CHAPTER VII

ECONOMIC ENDEAVOURS

The economic mosaic of Agasteeswaram taluk in the early period was one of extreme contrasts existing side by side, over lordship and subservien, landedness and landlessness, prosperity and poverty. The Nairs formed the feudal aristocracy owning most of the land. They were wealthy farmers, merchants and artisans. The feudal chieftains extracted from their lower caste tenants whom they could evict at will or even kill, kazhcha or presents on occasions like weddings, births, deaths, opening of new palaces fertivals etc. The Government also harassed them by the extraction of several unjust burdensome taxes. The inhuman manner in the taxes were collected made the tax collector a terror to the people. The concessions made from time to time by benign rulers were often overlooked and physical torture was applied to extract not merely dues but even advances; sometimes far above the fixed rates. Short-fire locks were

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2 Ivy Peter and D. Peter, *op.cit.*, p.61.
fixed on the ears of the ‘offending’ men who had to stand with them for hours in the hot sun suffering excruciating pain till the tax was paid. In the absence of the men, the women were tortured by heavy wooden rice-pestles being twisted into their hair or by making them stand in a bent position with heavy stones placed on their backs. Poverty and famine destroyed the lives and livelihood of thousands within a short span of time.

Economically exploited, the lower castes lived in a state of fear, humiliated and despised until the middle of the 19th century when economic reforms of far-reaching results were introduced due to the influence of the missionaries who had come to play a vital role in the affair of Agasteeswaram taluk. The influence of Christianity on the economic life of this area had been immeasurable and pervading. Mission aimed not merely at securing the spiritual enlightenment of the individual but also at promoting the economic life of the lower castes.

**Improvement of Agriculture**

Agriculture was the main occupation of this area. Agriculture as a science, was unknown and the implements in use are wretchedly inefficient. It is the most important sector in terms of providing employment and reducing poverty. Paddy crop was given top-most priority, but the extent of cultivation was limited as there was no reservoir to store water. From the year 1897 to 1976, seven major reservoirs were

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constructed with the total anacut area of 31968 hr. This opened up vast areas for irrigated agriculture, especially paddy.⁵

Pechipparai dam was built across the river Kodayar during 1896-1906 by the Maharaja of Travancore Sri Moolam Tirunal under the supervision of the British Engineer Mr. Munchin.⁶ Perunchani dam was constructed during 1943-1953. The development of modern agricultural practices is one of the great success of stories of applied science. Improved ploughing techniques, new pesticides and fertilizers and better varieties of crops are among the factors that have resulted in significant increase in agricultural productivity.⁷ Fertilizer is an important component of dry land technology.

Whenever agriculture was practised pests attacked, destroying part or even all of the crop. The first successful large scale conquest of a pest by chemical mean was the control of the pest powdery mildew in Europe in the 1840’s. It was controlled first by spraying with lime sulphur and subsequent by sulphur dusting.⁸ In 1942 Dr. Paul Muller of Switzerland discovered the insecticidal properties of a synthetic chlorinated organic chemical, dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane, first synthesized in 1874 and subsequently known as DDT.⁹

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⁶ Ibid., p.205.
⁹ Ibid., p.345.
Granary
Rev. Mead decided to improve agriculture by the introduction of European Ploughs. He wrote a letter to the Directors in connection with this matter. Agreeably to Rev. Mead's wishes, a supply of English ploughs was sent to him from England and he put the native Christians in the way of using them. As a result they obtained the maximum quantity of produce possible and also increased the general income of the mission.

Construction of the Granary

Rev. Mead also decided to erect a central paddy Godown or Granary to gather and store up all the produce from the extensive mission fields and prevent further wastage in storing and transporting paddy at different places. Accordingly plans and estimates were made and he applied to the Sirkar for the requisite orders or license for cutting down about 150 palmyrah trees for the use of the building. He obtained permission through the British Resident Col. Munroe and commenced the building in 1818 and ere long the strong and spacious granary was finished with the cellar and downstairs to store the paddy and the upstairs to be used as a dwelling house for the missionary when he was on tour, and as a Travellers Bungalow for European visitors.

