CHAPTER - II

PRIMARY EDUCATION
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The chief centres of elementary education in the city of Madras were the "pial" schools and other private elementary schools, Government elementary schools and Corporation elementary schools.

The "pial" schools represented the indigenous educational institutions, serving the cause of elementary education in Madras city as in other places in the Madras Presidency. As their name indicated, these "pial" schools were generally held on the street pial of a house, often in the residence of the school master. But it was also quite common to find them located in the porch of a temple, in a mantapam or on the pial of a chattiram. Sometimes though more rarely, the schools were located in thatched buildings, held on monthly rents varying from one rupee and a half, down to four annas.¹ Reading, writing and arithmetic formed the main part of teaching in "pial" schools. A knowledge of the alphabet was the first thing that a pupil learnt in the "pial" school. He was taught writing on the sand; he was made to read popular versions of religious books and light literature, the Ramayana, the Bhagavata and the Panchatantra; he was instructed both to decipher up-country letters and to draw up ordinary legal documents and deeds.² In short, the instruction given in "pial" schools enabled boys to read their vernacular well and to write a fair hand, and it included the four rules of arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) with proportion. The


apparatus employed was at first sand spread on the floor on which the characters were traced with the finger, and afterwards the style and palmyra leaf were introduced. Pens, papers and slates were also in use. These were supplied by the parents of the boys.

The age of the pupils attending the "pial" schools ranged from 4 to 15 years. The school day was divided into three parts, each consisting of 2 1/2 or 3 hours. Holidays were allowed on the occasion of all public and domestic festivals, or ceremonies, and on the Full and New Moon days. Discipline was enforced by castigation with a rattan on the hand. The course of instruction generally lasted from 2 to 5 years. 3

The fee collected in the pial schools varied from 2 annas to 6 or 8 annas per month, and the master's earning ranged as low as rupees 2 or 3 and seldom or never exceeded rupees ten. Besides these regular emoluments, the master had perquisites. In many cases, each boy had to bring daily a cowdung cake, and once a month an anna's worth of oil. By these means, the teacher obtained firing and lights gratis. On the occasion of domestic festivals, also, rich riots never forgot him, when making presents. A fee for admission was sometimes charged when a boy first joined the school.

The bulk of the pupils attending "pial" schools was composed of little children who were sent there, not so much to learn anything, as to leave their mothers free to attend to their domestic duties, and of boys whose parents did not require for their sons any education other than what was necessary to enable them to transact the daily business of the shop or the farm.

In many cases, the masters of "pial" schools were persons of very slender attainments, who, either from inability to obtain a better means of livelihood, or from laziness, select teaching as a means of earning their bread. There were, of course, exceptions, but generally speaking the teachers of the "pial" schools, could only read, write and cipher, and explain books on Hindu mythology and religion.4

The monotorial system by which more than one class was managed by a teacher, was practiced in the "pial" schools. The teachers in these schools were generally inefficient; the language of the books taught in class rooms was quite distinct from the dialect of that language in usage. Few teachers in "pial" schools could explain well; and still few pupils could understand the purport of the numerous books which they learnt to repeat from memory. Thus, the "pial" school system was primitive in nature and had its own inherent defects. It was imperfect and far from being satisfactory. In spite of the innate shortcomings, the "pial" schools did not fail to produce literacy in Madras city as in other places.5

Before 1854, the British Government, did not contemplate or conceive the idea of encouraging indigenous institutions. The British did not make any endeavour to resuscitate these institutions. They did not propose to allot or spend funds on these schools. They did not entertain the concept of providing model schools which the indigenous institutions could copy for their betterment.

Prior to 1854, "pial" schools and private schools imparted elementary education in the city of Madras. The private schools were run by private

4. ibid.

agencies and missions, both christian and non-christian. As mentioned earlier, the system of education envisaged by the British prior to 1854 was to further the cause of higher education and substantial stress was laid upon the usage of English. The study of European science and literature was given importance. In short, the inordinate emphasis on higher education was detrimental to the growth of elementary education. The Filtration Theory adopted by the British aimed at providing higher education to a select section of the population, resulting in the neglect of mass education. Consequently the "pial" schools and private schools which were regarded as channels of elementary education were neglected. The Government did not bestow care on primary education. The private institutions survived on their own funds without receiving grant or fund from the Government till 1854. The contribution of the British Government towards primary education was negligible. The only elementary school under the management of the Government at that time in the city of Madras was the primary section attached to the Madras Normal School, which served as feeder school for the High School.

But with the implementation of the Wood's Despatch of 1854, the British policy towards elementary education underwent a sea-change. The Despatch of 1854 ushered in a new era in the history of the progress of education. Adequate stress was laid in the Despatch on every aspect of education. Elementary education received impetus. A cardinal objective of the Wood's Despatch was to foster educational progress by the promotion of indigenous institutions and expansion of education at all levels. A significant outcome of the Despatch was that it had widened the horizons of vernacular and English education. The Despatch propounded a series of propositions of first-rate importance concerning elementary education. It displaced the Filtration Theory by the theory of mass education. The Despatch declared that elementary education was not to be sacrificed at the altar of higher education and that instruction in Indian language was not to be superseded by instruction in English. It advocated
the encouragement of elementary and higher education simultaneously. It envisaged the principle that the indigenous institutions which formed the basis of elementary education were to be revived, reformed and assimilated into one great comprehensive scheme of education.

As a result of the Wood's Despatch of 1854, the indigenous schools began to function in a better manner in imparting elementary education in Madras city. The uncertainty of their survival, their ephemeral existence and above all paucity of records prevent statistical data pertaining to the number of "pial" schools which existed in Madras. In 1870, the indigenous institutions continued to exist in considerable numbers in all their pristine purity in the city of Madras.6

Consequent upon the change in the attitude of the Government, the Government adopted several new measures purporting to promote elementary education in the city of Madras as in the rest of the Madras Presidency. The first step adopted by the Government to foster primary education was the introduction of the grants-in-aid system, which was envisaged by the Wood's Despatch of 1854. The grants-in-aid system opened new vistas in the progress of primary education in Madras city.

The grants ceded to the private schools under the rules embodying the award of grants of the specified categories, indeed sought to achieve decisive progress in primary education in the city. The first set of grants-in-aid rules issued in 1855, prescribed that the grants should not exceed half of what had been contributed by local sources. These rules were made somewhat more strict in 1858 by the issue of new rules which declared that salary grants to teachers were to be determined by a system of certificates. The rules of 1858 restricted the grant to one third of the salary. But these rules were relaxed in 1865. It was declared in

1865 that one third salary grants might be given to uncertified teachers and half to the certified. The schools were also now given the option of choosing to come under the salary grant system or under the system of payment by results.\(^7\)

In 1868, a fresh set of rules regulating the results - grants raised the grants for girls' schools to 50 per cent more than those for boys schools.\(^8\) These rules proved to be a boon for the progress of elementary education. The elementary schools in the city of Madras were benefited by this Governmental scheme.

Meanwhile, a series of legislations were enacted by the British Government with the avowed intention of promoting elementary education. By Act IV, of the Local Fund Act, 1871 funds were provided by a house-tax for the maintenance of elementary schools, for the training of teachers and for the construction and repairs of school building in the rural districts. By Act III of the Local Fund Act 1871, funds were provided by a house-tax for the maintenance of elementary schools, for the training of teachers and for the construction and repairs of school buildings in the city.\(^9\) Act V of 1878 or the Madras Municipalities Act made provision for the education of the poor.\(^10\)

The Governmental concern and endeavour assumed a new direction in the field of primary education since the introduction of a noteworthy Act passed in 1863. This Act brought into existence an entirely new category


\(^8\) Ibid., pp.14-15.

\(^9\) File of papers relating to the Act III and IV of 1871.

\(^10\) Education Commission Report, (Madras, 1884), p.27.
of schools designated as Rate schools. The first and the only such school to be set up by the Government in Madras city was the one established at Saidapet, renowned as Saidapet Rate School. The organization and functioning of the school could be understood in the light of the provisions of the said Act.

After the grants-in-aid system of 1855 had been in force for some years, it became apparent that however useful it might be in improving higher and middle class schools, it had been doing up to that date very little for elementary education in consequence of the limited number of applications made from elementary schools. Hence, the Madras Act IV of 1863 was passed. This Act gave legal status to the Rate schools which were established by collecting cess or rate from the public for their maintenance. According to this new arrangement, schools could be maintained partly by grants-in-aid and partly by voluntary cess.

The school which was established under this Act at Saidapet possessed the great advantage of numbering among its ordinary commissioners Hindu gentlemen much interested in the spread of education among their countrymen, and competent by their own intelligence and attainments to undertake the management of the Rate School. The notification of the Government authorising the introduction of the Act from 1 January 1864 was published on 11 October 1863. The Commissioners were appointed on 26 December 1863 and they were not able to settle the rate book and other preliminary arrangements before 23 March 1864. They, therefore, resolved to collect tax from that month instead of retrospectively from January, as they were anxious to avoid any alarm.


12. Files of papers relating to Act.IV of 1863.
among the inhabitants at the very commencement of their work. The rules sanctioned by Government provided from sources of income for the school, viz., a rate on houses, a tax on fixed salaries, a tax on bazaars and mundies classified according to their incomes and a tax on income from gardens and other landed property not coming under houses.\textsuperscript{14}

The establishment of the Rate School under the Act of 1863 was considered, after some progress had been made in the collection of the tax. Hence, the institution was formally opened on 2 May 1864. There had been a small private school at Saidapet maintained by a small grant from Government. Under the new arrangements, this institution was discontinued and all the boys who belonged to it joined this school. The Commissioners commenced the institution with 88 boys and the number of those admitted during the year was two hundred and one. The number of withdrawals and dismissals was 117, thus leaving 172 on the rolls of the institution; 90 of them were rate payers and 82 were non-rate payers, the latter paying a rate of school fee double that was paid by the former.\textsuperscript{15} The Rate School was subsequently abandoned.

Apart from the primary section of the Normal School and the Rate School at Saidapet which were functioning as elementary schools in the city of Madras under the management of the Government, an Anglo-Vernacular School, which devoted exclusively to the instruction of Muslim boys was opened by the Government at Mylapore in 1864. This school was regarded as a branch school of the Madrasa-i-Azam, and was run by the Government. In the first year of its existence, the school suffered


\textsuperscript{14} ibid.

