CHAPTER V

DEPRESSED CLASS EDUCATION

Grant – in- Aid Code of 1070 ME [1894-95 A.D], provided grants to backward classes as Pulaya, Pariah, Veda, Ezhava, Shanar, Kurava, Vettaran, Marakkan, Paravan, Mohammedan, Mukkuva, Velan, Pallanr, Malayarayan, Talavan, Tandan, Muthuvan, Veluthedan, Maran and Kshaurakaran. In 1071 ME [1895-96 AD], Government established 15 schools for backward classes - 04 for Mohammedans 07 for Ezhavas, 02 for Pulayas, 01 for Marakkans and 01 for Kanis. 15 more schools were opened in the following year. The missionary agencies utilized the liberal Grant - in - Aid and started numerous schools especially intended for backward classes. The schools receiving grants rose to 150 within a couple of years. To get qualified teachers for backward classes was difficult and government granted 185 scholarships to backward class pupils to enable them to prepare for Vernacular Elementary Examination. A pass in the Vernacular Elementary Examination enabled them to earn grants as teachers. Backward class students were exempted from the Vernacular examination fees. 199 Government had accepted the

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responsibility of imparting free primary education to all children in the state irrespective of caste or creed by the proceedings current No. E 115, dated 15 August 1904. Government also accepted to meet the entire cost of primary education of schools, in which majority of scholars came from backward classes.\textsuperscript{200} In 1904 A. D, the term backward classes was restricted to Pulayar, Parayar, Pallan, Kuravan, Paravan, Thandan, Marakkan, Mukkuvan and Kanikkars [Hill Tribes]\textsuperscript{201}. In 1080 ME [1904-05 A.D] four new Normal schools were opened at Kottar, Trivandrum, Quilon and Kottayam for training teachers for backward class schools\textsuperscript{202}. 56 students attended the Normal schools in 1905-06 A.D, and all of them received government stipends.\textsuperscript{203} Administrative Report of 1080 ME (1904-1905) marked that government had made the education of backward classes completely free and every class of people from the highest Brahmin to the lowest pulaya exhibited interest in yearning education of their children\textsuperscript{204}

In 1905-06 A.D, 276 primary schools were functioned for backward classes with 5,9,07 pupils. Only 20 schools were under direct


management of government. All the backward class schools received full salary grants and no fees were levied in these schools. 03 Aided Night schools were functioned for the children of coolies under the management of European Planters. These schools received a grant of Rs. 318 per annum from government\textsuperscript{205} Table I. Shows the total number of backward classes under instruction.

\textsuperscript{205} Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1081 ME [1905-06 A.D], OP. Cit., 53-55.
**TABLE I : NUMBER OF BACKWARD CLASS PUPILS UNDER INSTRUCTION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS, IN TRAVANCORE, IN 1080 ME [1904 – 1905 A.D] AND 1081 ME [1905-1906 AD]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pulaya</td>
<td>2,266</td>
<td>2,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parayar</td>
<td>2,252</td>
<td>2,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velans</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuravars</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanies</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vedars</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,591</td>
<td>5,907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On 26 October 1905 Marthandan Thampi in Sri Mulam Popular Assembly said that government started 20 special schools for backward classes and awarded salary grants to 201 other schools also. Most of those grant in aid schools belonged to Christian Missions. He also stated that Pulayar and others had to sacrifice their religion to study in those schools. He requested to open more government schools for backward classes.\(^{206}\)

The Grant – In – Aid Code of 1894 – 95 established schools for backward classes, provided grants to backward classes schools and encouraged the pupils to write Vernacular Elementary Examination, Provided free primary education to backward classes, full salary grants to backward class schools from 1904 onwards. Normal schools were started for backward class teachers training etc. In 1905 – 06 A.D, 2,513 Pulayas and 2,464 Parayas attended the schools.

Ayyankali also fought for the education of untouchable children. In 1905 AD Ayyankali constructed a *kudipallikoodam* (Pre Primary school) in Venganoor. The school was constructed with *Olla, Olla Madal* and *Mulla*. This was the first school started by the depressed classes in Kerala. Savarnas destroyed the school and Ayyankali built a new one in

the same place. The literate Pulayas worked as *Asans* and taught illetrate Pulayas *Nilathezhuthu.*  

