



AN ESSAY

ON

COMPULSORY MASS EDUCATION

IN INDIA

AS-00522

CSL



"A PUNJABEE STUDENT THINKER."

2.80.00



A8-005223

CSL

DR. S. K. MULLICK'S

PRIZE ESSAY

4

ON

COMPULSORY MASS EDUCATION
IN INDIA

JUDGES { THE HON'BLE Mr. G. K. Gokhale
THE HON'BLE Mr. Sarada Charn
Mitter retired Judge High Court
Calcutta.

BY

L. RAM DHAN B. A. LL. B.

Pleader Ferozapore City.

PRINTED AT
THE "NEWS PRESS," LAHORE.

1912

D. 80.00



CSL

PREFACE.

Last year when the enthusiasm of the public over the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's bill was at its height, Dr. S. K. Mullick, the eminent physician of Calcutta, announced a prize of Rs. 100 for the best and *most practical* essay on compulsory and free education. In response to the advertisement, the following essay was written and was ultimately pronounced to be the best, by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and Hon'ble Mr. S. C. Mitter retired Judge, High Court Calcutta, to whose judgment all the essays were submitted for final adjudication. The Hon'ble Mr. Mitter characterised the essay as 'Very good' while the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale remarked "He is the only man who really understands the subject." Conscious of the fact that the appreciation of these two gentlemen who occupy a pre-eminently high position in India is a guarantee that my essay will command the acceptance of the public and receive the imprimatur of public applause, I nevertheless submit it to the judgment of the public and if I realise that my humble efforts succeed in enlightening public opinion on this burning topic of the day I will give to the public my other essay on Joint family system for which I was awarded Rs. 200 by H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda.

RAM DHAN, B. A., L.L. B.,

Pleader.



CHAPTER I.

Present Position and advisability of free and compulsory mass education.

Introductory.—Though India had once attained to a civilisation unmatched by any contemporary nation the vicissitudes of time ultimately rendered her unfit to keep pace with the march of civilisation. Since the advent of British Rule in India and a partial transplantation of western institutions in India, an electric touch was administered and signs of awakening began to appear and India has begun to reverbrate with new life and new aspirations, but like the first rays of the sun which glints the topmost mountain peaks, it is only the upper classes that have been privileged to partake in the rousing of the nation, while the mass of voiceless millions is submerged in cymmerian darkness of ignorance. Of the various influences imported from the west, education on western lines has had a principal share in restoring some vitality to the Indian nation. India has yet not been able to reach the watermark of civilisation attained by her rulers or other nations and in the Derby of intellectual race is seriously lagging behind while other nations, more gifted not by heredity, are rushing fast to the winning goal. The struggle for existence and the stern realities of life are telling very seriously on the corporate life of India and the social and economic conditions of India are a standing proof that India is menaced with extinction, if the



condition of the illiterate and ignorant masses which are a dead weight to the advancing community of educated persons is not ameliorated, so as to raise the moral and economic efficiency and the level of intelligence of the general community.

It is a bare truism to say that education is the touchstone of a nation's greatness. The dissemination of higher education on a large scale among the masses is a practical impossibility, and if we study the history of any country, we shall find that the key of its success and achievement in civilisation and national prosperity lies in the organisation on a large scale of a system of free and at times compulsory elementary education on national lines. Elementary education to the masses is a potent instrument in raising a nation in civilisation.

The aims of elementary school life.

1. The purpose of the public elementary school is to form and strengthen the character and to develop the intelligence of the children entrusted to it and to make the best use of the school years available in assisting both boys and girls according to their different needs to fit themselves practically as well as intellectually for the work of life.

2. With this purpose in view it will be the aim of the school to train the children carefully in habits of observation and clear reasoning so that they may gain an intelligent acquaintance with some of the facts and laws of nature, to arouse in them a loving interest, in the ideal and achievements of mankind and to bring them



some familiarity with the literature and history of their own country, to give them some power over language as an instrument of thought and expression and while making them conscious of the limitation of their knowledge to develop in them such a taste for good reading and thoughtful study as will enable them to increase that knowledge in after years by their own efforts (cf. the remark of the Maharaja of Dharbanga in the Supreme Legislative Council in his speech on Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Bill.)

3. The school must at the same time encourage to the utmost the children's natural activity of hand and eyes by suitable forms of practical work and manual instruction and afford them every opportunity for the healthy development of their bodies, not only by training them in appropriate physical exercises and encouraging them in organised games but also by instructing them in the workings of some simple laws of health.

4. It will be an important though a subsidiary object of the school to discover individual children who show promises of exceptional capacity and to develop their special gifts (so far as this can be done without sacrificing the interest of the majority of the children) so that they may be qualified to pass at the proper age into Secondary Schools and be able to derive the maximum of benefit from the education there offered them.

5. And though their opportunities are but brief, the teacher can yet do much to lay the foundation of

conduct. They can endeavour by example and influence aided by sense of discipline which should pervade the school to implant in the children habits of industry, self control, and courageous, perseverance in the face of difficulties. They can teach them to reverence what is noble to be ready for self sacrifice and to strive their utmost after purity and truth. They can foster a strong respect for duty and that consideration and respect for others which must be the foundation of unselfishness and true basis of all good manners while the corporate life of the school, especially in the play ground should develop that instinct for fair play and for loyalty for one another which is the germ of a wider sense of honor in later life.

6. In all these endeavours the school should enlist as far as possible, the interest and co-operation of the parents and the home in a united effort to enable the children not merely to reach their full development as individuals but also to become upright and useful members of the community in which they live and worthy sons and daughters of the country to which they belong.