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12 Bi-Centenary Celebration (1806-2006), *op.cit.*, p.77.
The Granary was planned to hold 1500 cottahs of paddy. The people from all parts were used to go to this granary which was open to all classes of people alike in times of scarcity. The selling was so considerably regulated that the poor people could buy paddy from the granary even for a small sum. So all grades of poor people were thankful to the early missionaries for their very kind and sympathetic arrangement.\textsuperscript{14}

**Famine Relief**

In 1813 famine visited in Agasteeswaram region and many people were on the point of perishing with hunger. Though the severity of the famine was felt the government still insisted on the tax being paid up and Mr. Ringeltaube seeing the sufferings of the people, with a view to relieve them took a trip as far as Quilon and then back as far as Palayamcottah and collected funds from the good hearted gentries and helped the people.\textsuperscript{15} When he found that the famine was continuing longer, to discourage eating idle-food and in order to teach the Christian lessons of activity, he devised a plan for utilizing the labours of the poor people and made a well and a garden near the Mylaudi Church, with a tank and fountain and distributed the funds as remuneration for their work.\textsuperscript{16} He also made them collect red stones from the neighbouring Maruthuvamalay Hill. The stones, thus collected, were sent as mementos to the several

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Agur, C.M., *op.cit.*, p.605.
\textsuperscript{16} Bi-Centenary Celebration (1806-2006), *op.cit.*, p.29.
gentlemen who contributed to the relief of the poor Christian tradesmen, who purchased the stones manufactured them into buttons and used them for making bracelets and rings. Thus the missionary inaugurated a system of poor relief in Agasteeswaram taluk.

The First Printing Press

The people who were liberated from ignorance were able to read and needed material. Lack of proper reading material would cause frustration worse than ignorance. The first missionary Ringeltaube realised that without a printing press to produce sufficient literature for the people, any programme for the education of the masses would be “a useless abortive effort”. Realising the sanity of this remark, Mead the next missionary brought a printing machinery and accessories from Tharangampadi in 1820. He brought with him an experienced printer named David Adiappen and paid him Rs.21 a month. This press was the first to be introduced in Nagercoil and was “a valuable but necessary appendage to a Missionary establishment". The first book that was printed by Mead in Nagercoil in 1820 was “Atmabodham”. Local boys were trained in the school of industry and to do composing, book binding and even paper making.

20 Ibid.
Licence obtained to Import Mission Materials Free of Duty

Another important effort of Rev. Mead in connection with the Mission press was the licence obtained to import materials free of duty. He brought to the notice of Her Highness the Ranee’s Government that the reams of printing paper required for the press were sent to him from charitable institutions in England and were intended for the use of schools and other benevolent institutions already existing.\textsuperscript{22}

The press produced thousands of elementary school books, catechisms and scripture lessons. The press at Neyyoor and Quilon printed larger books like the summary of the Bible and books on Christian Theology. The Tamil Reference New Testament and Crisp’s Theology in 4 volumes were also printed here. For the people of South Travancore these books were easily available. The press of Quilon brought out school books, tracts and pamphlets in Malayalam.\textsuperscript{23} In 1884 after the retirement of Mault and Mead, the three presses were merged into one as the London Mission Press, Nagercoil. While pumping out useful reading material for the public, the press also acted as an employment-generating institution. It offered a living to many Christian young men and also trained them in composing, binding and printing. Time and again men who received their training here, went out and set up their own presses all over South

\textsuperscript{22} ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Joy Gnanadhason, \textit{op.cit.}, p.83.
In their own way these men have been contributing to the literacy of the land.

**Elimination of Unnecessary Taxes**

One must not forget that the equally noble band of Christian missionaries who laboured in the country bore the brunt of the battle to eliminate unnecessary taxes and contributed much towards the general uplifting of the masses and in the way of introducing western education and Christian ideas of religion and morality that now pervade the country. People of this generation enjoy the fruits of the labours of those able administrators, benefactors and philanthropists.