Michael Tharakan reported that in 1904 A.D, schools were opened to Ezhavas and other backward communities. Abhymanyu wrote that in 1905 A.D, Dewan V. P. Madhavarayar opened the doors of the *sirkar* schools to Ezhavas. *Savarnas* opposed the Ezhavas entry into schools by force and Nayar Ezhava *Lahala* spread in Central Travancore. In January 1907 A.D, G. Idichandy, in the Sree Mulam Popular Assembly demanded that all government schools should be thrown open without reservation to all castes and classes. In the same day, in January 1907 A. D, M. Govindan in the Sri Mulam popular Assembly presented a memorial signed by eleven members of the Assembly. The memorial pointed out that in several government schools the children of the Ezhava community were refused admission - in majority of Vernacular schools for boys, Ezhava boys were not admitted. Again the doors of the Sanskrit college and the *Ayurvedic Patasala* were absolutely closed against them. He begged that government schools should be thrown open open
to all without distinction of caste or creed.\footnote{Speeches of M. Govindan, B.A. B. L (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalanayogam Trivandrum) on 09 - January - 1907, the fifth Day, Proceedings of the Third meeting of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly of Travancore, Government Press, Travancore, 1907, PP. 109-111.} He got the reply that government were not able to admit Ezhava boys into all government schools. Admission was free to all castes in government English schools and admission to Vernacular Middle Schools was also free, except the schools situated near to temples or palaces. The unrestricted admission of Ezhava pupils into caste girls schools was also not possible.\footnote{Dewans Reply to M. Govindans speech on 09 - January – 1907, the fifth day, Proceedings of the third Meeting of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, Travancore, Government Press, 1907, PP . 111.}

The Education Code of 1907 A.D, again sanctioned the entry of all caste or classes of pupils into education institutions\footnote{C. Abhyamanyu, Ayyankali, OP. Cit., PP. 84-85.} except the schools which were situated in close proximity to temples or palaces and the places where existed a chance for clash. The entire decision power was with the Head Master.\footnote{Ibid, Reply to M. Govindans speech on 09 - January - 1907, The Fifth Day, Proceedings of the Third meeting of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly,..., Op. Cit., P. 11. M. Govindans Speech [Member of SNDP Yogam], Trivandrum, and Dewans Reply on 20 - November - 1907 the third Day proceedings of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, PP. 45-46.} Abhyamanyu noted that Head Master of the school was usually a \textit{savarna}. He used his discretionary power to prevent the admission of Pulayar and other depressed castes.\footnote{Abhyamanyu, Ayyankali, OP. Cit., PP. 84-86.}

On 20 November 1907, M. Govindan in Sri Mulam popular Assembly said that only 06 Government Girls Schools admitted Ezhava girls. He also mentioned that though Ezhava were qualified, they were
not allowed to write Ayurvedic examination. Dewan replied that theoretically all government institutions were opened to members of Ezhava community and agreed to make special arrangements for Ezhavas to attend Ayurvedic examination.\footnote{Speeches of M. Govindan on 20 - November – 1907, the third Day, \textit{Proceedings of Sri Mulam}. Op. cit., PP. 45-46.}

On 12 November 1908, Kumaran Asan, in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly demanded that all schools in the state should be opened to Ezhavas. He also expressed his thanks for admitted Ezhava boys in most of the schools. In his reply Dewan stated that among the 369 schools functioned for boys 326 were opened to Ezhavas. He also said that if any of those 326 schools denied admission to Ezhava boys, government would enforce them.\footnote{Speeches of Kumaran Asan, Member of SNDP Yogam and Dewans Reply on 12 - November - 1908, the fourth Day, \textit{Proceedings of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly}, PP. 73-74.}

The Administrative Report of 1086 ME (1910-11 AD) noted that education among Nayars, Ezhavas, Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians increased considerably. Restrictions on the admission of Ezhavas into Departmental schools had been removed and a large number of Ezhavas attended in schools. In the year 106 ME [1910-11
A.D], 14,164 Ezhava pupils studied in recognized schools. They were excluded from the special classes since 1086 ME [1910-11 AD].

One of the important development of the first decade of the 20th century was, Ayyankaly started Kudipallikudam for Pulayas in 1905 A.D. Though the Education Code of 1907 was reissued, the Savarnas and Savarna Head Masters prevented the Pulayas entry into schools. M. Govindan and Kumaran Asan, members of the SNDP Yogam expressed the grievances of Ezhavas in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, which resulted the entry of Ezhavas into most of the departments schools and they were allowed to attend the Ayurvedic examination. The number of Ezhavas students increased.