The great necessity therefore of the present day is to make the public fully appreciate the immense inheritance of good primary school, and it would be rank heresy to say that Indian People as a whole are not as yet prepared to have those qualities engendered in them which is the aim of the school to develop. It must however, be borne in mind that the day when a boy



enters college is less important than the morning when the poorest little urchin creeps timidly in the lower primary school. A Marconi catching the faintest flutter of a signal out over a wireless sea is of less significance than the six years' old child in the Primary School to-day who will give the world some invention as far beyond Marconi's as his is beyond Cyrus W. Fields Serpentine Cable. There are a thousand fold more wonderful things in germ in Elementary Schools than are being discovered by all the men in the laboratories of the world.

Indians have a capacity to do everything that may become a man and inspite of their labouring under a great disadvantage of carrying on their studies through the medium of foreign languages they are beating their western compeers on their own ground in the great educational centres of the west. Then let us enquire where lies the clue to the ever growing degeneracy of the Indian life, Indian manner, Indian trade and Indian everything. The reason is that Indians are being denied the full share of advantage accruing from public elementary schools. The contrast between India and other advanced countries will be brought into more vigorous relief if we examine a brief history or statistical returns of Public elementary schools of other countries and compare them with those of India.

England.—The statistical returns of Public elementary education for the year ending August 31st, 1900, show that while the population of England and Wales

was 325,260,756 there were 31,313 separate departments under head teachers, of which 4,060 were for boys, 3,912 for girls, 15,300 for boys and girls mixed, and 8,041 for infants only. The total number on the register were :— In Church of England schools, 23,00,150; in Wesleyan schools, 156,666; in Roman Catholic schools, 316,769; In British unsectarian schools, 269,421; and in schools under School Boards, 2,662,669. Thus the total of Registered Scholars is 5,705,675. Accommodation was provided for 6,544,092 or about 20.11 per cent of the estimated population. The staff of the teachers was composed of 64,038 certificated masters and mistresses, 32,436 adult assistants, 29,393 pupil teachers and 17,512 additional assistants.

France.—One of the articles of the Constitution of 1831 asserts definitively the principal of liberty of instruction. Private and individual enterprize and initiation are therefore not forbidden but owing to the completeness of State provision for Primary, Secondry, academic technical instruction there is little room for such an enterprize and therefore hardly any private schools exist. The returns for 1899 show that a total of 940,370 children or nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population are in attendance in primary school.

Holland.—A Dutch law of 1857, established throughout the Netherlands an excellent system of national education. Secular teaching was to be endowed with public funds, 730,688 children are receiving primary education, total population is 5,0742,632 (1898-1899).



Germany.—In Mathew Arnold's reports to the School Enquiry Commission in 1866, he said.—'The school system of Germany in its completeness and carefulness is such as to excite the foreigners' admiration ! there is in fact no country in Europe in which more skill, statesmanship and public spirit have been brought to bear on national education. So early as 1648 the General Synod of Wurtemberg recognised that parents should send their children to school. Similar regulations were enforced in Saxony in 1764, in Prussia in 1736 and in Bavaria in 1802. The Prussian constitution of 1850 declares that adequate provision for the education of the young is made by means of public school and that parents and their representatives may not have their children and foster children without the instruction prescribed for Public elementary schools. So early as 1794, the Allegemenies Landrecht formally declared schools and universities to be state institutions. In 1808, there were established a special section of the Home Office for worship and public instruction and from the year 1817, this section has been separated from the Home Office and constituted an independent education department. Nearly 17 per cent. of the whole population is receiving elementary education.

Switzerland with its small population of 2,993,334 has been distinguished for its educational efforts and resources. An article in the constitution requires that throughout the cantons, Primary education shall be obligatory and in public school gratuitous.



Twenty per cent. of the whole population is receiving elementary education.

Japan organised her education in 1870 only and has 95 per cent. of the whole population who can read and write while in India 95 per cent. cannot read or write.

India, we shall find that India is nowhere in comparison with these advanced countries. Education in India, in the modern sense of the term may be said to date from the year 1854, when the Court of Directors in a memorable despatch definitively accepted the systematic promotion of general education as one of the duties of the State and emphatically declared that the type of education which they desired to see extended in India was that which had for its object the diffusion of the Arts, Sciences, Literature of Europe, in short of European knowledge. They announced their decision that Government should actively assist in the more extended and systematic promotion of general education in India. They regarded it as a sacred duty to confer upon the natives of India those vast moral and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge. They hoped by means of education to extend the influence which the Government was exerting for the suppression of demoralising practices, by enlisting in its favor the general sympathy of the native mind. They also sought to create a supply of public servants to whose probity offices of trust might with increased confidence be committed and to promote the mutual interests of the country by stimulating its inhabitants to



develop its vast resources. The measures which were prescribed for carrying out this policy were :—

- (1) The constitution of a department of public instruction ;
- (2) The foundations of universities at the Presidency towns ;
- (3) The establishment of training school for teachers ;
- (4) The maintenance of existing Government Colleges and school of a higher order and the increase of their number if necessary ;
- (5) Increased attention to all forms of vernacular schools ;
- (6) And finally the introduction of a system of grants-in-aid which should foster a spirit of reliance upon local exertions.

The policy laid down in 1844, was reaffirmed in 1859, and Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, were incorporated in 1857, and those of Punjab, Allahabad in 1881 and 1887, respectively. As a result of these continuous efforts we find in existence to-day a system of public instruction the influence of which extends in varying degrees to every part of India and is upon the whole powerful for good. Provisions were also made for studies in Art and Oriental learnings and for Professional course of Law, Medicine, Engineering, Teaching and Agriculture.