The oppressed Shanar converts complained to Ringeltaube. As a duty bound citizen he asked them to be obedient to their masters and advised them not to imagine that their conversion to Christianity exempted them from various obligatory services. He even appointed a paid mission agent to collect the poll tax due from his Christian convert and regularly paid them in a lump sum to the Sircar. He also insisted that converts to Christianity were liable to same public service as others. The Directors of the LMS commended this action of Ringeltaube. However, before long the missionary realised the unjust nature of the tax. Hence Ringeltaube

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24 Ivy Peter & Peter, D., *op.cit.*, p.102.
26 James Hugh, *op.cit.*, p.111.
27 Missionary Society's Reports 1795-1814, p.418.
represented the grievances and sorrows of the poor classes to Government. Col. Munro though a strict financier was also a humane and Christian philanthropist he took such a lively interest in the matter in which Ringeltaube interested himself. He prevailed upon the Rani Parvathi Bai and procured a proclamation on 29th June 1814 exempting the Christians from paying the Poll tax. Not only Poll-tax, Net tax, Labour tax and Christian Festival tax were also abolished. Rev. Samuel Zachariah mentions in his book that these reliefs were of immense help to the Nadars. These were followed by the abolition of many other similar restrictions. In 1818 Col. Munro ordered that the lower castes could wear silver and gold ornaments without paying the usual taxes. In 1819 certain taxes levied on the Chettis were abolished. In 1847 people of the lower castes were allowed to tile the roofs of their houses. (Formerly they could use only Olai Kadjan). Due to the efforts of the Christian Missionaries nearly 110 peculiar and abnoxious taxes were abolished in 1864. The ‘Adiyara’ paid to get succession certificates by the Marumakathayam community was abolished in 1888.

29 Ivy Peter & Peter, D., op.cit., p.111.
30 Agur, C.M., op.cit., p.574.
35 Ibid., p.570.
The converts also refused to render ‘Ooliyam’ services. They strongly objected to their being engaged in duties relating to Pagodas and temples and petitioned in 1815 to the Rani that their religion was being dishonoured. Moved by this petition Rani Parvathi Bai, by a proclamation, exempted the Christians from gratuitous duties. Still the Brahmins and the Nairs were adamant and hence opposition came from the Christians. A Christian who refused to work for them was beaten to death and many Christians were jailed. Representation to the local government was of no avail. Proper payments were not made to the Christians for work done in spite of government orders and representations to the local government was of no use. So the following petition of 1859 was sent to the Government of Madras. “Works like ‘Kuttiyiluppu, Uppu ooliam, transporting Paddy and Kadjan, repairing roads, tanks, canals etc., are being done mainly by the Nadars and are not paid”. So an order was passed in 1886 that proper payments should be made and also for things purchased from the ‘Viruthikarargal’. Finally in 1893 all ‘Ooliyam’ and ‘Viruthi’ systems were abolished in Travancore.

Lace Industry

The missionaries also wanted to put an end to the miseries of women. Lace industry is an economic endeavour which appears a simple

36 Proclamation of Rani Parvathi Bai, dated Margali 991 (1815).
37 Ivy Peter & Peter, D., op. cit., p.112.
38 Ibid., p.114.
and easy proportion. However its contribution towards economic enrichment of certain sections of this taluk is of far reaching significance.

Lace works were carried on as cottage industries throughout the area under the supervision of various missionary organisations. Chronologically, Syrian Embroidery was the earliest to find its way into Travancore. It was introduced early in the Christian era by the Syrian Settlers[^40] and found a place in the list of activities fostered by the LMS, the Salvation Army and the Immaculate Congregation of Mary.[^41] Subsequently the Government of India made budgetary provision in the Five Year Plans for the enforcement of some schemes mainly meant for women's welfare. Accordingly many women's organisations sprang up in almost all the places of India and most of them undertook lace and embroidery work as one of their important activities.[^42] Yet it is worthy to see that the LMS was the pioneer in this taluk. Its advent marked a turning point in the economic history.

Lace is an open work fabric made of many varieties of fine thread.[^43] It is a transparent network, in which the threads of the weft are twisted round those of the warp. It may be made of silk or cotton or even of gold and silver thread. It is usually a pattern worked upon either during

[^41]: Emily Gilchriest Hatch, op.cit., p.267.
the process of making the lace, or with a needle, after this has been completed. The lace consisted of two elements - the pattern and the ground. The pattern is called the toile and the ground that holds the pattern is called the reseau, which means noose or snare. The two main types of lace are bobbin and needle point. Other types of lace are crocheting made of knotting threads with a needle and fatting.