\textsuperscript{15} ibid., p.74.
owing to the misconduct of the teachers. Though some progress had been made, the standard of the institution was very low. During 1864-65, the school had 72 pupils and 3 masters. To prevent the admission of grownup young men into the school, a limit was fixed as to age for each class.\textsuperscript{16} This step helped the Muslim inhabitants of Mylapore to send their children to school at an earlier period.

In 1871, the condition of elementary education had attracted considerable attention on the part of the Government. Although large numbers had annually passed from the higher and secondary schools fully competent for the task of undertaking the elementary instruction of their fellow countrymen, the expectation that a great impetus to primary education would be the result of the measures adopted, had proved to be delusive. The census returns of 1871 disclosed that only 18 per cent of the population were able to read and write in that year.\textsuperscript{17} Of course this figure amply shows decisive improvement over the condition available outside the city in the Madras Presidency where only 4.7 percent of the population were alone able to read and write.\textsuperscript{18}

The most important event in the educational history in 1871-72 was the introduction of the Towns Improvement Act and the Local Fund Act which received the assent of the Governor General on 28 March 1871 and were brought into force, the former from 1 May and the latter from 1 April. The views entertained by Government as to the measures to be taken under these Acts for the promotion of popular education were

\textsuperscript{16} ibid., p.39.


\textsuperscript{18} ibid.
promulgated on 28 April, and on 30 June the Local Fund Rules and Municipal Rules were published.\textsuperscript{15}

Although these Acts did not define the description of education to which Local and Municipal Funds were applicable, it had been distinctly intimated by the Government that they were to be mainly appropriated to the maintenance and improvement of elementary education.\textsuperscript{20}

When the house tax was ablished in 1873, the Government assigned in its place, a special grant from Provincial Funds by making education a first charge on one-third land cess.\textsuperscript{21} Thus the funds made available by the Government were spent on elementary education.

In 1875-76, the grants-in-aid of elementary education disbursed by the Government in Madras city amounted in the aggregate to rupees 14, 391, annas 14 and paise 10. Totally 218 private elementary schools in the city were paid the grant, of which the results grant paid to 216 schools were rupees 12055, annas 7 and paise 7 and the salary grant paid to 2 schools was rupees two hundred and fifty five. The aggregate grant also included the pay and allowances to inspecting school masters to the tune of rupees 2064, annas 7 and paise 9 and the contingency amount of rupees 16, annas 15 and paise 6.\textsuperscript{22} Grants on the system had been generally adhered to. The payment of salary grants had been entirely


20. \textit{File of papers relating to Act III of 1871}.


discontinued in 1875-76. It was indeed very difficult to differentiate the elementary schools into aided or unaided categories. The term "unaided" included two different classes of elementary schools. A school when brought under improvement might be unaided by Government for sometime, because it was not prepared to undergo the necessary examination. A school could also be unaided if owing to any cause it had not received the Governmental grant which it had earned during the official year. Consequently, the result grant given by the Government to the poor elementary schools in Madras city fluctuated. In 1878, the Government gave the result grant of rupees 9567 for elementary education to the Poor schools in the city of Madras while the grant paid by Government to such schools in 1879 was only rupees eight thousand five hundred and thirty one.

Hunter's Commission on education (1882) laid considerable stress on the progress of elementary education. After Ripon's resolution of 1882, local self-government institutions began to make progress. In accordance with the recommendation of Hunter's Commission, the local self-government institutions were entrusted with the onerous responsibility of maintenance and management of their schools. Consequently the Corporation of Madras began to play a decisive role in the field of primary education in the city and the Governmental measures in the realm of education at the primary level continued.

The Government bestowed attention on the elementary education of Muslims in Madras city. The number of Mohamanedan combined schools in Madras city on 31 March 1885 was 12, and 335 pupils were attending

23. *ibid.*


these schools. 26 On 31 March 1885 the number of schools managed by Government for the benefit of Muslims, had risen upto thirteen. In 1885-86, of these Muslim elementary schools, seven were closed chiefly for want of attendance. 27 Hence the Mohamedan upper primary schools maintained by the Government in the city of Madras were 5 in number. The number of pupils studying in these schools rose from 255 on 31 March 1889 to 256 on 31 March 1890. 28

Apart from these Government elementary schools intended for Mohamedans in the city of Madras, the Government also maintained three lower primary schools with 99 pupils in 1888-89. During 1889-90, a new salary - results school was opened by the Government at Perambur. 29 So the number of lower primary schools in Madras under the management of Government excluding those meant for Muslims, rose to four with 124 pupils. 30

There was an increase in the number of primary schools for boys managed by the Government in Madras city. In 1896-97, there were 15


29. G.O.No.617, Education Department, 7 October, 1889.

such schools with 603 pupils. The number of these schools continued to remain 15 till 1900-1901.

The educational conference convened at Simla in 1901 under the presidency of the Viceroy suggested certain measures to be enunciated for the promotion of primary education. It recommended the establishment of Government model primary schools in localities where education was in a neglected or backward condition, the improvement of female education by the establishment of Government girls' schools and the revision of the curricula for primary schools for boys and girls and the adoption of suitable text books. The curricula for primary schools were revised by the Government in 1902-1903.

The Government also granted subsidy to the Corporation of Madras for the purpose of fostering primary education. A sum of rupees 8,189 was allotted as Government subsidy for primary education for 1904-1905 and the amount was duly spent by the Corporation of Madras for the purpose of which it was intended. In 1906-07, the Government subsidy of rupees 21,950 was spent towards the cause of primary education in the city.


The Government subsidy spent in 1907-08 for the same purpose was rupees twenty one thousand six hundred and twenty.\textsuperscript{37}

A significant development took place in the realm of primary education in 1907-08. The term 'elementary education' meaning thereby the instruction of the masses had supplanted the term 'primary education' and the two stages 'upper primary' and 'lower primary' classified by Hunter Commission of 1882, no longer had any significance. A special scheme of studies for these schools had been issued by the Government and it had been arranged to give an elementary school leaving certificate granted on the result of examinations which would take the place of the old primary examination certificate.\textsuperscript{38}

A few changes of importance were sanctioned in the educational rules during 1908-09. In accordance with the general policy of the Government, a number of powers were delegated to the Director of Public Instruction. Certain changes were made in the provisions of the grants-in-aid code according to which any amount for teaching grants to elementary schools which local bodies found themselves unable to defray was now paid direct from Provincial Funds and not through Local Funds as it was done before. In 1908-09, Madras city had received the largest share of 12.45 per cent from Provincial Funds in aid of the elementary schools under private management.\textsuperscript{39}


\textsuperscript{38} Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency during the year 1907-08 (Madras : Government Press, 1908), p.89.

With the introduction of new scheme of studies in elementary education, suitable books on the several subjects of instruction, such as nature study, kindergarten occupations, hygiene, botany, civics, etc. had in some cases been written.\textsuperscript{40}

As an outcome of the policy of the Government with regard to the grants-in-aid scheme for elementary education, there were no schools in the city aided from the Corporation Funds since 1912. The Corporation of Madras was relieved by the Government of its responsibility for grants-in-aid.\textsuperscript{41}

In consonance of the main provision of Madras Elementary Education Act of 1920, the Government gradually began to withdraw its management of some elementary schools in the city of Madras and to transfer the power of management of these schools which were under its management to Corporation undertaking to pay them an annual subsidy for their maintenance. Hence the Government sanctioned the transfer of management and control of the two Mohamedan girls' elementary schools, one at Mylapore and another at Perambur with effect from 1 February 1923 agreeing to pay annual subsidy from 1923-24 at rupees 3517 and rupees 1445 respectively and the actual transfer took place in April 1923.\textsuperscript{42} The management of the twelve Mohamedan boys' elementary schools so far run by the Government at washermanpet, Mahfuz Khan Garden, Perambur, Periamet, Pudupet, Thousand Lights, Chetty's Garden,

\textsuperscript{40} ibid., p.84.


\textsuperscript{42} G.O.No.292 Law (Education), 24 February 1923.
Puranabagh, Chepauk, Mirsaibpet, Royapettah, and Mylapore was handed over to the Corporation of Madras.43

As the Corporation of Madras carried on its endeavour in the sphere of elementary education in the city, the Government offered loans to it for the purpose of constructing buildings to house elementary schools. In 1930-31, the Government floated a loan to the tune of rupees one lakh to the Corporation for construction of schools buildings. Further it also lent its buildings for running the Corporation elementary schools in Madras city till the construction of these schools were completed. As a matter of fact, three of the Corporation elementary schools were run in the Government buildings in 1930-31.44

The Government also continued to maintain elementary schools under its direct management and to pay teaching grants from the Provincial Funds to the elementary schools run by private management in the city. In 1929-30, the number of elementary schools for boys maintained by the Government in the city of Madras was 35 and those for girls was three. There were 1680 boys and 339 girls on the rolls of these boys' elementary schools; there were 15 boys and 148 girls studying in these girls' elementary schools. In that year, the Government paid teaching grant from provincial funds to 247 elementary schools which were under private management, of which 194 were boys' schools and 53 girls' schools.45


In 1930-31, one more boys' elementary school was set up by the Government raising the total number of these Government boys' elementary schools to thirty six. But the number of boys and girls in these boys' schools fell to 1589 and 247 respectively. Though the number of elementary schools for girls run by the Government in 1930-31 was the same as in 1929-30, the number of girls studying in these girls' school fell from 148 to 140. In that year, the total number of elementary schools run by private management to receive teaching grants sanctioned from Provincial Funds by the Government was 245, of which 192 were boys' schools and 43 were girls' schools.46

In 1931-32, there was a decline in the number of elementary schools managed by the Government in Madras city. In that year, there were 29 Government boys' elementary schools with 1314 boys and 228 girls, and two Government girls' elementary schools with 86 girls. In the same year, the Government sanctioned teaching grant from Provincial Funds to 249 elementary schools run by private management; among these schools, 196 were boys' schools and 43 were girls' schools.47

A further fall in the number of Government boys' elementary schools was witnessed in 1932-33 and the number of such institutions in the city in that year was twenty. Correspondingly, the number of boys and girls on the rolls of these schools fell to 1129 and 173 respectively. Although there were two Government girls' elementary schools in 1932-33 as in 1931-32, the number of girls studying in these schools fell to eighty three. In that year, the number of boys' elementary schools and girls'elementary schools


under private management which were sanctioned teaching grant from Provincial Funds had been 174 and 52 respectively.\textsuperscript{48}