The section 69 of the Education code of 1909 AD dated 19.11.1909 removed the restriction on entry of Pulaya children into schools. The section 69 of code says

No pupil shall be refused admission to any school on the ground that the belongs to any class or caste, or religion. The Director, however, may, with the approval of government, sanction, in the case of any school or of

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any class of schools such restriction on admission as he
may consider reasonable.\textsuperscript{219}

The code recognized the principle of throwing open all schools to
all classes without distinction of caste or creed.\textsuperscript{220} In 1912-13 A. D.
Direction of Public instruction reported that permission was granted to
admit Pulayas freely into the Departmental schools, though they mostly
preferred to attend the mission schools.\textsuperscript{221}

As evident from the Table No: II, the number of Pulayar under
instruction in 1087 ME [1911-12 AD] was 1,473 and in 1088 ME
[1912-13 AD] the number decreased to 1,193. The Director of Public
Instruction noted that the fall was due to conversion of Pulayas to
Christianity.\textsuperscript{222} In 1086 ME [1910-11 A.D] one Korava boy was being
studied in a Higher Grade Secondary School and two Pulaya boys and
one Paraya boy were given stipends to attend secondary schools.\textsuperscript{223} The
Administrative Report of 1088 ME [1912-13 AD] reported that stipends

\begin{footnotes}
\item[221] Ibid, 63.
\item[222] Idem.
\end{footnotes}
were given to Nine Pulaya boys, one Dhoby boy and one Parya boy who were being studied in the Mission schools.\textsuperscript{224}

P.K. Govinda Pillai in his speech in the Sri. Mulam Popular Assembly on 18 February 1911, expressed the grievances of Pulayas that they were backward in education. Though government had issued an order admitting the Pulayas into some of the \textit{sirkar} schools, the Pulayar were not able to access into the schools. Pulayar were poor and weak to assert themselves to secure admission. He demanded that special schools, Special scholarships and concessions should be granted to Pulayar. Appointments should be given to Pulayas in Excise Department and in Pulaya wards attached to the Medical Institution as peons.\textsuperscript{225}

The period between 19.11.1909 and 04.03.1912 [the date is not clear] for the admission of his Pulaya children Ayyankali went to the Venganoor Chavady school with his \textit{pata} - Kunchavilakam Kochappi, Ayyan, Manjamkuzhi Velayudhan, Pappu Manager and Vizhakhan Thevan. Ayyankali demanded the authorities to admit the children. School authorities threatened Pulaya children Savarnas attacked Ayyankali and his \textit{pata}. Ayyankali submitted a petition for Sadujana Paripalana Sangham. Director of Public Instruction, Mitchell, visited the school and


admission was given to depressed class children - Kulathumel Kochappi, Kunju Krishnan, Ayyankalis younger brother Velukutty, Chadayan Gopalan, C. Parameswaran Narayanan, later he was appointed as petty officer, Shankaran and Kunjanna Thus Pulayar, Parayar and Kuravar children entered into the sirkar school. When the depressed class students had entered the class, the savarnas went out from the class room. On 04 – 03 - 1912, in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, Ayyankali thanked the government for admitting the Pulaya children in the Venganoor Elementary School.

In 1911 A.D, Ayyankali wrote a letter to Swadeshabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai, who was deported to Chennai. He mentioned that three Pulayas had been joined in the preparatory classes of Neyyatinkara English school and they discontinued the studies due to the non payment of fees.

Ayyankali in his speech in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly on 04 - 03 - 1912 mentioned that only 07 schools in South Travancore admitted Pulaya students and he urged the government to throw open all sirkar schools to Pulayas. He further requested to grant fee concession to Pulayas. Fee concession had been given to Mohamedans who were in

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227 Speeches of Ayyankali and Dewans Reply on 04.03.1912, The seventh Day, Proceedings of Sri. Mulam Popular Assembly, P. 82.

every way far ahead of them, the same was denied to Pulayas. Dewan in his reply agreed to grant fee concession to Pulayar\textsuperscript{229}

Before 26 – 02 - 1914 Ayyankali reached Oorutambalam Malayalam school in Neyyattinkara taluk with a Pulaya girl Panchami, daughter of Poojari. Ayyan for admission He was accompanied by his supporters. Nayars of the locality beaten Ayyankali and his pata Ayyankali \textit{Pata} retaliated against the Nayars. Nayers entered into the huts of the depressed classes and destroyed their domestic animals like goats, bullocks, Fowls, hen, their huts and everything Nayars raped Pulaya women. The angry Nayars also set fire to the school. At last the Neyyattinkara school admitted the Pulayas.\textsuperscript{230}