Primary Education.

Primary education was defined as the instruction of the masses through the vernaculars in such subjects as will best stimulate their intelligence and fit them for position in life. It was found as early as 1854, that the consideration of measures to this end had been too much neglected and a considerable increase of expenditure on primary education was contemplated. The Education Commission in 1883 recommended that the elementary education of the masses, its provision, extension and improvement, should be that part of the educational system to which the *strenuous* efforts of the state should be directed in a still larger measure than before. The Government of India fully *accepted* the proposition that the active extension of primary education was one of the most important duties of the state. They undertook this responsibility not merely on general grounds but because as Lord Lawrence observed in 1868 "among all the sources of difficulty to our administration and of possible danger to the stability of our Government, there are few as serious as the ignorance of the people." The Government of India in elaborating its policy (educational) in 1904 thus observe ; "To the people themselves moreover, the lack of education is now a more serious disadvantage than it was once in primitive days." By the extension of Railways, the economic side of agriculture in India, has been greatly developed and the cultivator has been brought into contact with the commercial world and has been involved in transaction in which an illiterate man is at a great disadvantage. The



material benefits attaching to education have at the same time increased with the development of schemes for introducing improved agricultural methods, for opening agricultural banks, for strengthening the legal position of the cultivator and for generally improving the condition of the rural life. Such schemes depend largely for their success upon the influence of education permeating the masses and rendering them accessible to ideas other than those sanctioned by tradition. This being the policy and position of the Government of India, let us see how matters stand in respect of the extension of primary education among the masses. The population of British India is over 240 millions, it is commonly reckoned that 15 per cent of the population are of school going age. According to this standard there are more than 18 millions of boys who should now be at school, but of these only a little more than $\frac{1}{8}$ are actually receiving primary education. In the census of 1901, it was found that only one in ten of male population and only seven in a thousand of the female population were literate (Japan has 95 of population literate.) The figures exhibit the vast dimensions of the problem and show how much remains to be done before the proportion of the population receiving elementary instruction can approach the standard as indispensable in more advanced centres such as England, France, Germany and Japan.

*Its Progress :—*While the need for education grows with the growth of population the progress towards supplying it is extremely slow. In 1870, 1871,



there were 16,473 schools with 6,07,320 scholars; in 1881-82 there were 82,916 schools with 2,061,541 scholars. But by 1891-92 they had only increased to 97,107 with 2,837,607 scholars and the figures for 1901, 1902 (98,338 schools with 3,268,726 scholars) suggest that the initial force of expansion is somewhat on the decline. Indeed the last years of the century showed a slight decrease as compared with the previous years (Mark England as big as Punjab only has 5,705,675 scholars on roll equal to about double the number on roll in the whole of big continental India).

Taking then into consideration the history and statistics of elementary education in advanced countries, and India we find that India is in a seriously backward condition. On two points India has dropped far behind in educational struggle;

(1). We have a very insufficient provision of intellectual instruction in the cheap and easily accessible or free primary schools and much of the intellectual work prescribed to boys at the public elementary schools seems out of gear with the needs of time.

(2) In the second place (this matters most of all) through our comparative neglect of elementary mass education on national lines, we have in every respects, a less enlightened public opinion to appeal to than have all the advanced countries. As a nation we are much less intelligently interested than the European countries in methods of instruction, in the choice of *curricula* and



in the direct application of the results of scientific study to the organisation of industry, to the development of commerce and to the administration of public affairs.

This being the situation, the most influential organs of the public opinion, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League repeatedly and year after year voiced forth the public sentiment and constantly denned in the ear of the Government that it should redeem its pledges and wake up to its responsibilities and evert itself to organise a system of free elementary education to the masses but the Government shielded itself behind the plea that the scheme would entail a prohibitive cost to the state.

Problems of vital importance were thus listlessly allowed to be shelved on account of the want of initiative on the part of Government when all of a sudden, the public affairs of India entered on a new sphere in consequence of the reforms introduced by Lord Minto and Lord Morley. The reformed Councils conceded great powers of interpellation, discussion and submitting resolutions to the Government recommending certain action to be taken on important affairs. This placed a capital opportunity in the hands of the leaders of the public to arouse the Government to a consciousness of its duty. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale proposed a resolution in the Supreme Legislative Council last year to the effect that elementary education should be made both free and compulsory but it was eventually withdrawn on an assurance being given by the Home Member that it



CSL

shall receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Government. Criticism from the Local Governments was invited and the public opinion showed itself entirely in favor of the free dissemination of Primary education. The Government reciprocated its regard for the scheme by creating a separate Education Portfolio and placed the Hon'ble Mr. Butler in charge of it. The enthusiasm of the member for education for the advancement of the primary education to the masses is conspicuous and the choice of the Government was a most judicious one.

This year (1911) the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale introduced a bill on elementary education (free and compulsory). The bill as framed has been welcomed by the public and has elicited favourable opinion from Local bodies, Municipalities and Universities to whose judgment it was submitted. The present therefore is a singularly favourable juncture for the introduction of free education to the masses as there appears to be a strong coincidence between the views of the Government and the public.

It may however be urged with some show of reason that as mass education is essentially a western idea, it is not fair to compare the progress made by her with the achievements of Western nations in that field but it is essentially a false notion, for Japan which came under the influence of the West a few years ago, has successfully adopted a system of Universal mass education. Phillipine Islands, Ceylon and Baroda supply



an example which give a lie direct to such an erroneous view and there is absolutely no ground to suppose that the subjects of these countries are in any way superior to the people of India in their natural intelligence or desire for education.