In 1933-34, the Government maintained 19 boys' elementary schools with 1080 boys and 113 girls in Madras city. But the number of girls studying in the two girls' elementary schools, run by the Government in that year rose to ninety. In the same year, there was a slight diminution in the number of boys' elementary schools under private management to receive teaching grants from Provincial Funds and these boys' schools numbered 172; the number of girls' schools of this category receiving teaching grants from Provincial Funds remained 52 as in the previous year.\textsuperscript{49}

In 1934-35, the number of boys' elementary schools run by the Government in the city was nineteen as in the previous year, but there was a meagre increase in the number of boys and girls on the rolls of these schools. Nearly 1081 boys and 137 girls were studying in these schools. But, the number of girls' elementary schools run by the Government in that year was only one; and only 66 girls were studying in that school. In that year, the Government sanctioned teaching grant from Provincial Funds to 166 boys' elementary schools and 52 girls' elementary schools, both of which were under private management; thus aided schools run by Christian missions and non-Christian agencies were benefitted.\textsuperscript{50}

In the next year, there was a further fall in the number of boys' elementary schools run by the Government in the city and they numbered


only 15 with 981 boys and 104 girls. The only girls' school run by the Government in Madras that year had 63 girls. In the same year, 161 boys' elementary schools and 52 girls' elementary schools, both of which were under private management, received teaching grant from the Provincial Funds.51

In 1936-37, the number of boys' elementary schools managed by the Government in Madras city decreased to twelve; 906 boys and 160 girls were studying in these schools. In that year, the only girls' elementary school under the management of the Government had 56 girls on its rolls. In the same year, the Government sanctioned teaching grants from Provincial Funds to 148 boys' elementary schools and 50 girls' elementary schools which were under private management.52

In the succeeding years too, there was a gradual diminution in the number of elementary schools run by the Government in the city of Madras. The number of elementary schools run by the Government in the city gradually declined from 10 in 1938-39 to eight in 1941-42 and five in 1944-45.53

However in 1946-47, seven elementary schools were run by the Government in the city of these schools were boys' schools and two were girls' schools.54 In that year, 125 boys' elementary schools and 49


girls' elementary schools which were under private management were paid teaching grant from Provincial Funds by the Government.55

In 1947-48, the number of Government elementary schools for boys was five and those for girls was two as in the previous year. In that year, there was a meagre increase in the number of boys' elementary schools which were under private management to receive teaching grant from Provincial Funds and the number of such schools was 127 as against 125 in 1946-47. But, Government paid teaching grant from Provincial Funds to 49 elementary schools for girls under private management as in 1946-47.

It is evident from the above account that there had been a gradual and considerable diminution in the number of elementary school run by the Government. Consequently there was a corresponding fall in the number of pupils attending these schools. This trend could be attributed to the increase in the number of Corporation elementary schools in the city.

The Government permitted the schools run by private management to collect fees. Hence it felt that there was no need to grant teaching aid from Provincial Funds to such institutions. Therefore, simultaneously with the decline in the number of Government elementary schools, the number of schools under private management which were paid teaching grants by the Government from the Provincial Funds, diminished.

A noteworthy contribution was made by the Corporation of Madras for the progress of elementary schools or primary education in the city of Madras. Prior to 1908, the Corporation of Madras evinced interest in educational sphere by providing aid to elementary schools in the form of results grant and teaching grant. The amount of money disbursed by the municipality by way of grant to such schools in the city in 1882 and 1883

55. ibid.
were rupees 8229 and annas 8, and rupees 9839, annas 4 and paisa 9 respectively.\textsuperscript{56} The total number of elementary schools which were under inspection by the Municipality in 1882 were 203, which included 118 boys' schools, 16 girls' schools and 69 mixed boys' and girls' schools. In 1883, the total number of schools under the inspection of the Municipality rose to 212, which included 122 boys' schools, 16 girls' schools and 69 mixed boys' and girls' schools.\textsuperscript{57}

In 1884 the amount disbursed by the Municipality by way of results grant to poor schools imparting elementary education in Madras rose to rupees twelve thousand five hundred and eighty five. During that year, there were 226 schools under inspection with 9526 children of whom 1614 were girls and 7912 were boys.\textsuperscript{58} The amount of aid given by the Municipality to elementary schools in the form of results grant during 1885-86 was rupees ten thousand eight hundred ninety eight. The number of these schools under inspection during the year was 209 with 10,335 pupils, of whom 3407 were in mission schools.\textsuperscript{59}

Aid was continued to be given by the Madras Municipality to elementary schools, and was, as usual, in the form of results grant. The amount so disbursed in 1885-86 was rupees nine thousand eight hundred and twenty seven.\textsuperscript{60} The number of schools which were subject to inspection during the year was two hundred and five. The number


57. \textit{ibid}.


of children under inspection was 10639 which included 9069 boys and 1570 girls.\textsuperscript{61} In 1896-97, there was a slight increase the amount of results grant paid to the elementary schools by the Madras Municipality and the amount thus paid was rupees eleven thousand one hundred and two.\textsuperscript{62} In 1897-98, the Madras Municipality incurred an expenditure of rupees 10,688 by way of results grant paid to Poor Schools. The payment of results grant by the Municipality to elementary schools in the city continued in the subsequent years.

However, in 1901-02, two Panchama night schools were maintained by the Municipality, and the amount spent for their maintenance was rupees 583, annas 4 and paise 8.\textsuperscript{63} This was the first occasion in which night schools exclusively for the Panchamas were managed by the Madras Municipality.

The amount spent by the Madras Municipality during 1903-04 by giving results grant to elementary schools was rupees 10,889, and annas eight.\textsuperscript{64} During 1905-06, the Corporation of Madras gave rupees 15,296 as results grant to elementary schools and spent rupees 969, annas 13 and paise 7 for the maintenance of the two Corporation Panchama Night Schools, which were set up in 1901-02.\textsuperscript{65}

61. \textit{Ibid.}


There was an increase in the number and strength of the primary schools aided by the Corporation, which on 31 March 1906 numbered 139 with 7222 boys against 111 with 7004 boys on the corresponding day in the previous year. In 1906-07, a sum of rupees 42,836, and annas 5 was spent by the Corporation as teaching grant to elementary schools.

The two Corporation Night schools for Panchamas which were working unsatisfactorily were closed in 1906. Hitherto no day school was started by the Corporation. However, for the first time in the history of the progress of primary education in the city of Madras, a Panchama Day School for boys was opened by the Corporation in 1906 at Chetput. It was indeed a good beginning since the Corporation slowly started to establish elementary schools of its own. To begin with, this school had 78 boys and 13 girls with three teachers on 31 March 1907, and it had 63 boys and 28 girls with four teachers on 31 March 1908.

The number of elementary schools aided by the Corporation showed an increasing trend. In 1906-07, one hundred and forty four elementary schools for boys and twenty eight elementary schools for girls were aided by the Corporation. In 1907-08, the number of elementary schools for

66. G.O.No.2090, Local and Municipal Department, 28 November 1906.
68. G.O. No.2390, Local and Municipal Department, 27 November 1907.
70. G.O.No.2390, Local and Municipal Department, 27 November 1907.
boys and that for girls aided from Municipal Funds rose by one in each case.\textsuperscript{71}

In 1908 the Government while reviewing the administration report of the Corporation of Madras for 1907-08, observed that the improvement of accommodation of many of the elementary schools in the city of Madras was an important matter on which the funds of the Corporation might be usefully spent and advised the Corporation to take up the matter for consideration in consultation with the Director of Public Instruction.\textsuperscript{72} The subject was thereupon duly considered and scheme for opening forty model elementary schools in the buildings owned by the Corporation was formulated by the Government. It was intended to open these schools within ten years at the rate of 4 schools per year.\textsuperscript{73}

As a first installment of the scheme for the establishment of forty model elementary schools in the city sanctioned by the Government, three new elementary schools were opened by the Corporation at Vallabha Agraharam, Periamet and Sanjivirayanpet on 4 February, 7 February, and 25 February 1913 respectively.\textsuperscript{74} Consequent upon the opening of these three elementary schools, the income to the Corporation from school fees rose from rupees 43 and annas 12 to rupees 63, annas 3 and pai 4. Including the Chetput Panchama School already in existence, the total number of elementary schools maintained by the Corporation in March


72. \textit{ibid}.

73. G.O.No.820, Local and Municipal Department, 25 May 1911.

1913 was four. There were 543 boys and 152 girls on the rolls of these schools on 31 March 1913. Nearly 50 per cent of this number were Panchamas mostly attending the Chetput and Periamet schools. There were 26 teachers altogether employed in the four Corporation schools including an instructor in manual training attached to each school. They were all trained except two.\textsuperscript{75}

These four Corporation elementary schools functioned smoothly. The scheme of studies for elementary schools published by the Department was followed, and to enable the teachers to implement it efficiently, they were required to attend the popular lectures in scientific and other subjects arranged by the Elementary Section of the Madras Teachers' Guild. All these four schools had a small play ground attached to them; at Chetput and Vallabha Agraharam, a fairly good school garden has been raised.\textsuperscript{76}

The four elementary schools opened by the Corporation represented the first sods turned by the Corporation in the field of elementary education in Madras. The success which had attended them within such a short time as two months had shown the great demand there was in the city for elementary education, cheap enough to be within the reach of the poor classes and at the same time efficient.

These schools could not satiate the demand for elementary education in the city. Consequently the problem of accommodation arose. The Chetput school required extension of accommodation. The Vallabha Agraharam was full soon after the opening, and further admissions had to be stopped. To meet the demand in this locality, another Corporation school was necessary even as early as March 1913.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{ibid.}, p.144.

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{77} \textit{ibid.}, p.143.
Realising the need for school buildings, land was acquired on the following sites and the construction of buildings thereon was in progress in March 1913.

1. Sanjivirayanpet, 2nd Division.
2. Mint Subrayalu Naidu Street, 3rd Division.
3. Amman Koil Street, 7th Division.
4. Vaikaikaran Street, 11th Division.
5. Arunachalla Naick Street, 16th Division.
6. Mandavali Street, 20th Division. 78

After the Corporation had started maintaining its own elementary schools in the city, it had been relieved by Government of all liability for grants-in-aid and hence no elementary school under private management was aided from the Corporation Funds on 31 March 1913 and the situated continued.

