APPENDIX II

Observations on Education

Summary section of the letter sent by Maharaja Rama Varma on 10 April 1882 to the British Government

To summarise the above observations:

I. There is a widespread impression that the Government intends to withdraw its connection with higher education.

II. That this impression will continue until it is authoritatively denied.

III. That it is to be regretted that a discussion had been going on for the last forty years on the comparative importance of higher and lower education, as if an antagonism existed.

IV. That theoretically no Government is bound to educate its subject population.

V. That if, in practice, such considerations as expediency, humanity, and the demands of civilisation make it a duty, there is no reason why the primary education of the masses form a part of that duty and the higher education of the few should not.

VI. That the case of England where higher education is almost self-supporting cannot be applied to India owing to the obviously great difference of circumstances.

VII. That there is not, at present, any indigenous agency competent to take up the work of higher education, if relinquished by Government.

VIII. That to entrust it to Missionary agencies will be objectionable: - 1. The people will view it with distrust, attributing to Government a wish to thrust its religion upon them; 2. The higher classes of natives and the non-Hindu populations are sure to keep out; 3. There is no
guarantee that higher education under Missionary agencies will maintain the present high
standard when the model Government colleges no longer exist.

IX. That while it may be regretted that a greater religious tone is not given to Government
education, the Government will be ill-advised to take any action with a view to rectify it.

X. That it is false to say that educated natives are atheists. Education must sweep away
all absurd notions, but at the same time leave the mind with a keener desire to search for the
truth. And religious teaching is ready to hand to those who seek it.

XI. That primary education needs much further development is true. The Local Funds and
Grant-in-Aid arrangements have already done appreciable good and are capable of extension,
and ought it to be supplemented by a share of the savings effected by a wise and economical
financial management.

XII. That as yet Government has not done all that could be done, especially in the Madras
Presidency, to educate the nobility of the land, who in their turn may be expected to promote
the education of their tenantry largely.

XIII. That the higher education in the Government Institutions has produced no good is
gross calumny. In British India and out of it, educated natives are doing important public
service, and each educated native exercises enlightened influence around him.

XIV. That the present plan of higher education is susceptible of great improvement so as to
follow a healthier development of the faculties of the recipients is true, but that object will be
least attained by the withdrawal of Government connection.

XV. That the natives that have received higher education, far from being impediments to
the cause of primary education, have been valuable aids to it, is shewn by men most
competent to speak on it.
XVI. That the argument of political danger to Government from the spread of higher education is too ridiculous to need any serious refutation.

That the increased expenditure on primary education should not be met by a curtailment of that on higher education, which, considering the resources of the Empire, is very moderate, and that the time is not come for carrying out of the policy contemplated by the Despatch of 1854 (Varma, 1882).