Primary duties of state.

It has in recent times been very practically recognised that the state has other functions than that of preventing individuals from interfering with one another's rights, that in fact the true function of a state, is by positive, as well as by negative, means to make the best and the most of individuals or rather to aid him in making the most and the best of himself. It is also broadly recognised that it is the duty of the state by all practical means to seek to raise its citizens to a higher level of life. Thus we find that a state does not stop short at providing for national defence, for the conduct of its relations with other states, for the repression of crime and the administration of Civil Justice, but aids in the production of wealth by retaining control of certain instruments too, important to be entrusted to individuals, such as the high roads and the postal system. It aids in the just distribution of wealth by graduating its taxes, by relieving the distress of its poorest citizens at the expense of the rest. It protects the health of the people by enforcing sufficient sanitary measures by penalising the adulteration of food, etc, etc. And to come to our immediate subject it facilitates the education of its citizens and makes elementary education free and compulsory.



Compulsion why necessary.

If we study the history of elementary education throughout the world, one fact which stands out pre-eminently is that without a resort to compulsion, no state can ensure a general diffusion of education amongst people. England with its strong individualistic and legal tendencies stood out against the principle of compulsion but had to give away all the same. Mr. Foster by the Act of 1870 had hesitated to make school attendance compulsory but in clause 36 of that Act he plainly contemplated an early change in public opinion as would justify Local bodies in enforcing attendance. Hence a later Act in 1876 enforced the duty of every parent to send his child to school between the age of 5 and 14. In 1880 Mr. Mandella's Act established direct and universal compulsion and empowered the local school authorities to enforce it. Mr. Gladstone had to admit the necessity of compulsion to secure the proportion of education on very strong terms. A Royal Commission appointed in 1886 to report on the working of the measures adopted to make attendance at school compulsory in England and Wales bear ungrudging testimony to the great effect which compulsion had produced.

History of compulsion in other countries and India.

Education like the other beneficial influences at work in a civilised community may be conducted by all or any of three means, *First* by voluntary effort with a view to profit *secondly* by voluntary effort arising from philanthropic or religious motives; *Thirdly*



by the agency of the state. In Historical order voluntary effort of course takes precedence of the agency of the state but state intervention has come about at very different rates in different countries. In Germany State intervention began with the Reformation and in the second half of 16th century two of the Reformed States Saxony and Wurtemberg organised complete educational system. The year 1806 saw Prussia prostrate at the feet of Napoleon and every student of History knows how great a part the reconstruction of her educational system played in the retrieval of her fallen fortune. In France as in other catholic countries state intervention was much longer delayed but the revolution swept away the old order of things and established a rigorously rigid system of state control. While on the other hand, the Government in India, with a mature experience of the last transitional stages in the history of compulsory mass education in England has been slow almost to a fault in recognising the necessity of compulsion. I know of no State document to be found in the archives of other Governments which would compare in their large hearted benevolence with the despatch of 1854, which aimed at creating a national system of education calculated to benefit the entire masses of the people but the Despatch rested on voluntary basis and the want of progress is the consequence of want of compulsion to enforce attendance.

We have illustrated sufficiently for our purpose the gradual supersession of voluntary agency in education by that of the state. It has been recognised



everywhere that philanthropic motive even when combined with religious zeal are not enough to rescue the masses of the people from the evils of ignorance and defective training. Hence the organisation of compulsory mass education is an indispensable necessity in India where seven children out of 8 are yet allowed to grow up in ignorance and darkness and 4 villages out of 5 are without a school.

Let us next examine in what ways the state can effectively promote the cause of education. The ways are the following :—

(1). In the first place all who believe in the state as an instrument of goodwill contend and many individualists shall on grounds of expediency be ready to allow that the state should provide school. And when we regard the state not simply as an aggregate of persons but also as itself a sort of person, competing with other similar persons in commerce and general advancement, the argument for a state supply of schools is tremendously re-enforced.

(2). In the second place having provided the means of education the state should, on the same grounds compel careless or ignorant parents to live up to their privileges, at least to the extent of requiring that every child shall go through the primary course.



- (3). By determining how the cost should be met.
- (4). By assuming general control and supervision.
- (5). By insisting on the supply of well equipped teachers.

We shall discuss these ways as we proceed on.

Best means of enforcing compulsion.

Though it would be unnatural to say that India is not ripe for the enforcement of universal compulsion yet it is advisable that a cautious start should be made in this direction lest the benevolent motive of the scheme be misconstrued and the chances of the success of the scheme be seriously jeopardised, for in a conservative country like India a great innovation is often found to evoke a volume of unmeaning noise. It is therefore necessary that advanced areas where 33 per cent or more students of the total boys of school-going age are on roll in elementary schools may be marked out by Local Governments for the enforcement of attendance by compulsion. In pursuance of carrying out this policy embodied in the legislation which shall be necessitated for the extension of elementary education, this shall be the preliminary step and the Governor-General in Council may declare such areas with the advice of the education member after calling for a detailed report from directors of public instruction. The local bodies (Municipalities and the District Boards) may further be authorised from time to time to secure the sanction of the Local Government for the introduction of compulsion within the limits of their jurisdiction



when they realise that the time has come to take this step. In case the Local Government withholds its sanction, reasons shall be assigned for it and the member for education shall call quarterly returns of all such cases where such sanction was withheld and it is thus hoped that any attempt on the part of the Local Government to neutralise the effect of this scheme will be frustrated. Attention of the Hon'ble member for education may also be invited by the Hon'ble members in legislative councils when any flagrant abuse of authority takes places. In less advanced areas the Inspector should impress in the minds of the people the desirability and the advantage of sending their children to school and it is found that the villagers listen to the advice of the Inspector, provided he is courteous and sympathetic, with great avidity and eagerness. In the areas thus proclaimed for the extension of education by compulsion, the local body through the Inspector or the Secretary of the Attendance Committee which shall be formed for this purpose shall make the parents understand their obligation to send their children over to school and they must also know that if they disregard this duty, they will not escape speedy and automatic punishment though in the beginning I would concede that there should be greater relaxation observed in the enforcement of compulsory laws.