Pulayas were denied admission in Pullat \textit{Sirkar} Grant School in Thiruvalla and started the Pullatt \textit{Lahala} After completing 5th class pupils in Pullatt had to join the Pullatt \textit{Sirkar} Grant School to continue their studies. Due to the efforts of Vellikara Chothi these depressed class pupils got admission in Pullatt \textit{Sirkar} Grant School. T.T. Thevan, Painkar and M.T. Thevan were the three. They wore \textit{Thorthumundu} savarnas refused to sit with the depressed class students and they walked

\textsuperscript{229} Speeches of Ayyankali and Dewans Reply on 04- 03-1912, The Seventh Day. \textit{Proceedings of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly}, PP. 82-83.

out from the classroom. Savarnas didn’t send their children to school and Pullat Sirkar School was closed. The school was burnt down by savarnas. Then the school came to be known as Theevacha School. Savarnas Avarna attacks continued. Finally Nayars withdrawn attacks. Thus depressed class students again entered into the school. Later Pullat School was famous as Vivekananda school Ayyankali in his speech in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly on 26.02.1914 said that Pullat School had been opened to Pulayats.

Chentarassery wrote that after the completion of 4th class, T.T. Kesava Shastri didn’t join the 5th class for one year. They had to pay fees in the 5th class. In 1915 A.D. Sree Narayana Guru met Kesava Shastri. Brahma Vidyabhooshan Puthupally Varanapilly P.K. Panikkar taught him Sanskrit. The expenses were met by Sree Narayana Guru. He joined in the Advaita Sankrit School, Always in 1095 ME [1919-20


Chentarassery narrated that Manager of Sirkar Grant School, Oonnupara Panikkar denied admission to pulaya children. Kochuparambil Milan Pramani was the leader of the Pulayas in Pullatt. Varikannamala Vaidyan supported the depressed castes. Chentarassery Portraits that including Kesava Shastri four pupil got admission in Pullatt School - Painkan, Thevan and Kiliyan were the other three. Later Kiliyan became a Post Master. Later T.T. Thevan was known as T.T. Kesav Shastri. He was born in Kunnathanam as the son of Thunduparambil Thevan Thevan and Thali. In 1942 A.D. after the death of Ayyankali T.T. Kesava Shastri formed on organization especially for Pulayar, Thiruvithamkur Samastha Ppulayar Mahasabha. He served as the Deputy Speaker of Thiru Kochi Niyama Sabha and acting Speaker of Kerala Niyama Sabha.
A.D]. He received a scholarship of Rs 7 from Dewan Mannathu Krishnan Nair. T. T. Kesava Shastri wrote a letter to Muloor Padmanavha Panikar on 11 Edavam 1095 ME [1919-20 A.D] in it he mentioned that he had to pay Rs 7 for food & the cost of school books was Rs. 5 He added that Rs. 7 was not enough for Mundu dress oil etc. He passed the sastra examination from Aluva Sanskrit school, in 1927 A.D [1102 ME]. He joined in the Maha Rajas Sanskrit College, Thiruvanathapuram for high studies, he discontinued his studies due to economic difficulties.232

The first agricultural workers strike in Kerala was organized by Ayyankali for getting pulayas the right to enter into schools. They also demanded access to public roads and increase in wages. Pulayar refused to work in the fields of upper caste land lords in several villages in West Neyyatinkara and stood firm behind Ayyankali till the pulaya children were admitted to schools. Though Nayars attempted to work in the fields, they failed. Paddy fields were laid fallow for nearly a year. As a result of the negotiations the Nayars agreed to allow harijan children to attend school freely and Ayyankali called off the strike. Chentarassery mentioned that the strike was started in June 1913 AD

and ended in May 1914 AD Abhymanyu reported that the period of strike was before 1910 AD\textsuperscript{233}

Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham under the leadership of Ayyankali submitted an application to the Director of Public Instruction, Michael, for the opening of a Malayalam Primary School especially for the depressed class at Puthuvilakam in Venganoor. Their demand was sanctioned by the government in 1914 A.D. In 1914 A.D, the salary of a teacher was Rs. 6, government paid Rs. 9 to Parameswara Pillai, the teacher of the Venganoor Puthuvilakam Depressed Class Primary School. Though Government offerd Rs. 9 as salary, the authorities faced great difficulties to find a teacher. Parameswara Pillai came to school and returned to home, Kaithamukku in Trivandrum, with the escort of Pulayas.\textsuperscript{234}

In 1914 A.D, Education Director reissued the orders regarding the entry of depressed class in schools.\textsuperscript{235} The Administrative Report of 1089

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\textsuperscript{234} K. Saradamoni, Emergence of a Slave Caste..., Op. Cit., P. 151. C. Abhymanyu, Ayyankali Op. Cit., PP 124-126. THP Chentarassery, Kerala Chithrathi Gathimattiya..., Op. Cit, PP. 52-53. Ayyankali founded a Kudipallikoodam [Pre Primary School] in 1905 A.D. The School was developed in to a Malayalam Primary School in 1914 A.D. The Platinum Jubilee, 75 years, of the School was celebrated in 1980 A.D. The School was raised into a U. P. School in 1983 A.D. Later the school was known as Shri Ayyankali Smarakya Puthuvilkon U.P. School.