A few materials of low cost are necessary to start with. One of the primary requirements is a cushion which is commonly called a pillow. The cushion raised about a foot high on one side is gradually decreasing in its height towards the opposite side. The lace manufactured is rolled and kept clean. A hundred or less number of bobbins are made of wood, a sheet of small pins and a quantity of thread. Strips of leather about one and half yards long and two or more inches broad are the materials needed. The first thing to be done is to fix the leather strap on the cushion firmly by means of 8 or 10 large pins. The thread is then rolled into a required number of bobbins necessary for the particular pattern of lace to be made. The cushion which is in a standing position is then placed in front of the person. All the threads are fastened at the top of the leather strap. The process of lace making starts by passing the bobbins to and fro.

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46 Pillow is a common term as far as lace making is concerned. And from the term the name Pillow lace came into being.
It is followed by interlacing the thread in a particular manner. The twist and crossing made are fastened by means of small pins.\textsuperscript{47}

Early in the year 1821 Mrs. Mault (Martha) who had some knowledge of lace making began to teach lace work to a few girls.\textsuperscript{48} The girls in the boarding school soon showed themselves to be apt pupils and in addition to all the elements of a primary education, needle work was taught. In these institutions they taught the academic subjects and Scripture in the forenoon hours. In the afternoon hours, the girls were taught spinning, plain needle work and sewing.\textsuperscript{49}

Mrs. Mault saw many women, widows and girls live in idleness and exposed to many temptations. She looked round to provide an honourable livelihood for them and pondered over the introduction of English hand-made lace for their benefit. The lace industry functioned as a religious and cultural centre as well as an "umbrella" where the people could find a new leadership in the missionaries. It could give economic, mental and spiritual uplift to hundreds of workers in this taluk. The income from the industry became a very good source of revenue for the missionaries to promote education in this region especially for girls.\textsuperscript{50}

All the lace workers were Christians of various congregations in the Nagercoil District, and no woman was given work without a letter of

\textsuperscript{47} Nagam Aiya, V., \textit{op.cit.}, Vol.III, p.289.
\textsuperscript{48} Hacker, I.H., \textit{op.cit.}, p.87.
\textsuperscript{49} Agur, C.M., \textit{op.cit.}, p.464.
\textsuperscript{50} Joy Gnanadhason, \textit{op.cit.}, p.136.
recommendation from the mission agent.\textsuperscript{51} They were baptized women of good character, who could read the Bible. It is very clear from Mrs. Fosters' report about lace industry of 1912. She writes, “Only baptized women of good character, who can read the Bible are admitted, in this way we strive to make the industry as a whole a refining and uplifting influence throughout the mission”.\textsuperscript{52}

The missionary ladies gave priority to the girls who studied in the Boarding school for employment in the industry. It is reported by I.H. Hacker, in his report of Neyyoor Mission District for the year 1899 as “All my 70 workers are old girls of the school and then I have the pleasure of keeping in touch with them for many years after they leave the school”.\textsuperscript{53} They also gave much consideration to mothers of Boarding school girls. It is very clear from the T.D.C Report that “Most of the mothers of the Boarding School girls being lace workers”.\textsuperscript{54}

Mrs. Mault with the support of Mrs. Mead lace making and embroidery were taught in almost all the schools for girls of the repressed sections. Hence the girls of the downtrodden sections to whom education was denied so far came to receive general education and training in a trade to earn their daily bread. The lace they made became a source to buy back

\textsuperscript{51} T.D.C. Report for 1907, pp.6-7.
\textsuperscript{52} L.M.S. Report for 1912, p.173.
their freedom. They imparted religious education to the girls and instilled in them the habits of cleanliness and industry. It is clear from the extract of a letter of Mrs. Mault dated 18, 1841. She writes, “Our aim is to impart to them in reading, writing and useful employment, including at the time habit of cleanliness and industry”. They gave admission to orphans and those who suffered from poverty in the Christian families.

The Nagercoil Lace Industry developed to such an extent that many hundreds of workers were employed in it. The administration also showed interest in the promotion of this industry. It is said that some specimens of Nagercoil Lace were purchased by His Highness the Maharajah’s Government to be displayed in the Calcutta Exhibition, for which a Gold Medal was awarded. In December 1929 His Excellency, the Viceroy Lord Irwin accompanied by Lady Irwin visited Travancore. In the course of their travels they visited the office of the Nagercoil Lace Industry and greatly admired the displayed works. Her Excellency was pleased to accept beautiful pieces of lace. The Viceroy signed the visitors’ book of the industry following His Excellency signature, together with the following words. “I was also very interested to see the school of Lace and

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56 *Missionary Magazine and Chronicle for August 1841*, p.128.
thought the work very good indeed. It must be great boon to the women workers.