The age for compulsory education shall be from 6 to 11 years in case of urban schools though the scholar in rural school shall have to take an additional year on account of the constant demand on their labour for the



seasonal needs of agriculture or the school hours shall have to be arranged in a manner as to have the time of labour free. The District Boards and Municipalities shall in order to make provision for the enforcement of compulsion form attendance committee which shall consist of the following members : —

- (1). 4 members chosen from the members of the District Board or Municipality by the Members themselves, one Vice-President of District Board and 3 Members.
- (2). District Inspectors (in case of Municipality, 3 Senior teachers in Recognised Schools).
- (3). 10 Primary senior teachers elected by the teachers in Primary Schools in the District.

The Secretary of the Attendance Committee shall be chosen out of the members of the District Board by votes. The Vice-President of the District Board shall be President. The Attendance Committee shall hold its meeting once every month and $\frac{1}{3}$ of its members shall constitute a *quorum* and transact all the business of the committee. The functions of the Attendance Committee shall presently be described.

Every member of a District Board shall cause in his circle in the case of a District Board and the Secretary of the Municipality, in the case of the city, a list of the children about to attain the age of school attendance to be prepared each year from the register of births by



Each headman of the village The member concerned shall send the list to the Secretary of the Attendance Committee who shall notify to the parents the nearest school to which their children are respectively assigned and the school should be warned of the children to be expected but in no case shall the number of children exceed 50. If they do not turn up within a fortnight a duplicate of the pages in the Register covered by the period shall be sent to the Local Inspector who shall sign and forward it to the Secretary of the Attendance Committee or of the Municipal Committee as the case may be. The parents shall be given one or two warnings by the Secretary according to the exigency of the moment but if the parents are obstinate and the repeated warning go unheeded, the Secretary shall report the matter to the District Magistrate, who shall either dispose of the matter himself and direct the parent to send his child to attend the school within a specified date or send the report to another Magistrate for orders but if default is made in complying with the orders, the Secretary shall prosecute the defaulting parent before a magistrate if there is no excuse for non-compliance and the parent shall on conviction be liable to a fine which shall not exceed Rs. 2, but if compliance with the orders is still refused he shall be fined Rs. 10 or in default one day's simple imprisonment.

ABSENCE ON EXCUSE.

It must however be borne in mind that the provisions of any Act which may be passed for the enforcement of obligatory attendance should not be rigidly enforced



in the beginning and the prejudices of the people wherever they carry about them the slightest tinge of reason should be sufficiently respected so that any chance of unresonable opposition provoked, by a vindictive and unscrupulous enforcement of compulsory laws may be obviated and the Act resting for its operation in the hands of sympathetic and reasonable men work out its own salvation and gradually develop partly by precept and partly by example a consciousness of the obligation to send their children to school, in the minds of parents. Wherever any of the following circumstances exists or a combination of any two of them exists, it must be deemed a valid excuse for non-attendance.

(a). That there is no recognised school within a distance of one mile measured along the nearest road from the residence of the boy which the boy can attend.

(b). Of course in a heterogeneous country like India moral instruction should be so adjusted as not to hurt the susceptibilities of the parents of children and no denominational code of morals shall be prescribed but if in any recognised school to which any boy has been assigned any religious teaching there prescribed, is repugnant to the feelings of the parent it should be a reasonable excuse for non-attendance.



- (c). That the child is prevented from attending school by reason of sickness, infirmity and other sufficient reasons.
- (d). That the child is receiving instruction in some other satisfactory manner.

A written application on a form to be supplied by the Local Board or the Municipality setting forth the grounds of excuse, the name of the child, the village school to which he was assigned, shall be submitted to the President of the Attendance Committee. The Committee shall consider the application in its meetings and the Secretary shall inform the parents of the child sought to be excused from attendance of the decision of the Committee, through the member of the circle in which the school is situate.

In the case of excuse No. (d) it shall be the duty of the Inspector to inquire from time to time into the teachings of the children at their house and if the arrangement for private teaching prove unsatisfactory or it is found that it was simply to evade the authorities, the Inspector shall bring it to the notice of the Secretary and the Committee shall on being satisfied, take necessary steps to enforce attendance.

If any person employs any boy as a servant or apprentice the member in charge of each ward where he is apprenticed shall report the matter to the Secretary of the Attendance Committee who shall through the Secretary file a complaint against the employer before



a magistrate appointed by the District Magistrate or Local Government to hear complaints of this nature and the employer on conviction shall be liable to a fine not exceeding Rs. 20 or in default to three days' simple imprisonment, unless he shows in his favor some excuse which exempts a boy from compulsory attendance or that the time and nature of appointment of the boy are such that he is not prevented from receiving elementary education at school or that the boy is receiving education in some satisfactory manner; that the boy was employed under false representation as to age, residence and other conditions, or that the boy was employed without his knowledge or consent, or that by an agent or workman under him for whose prosecution he is willing to afford the necessary facilities. Such workman shall be liable to the same penalties to which his employer would have been if he had himself employed the child.