The Corporation elementary schools witnessed an increase in their numbers in the subsequent years. Three such schools were opened by the Corporation during 1913-14 at Chintadripet, Malayappan Street, and Purasawalkam (Vaikaikaran Street). The first two schools were opened on 2 January 1914 and the third on 28 January 1914. During 1914-15 five more schools were opened at Mandavali (Mylapore), Nungambakkam, (Rama Naicken Street), Korukkupet, Goyatope, and Thousand Lights on 28 May 1914, 24 June 1914, 22 July 1914, 26 March 1915, and 31 March 1915 respectively. 79

78. ibid., p.19.

Consequently the total number of Corporation elementary schools rose to twelve on 31 March 1915. Out of the total of 1790 pupils on the rolls of these schools, about 19 per cent of the number belonged to the Panchama community. Most of the pupils in the Chetput and Periamet schools were of that community, while in the Malayappan Street school about 30 per cent of the pupils belonged to it. In the other schools, a good many pupils attending the school were of the other backward classes.  

All the schools were provided with accommodation of their own except Sanjivirayanpet and Nungambakkam schools which were located in rented houses. The school at Sanjivirayanpet occupied the building constructed by the Corporation on 2 December 1914. The Nungambakkam school was still in the rented building in March 1915 and a building for it was under construction. All the school buildings had more or less open space around them, of which a portion was allotted for school garden and the rest was used as playground. These Corporation elementary schools had been provided with the necessary furniture. Some of the first opened schools had been supplied with the necessary apparatus and appliances for teaching.

A significant feature of these schools managed by the Corporation was that each of these schools was staffed with five teachers and a handicraft instructor who gave instruction in carpentry. The staff were efficient, most of the teachers employed having been trained or


81. *ibid.*
professionally qualified. The Chetput school alone had two additional teachers on account of the increased strength it had.²²

The teachers availed themselves of the opportunities afforded by the elementary section of the Teachers' Guild for improving their knowledge of subjects included in the elementary scheme of studies issued by the Department. They were awarded certificates during the year for their proficiency in several subjects. The syllabi of instruction was drawn up in conformity with the scheme and followed.

In order to maintain efficient functioning of these elementary schools, surprise visits were done by the Sub-Assistant Inspectors of Schools, and the working of these schools had been carefully watched by them. They were examined for annual inspection and copies of these reports had been duly forwarded to the President of the Corporation of Madras.

In March 1916, new elementary schools were opened in Venkatarangam Pillai Street, Bell's Road, Angappa Naicken Street and Salai Vinayagar Koil Street, thus bringing the total number of Corporation elementary schools to sixteen.²³ Out of these sixteen schools, the schools at Bells Road, Angappa Naicken Street and Salai Vinayagar Koil Street were opened in the last week of March 1916 and hence their strength was low. In the case of Malayappan Street School, the strength had fallen down by about 20 per cent on account of some disunion among the staff, as against the remarkable growth it showed during the previous year.

Of these sixteen schools, the schools at Chetput, Periamet and Thousand Lights were intended mainly for the Panchamas and the one

²². *ibid.*, p.147.

at Malayappan Street had also a good number of Panchamas. In the other schools a good many were of the other backward classes and these backward classes of pupils were all admitted free.\textsuperscript{84} Hence it might be said that the opening of these schools had made education free to the poor and backward classes.

All these schools were provided with accommodation of their own. The school at Nungambakkam was held in the rented building till the end of November 1915 when it was removed to the Corporation building. These schools had the full supply of furniture, and they were also provided with up to date equipment.

The staff strength during 1915-16 remained the same as in 1914-15 and each of these Corporation elementary schools was staffed with 5 teachers and a handicraft instructor who gave instruction in carpentry. The teachers who were not qualified had been informed that they would not be confirmed until they qualified themselves fully. Hence nine teachers were under training during the year 1915-16 in the Government Training School, Triplicane. The total amount of stipends paid to these teachers was rupees 1169, annas 15 and paisa 11.\textsuperscript{85} Thus, attempts were made to ensure the efficiency of teaching in Corporation elementary schools and to promote the pecuniary interests of the teachers employed in these schools.

In the case of the schools at Chetput, Vallabha Agranaharam and Periamet, a fair progress was made in carpentry. Some of the finished articles of carpentry made by the pupils of the Periamet school were sold

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{ibid.}, p.34.
in auction during the year 1915-16 and the amount was remitted into the Corporation treasury.\textsuperscript{86}

During the year 1916-17, five new elementary schools were started in Madras city. These schools were situated at Vasapmode, Choolai, Triplicane High Road, Ammayappa Mudali Street and Cemetery Road. Thus, the total number of schools maintained by the Corporation at the end of 1916-17 was twenty one. There had been an increase in the number of pupils studying in these schools. There were 2338 boys and 404 girls on the rolls of these schools on 31 March 1917 against 1931 boys and 386 girls at the end of 1915-16.\textsuperscript{87} Consequent upon the increase in the number of Corporation elementary schools and the corresponding increase in the number of students, there were 124 teachers in these schools and most of them were professionally qualified.

The kindergarten agency consisting of four drawing and kindergarten instructors, two gymnastic instructors and one supervisor for drawing and kindergarten employed for the benefit of all the elementary schools in the city was abolished by the Standing Committee at their meeting held on 5 May 1916. All the members of the agency, except one who was granted compensation pension, were provided with appointments as teachers in Corporation schools.

During the year 1916-17, nine teachers were under training in the Government Training School at Saidapet and one in the Government Training School at Triplicane. Under the Madras Educational Rules, one teacher was paid a stipend to undergo a further course of training for

\textsuperscript{86} ibid., p.155.

three months in the Government Higher Elementary Training School, Saidapet. The total amount of stipends paid to these teachers was rupees 1190, annas 4 and paise 2.88

During this year, the Corporation had added to the already fairly abundant supply of journals and periodicals for the use of the staff of the schools. This had a most beneficial effect upon the general knowledge of the teachers.89 The Superintendent of Government Museum delivered a series of lectures with demonstration for the benefit of the Corporation teachers.90

All the Corporation elementary schools which existed now with the exception of the newly opened one had their annual inspection. They were also visited frequently by surprise by the inspecting officers concerned and suggestions and instructions were given.91 Such visits helped to increase the efficiency of the functioning of these elementary schools.

In may be noted here, that it was only during the year 1916-17 permission was granted to philanthropic associations and societies to conduct free night schools for the poor in nine of the Corporation school buildings. A few of the teachers of the Corporation schools were also granted permission to be on the staff of those schools.92

The number of Corporation elementary schools at the end of the academic year 1917-18 remained twenty one as at the end of the previous

88. ibid.
89. ibid., p.155.
90. ibid., p.156.
91. ibid.
92. ibid., p.38.
year. Though the aggregate strength of all the schools rose by nearly 600 during the year, the strength and attendance of some of the elementary schools fell during the year 1917-18 notably at Sanjivirayanpet, Korukupet, Purasawalkam, and Nungambakkam while in others there was not any appreciable improvement on the strength of previous year except in the schools at Malayappan Street, Choolai, and a few others. Curiously enough the average attendance improved during the year in certain schools which had almost the same strength as the last and in some cases where it was lower than the previous year. On the other hand, certain schools whose strength was comparatively better, lacked adequate average attendance. This was evidently due to extreme backwardness of the classes from which the pupils attending the schools were drawn, and was also due to a need for canvassing for pupils.\(^{93}\)

During 1917-18, the admission of Panchama pupils in Corporation elementary schools situated in comparatively non-backward localities had an initial depressing effect upon the attendance of non-brahmin caste Hindu pupils who stayed away. The fall in the strength of the Korukupet school was mainly due to this reason, but the Panchama pupils were gradually regarded as less and less objectionable.

All the teachers employed in these schools during the year 1917-18 were trained men with the exception of a few who held professional certificates granted by the Department. The majority of the teachers were of the Lower Secondary or Elementary Higher grade. There was a distinct improvement during the year in the quality of the instruction imparted in most of the schools. This was mainly due to the improvement in the general knowledge of the teachers and their teaching methods by

means of occasional lectures and model lessons in the course of the inspecting officers' surprise visits.\textsuperscript{94}

It is significant to note that in 1917-18, all the elementary schools run by the Corporation of Madras were located in buildings of their own. Gardens were also maintained in these schools. The schools had enough furnitures and equipments. The libraries existing in these schools were reported to have been made proper use of. There was considerable progress in the efficiency of the schools, although the strength and attendance of pupils in some of these schools had shown a slightly declining trend owing to the obvious reasons mentioned above.

Night schools for the poor were continued to be conducted in nineteen of the Corporation schools in 1917-18 and a few of the teachers of the Corporation schools were granted permission to be on the staff of those schools.\textsuperscript{95}

During 1918-19, three new schools were started. One of these schools, was opened at Edapalayam on 30 January 1919 in a permanent building of its own. The other two schools were opened in rented buildings in Vannia Teynampet and Kalmantapam Road (Royapuram) on 28 March and 29 March 1919 respectively. Thus on 31 March 1919 there were in all 24 Corporation elementary schools.\textsuperscript{96} The aggregate strength of all the elementary schools maintained by the Corporation of Madras rose by eight hundred and sixty. The average attendance which

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{ibid.}

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{ibid.}, p.25.

was 69.7 per cent., in 1917 dropped to 64.1 per cent., in September 1918 owing to such adverse cause as the outbreak of influenza and plague, the abnormal storms and the acute economic distress due to the severities of the First World War, all of which tended to keep the same low. But, it however began to improve and rose steadily to 74 per cent by March 1919. The school in the Venkataramgam Pillai Street, Triplicane had to remain closed for nearly two months on account of plague, but that also regained its normal strength before the academic year 1918-19 terminated. Additional sections had to be opened in the lower standards of some of the Corporation elementary schools owing to increasing admission.97

The Corporation elementary schools in Madras city catered mainly to the needs of the pupils drawn from the backward classes of communities. The average attendance was in consequence affected by the apathy and ignorance of the parents of such pupils as well as by their chronic poverty.

The year 1918-19 was characterised, thanks to the labours of the special educational committee appointed by the Corporation in February 1918, by the abolition of the levy of fees in all Corporation schools, the improvement in the pay of the teachers and the appointment of a special officer to be in total administrative charge of the schools.

There were 136 teachers including special instructors in all the Corporation elementary schools working on 31 March 1919 and most of them were professionally qualified. Those who were not fully qualified had been informed that they would not be confirmed unless they qualified themselves fully.98

97. *ibid.*

98. *ibid.*
In 1918-19, efforts to improve the attainments of the teachers, employed in Corporation elementary schools were made by (i) the starting of an additional teachers' association in George Town wherein special lectures or model lessons were given, (ii) the holding of a monthly meeting of the members of the staff of each school once a month in the school premises; (iii) the circulation of special journals and books; and (iv) the paying of more frequent visits and the imparting of model lessons by the inspecting officers and the superintendents of schools during their visits. 99

A series of magic lantern lectures during the latter part of the year were delivered by the Superintendent of the Government Museum for the benefit of all elementary school teachers including those in Corporation schools.