[1913-14 A.D] reported that half fee concession were extended to Pariahs in that year. The number of Pulayas increased by 826.\textsuperscript{236} Administrative report of 1914-15 A.D noted that section 146 [g] of the Education code of 1085 ME [1909 A.D], sanctioned stipends to backward classes Rs. 3 per month, per pupil, for higher grade instruction, for a maximum period of five years, for a course extending over three years only.\textsuperscript{237} Half fee concession were extended to Kaniyars, Kakkala and Vilakithala Nair communities in the year 1918-19 A.D\textsuperscript{238}

Administrative Report of 1918-19 A.D noted that all the possible schools were opened to Depressed Classes and all the children who sought admission were freely admitted\textsuperscript{239} In 1920-21 A.D, 7 boys schools which were closed to non caste Hindus were thrown open to all classes for the first time.\textsuperscript{240} 24 schools were not accessible to all classes in 1922-23 A.D\textsuperscript{241}.

In 1920-21 AD, 356 Pulaya pupils sat for annual examination of Class IV among them 174 passed the examination and 136 had gone up

\textsuperscript{236} Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1089 ME [1913-14 A.D], Government Press, Trivandrum, 1915, PP. 56 and 65.


\textsuperscript{238} Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1094 ME [1918-19 A.D], Government Press, Trivandrum, P. 74.

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid, P. 87.


for higher study\textsuperscript{242} 11,655 Pulayas and 5,180 Parayas attended the recognized schools in 1921-22 A.D. The number of Pulaya pupils decreased to 10,120 and Parayas 3,738 in 1922-23 A.D. Director reported that the decrease was due to conversion of these classes to Christians. Conversion helped to increase the number among Roman Catholic Protestants and other Christians.\textsuperscript{243} For the first time, 03 Paraya girls appeared for the Vernacular School Leaving Examination of whom one passed the examination in 1922 - 23 A.D\textsuperscript{244} Table No. II shows the caste wise statement of pupils under instruction in Recognised schools in Travancore from 1910 – 11 to 1922 – 23 A.D.

\textsuperscript{244} Ibid., P. 100.
### TABLE II: CASTE / COMMUNITIES UNDER INSTRUCTION IN RECOGNISED SCHOOLS IN TRAVANCORE FROM 1910 – 11 A.D to 1922 – 23 A.D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Christians</td>
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<td>Malayala Brahmins</td>
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<td>Ambalavasi</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>540</td>
<td>865</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ayyankali in his speech in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly on 27-02-1922 said that the total Pulaya population was 3,00,000 of these only 12,381 pulayar were being studied in schools. He added that only 136 Pulayar attended above 5th class and 6/7 passed the public examination. He demanded that the pulayas should be granted free education and noon meals.\textsuperscript{245} On 16 June 1923, depressed classes were exempted from the payment of fees in both English and Vernacular Schools and half fees concessions were granted to backward classes in both English and Vernacular education.\textsuperscript{246} Government order dated 15 – 05 - 1923 abolished rural schools and sanctioned part time schools\textsuperscript{247}. On 02 – 12 – 1923, rules had been formulated for the organization of night schools for adults by Private agencies with government helps.\textsuperscript{248}


\textsuperscript{247} Ibid, P. 97. Rural Schools were started in 1092 ME [1916-17 A.D] for the benefit of people who were unable to go for higher education due to poverty. See T. K. Velu Pillai, The Travancore State Manual, Volume III, Op. Cit., P. 721. 20 departmental rural schools and 20 Private schools functioned in Travancore in 1918-19. At the end of the year 1919-20 A.D, state had only 19 departmental rural schools and 15 private recognized rural schools. Rural schools were started to serve the needs of the poor children of backward communities living in rural areas, gave instruction in practical agriculture through work in garden, basket making, mat weaving etc. See Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1095 ME [1919-20A,D], OP. Cit., P. 85. In part time schools children had only three hours class a day and they were free in the rest of the day to assist their parents. Pupils studied reading, writing and arithmetic. State had 05 part time schools one aided and 04 unaided in 1923-24 A.D. Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1098 ME [ 1922 – 23 A.D], Op.Cit., P. 97. See Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1923-24 A.D, op. cit., P.88.