Migration of students from one place to another.

Capricious change should be avoided as far as possible. If the parents change their residence, a form to be supplied by the Local Board or the Municipality should be filled up which should state in detail, the class, attainment, conduct, religious denomination of the child, the time during which he has attended, and his reason for leaving. Even so if the change of residence is from one part of the town to another, the child should attend the old school until the end of the school year so that if a scholar has to change the school he should at any rate find the same subjects being taught, the same or



nearly the same point in the instruction reached and similar principles and methods at work. A new school will not therefore mean temporary confusion of his school life.

The form thus filled up shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Attendance Committee who shall communicate it to the authorities under whose jurisdiction he has taken up residence. The new authorities shall then assign him to the nearest or other suitable school. When the child having completed the primary course leaves school altogether, he shall receive a certificate which states his date of birth, religious denomination, period of attendance, attainments and conduct. The teacher shall draw up this document and the Local Inspector countersign it.

Means of improving attendance.

It is not however insisted that the compulsory laws should be rigidly enforced hence it is necessary that other means besides compulsion may be employed to improve attendance in those districts where compulsory laws are in force and they are much more necessary in areas where attendance by compulsion shall not be enforced in the beginning.

- (1) Attendance can be increased by proper encouragement being given by teachers themselves and other inspecting officers impressing on the illiterate folk the necessity of education so that it may be better appreciated



and by the faithful discharge of duties of those having care of children.

- (2) In those areas where fees are levied, attendance can be improved by remitting their fees while associations and other benevolent persons should assist, by providing books, paper, pencils or even clothes and food.

It is not expedient that the above provisions be applied to the case of girls of school going age. There is no doubt that far greater proportional impulse is imparted to the educational and moral tone of the people through female education than by the education of men, yet from the social customs of the people there are very strong difficulties to be experienced before primary female education is made compulsory. It is therefore necessary that this branch of education should be liberally treated in respect of scholarships and fees. I have found that girls flock to the school where clothes and sweetmeats are distributed to them after an interval of month or so. Let some benevolent men come forward and let the Government help in starting school where girls may be tempted to school. The road will thus be paved for a more general diffusion of female education and it would not then be difficult to apply compulsion for the enforcement of attendance.

The constitution of the body which will govern the scheme.

In a country like India where heterogeneity of people and the diversity of language prevails to such an extent, a centralised system of education though possible



would' be productive of much inconvenience. As the brunt of the scheme has to fall heavily on the district, the administrative unit of the Government it seems advisable that attention be confined mostly to the working of the District Boards and the Municipalities and the hands of the Local Government be strengthened though the whole administration of the education department under the Local Government shall be immediately subject to the supervision of the member in charge of education of the Governor-General's Council. Though in the beginning a strong initiative is to be taken by the Central Government the moment that the scheme has embarked on its career the supreme educational authority should decentralise itself by stationing its outposts in administrative sub-division or under Local Governments and not by devolving the entire power into any central authority. It may, however, enforce its control through inspection, through regulations to a large extent by money grants and most effectively through state control over entrance to the University and to the various forms of professional as well as official life. The extension of Primary education should be co-extensive with a corresponding increase of popular control under the Local Government coupled with a general supervision of the Central Government. "In no sphere" says a German writer," is the deadening influence of the bureaucracy so perilous as in education, unless indeed we do not care at all whether our schools are or are not permeated with the bracing spirit of manly independence." It is advisable



in the best interests of the country that the old system be changed as little as possible, for any radical change will not only overhaul the whole administration of education and require a cumbrous readjustment but also provoke protest from quarters where it is least expected. In matters, educational, the Central Government should retain only an ultimate power of control over local Governments and should allow them to carry on its educational policy unhampered by any restriction. To guide the Local Governments and the Local bodies the Indian Educational Code is a comprehensive body of regulations, though they are now required to move and act more energetically than before, to meet the necessities of an extensive system and net work of Primary schools. The normal schools shall have to be extended and increased, the training colleges to be more developed to supply the increased number of teachers. The public elementary schools shall be directly managed by the Local Government and the Director of Public Instruction of each province shall be at the head of each Local education department and local bodies shall manage the schools both public and private which shall be open to inspection within the limits of their authority, the District Inspector being the chief inspecting authority and the province shall as usual be parcelled out in circles which need not coincide with the administrative division, and the Inspector shall be placed in charge of it. Any new cess which shall be levied shall after being sanctioned by the legislative authority be administered by the Local Bodies.



The real body which shall govern the scheme, shall be a superior council of education, the president *ex-officio* of which shall be the Hon'ble Member for education in the Governor-General's Council. It shall be constituted of the following members :—

The Hon'ble Member for education in Governor-General's Council.

Secretary to the Government of India in Education Department.

Director of Public Instructions from each province or Local Government.

A Chief Inspector from the Central Provinces and Sindh.

One Inspector of Schools from each Local Government to be elected by the Inspectors and District Inspectors.

Three Non-Official members from each Province of Punjab, North Western Province, Madras, Bombay, but 4 from Bengal to be chosen by votes from the private Local Colleges, or from persons distinguished for their intellectual attainments, as Mr. Surendra Nath Bannerjee and the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale.

The Secretary to the Government of India in the Education Department shall be the Secretary of the Council. Members shall ordinarily be elected for three years.



Functions.

The Council shall review and advise generally upon the operation of the department and shall serve as referee in all matters connected with the organisation of education in general and elementary education in particular. It will annually receive and discuss the proposals of each departmental head in regard to the extension of primary education. It is not intended that the directing influence of the Council should in any way weaken departmental executive control or responsibility and the precise manner in which and the agency by which any required information is to be collected must be left to the heads of department.