Eleven teachers of the Corporation elementary schools were under training during the year 1918-19 in the Government Training School, Triplicane. The total amount of stipends paid to these teachers was rupees 1,278, annas 6 and paisa 1.100 The total expenditure incurred by the Corporation of Madras on elementary education in the city in 1918-19 amounted to rupees 53,161, annas 15 and paisa 10 as against rupees 40,982, annas 15 and paisa 2, in 1917-18. The increase in the expenditure was mainly due to the revision of the scale of salaries of teachers, the payment of war allowances to the school staff and the opening of a Corporation playground at Egmore for the benefit of the school going population in general. The average expenditure on each of the Corporation elementary schools amounted to rupees 2,145, annas 6 and paisa 8 in the year 1918-19.101

99. Ibid., p.31.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., p.32.
During the year 1919-20, three new elementary schools were opened by the Corporation of Madras. The schools in Coibrapalayam and Thiruvottiyur High Road were opened on 16 October 1919 in buildings constructed by the Corporation and the school in Kassimodu Kuppam at Royapuram was opened in a rented house on 10 March 1920. All these three new schools were opened in the border limits of the city and catered mainly for the obrava caste, fishermen and such other backward classes.

The number on rolls of the Corporation elementary schools in the city was 4155 on 31 March 1920 as against 4162 on 31 March 1919. There was a sudden withdrawal of pupils in March 1920 owing to the unfounded but widely prevalent scare of the kidnaping of children. The average attendance in the Corporation elementary schools revived satisfactorily and stood at 77.6 per cent in 1919-20 as against 62.3 per cent in 1918-19. In the crowded localities, admission was increasingly sought in the Corporation schools but had to be refused owing to the want of space to open additional sections.

Admission into the Corporation elementary schools continued to be free and open to the children of all castes and communities. The poorer and the backward classes continued to resort to these schools largely, and the teachers shedding all prejudices tried to move among the parents and exhorted them to send their children to schools.

Though the end of the First World War removed the pall of gloom from the minds of the people and raised their spirits, still its aftereffects were felt throughout the year in the continuance of high prices and

103. ibid., p.38.
consequent economic strain which had their adverse influences on the strength and attendance.

During 1919-20, twenty two of the Corporation elementary schools in Madras city continued to engage the pupils in wood work as a part of manual training. A beginning was however made in the year in imparting vocational training to the pupils by the institution of tailoring as a handicraft in the Corporation school at Kalmantapam Road. Increasing attention was paid to manual training and gardening by the pupils in all the schools.

In order to instill interest in the minds of the students in education and to widen their knowledge, children of certain Corporation schools were occasionally taken out on excursions to the Museum, the People's park, Aquarium and the beach. Visits were paid by the teachers and some of the pupils to the Health and welfare Exhibitions held in the Banquetting Hall, Madras in the year. 104

In 1919-20, one hundred and fifty four teachers including handicraft instructors were employed in the Corporation schools and all were professionally qualified. A concession was shown in the year to a disabled sepoy entertained as an acting teacher and he was sent for training. All those teachers recruited during the year were as a rule higher elementary grade teachers. Two secondary grade teachers were also appointed in the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras.

The Corporation Teachers' Association continued to hold general and sectional meetings in which model lessons were given, essays read, syllabi discussed and other means of improvement adopted under the guidance of the superintendent of schools. Meetings of the Head Masters

of the Corporation elementary schools were also convened whenever necessary.

A substantial relief was given to the teachers, first by the grant of a temporary allowance of 20 to 25 per cent of their pay, and later by the permanent revision of the scales of their salaries at the end of the year raising the minimum to rupees 35 per month.

Five teachers of the Corporation elementary schools were under training, during the year 1919-20 in the Government Training School, Triplicane. The total amount of stipends paid to these teachers was rupees 461 and paise 7 as against rupees 1,278, annas 6 and paise 1 in 1918-19. The question of paying stipends to teachers under training was discussed afresh and it was resolved to discontinue the system generally, reserving the right to train teachers if and when necessary.\textsuperscript{105}

In 1919-20, free night schools were conducted by philanthropic bodies in 21 of the Corporation schools and a few of the teachers of Corporation schools were permitted to be on their staff. The Corporation elementary school at Periamet was lit with electricity for the benefit of the night school. The maintenance charges of this night school were shared equally between the Poor Schools’ Society and the Corporation.\textsuperscript{105}

The year 1920-21 witnessed the opening of three new Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras, thus raising the total number of such schools run by the Corporation to thirty. Of these three new schools, one was opened at Jani Jehan Khan Road. This school was later converted into a Mohamedan boys’ school. The other two schools

\textsuperscript{105} ibid., p.40.

\textsuperscript{106} ibid.,
were opened in Bazaar Road and Mirsahibpet. All these three new schools were opened on 21 July 1920.\textsuperscript{107}

Five more Corporation elementary schools were opened during the year 1921-22, bringing the total number of these elementary schools to thirty five. These schools were opened in Egmore, Strahan's Road, Cochrane Basin Road, Alwarpet and Nachikuppam on 11 April, 1 July, 15 November, 12 January and 3 March 1922 respectively.\textsuperscript{108}

A special meeting of the Standing Committee (Tariff and Finance) of the Corporation of Madras was held in December 1922 and passed the Budget estimate of the Elementary Education Fund for 1923-24. It was resolved that in respect of the new elementary schools to be opened and Government schools to be taken over by the Corporation of Madras, the scale of salaries would be as in Government schools. Though, the Corporation was till now paying rupees thirty five as minimum monthly salary to be paid to the teachers in the Corporation elementary schools, a Government salary of rupees 25 was now fixed as minimum monthly salary to be paid to the teachers in the Corporation schools. But the salaries of the existing incumbents were protected and the new scale was made applicable only to the new entrants.\textsuperscript{109}

The number of Corporation elementary schools at the beginning of the year 1922-23 was thirty five. No new schools were opened during the year. Yet, the construction of six buildings for schools was sanctioned by the Corporation of Madras at Suriyanarayana Chetty Street, Royapuram


108. \textit{ibid}.

(2nd Division), Konditope (12th Division), Annapillai Street (13th Division) Puliantope (16th Division), Padavattammen Koil Street (18th Division) and Pudupakkam (24th Division) and the construction was completed. But the Government sanctioned the transfer of the management and control of the two Government Mohamedan girls' schools at Mylapore and Perambur to the Corporation of Madras with effect from 1 February 1923, agreeing to pay an annual subsidy from 1923-24 at rupees 3517 and rupees 1445 respectively, to the Corporation. Thus, the number of elementary schools run by the Corporation was thirty seven. The maintenance of Corporation elementary schools exclusively for the sake of Mohamedan girls in the city of Madras was indeed a great boon for the early attempt on the part of the Corporation to foster education, particularly to Mohamedan girls.

The number of pupils on the rolls in the Corporation elementary schools on 31 March 1923 was 6215 against 5504 in the previous year. The strength of all the schools increased except in the case of a few schools where, either from a dearth of teachers with qualification in Telegu or Urdu or for want of some handicraft training suited to the requirements of the boys of the depressed classes of the locality, there was a slight fall in the strength.

There was however, a substantial increase in the total number of pupils of the Corporation elementary schools. There were 5281 boys and 984 girls in these schools in 1922-23 as against 4722 boys and 782 girls in the previous year. The average attendance kept pace with the increase


111. G.O.NO.292, Law (Education) Department, 24 February, 1923.
in strength and stood at 128 for a school and 4463 for all the Corporation elementary schools in the city against 121 and 4116 respectively in the previous year.\textsuperscript{112}

Admission to the Corporation elementary schools in the city was free and open to children of all castes. The number of pupils from backward classes showed an increase and stood at 3706 in 1922-23 as against 3075 at the end of 1921-22. The experiment of providing refreshment to secure continuity and regularly of attendance of pupils which was begun in the Corporation school at Thousand Lights and subsequently extended to the pupils of the Corporation schools in Mirsahibpet and Chetput was continued during the year. The experiment had proved to be a success as evidenced from the fact that the strength of the Corporation elementary schools Chetput, Thousand Lights and Mirsahibpet rose from 131, 247 and 140 in 1920-22 to 162, 205 and 200 respectively in 1922-23. The attendance also proportionally rose from 85, 171 and 71 to 134, 213 and 130 respectively.\textsuperscript{113}

An Elementary Education Fund was constituted from the beginning of the year 1922-23. The Educational Council of the Corporation recommended that a tax of 4.25% of the taxation leviable by the Corporation under property tax be levied for educational purpose under Section 34 (1) of the Elementary Education Act of 1920 and that the rate of property tax be correspondingly reduced from 18 1/2\% to 17 3/4\%. The income anticipation from this source together with the grant of an equal amount payable by Government was taken into account in preparing the Corporation Budget Estimate for 1922-23 and liberal provision was

\textsuperscript{112} Administration Report of the Corporation of Madras for 1922-23 (Madras: S. Murthy and Co., 1923), p.34.

\textsuperscript{113} ibid.
made for the expansion of elementary education in the city of Madras. But, in August 1922 the Government in its order expressed its inability to sanction the above approval for the reason that it did not appear to be in consonance with the spirit of the Elementary Education Act, since there was no undertaking on the part of the Corporation to continue from its general revenue the amount normally spent by it one elementary education and to utilize the proceeds of the education tax only to provide for additional expenditure for the purpose of expansion of education by new schools.114 The amount provided for the acquisition of fresh sites and the construction of new elementary schools had consequently to be considerably reduced.

Proposals for the acquisition of sites in Egmore and Gajapathy Narayanaswami Chetti Street, Mylapore were negatived by the council at its meeting held on 21 November 1922, the council being of the opinion that there should be one building owned by the Corporation of Madras in each division before any division which already possessed one or more school buildings was provided with an extra one. Hence, the Corporation elementary schools at Egmore, Alwarpet and Bazaar Road had to be located in rented buildings for some time to come.115

The Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras imparted vocational education too. In 1922-23, the schools at Bazaar Road and Jani Jehan Khan Road were provided with special appliances for wood work. During that year there were 27 Corporation elementary schools providing manual training in wood work and 3 schools giving instruction in

114. G.O.No.971, Law (Education) Department, 16 August 1922.

tailoring. Tailoring had been introduced as an additional subject in the Corporation elementary schools in Angappa Naick Street and Vasapmode.