\textsuperscript{248} Idem. By that rule night schools were conducted entirely by private agencies. The school year consisted of 160 days, the daily period of instruction ranging from two to three hours between 7 pm to 10 pm. The instruction was confined to Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Stories of Interest, Elementary Lessons in Hygiene and First - Aid.
On 15.5.1924 half fee concession was restricted to deserving poor pupils. In the revised order government also allowed half fee concessions to poor pupils belonging to the educationally advanced communities.\textsuperscript{249}

Ayyankali in his speech on 10 – 03 - 1924 mentioned that pulayar were so poor to have the noon meals everyday. It was difficult to continue their studies without noon meals. \textit{One chakra / Aranazhi Ari} was needed for every child for midday meals. He demanded that the government ought to take the responsibility to provide noon meals to pulaya children\textsuperscript{250}

Depressed class pupils were exempted from the payment of public examination fess for five years since 1927-28. \textit{Census of Travancore 1931} reported that government were being provided pecuniary aids to deserving pupils of the depressed classes for the purchase of books and clothing. At the end of the school year 1929-30 A.D, only 12 schools were not opened to the depressed classes out of a total number of 3641 recognized institutions.\textsuperscript{251}

Ayyankali on 15- 03- 1930 in Sri Mulam Popular Assembly pointed out that chief cause for the backwardness of education of Pulayas and Parayars was Poverty - they didn’t have noon meals. He demanded that the state should allot one \textit{chakram} and one cash per day

\textsuperscript{251} Census of India Travancore 1931..., Op. Cit., P. 435.
for every hindu Pulaya to provide noon meals. He also requested to exempt the pulayas from the payment of examination fees for ten years. Dewan replied that government couldn’t exempt pulayar from the payment of examination fees for more than two years. He added that government alone couldn’t provide noon meals. If any philanthropic people started that project government would provide all possible help.  

Paradi Abraham Isaac on 14.03.1930 requested the government to grant full fees concessions and scholarships to Cheramar pupils in college classes also. He noted that Cheramar Sangham had opened night schools in some villages for the benefit of labour classes and were conducted without grant – in – aid from government. He demanded that the government should appoint qualified teachers in those night schools, and meet the cost of staff and lighting charges. Dewan replied that a few scholarship were being granted to depressed class students in colleges and the Sirkar would consider to improve the number of scholarships.

On 11-03-1931 Dewan agreed to pay scholarship to pulaya pupils in college classes. He also said that government would consider to grant scholarships to Pulayas in High school classes.

253 Speeches of Paradi Abraham Isacc (Nominated) and Dewans Reply on 14.03.1930, the twenty sixth session, Proceedings of Sri Mulam Popular Assembly of Travancore, Government Press, Trivandrum, 1930, PP. 330-331.
On 11-03-1931 Ayyankali and P. K Das requested the government to supply free noon day meals to pulayas. P.K. Das also said that pulayas needed free textbooks. The same day N. J. Jonhua expressed the grievances of Cheraman and other depressed classes. He mentioned that in Cochin and Mysore, government provided free text books, slates and noon-day meals besides full fee concessions to depressed class pupils.255

Administrative Report of 1932-33AD reported that 02 Pulayar and 01 Paraya attended the college classes. The number of Pulayas, Paraya and Kurava pupils under instruction was 15,726, 5,218 and 3,031 respectively.256

In 1931 A.D, the percentage of literates among Pulayas was 4.1 % and Converted Christian Pulayas was 13.1 %. Literacy among Paraya was 4.9 % and 15.7 % of Converted Christian Parayas were literates. 9.7 % of Converted Christian Kuravas were literates and only 1.5 % of Kuravas were literates. Here one could conclude that Converted Christians had increased literacy rates257.