The lace workers were paid according to the work they completed and each could earn from Rs.7 to 10 per day. When the girls left the institution to marry they received a dowry in the form of a box containing clothing and all necessary materials to make lace and embroidery for themselves.

Women missionaries and missionary wives headed the lace and embroidery industries. These ladies did not occupy any official position or salaried post. Without that they devoted a good deal of their time to the supervision of institutions started for the welfare of the women. How the missionaries managed that is a big question. But they managed it amazingly well. The Mission Council regarded its industrial work as a task of high missionary value. At the same time it did not agree that such work was suitable for “Paid Missionaries” of the society. It appeared necessary on the part of the Mission Council from time to time, to ask one or other of the single women missionaries to take care of the industries for shorter or longer period.

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60 Yesudhas, R.N., London Missionary Society in Travancore, p.82.
The Missionaries took care of various matters connected with the lace school. They spent their major time towards giving out materials, inspecting the work, paying the worker, attending to the orders, receiving payments etc. They worked in favour of the continuance of the industry against all odds at all times. The matron and other native helpers willingly gave their valuable assistance and kept the mechanical work as much as possible in their hands. The supervision had taken a good deal of time, but they liked to work as it gave them great pleasure.

The Superintendents had adopted the practice of visiting the centres and meeting the women. The visit enabled the Superintendent to get right into the normal surroundings of the workers and dismiss workers of immoral conduct. The smooth running of the industries required periodical assessment of the work and periodical meeting of the workers of various industries. Hence the convener was authorised to arrange a meeting of the supervisors of the industries. A sub committee constituting of the Convener of the Industries Committee and the Treasurer was constituted to study statements. They had to visit any of the industry offices, if it was found necessary. After the completion of the sub-

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64 Letter from Foreign Secretary to Rev. G. Parker dated 22nd June 1915, L.M.S. Box No.72, 1915, UTC Archives, Bangalore.
committees report the convener called for a conference of those who supervised industries.

The workers made the kind of lace that the consumer required. They also maintained a high standard of design and workmanship which appeared essential for the success of the industry.\(^6^6\) Many ladies in various parts of India assisted the scheme by purchasing the lace and aiding in its sale. In the year 1890 over Rs.1600/- worth of work had been sold to ladies in different parts of India.\(^6^7\)

**Government Aid and Encouragement**

State recognition to various ventures of the mission shows that the Government and the Missions were equally interested in the welfare of the people. The Industrial schools of South Travancore received a Government Grant of Rs.156/- per annum from 1869.\(^6^8\) These schools also continued to do some useful work and gave a grant of Rs.12/- per mensem to the Nagercoil lace industry and this came to about 50 per cent of the tuition fees.\(^6^9\)

The government also gave sanction for the Technical Schools for Girls Little Flower’s School at Mela Manakudy, Mary Immaculate Technical School at Cape Comorin and St. Micheal’s Technical School at


Asaripallam in this taluk. These schools gave construction in the more feminine subjects such as embroidery, lace work etc.

The government encouraged the lace industry by conducting exhibition and purchasing materials to exhibit in several exhibitions. His Highness ordered the best specimens of “Pillow lace” to be displayed in the “Great Exhibition”. Some specimens of Nagercoil Lace were purchased by His Highness Maharajah’s Government for the Calcutta Exhibition for which the Gold Medal had been awarded. The local price for the various kinds of laces exhibited by the Government in this exhibition was Rs.587.8 (Anna). In 1899 His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore placed an order for lovely embroidery on satin and on fine white muslin to be displayed at the Paris Exhibition. The workers worked day and night for it. The work was most beautiful when finished and received a letter of commendation for the excellency of the work and the promptitude of its execution.

In the Glasgow Exhibition of Industry, Science and Arts of 1909, the Maharajah of Travancore participated and sanctioned a sum of Rs.5000/- for the collection of the exhibits and a committee was appointed to select appropriate articles.
The London Art Exhibition was held in London in May 1931. About this information was sent to the Director of Industries of Travancore from the Agent to the Governor General, Madras State dated 2

1931. Her Highness was pleased to approve the proposal to send to the exhibition, samples of lace, gold thread or filigree work. The Director of Industries addressed the Infant Jesus Orphanage, Mulagumoodu to send suitable samples of lace and embroidery. The lady supervisor sent a tea cloth in Venetiah lace worth Rs.105/-.