The Educational Council of the Corporation at its meeting held on 20 May 1923 approved the draft scheme for pre-vocational instruction in Corporation elementary schools and to raise the standard of some of the elementary schools of the Corporation of Madras to the higher elementary grade to provide for an extensive course of vocational training. Steps were taken to introduce net weaving, rope making and mat making, spinning and weaving, higher carpentry, lace-making, embroidery, masonry, printing and book-binding in the Corporation elementary schools at Vasapmode, Cassimode, Venkatarangam Pillai Street, Korukupet, Strahan's Road, Purasawalkam, Chintadripet, Vallabha Agraharam, Obbrapalayam and Konditope respectively.\textsuperscript{116}

There were 203 male teachers including 30 handicraft instructors and 4 female teachers on 31 March 1923. All of them with one or two exceptions were qualified.

In 1922-23, night schools were conducted by private bodies in 24 of the Corporation schools. The schools at Venkatarangam Pillai Street, Triplicane High Road and Thousand Lights were provided with electric lights for the benefit of the night schools and arrangements were made to provide electric lights for the schools in Purasawalkam, Goyatope and Sanjivirayanpet.\textsuperscript{117}

During 1923-24, five new elementary schools were opened by the Corporation of Madras. Three of these schools were started in Anna Pillai Street, Kondithope, and Padavattamman Koil Street (Kosapet) in October

\textit{ibid.}

\textit{ibid.}, p.37.
1923. The other two schools were girls' schools, and they were opened at Perambur Barracks (Gate Road) and at Royapettah on 5 October 1923 and 10 March 1924.\textsuperscript{118}

The next year witnessed the opening of eight elementary schools by the Corporation of Madras. These new schools included four girls' schools. They were Urdu school for girls at Thiruvatteswaranpet, S.V. Narayanachari Girls' School at Purasawalkam, the girls' school at Pycrofts Road, and another girls' school at Thiruvottiyur High Road. The other four new schools were opened at Pudupakkam, Pulianthope, Kilpauk, and Linghi Chetty Street.\textsuperscript{119}

A very commendable feature in the educational activity of the Corporation of Madras was the introduction of free and compulsory primary education in the city. The Corporation also devoted an increasingly larger portion of funds for the purpose. In 1924, the Corporation of Madras took a bold and progressive step in the matter of elementary education when it resolved to introduce free and compulsory education from division 24 to 27 as an experimental measure. In 1925, it further resolved to contribute annually a sum of rupees 2.4 lakhs to the Elementary Education Fund from the general revenues of the Corporation. The Government accepted the principle of gradual introduction of compulsory elementary education in the city and in particular approved the introduction of compulsory elementary education for boys and girls (non-Muslims) in divisions 24 to 27 during the year 1925-26.\textsuperscript{120} Hence, the compulsory


\textsuperscript{119} \textit{ibid.}, p.273.

\textsuperscript{120} C.S. Srinivasachari, \textit{op.cit.}, p.312.
elementary education scheme was first introduced in June 1925 in these four divisions of the city. In 1926, the Government sanctioned the introduction of compulsion from division 28 to 30 with effect from 1 January 1927. The success that attended the scheme emboldened the Corporation to introduce it in other parts of the city and also to include Muslim boys and girls within its scope. Within three years, the scheme of compulsory elementary education was extended to all the divisions of the city by the year 1928-29.

Consequent upon the introduction of compulsory elementary education in the city, the Corporation of Madras paid compensation to aided elementary schools. In 1925-26 a sum of rupees 6,876, annas 12 and paisa 4 was paid by the Corporation for 13 schools from Division 24 to 27 where compulsion was introduced in June 1925. The amount of compensation paid by the Corporation in 1926-27, 1927-28, 1928-29, 1929-30, and 1930-31, had been rupees 12,477 and annas 10, rupees 25,869, annas 6 and paisa 8, rupees 81,707, annas 14 and paisa 4, rupees 96,973 and paisa 6 and rupees 1,06,857, annas 7 and paisa 5, respectively. In 1930-31, one hundred and twenty eight schools received the compensation. But as a result of the passing of the Education Amendment Act of 1932, payment of compensation was stopped and hence the amount paid to aided elementary schools during the year 1931-32 fell to rupees 6,207, annas 8 and paisa 4. In 1932-33 no compensation was paid at all.


Growth of Corporation Elementary Schools in the City of Madras (1906-07 to 1926-27)

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Simultaneously, the Corporation of Madras opened new elementary schools in areas where there were no such schools. In 1925-26, twelve Muslim boys' elementary schools which were hitherto run by the Government were taken over by the Corporation.

On 8 January 1926, the Corporation took over the management of three schools from Olcott Panchama Free School Society. They were, the Annie Besant School, Krishnampet, a school at Damodar Street, Teynampet, and another school at Thiruvalluvar Street, Mylapore. The total number of elementary schools maintained by the Corporation in 1925-26 was seventy eight. This number increased to 96 in 1926-27, and to 142 in 1929-30.

At the beginning of 1930-31, the Corporation of Madras maintained 73 Hindu boys' schools, 41 Hindu girls' schools, 17 Muslim boys' schools, and 11 Muslim girls' schools. Owing to financial stringency, new schools could not be opened during the year. In deference to the opinion of the District Educational Officer, a boys' school was opened by the Corporation in Ramanan Street on 15 September 1930 in the place of the Danish Mission school, which was closed. One school for girls at No.1, Subraya Pillai Street in 12th Division was opened on 8 September 1930. For want of proper accommodation and owing to the existence of other Corporation schools in the vicinity, it was found expedient to club the Corporation schools. Hence at the end of the year, there were 88 boys' schools and 52 girls' schools as against 90 boys' schools and 52 girls' schools at the end of the previous year.  

With the introduction of compulsory elementary education, Attendance Committees were constituted by the Corporation to enforce compulsion.

There were 25 Attendance Committees functioning during 1930-31. Ordinarily there was one Attendance Committee for each Division except in Division 8, 11 and 14, where there were no Corporation schools. To facilitate working, these Divisions were clubbed with Divisions, 9, 12, and 13 respectively. There were no committees organised for Division 6 and 21 for want of lady members to serve on them. The committees in the 20th and 26th Divisions had done commendable work. They evinced real interest in bringing children of school age to schools. No additional staff was however employed for enforcing compulsion, but as in the previous year, the creation of the post of an Attendance officer was proposed but the standing committee (Education) recommended that one of the existing supervisors might be deputed solely for this work for the year 1931-32. There were no punishments for non-compliance with the provisions of the Act during the year, but parents were persuaded to send their children to schools.\textsuperscript{125}

The introduction of compulsory elementary education benefitted the children of backward classes. Since the introduction of compulsion in the city in the year 1925-26, there was a steady increase in the number on rolls of children of backward classes in Corporation elementary schools and the strength had nearly doubled itself on 31 March 1931. While the number of children of backward classes on the rolls of the elementary schools run by the Corporation on 31 March 1926 was 6908, it swelled to 9595 on 31 March 1928 and to 12712 on 31 March 1931.\textsuperscript{126}

The poverty of the masses and the apathy of the parents still continued, and the council at its meeting held on 15 July 1930 sanctioned a sum of rupees 25,000 from General Funds for the supply of midday meal to

\textsuperscript{125} ibid.

\textsuperscript{126} ibid.
poor pupils for the year 1930-31. The supply of free meals departmentally was accordingly inaugurated on 1 August 1930. The meal prepared at Chintadripet centre was distributed with the aid of motor vans, one for supplying to the schools in the North Range and the other for those in the South Range. At first 2000 pupils in 31 schools were fed with rice and sambar (soup) and when it was soon found possible to feed more children, the number was increased to 2,500 pupils in 40 schools. The cost per meal per child worked out at 6.4 paise approximately. The Corporation midday meal centre was also found to be useful in connection with the feeding of the poor rendered helpless during the floods in the first week of December 1930.

The Corporation council resolved in February 1931 to provide midday meal to all the children of the depressed classes; but for want of funds, many of them could not be fed. Besides midday meals, poor children were also supplied free with books, slate and slate pencils. As a result of these measures, the average attendance at Corporation schools rose to 81.4 per cent in 1930-31. Further, as a measure to increase attendance in Corporation schools the employees of labour, especially beedi merchants were requested not to entertain youths in their service. As a result of these measures, the attendance of children in the Corporation elementary schools showed signs of improvement, from 28915 children in the beginning of 1930-31 to 30,224 children at the end of the year.127

During 1930-31, there were 1152 teachers including 47 vocational instructors and 15 music mistresses as against 1162 teachers including 49 handicraft instructors and 16 music mistresses. The decrease in the number of teachers was mainly due to the clubbing of five Corporation elementary schools during the year. Transfers of teachers in the middle

of the school year were avoided and teaching of English to IV to V standards was entrusted as far as possible to secondary grade trained teachers. Further in 1930-31, the teachers employed in Corporation elementary schools had the benefit of attending a number of talks given on the teaching of various subjects taught in elementary schools.\textsuperscript{128}

The outstanding features in the history of elementary education in the city of Madras during the year 1931-32 were the financial deficit in the Corporation budget and the passing of the Elementary Education Amendment Act, 1932. In the Budget estimate of the Corporation for the year 1931-32, it was anticipated that there would be a deficit of rupees seventy thousand. The council at its meeting held on 7 September 1931 approved certain proposals of the standing committee to meet this deficit. One of them was the clubbing of Corporation elementary schools, as a result of which the total number of Corporation elementary schools was reduced from 140 to 132. Further the Corporation boys' school at Ramanan Street was closed on 1 April 1931 owing to the deficiency of strength in the school and its proximity to another Corporation elementary school. But, these did not depreciate the strength in Corporation elementary schools, which on the other hand showed sign of increase as evidenced from the actual increase from 30,224 in 1930-31 to 32,063 in 1931-32.\textsuperscript{129}

As a result of the passing of the Elementary Education Amendment Act, 1932, the Corporation was relieved of the responsibility of paying compensation for the loss of fee income to the managers of the aided elementary schools from 1 January 1932. This had considerably reduced the financial strain on the part of the Corporation of Madras.

\textsuperscript{128} ibid., p.40.

