~~
arguments advanced in the article are only based on a com-
parison with other countries. The quinquennial review for
1887-88 to 1891-92 meets this and points out the special
circumstances of this country which distinguish it from
others in this respect,

It may however be observed that this subject was
also discussed at the conference of the inspecting officers
held at Ootacamund in June 1914. It is reported that the
President (Mr. Stone) "was of opinion that this question of
school age ought to be specifically investigated and the
Government of India subsequently addressed and requested
to take some other figure than 15 per cent. if the ~~xxxx~~ in-
vestigation indicated that 15 per cent. was not a correct
estimate". Thus ~~there~~ there is likelihood of the question

178 900
17.2.16
(4)

again. The result of this

be awaited.

CR
29.5.15

10

HE

This is an interesting note.
HE would probably like
to read it. Heri is looking
to be done now in the matter.

Boo no 20
27.5.15

27/5/15

Read with interest.

P
27/5



Submitted that these notes may be recorded
for future reference.

31.5.15 CR
31.5.15

2.6.15
4.6.15

up for this
has been removed

16

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