The Council shall discuss all sorts of questions connected with schools, curricula, hours, fees, books, systems of grants-in-aid to private school, qualification of officials, etc.

At the end of the year it shall submit to the Government a brief review of the results obtained and the programme of work embodying its proposals.

To enable the council to carry out the duties which are assigned to it, it shall be desirable that the council as a collective body, should hold quarterly meetings to consider the work of the past year and proposals for the programme of the coming year and to settle finally their programmes subject to the approval of the Government of India. The members of council shall make tours throughout the whole of India and make a detailed



report of the working of the scheme in the various provinces, and it shall be their duty to bring to the notice of the Inspector and the Director of Public Instruction any abuse in the enforcement of compulsion done by the injudicious zeal of the officers of the Local body.

Financial means by which free education can be spread.

The various sources from which financial means can be derived for the spread of education, are the following :—

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| (1). Imperial funds | } Public funds. |
| (2). Local rates | |
| (3). Voluntary subscription | } Private. |
| (4). Fees and endowments | |

Imperial funds:—I have already largely dwelt upon the absolute duty of the Government to make primary education free and compulsory and consequently to bear this heavy outlay of expenditure to provide adequate accommodation and other necessary appendages of school. Whether we consider the extent of literacy among the population or the proportion of those actually at school, or the amount of money expended on Primary education, India is far behind other civilised countries. If we take the expenditure on elementary education in different countries per head of the population we shall find that India is nowhere in the comparison. The



expenditure per head of the population is highest in the United States of America being no less than 16s. in Switzerland, it is 13s 8d; in Australia, 11s 3d; in England and Wales, 10s; in Canada, 9s 9d; in Scotland, 9s 7½d; in Germany, 6s 10d; in Ireland, 6s 5d; in the Netherlands, 8s 4½d; in Austria, 3s-1½d; in Spain, 1s-7½d; in Servia and Japan, 1s 2d; in Russia, 7½d; while in India it is hardly one penny.

A great portion of the money spent on primary education is supplied or contributed by the imperial treasury. If we take the figures of England the country of our rulers we shall find that there is a greater and greater tendency to replace the amount contributed by voluntary effort by public revenue and to throw upon the state the entire responsibility of bearing the whole cost of primary education. In every country even in Japan which organised its system of education only thirty years back and was practically exhausted by the recent wars of its resources two-thirds of the total cost on primary education is borne by Government. Let us examine the figures of England and Japan and see how sorry a figure does India cut when placed in comparison with these countries.

England.:—In the year 1890, the Government grants to elementary schools amounted to £5,332,617, the voluntary subscription to £758,670, the Local rates levied by the School Boards to £1,320,487 and the contribution of parents in the form of fees to £1,940,546. Later legislation during the administration of Lord

Salisbury had the effect of altering materially the proportion in which the educational revenue was provided.

The total of that revenue for the year 1899-1900 amounted to £12,336,986. This sum was made up as follows :—

	£.
Endowment	156,012
School Boards, etc ...	2,959,717
Voluntary contributions...	812,104
Fees and payment for books	262,135
County Council grants for technical instruction	35,930
Other Local sources ...	108,107
Government grant <i>viz.</i> Annual grant... ..	4,993,115
Fees and grants to voluntary schools under Act 1896 ...	669,772
Science and Art Depart- ment	12,678
Total ...	12,336,986

Thus it will be seen that contribution from public sources including the grants from Local taxation amounted to £11,106,735 out of a total expenditure of £12,336,986. In the near future the contributions of parents and of voluntary subscribers may reasonably be expected to bear a yet smaller proportion to the total expenditure and public control will in a corresponding measure supersede private management.



Japan :—In 1902, the total expenditure of Local Bodies on public primary schools amounted to £3,150,000. The whole amount is 70 per cent of the total local expenditure on education and 60 per cent of the total public expenditure on education. The sources of expenditure on the other hand were the following :—

Local taxation 61·8 per cent, national treasury 19·1, fees 10·2, donation 4·6, from miscellaneous 6·1. It appears then that four-fifths of the cost are met from public sources.

India :—The expenditure on primary education does not admit of exact statement since the cost of instruction given in the lower classes of secondary schools is not separately shown, nor is the expenditure on the administration and inspection of primary schools capable of separate taxation, but the direct outlay from public funds upon primary schools stands as follows :—

	1886-87	1891-92	1901-02
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
From Local and Municipal funds	26,07,624	35,86,208	4,610,387
From Provincial funds ...	16,00,239	13,43,343	16,92,514
Total ...	42,07,863	49,29,551	63,02,901



In 1901-02 the total outlay on primary education was about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total expenditure spent in the England on primary education.

On a general view of the question it is quite clear that we cannot avoid the conclusion that primary education has hitherto received insufficient attention on the part of the Government and inadequate share of the public funds, primary education therefore possesses a strong claim upon the sympathy both of the supreme Government and of the Local Governments and should be made a leading charge upon provincial revenues; and that in those provinces where it is in a backward condition its encouragement should be a primary obligation. The Government of India declare in their educational policy of 1904 that they are cordially in agreement with the Local Governments and will carry it out to limits allowed by the financial conditions of each province. The plea of the Government of India that they have no funds at their disposal to meet the heavy cost of primary education (*vide* the remarks of Mr. Quin while supporting Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Bill) is inexcusable under these circumstances when huge amount of money is forthcoming for frivolous purposes. During the last two or three years abnormal amounts of moneys have been spent in conducting abortive prosecutions financing private cases. The Midnapoor Bomb case, the Alipore Bomb case, the Dacca conspiracy case most of them ending in fiasco and concocted into a huge joke by the police, have wasted lakhs of public money.