The provision of midday meal for poor children in the Corporation elementary schools, the effective supervision of the inspecting staff and the constant touch with the parents of pupils had contributed to an increase in the average attendance in the Corporation elementary schools from 24,627 in 1930-31 to 25,402 in 1931-32 in spite of the clubbing of the schools. With the exception of Divisions 8, 11, and 14 where there were no Corporation schools, all other Municipal Divisions had an Attendance Committee of its own and these Attendance Committees continued to enforce compulsion of attendance of children to schools.

During 1931-32, special care was taken to see that children did not stay in the same standard for more than a year and the problem of the retention of children at school had engaged the attention of the Corporation. To avoid dropouts, higher standards were opened in the Corporation elementary schools, where it was fit necessary. The system of holding common annual examinations for standard IV and V was continued with a view to gauge the progress made by the several schools. An up-to-date census record of the number of children of school age in the area in which the Corporation school was located was maintained by each school and the teachers were paying house to house visits for the purpose of maintaining the record and for being in close touch with the parents of pupils.\textsuperscript{130}

In 1931-32, the Corporation of Madras concentrated its attention in the enforcement of compulsion in elementary education. Hence it did not achieve anything substantially for the promotion of adult education. But the Corporation had been actively rendering necessary help to private agencies to start night schools in Corporation elementary schools and permitted the teachers of Corporation schools to work on the staff of such

\textsuperscript{130} \textit{ibid.}, p.38.
schools. In 1931-32, forty night schools were run in the Corporation school buildings, of which 37 were recognized by the Government.\textsuperscript{131}

The educational policy of the Corporation of Madras in the past had been to start elementary schools in the localities where necessary, but in the year 1931-32, as mentioned earlier, owing to financial consideration, a few schools were amalgamated with those in the neighborhood. In 1932-33, the attention of the Corporation was directed towards the maintenance of elementary schools in a more efficient manner.

On 31 March 1933, the number of Corporation elementary schools in Madras city was 133 as against 132 on 31 March 1932. The branch school at Sundaram Pillai Street was made an independent school from 12 September 1932. The number of children on rolls rose from 32,063 in 1931-32 to 32,282. In 1932-33, there was an increase in the number of children of Adi Dravida Community attending the Corporation elementary schools. The number of boys and girls belonging to Panchama Community rose from 3,121 boys and 1,178 girls on 31 March 1932 to 3,329 and 1,308 respectively on 31 March 1933.\textsuperscript{132}

Though all the children of school going age in the city except the Muslim girls came under compulsion, no prosecution had been launched against any parent for not sending his children to school. At the time when compulsion was started, teachers were going round to the houses of children of school age to persuade parents to send them to the nearest elementary schools. The aided school teachers co-operated in this work, as they had been in receipt of substantial amount by way of compensation

\textsuperscript{131} ibid., p.37.

for loss of fee income. By the continued efforts of the teachers of the aided and Corporation elementary schools in Madras city, a large number of children were brought into schools. This work of persuasion had its results seen perceptibly in areas where there were labourers. Year after year, poor labourers had been sending their children in increasing numbers.

The problem then was not so much as to how to compel defaulting parents to send their children to schools, but how to accommodate satisfactorily the children who attended schools without risk to their health. A large number of Corporation elementary schools were located in rented buildings not built for school purposes. Although the houses were altered to a great extent, they neither afforded proper accommodation to classes of the normal size nor supplied sufficient light and ventilation. In such circumstances it was unthinkable to have a school garden, much less a playground. Without proper school buildings, compulsion could not justly be enforced in the city. Further, in the case of Muslim children, difficulties were in no way less. A large proportion of the Muslim population was poor. They needed the uplifting factor of education, no less than any other community. Unless the school was taken to their residential quarters, the parents did not care to send their children to school. To take the school to their very doors, proper houses were wanting. Every attempt was made to minimise these difficulties either by putting up buildings wherever possible or by taking well-ventilated houses as near to their residential quarters as possible.\(^{133}\)

According to the Madras Elementary Education Act as amended by the Madras Act II of 1932 (Section 47), fees were permitted to be levied from the children in aided elementary schools in the city of Madras. As this amendment had been introduced at the instance of the Corporation,

\(^{133}\) *ibid.*, p.38.
no provision was made during 1932-33 for payment of compensation to aided schools.\textsuperscript{134}

The successful working of the scheme of midday meal to school children in 1931-32 emboldened the Corporation of Madras to continue the same during 1932-33. During the 200 working days of the schools, on an average of 68,075 children were benefitted with one full wholesome meal in 78 Corporation elementary schools in 1932-33. The total cost of providing the meal during this year worked upto rupees 33,926, and paisa 11. The supply of midday meal was increased from 3,500 pupils to 4,200 pupils from 20 January 1932. The supply of the meal was a boon to the poor pupils who could ill afford to attend school without it.

The Attendance Committees functioned in 1932-33 as in the previous year to enforce attendance of children in the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras. In that year, all the Divisions except those in which there no Corporation schools namely Divisions 8, 11, and 14 had Attendance Committees and the 21st and 22nd Divisions had a second committee each, as they were too big to be served effectively by one committee. In accordance with the resolution of the Standing Committee (Education), the committees were helped by the supervisors in this work.\textsuperscript{135}

During 1932-33, amenities were provided in the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras to ensure their efficient functioning. A radio was installed in each of the Corporation boys' elementary schools in Triplicane High Road, Mandavali, Choolai, Kondithope, Edapalayam, Chintadripet and Strahan's Road. Storeis and music were broadcast from the studio at the Ripon Buildings by selected teachers between 11.30 a.m.

134. \textit{ibid}.

and 12 noon on all working days. These were well attended by pupils of the Corporation elementary schools and greatly appreciated by the public, even from stations outside Madras.

The pupils of the Corporation elementary schools were taken on visits by the respective teachers to places of interest. Such visits indeed helped the children to widen their knowledge and created interest in their studies. Further they provided recreation to children and broke the monotony of remaining within the four walls of a class room.

Care was bestowed upon the health of the children studying in the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras. During 1932-33, 17,297 boys and 10,209 girls of these schools were inspected medically, of whom 10,189 boys and 5,422 girls were found defective. Such defective children were treated in Corporation dispensaries and special hospitals. 136

During 1932-33, the teaching staff in Corporation elementary schools increased in number; there were 133 Head Teachers, 916 assistant teachers, 15 music teachers for Hindu girls’ schools, 30 religious instructors, one drill and one drawing master for Muslim boys’ school and 46 instructors for teaching crafts. All the Head Teachers and assistant teachers with the exception of nine teachers were trained ones. The nine assistant teachers had been in service for many years and were exempted either by the Government or by the Commissioner from possessing the required educational qualifications.

There was further improvement in the qualification of the teachers employed in the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras. When the first Muslim schools were taken over from the Government, there was a large number of lower elementary grade trained teachers.

136. ibid., p.40.
These teachers were being slowly replaced by higher elementary grade or even secondary grade assistants. Even collegiate trained men had been offering themselves for Head Master's places and they were being encouraged in the Corporation service and thus within three years a large number of secondary grade men and women were added to the teaching staff in the Corporation elementary schools.

During 1932-33, an educational camp was organised at the Red Hills at which several important educationalists were requested to deliver lectures on educational topics to the assembled teachers of Corporation elementary schools. Being the first of its kind in the metropolis, several teachers took advantage of the occasion and in fact, lectures served as refresher courses. It was a great success. Many teachers were permitted to attend the refresher courses arranged under the auspices of the Christian Literature Society for India. In that year, as in the previous year, permission was granted to private agencies to run night schools in the Corporation buildings of which 42 were recognised by the Government.

The educational policy adopted in 1932-33 of directing attention mainly to the maintenance of the existing Corporation elementary schools in the city in an increasingly efficient condition remained practically unaltered in the year 1933-34. There was an increase in the number of Corporation elementary schools from 133 to 134 in 1933-34. This increase was due to the fact that the girls' section attached to the Corporation boys' school, Kondithope had been made an independent girls' school. Although the total number of Corporation elementary schools in 1933-34

137. ibid., p.41.

138. ibid., p.38.
exceeded that for the previous year by only one, the total number of children under instruction increased by 961.\textsuperscript{139}

The supply of midday meals to poor children attending Corporation elementary schools had come to be a necessary condition for the spread of education among the poorest classes in the city, and thus for the maintenance of steady progress in elementary education in Corporation schools as a whole. During 1933-34, poor children in 80 elementary schools run by the Corporation of Madras had this concession. On all school days when both the Hindu and Muslim schools worked, 4,200 poor children reading in them were fed. The total cost of providing this free midday meal during the year amounted to rupees 29,570, annas 13 and paisa 10.\textsuperscript{140}

The number of elementary schools maintained by the Corporation was 134 in 1934-35 as in 1933-34. The same number was kept up during the year 1935-36. However, the number of pupils on the rolls of the Corporation elementary schools rose from 34,163 in 1934-35 to 34,916 in 1935-36. It may be mentioned here that the above increase was noticed after strictly enforcing rules for the removal of all chronic absenteees, by departmental action, which was not possible in previous years, when the consent of the Attendance Committees had to be got before effecting such removal.\textsuperscript{141}

As in the previous year, only methods of persuasion were adopted to bring children of school-age under instruction. The Teachers Association


\textsuperscript{140} ibid., p.37.

exhorted Corporation school teachers to persuade parents to send their children regularly to school. The main difficulty experienced in enforcing the scheme thoroughly sprang from lack of adequate finance. From several schools, demands for additional accommodation and for additional staff and equipment arose. All these were met to a fair extent during 1935-36.