T. T Kesavan Sastra in his speech in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly on 21 – 11 - 1933 requested the government to introduce scholarships and free meals to depressed classes, as did by

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257 Census of Travancore 1931..., OP. Cit., P. 291. Here for percentage calculation, only population above 7 years and over were taken.
the Cochin and Mysore government, to improve their educational backwardness.258

In 1935-36 A.D, a small grant of Chs. 14 was sanctioned to each backward class pupils, who were in III and IV classes of all recognized vernacular schools, for books 259. Administrative Report of 1938-39 A.D, noted that text books were supplied to the backward class pupils in classes III and IV free of cost. 30 Harijan schools were given grants during the year.260

In 1936-37 A.D, concession given to backward communities, exemption from the payment of examination fees, was extended for another three years.261 They enjoyed the concession in 1943-44 A.D, also. In 1936-37 AD the rules for the award of the concession were revised and percentage of literacy of several communities was accepted as the basis for granting fee concessions. For deserving backward communities fee concessions were extended to colleges and technical schools besides Vernacular and English schools. Government reimbursed 60% of the fee concession, to those private schools, who allowed fee

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260 Administrative Report of Travancore for the year 1114 ME [1938-39 AD], Government Press, Trivandrum, 1940, PP 190-191
concession as in departmental schools. Director of public Instruction said that there were 04 depressed class students in the Science College, 07 in the Arts College and 01 in the Sanskrit College, in the Academic year 1936-37 A.D. He added that poverty, character, conduct and merit were the criteria for getting fee concession. Boys who failed in college classes didn’t receive fee concessions. He also said that fee concessions were not allowed to all depressed class students, who were in the VIII and IX of the Malayalam Schools and College Classes. Only selected candidates were given fee concession based on their merits. T. T. Kesavan Shastri pointed out that depressed class students in VIII and IX classes of Malayalam Schools and College Classes were unable to pay the fees.  

Sivaraman Nair, in the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly said that for an ordinary man the payment of his boys fees was more difficult than the payment of his land tax. 22.8 % of the guardians of the school going children were farmers, 17 % labourers. 12.4 % traders, 11.8 % were journalist, astrologers and others and only 36 % were government servants. A large majority of the guardians of the school going children

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263 Administrative report of Travancore for the year 1112 ME [1936-37 A.D], OP. Cit., P. 218.
couldn’t afford to pay the fees. He demanded that the fees should be reduced by 50%.

Administrative Report of 1935-36 A. D, repored that 31,259 backward class pupils comprising Pulayas, Parayar, Kuravas, Hill tribes etc. were under instruction in College, English Schools and Vernaculuar Schools. Among them 9,711 were girls. The number of pupils in English schools was 2,667, in Vernacular Schools was 28,584 and 08 were in Colleges. The total number of Pulayas, Parayas, Kuravas and Kakkalans under instruction was 15,068, 8,473, 2,369 and 1,110 respectively.

In 1941 A. D, the percentage of literacy among the Pulayar was 17 %, 16.4 % among Parayar and 7.8 % among Kuravar.

In Cochin Dewan Rajagopalachari gave access to all classs of pupils in educational institutions, without distinction of caste or creed. Depressed class pupil entered into the schools, that was a turning point in the educational history of cochin. For the first time they achieved what was denied to them before. Kerala Charithram recorded that though they got admission, they were not allowed to sit with other students in benches, they sat on the floor. Pulaya Maha Sabha raised voice against that injustice, even after the struggles pulayas were permitted to sit in small

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267 Census of India Travancore 1941, Volume XXV, Part I Report, OP. Cit., P. 162
branches. Education Note of 1908 A. D, sanctioned free primary education and free Primary schools for backward classes. Education Code of 1911 A.D, encouraged to open night schools to promote education among working classes. The code also introduced scholarship to poor deserving students studying in Vernacular, Anglo Vernacular, Primary, Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary University courses and Sanskrit institutions - 77 scholarships were sanctioned. As mentioned in Chapter III Pulaya Mahasabha submitted memorandum to Dewan in 1913 A. D, and acquired right to education. Administrative report of Diwan A.R. Banerjees period noted that 07 pulayas studied in the Perumanur Kalathil Pulaya School, Kanayanur. In 1919-20 A.D, the state had 2,902 Pulaya students. They had to face attacks from higher castes even in 1919-20 A.D. When a pulaya boy was being gone to Pengamuk school, he was beaten by an Ezhava by saying that he was polluted. When pulayas had been admitted in Vellangallur school, a Nair entered the school and disturbed the Pulayas. Criminal proceedings were taken against him. The Nairs at Edavanakad and Palluruthy withdraw their children from school due to the admission of Pulayas.

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270 Ibid, Appendix to Part IV, P. 23.