and brought discredit on the administration. The partition of Bengal has doubled the administrative expenditure of Bengal, the creation of a large system of surveillance and C. I. Department is doing mischief, arousing suspicion and wasting money. The Government must realise the situation, extend the primary education and thus broad-base the administration on the sympathies of the people. A greater share in the administration of the country should be given to the Indians. It shall involve less expenditure and greater efficiency especially in judicial service. Moreover the remark of the Hon'ble Mr. Butler that Imperial Defence entails huge expenditure of money and leaves no broad margin for meeting the cost of an extensively system of education does not appear to me to be sound. Germany is tottering under its military and naval burden, France and other European countries are on the verge of bankruptcy, yet primary education has been receiving a proper share of the public revenue.

Moreover for the last years the Provincial Governments have shown greater surplus and the Government of India has been making heavy retrenchment in the expenditure. More retrenchment should be made in the Military department and there is reason to believe that though there will be retrenchment in the Military department yet by the general diffusion of education the position of Government will be doubly strengthened, for the Government will then be winning the lasting gratitude of the people of India, the destinies of whom



have been placed by Providence in the hands of the English people.

Local Rates.—In so far as District and Municipal Boards are required to devote their funds to education, Primary education should have a predominant claim upon their expenditure. The administration of primary schools by Local Bodies is everywhere subject to the general supervision of the education Department, but the degree of control differs in different provinces and where it is most complete primary education is most advanced. The Government did not extend its control to financial matters but now it is essential in order to ensure that the claims of primary education receive due attention that the educational authorities shall be heard when resources are being allotted and that they should have the opportunity of carrying their representation to higher authority in the event of their being disregarded. In future therefore so much of the Budget estimates of District or Municipal Boards as relates to educational charges shall be submitted through the Inspector to the Director of Public Instruction. As most of the responsibility shall fall upon the shoulder of the Local body it seems advisable that it should be more financially equipped to perform its task.

It is therefore necessary that to raise the funds to a satisfactory level a special education cess should be levied by the Local bodies on the same basis on which Local rates are levied. As the scheme is to benefit the people materially, it is to be expected that the people



shall cheerfully bear the additional taxation. Income-tax should also be increased and the increment shall be levied on those whose annual income exceeds Rs. 3,000.

Fees :—Compulsory education means practically free education. When compulsory laws are in force obligation rests upon the Government to provide adequate accommodation and to impose no fees whatsoever but as the funds for the general diffusion of education are not available it seems reasonable that a large amount which can be raised from fees should not be sacrificed.

Fees should be graduated according as they are of the 1st class, second class, third class. Ordinarily fees of the third class shall be charged. Second class from those whose parent's income is above Rs. 100 and 1st class from those whose parent's income is above Rs. 200, from boys whose parent's income is less than Rs. 25 no fee shall be charged, and in the case of boys paying third class fee if two brothers read in the school, the fee of one shall be remitted.

Fees of	Third class.	2nd class.
1st Primary class	1 anna	{ double the third class and first class double the 2nd class.
2nd Primary class	2 annas	
3rd Primary class	3 annas	
4th Primary class	4 annas	
5th Primary class	5 annas	

Private subscription.—It appears to be very reasonable that the great landmark of the Indian history



That is the visit of His Most Gracious Majesty the King Emperor should be contemporaneous with far reaching reforms meant to elevate the masses, and be associated with the general diffusion of primary education. Let the Government invite subscription in the name of the King Emperor and I hope that the Rajas and Nawabs and other munificent people will contribute liberal donation. The subscription thus collected should form the nucleus of a primary education fund to which large allotments should be added from the imperial treasury and half of the surplus of the Local Governments saved from the quinquennial contracts, be lodged with the Imperial Government to the account of primary education fund. In view however of the increasing difficulty of providing funds for the constantly growing expense, attempts should be made to increase special resources of income to primary education fund, the income from which may not be diverted to other purposes.

Notwithstanding the establishment of a department of education and its far reaching effects, there shall still remain an ample room for voluntary effort on the part of societies and for personal initiative on the part of individual thinkers and teachers, thus in England great educational societies such as the British and Foreign School Society founded in 1808 and the National Society for educating the poor on the principles of established church founded in 1811 still flourish and readily co-operate with the Central Government and take a leading and effective part in educational affairs and in the training of teachers in their own normal schools.



Fortunately there are large religious societies that are willing to cooperate with the Government if the Government can only admit them into its confidence and readily lends them support. The Arya Samaj has a network of schools in the Punjab where its activity is chiefly centred but their efforts are sometimes thwarted by District officers prejudiced by calumnious reports of interested persons. They have made primary education practically free. The Brahmo Samaj, Khalsa Dewan, and Sanatan Dharam Sabhas maintain schools both primary and secondary. The Government has only to take the initiative and it shall find that religious and philanthropic societies will readily relieve the Government of most of its burden and the difficulties that are looming in the distant horizon will vanish like the mist before the rising sun. Let the Government though it is largely foreign in *personnel* show that it is *national* in spirit and ready to undertake what is conducive to the welfare of the people. The Indians instinctively reverence their sovereign as God and let the Government try to convince by example that it does possess Godly and beneficent qualities, India must rise or it must fall are the only two alternatives in the present heat of competition. India's boat of hope is in the charge of English Government, Let the Government pilot it safe through the shoals that lie around and carry it to the haven of safety.

A. PUNJABEE STUDENT THINKER