It may be noted that the number of boys and girls belonging to the Adi-dravida and Adi-Andhra Communities rose from 5,174 (3,708 boys and 1,466 girls) on 31 March 1935 to 5,265 (3,855 boys and 1,410 girls) on 31 March 1936, i.e. by 1.2 per cent. In the case of Muslim children in Corporation elementary schools, the strength in 1935-36 was 5,199 (2,546 boys and 2,653 girls) as against 5,072 (2,648 boys and 2,424 girls) in 1934-35, the percentage of rise being 2.4 on the whole. There had been a fall in the case of Muslim boys by 3.8 per cent. Economic causes forcing several poor Muslim boys of school age to earn a livelihood had been primarily responsible for the fall, whereas the supply of carts to the Muslims girls had proved a great facility in attracting them in large numbers.¹⁴²

The supply of midday meal to poor children attending the Corporation elementary schools was extended to 84 schools in 1935-36 against 82 in 1934-35, though the number of children fed daily i.e. 4,500 remained the same. There were several demands for a further increase in the number fed, but it could not be met for want of adequate funds. The total cost of providing this free midday meal during 1935-36 amounted to rupees 30,266 and paisa 11 as against rupees 34,378, annas 14 and paisa 1 in the previous year. The entire cost of this supply was, as usual, borne from the General Funds of the Corporation. It may be observed in this connection that most of the poor children receiving the midday meal in the Corporation elementary schools in the city, would not, in all probability,

have attended any school, if this free supply had not been made. The help given was much appreciated by many a poor parent, and was favourably commented on by visitors from other provinces who had come to study the system of education in Madras. 143

The several Attendance Committees which were constituted to enforce attendance of children in Corporation elementary schools in the city, under the Elementary Education Act of 1920, ceased to function from 1 November 1935, consequent on the coming into force of the Elementary Education (Amendment) Act 1935 from that date. 144

The measures adopted in the Corporation elementary schools such as the excursions arranged for school children to important places in the city, the radio talk broadcast in the schools, and the medical inspection and the provision of playground to improve health condition of the school children, continued in 1935-36 also, contributing to the steady progress of elementary education in Madras city.

As in the past three years, the Corporation of Madras continued, for financial reasons, the policy of confining its entire attention to the maintenance of its existing elementary schools in an efficient manner. Hence, the total number of Corporation elementary schools remained stationary at 134 on 31 March 1937 as in the previous year. The total number of children on the rolls of all the Corporation elementary schools, taken as a whole, rose from 34,916 (21,107 boys and 13,809 girls) in 1935-36 to 35,520 (21,205 boys and 14,315 girls) i.e. by 1.7 per cent. The rule regarding removal of chronic absentee was strictly enforced. The number of boys and girls belonging to Adi-Dravida and Adi-Andhra communities in the Corporation elementary schools rose to 5,447 (3,881

143. *ibid.*, p.42.

144. *ibid.*
boys and 1,566 girls) on 31 March 1937. It was an increase of 3.4 per cent over last year. In the case of Muslim children in Corporation elementary schools, the strength in 1936-37 was 5,013 (2,459 boys and 2,554 girls). This had shown a decrease of 186 (87 boys and 99 girls) i.e. by 3.6 per cent over the strength in the previous year. Economic causes forcing several poor children of school-age to earn their livelihood appeared to be the primary reason for the fall. The presence of unrecognised rival schools was found to be the main cause for the depletion of strength in one Corporation Muslim elementary school in the city. Steps were then taken to shift the school to a more promising centre from the school year 1937-38.\textsuperscript{146}

As in the previous year, midday meal was supplied to 4,500 poor children studying in 84 of the Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras in 1936-37. Demands for the midday meal for many more poor children could not be met for financial reasons. The total cost of providing free midday meal during 1936-37 amounted to rupees 37,110, annas 9 and paise 6. As in the last year, the entire cost on this supply was met from the General Fund of the Corporation.\textsuperscript{146}

There was a gradual increase in the number of Corporation elementary schools. While there were 136 schools in 1937-38, the number increased to 137 in 1938-39 and 140 in 1939-40. The three elementary schools opened by the Corporation of Madras during 1939-40 were a boys' school in Royapettah High Road for the benefit of residents east of the tram line,


\textsuperscript{146} ibid., p.47.
a mixed school at Narasingapuram for the scheduled classes and a boys' school at Chintadripet for the Muslims.\textsuperscript{147}

Consequent upon the increase in the number of elementary schools maintained by the Corporation of Madras, there was a corresponding increase in the strength of students studying in these schools. While the number of pupils on the rolls of Corporation elementary schools in the city in 1937-38 was 36,708 (21,826 boys and 14,887 girls), it was 40,417 (24,001 boys and 16,416 girls) in 1938-39. In 1939-40, the number soared up to 43,998 (25,951 boys and 18,047 girls). The enrolment in the schools had been making rapid headway as a result of the enforcement of compulsion and the adoption of stimulative measures.

The average attendance in Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras had increased from about 29,500 in 1937-38 to about 31,500 in 1938-39, and 36,100 in 1939-40. The percentage of attendance to strength in the Corporation elementary schools was 78 in 1938-39 and 82 in 1939-40, an increase of 4 per cent.

The following measures were adopted to ensure more attendance in these schools. Midday meals, slates and books were given free to pupils of indigent parents; conductors and conductresses escorted pupils safely along routes of traffic; bullock-carts conveyed (purdah-observing) Muslim girls from home to school and back; and guardians were interviewed and prevailed upon to send their wards to schools.

The four Attendance Committees constituted for boys' schools in 1939-40 took up defaults in attendance of pupils already enrolled in schools but action was not taken on default in guardians who never sent

\textsuperscript{147} Administration Report of the Corporation of Madras for 1939-40 (Madras : Government Press, 1940), p.82.
their wards to any school whatever. The service of notice to parents of absentee pupils and taking action on them for defaults, within the time limit allowed, met with handicaps and suffered seriously for want of adequate establishment in the schools. The knowledge on the part of the parents that penalties would be imposed, however, resulted in a rush for admissions.¹⁴⁸

In 1940-41, the number of schools maintained by the Corporation of Madras remained the same as in the previous year. But strenuous efforts were made by the Education Department of the Corporation to spread literacy among the children of school-age in the city, with the result that there was a perceptible increase in the enrolment of children in the Corporation elementary schools by 2,709 over that of the previous year.¹⁴⁹

Out of 140 elementary schools maintained by the Corporation in the city of Madras in 1940-41, fifteen were higher elementary schools. As no fees was levied in Corporation schools, there was always a rush for admission into the higher standards of these schools. Selection of pupils for admission into these standards was made on considerations of poverty and proficiency of pupils. To meet the growing need in this direction, the next high standards were opened in the following Corporation elementary schools in the city of Madras. Eighth standard was opened in Corporation Muslims boys' school at Washermanpet and Corporation boys' schools at Pulianthope, Vaikkakarn street, Lloyds Road, and at Damodar Street. Seventh Standard was opened in the Corporation boys' schools at Nammalwarpet, Korukupet and Thousand Lights, and the Corporation girls' schools at Vedavinayagar Road and Bazaar Road.

¹⁴⁸. Ibid., p.83.

There was also an increase in the number of pupils belonging to the scheduled classes studying in the Corporation elementary schools. During 1940-41 there were 7,071 pupils (4,635 boys and 2,436 girls) as against 6,781 in the previous year.\textsuperscript{150}

Effective compulsion was attempted since the issue of notices to guardians of defaulting pupils from the beginning of the year 1939.\textsuperscript{151} Six Attendance Committees, four for boys' schools and two for non-Muslim girls' schools were constituted in the city during the year 1940-41 for the purpose of checking defaults in attendance of pupils already enrolled in schools.

There was further increase in the number of elementary schools under the management of the Corporation of Madras. While there were 143 elementary schools run by the Corporation in 1943-44, the number reached 155 in 1944-45. Corresponding to the increase in the number of schools, there was an increase in the number of pupils on the rolls in the Corporation elementary schools in the city. The number of pupils in these schools was 39,331 (23,323 boys and 16,008 girls) on 31 March 1944. But the number rose to 41,441 (24,085 boys and 17,356 girls) on 31 March 1945.\textsuperscript{152}

Ever since the year 1925, when compulsion was first introduced in the city of Madras, it had been the endeavour of the Corporation to open more elementary schools with a view to provide greater facilities for the pupils.

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid., p.111.

\textsuperscript{151} G.O. No.206, Education, 23, September 1937.

\textsuperscript{152} Administration Report of the Corporation of Madras for 1944-45 (Madras, 1945), p.34.
poor classes of the community and thus wipe out illiteracy. The procedure laid down in G.O. No.206 (Education Department), dated 23 September 1937 for enforcing compulsion was so cumbersome as to be largely ineffective and unworkable. This apart, in the interests of efficiency of Corporation elementary schools, it was considered that the teaching staff should not (as they were under existing procedure) be burdened with the work of serving notices or collecting fines as their time and energy could be more profitably directed towards teaching work. Hence, certain proposals were placed before the council, which accepted them on 24 October 1944 as an experimental measure and sanctioned the appointment of additional staff for enforcing compulsion of attendance in the elementary schools.\textsuperscript{153}

Pre-primary instruction in the form of Nursery schools or classes was considered as an essential adjunct to a sound system of elementary education and provision for opening three nursery schools was accordingly made in the Elementary Education Budget for 1944-45. But the Government passed orders that the expenditure on Nursery schools should not be debited to the Elementary Education Fund.\textsuperscript{154} Considering the importance of the project, the matter was again placed before the council which at its meeting held on 11 July 1944 resolved to open three Nursery schools, the cost being met from the General Funds. The three schools could not be opened for want of suitable accommodation and trained teachers. However, a Nursery class was opened in the Corporation boys' school, Vathiar Kandapillai Street, Choolai on 1 February 1945.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., p.35.

\textsuperscript{154} G.O. No.200, (Education Department) 10 February, 1944.

Growth of Corporation Elementary Schools in the City of Madras (1931-32 to 1946-47)

Number of Schools

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<th>Years</th>
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<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>132</td>
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<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>134</td>
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<td>1941-42</td>
<td>141</td>
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<td>1946-47</td>
<td>173</td>
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As in the previous years, midday meals had been continued to be supplied to poor children in the Corporation elementary schools in the city. In 1944-45, midday meals were supplied to 6,250 poor children in 108 Corporation elementary schools at a cost of rupees 125,654, annas 7 and paise 10 against rupees 1,17,647 in 1943-44.\textsuperscript{156}

In 1945-46, the number of Corporation elementary schools remained 155 as in 1944-45. But in 1946-47, the number of Corporation elementary schools in the city increased upto 173, and the total strength of pupils in these schools was 51,512 (30,026 boys and 21,486 girls). In 1947-48, one more elementary school was opened by the Corporation of Madras raising the total number of elementary schools run by the Corporation to 174, and correspondingly the total strength of the pupils on the rolls of these schools rose to 54,879.\textsuperscript{157}

It is thus evident from the foregoing account that substantial progress was effected in the field of elementary education in the city of Madras owing to the relentless efforts of the Corporation. The free and compulsory elementary education together with the free midday meal to the pupils provided by the Corporation, the measures of the Corporation to enforce compulsion of attendance of pupils, the amenities offered to the pupils to acquire elementary education and the care bestowed by the Corporation on the health of the pupils decisively resulted in the progress of elementary education in the city of Madras.

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p.36.