All India Exhibition of Indian Architectural Arts and Crafts at Calcutta was held in 1936. Some specimens of arts and crafts were sent from the Department of Industries. The ladies embroidery section with its charming Indian designs received much attention. An All India Exhibition was conducted in Trivandrum in connection with the celebration of the Birthday of His Highness of Maharajah on 19

th November 1936. It was intended to propagate and popularise the existing industries, encourage all active and prospective industrialists, manufacturers etc. Thus the state patronage in different ways helped the lace industry to prosper.

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75 Bundle No.253, File No.867, General Exhibition of Indian Art to be held in May 1931, Participation of the State in the Exhibition dated 11.05.1931, State Archives, Trivandrum.

76 Bundle No.284, File no.759/35, All India Exhibition of Indian Architectural Arts and Crafts – Calcutta, State Archives, Trivandrum.

77 General Bundle No.318, File No.225, dated 02.02.1936, Birthday Celebration of His Highness the Maharajah – 1936/112, Sri Chitra Exhibition, State Archives, Trivandrum.
Uplift of Poor Women

All the lace workers were poor. The establishment of this reputed industry helped its employees to develop their self-respect and social status. The employment appeared profitable and it was calculated to inculcate a spirit of self-support in the workers.\(^\text{78}\) It had also raised the economic status of women and brightened the educational facilities, mainly for women. The progress of women of the lace industries brought improvement in their mental make-up and general manners as well as social habits. Mental culture formed a part of their education and their moral training was the chief object of the missionaries.\(^\text{79}\) It gave a regular income to the suffering poor women. It paved the way for their economic advancement in life. It inspired the people towards their liberation from ignorance and proved a great boon to all those employed.

Widow's Regeneration

The lace industries were very helpful for the widows. In the LMS report Mrs. Duthie has given an interesting account of the influence and the fruits of lace making introduced by Mrs. Mault, which runs as follows; “A great number of Christian women, by means of this employment, have been able to earn much. It is great advantage, especially to those who have been left widows and whose relatives may be poor and

therefore unable to give item but little assistance”. The widows entirely depended upon it for the support of themselves and their families. Many of the workers were widows or women whose husbands had deserted them.

When village people were faced with starvation, lace work helped the hungry to feed themselves and their children. Its object was to help them to be self-dependent and become valuable workers. Many were anxious to take up this job as they saw it as a means to earn a livelihood. Some workers’ husbands were drunkards and did not give money to meet family expenses. In such families the wages from lace work were of great help to the women workers. Some workers were solely dependent upon this profit.

Thus lace industry furnished profitable employment to a large number of native women. The LMS report of 1902 says that “the lace-industry continues to give employment to 200 Christian women.” In 1920 the number increased and the Nagercoil Industry register contained the names of 1700 women. Before employing them in the industry the missionaries learned about the conduct and character of the worker. They observed the conduct of the applicants in person. The missionaries employed in the industries the intelligent and trained students from the

80 LMS Report for 1867, p.146.
81 T.D.C. Report for 1879, p.16.
82 Col. Pakyanathan and Captain Y. Peter, An Advancing Army (Tamil), Tirunelveli, 1994, p.91.
83 LMS Report for 1902, p.193.
schools. About this Mrs. Emlyn writes; “Many of the girls, on leaving the school, are employed as lace workers, which is an advantage to them in many ways”.  

Thus the missionaries had taught them values such as dignity of labour, work, culture etc. They had made them conscious of their dignity as human beings and inspired them with the sense of self-respect. In schools training were given in agriculture, carpentry, weaving etc., so that they could stand on their own legs and could lead honest lives. The entire scenario underwent a change with the spread of education which kept the doors for employment wide open for the educated. The educated youth both male and female were able to shoulder the responsibility of their parents. They were taught to cut unnecessary expenditure and to limit borrowing so that they could be saved from interest charges. By removing the wrong notion about illness much economic loss was stopped by the contribution of Christians to the prevention and care of illness, and the lower caste people started enjoying the fruits of their hard labour with pride and dignity.

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