During Vijayaraghavacharyas period pulaya boy and girls were given admission in all government and aided schools. In 1095 ME [1919-20 A.D], government ordered that

If there are any in places not accessible to all the same should be removed as for as possible to places not objectionable and that no school buildings should hereafter be constructed out of public funds in a locality which is not accessible to all classes of people.\(^{272}\)

Revised Education Code 1921 A.D, granted free primary education in Vernacular & Anglo Vernacular Schools provided books slates, slate pencils, copy books, lead pencils and two clothes to each Pulaya children at *Sirkar* cost. Free mid day meal was also given to Pulaya pupil on all school days. The allowance for meals was fixed as one *anna* three *pies* per pupil. Special schools were opened for Pulaya children\(^{273}\). The Code Revision Committee recommended that these concessions will have to be withdrawn when once a taste for education has been created and economic condition of these classes have so far improved as

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\(^{272}\) Idem

to enable them to stand on their legs.\textsuperscript{274}

One of the provisions of New Education Code of 1922 A.D, was that ‘no school should be ever recognized which didn’t produce a certificate from the Dewan Peishkar to the effect that the building was on a site accessible to all castes’. The code also exempted the Pulayas from the payment of fees in English \textit{Sirkar} and aided and extended those concession to Nayadies, Vetuvans and Parayans. 17 special schools were started between 1097 ME [1921-22 A.D] and 1099 ME [1923-24 A.D]. Free noon meals, free supply of books, cloths, slates and stationary were also sanctioned to them\textsuperscript{275}.

C. Mathai, Director of Public Instruction, in his speech in the Cochin Legislative Council, on 7 Aug 1925, said that free noon day meal was provided to Pulayas only once in a week, only to those who had attended the school on 05 consecutive days, then on the fifth day he was fed. He added that free meals was supplied in both \textit{Sirkar} and private schools\textsuperscript{276}. On 8 - August – 1928, he said that meals were supplied in chalakudy, colony school only to depressed classes on all


\textsuperscript{275} Speeches of C. Mathai, in \textit{Cochin State Legislative Council Proceedings} on 7 - August - 1925, PP. 722-724. C Mathai was the Director of Public Instruction at that time.
days\(^{277}\). The \textit{1931 census} noted that free noon day meals to depressed class pupils was stopped, instead of that one anna was paid weekly to all regular students in the primary classes. However daily feeding was continued in the schools for the Kadar tribe up the hills\(^ {278}\).

C. Mathai, on 07 August 1925, mentioned that government had introduced free supply of noon meals to Pulaya pupils six years before. Certain pulaya schools were run by gentlemen - Rama Varma Memorial School, Vijaya Raghava Chari Memorial School and Davis Memorial school were the some among them. Each school received Rs. 300/400 as grants. They didn’t spent the whole amount for the Pulayas. Philanthropic gentlemen invested the money in property when the government had noticed the facts stopped the grants to all schools\(^ {279}\).

P.C. Chanchan, on 08 August 1925, in the Cochin Legislative Council said that, Government sanctioned two clothes to every Pulaya, Paraya and Kuravar children in schools. Clothes were not properly distributed in all areas and the quality of \textit{Mundu} was also not good it was too short\(^ {280}\).

Karuppan in his speech in the Cochin Legislative Council, on 7 August 1925, complained that a school, which was built by Pulayas in


Mulavukadu, was destroyed by highercastes. The Savarnas started a toddy shop there. Government had accepted Pulayas demand and granted poramboke land to build a primary school. When a sayippu had asked, government transferred the land and school to him. Here the government put impediments on the efforts of Pulayar. He also said that one Pulaya and one Ullada child joined in the Ernakulam College High School. Ullada child had to face attacks from the highercastes on his way to school. His highercaste classmates attacked him in classroom also. He discontinued his studies\(^{281}\). P. C. Chanchan, on 12 December 1928, in his speech mentioned that a Nayar attacked Vally, a Cheruma, who was a 7th standard student of Kodakara Lower Secondary School for using Sheela Kuda.\(^{282}\)

In 1927 A. D, Government decided to give stipend of Rs. 2 per month and six out of 26 scholarships were reserved exclusively for depressed class pupils in the Lower Secondary Classes. Since 1926 A.D, all depressed class pupils in the upper secondary departments were given a stipend of Rs. 3 per month for three years. Special stipends was sanctioned to Nayadi pupils in Industrial and Literary schools in 1926 A.D\(^{283}\).

\(^{282}\) Speeches of PC Chachan, on 12 December 1928, Cochin State Legislative Council Proceedings, P. 405.
C. Mathai, on 08 - August - 1928, said that to teach Kaithozhil government had selected certain Pulayas students and sent them to Trissivaperur G. T. School. Those students received an industrial stipend of Rs. 7. He added that till that time most of the depressed class students went only up to primary class. Students began to go to high school, in those days many Pulayar were being studied in 4th and 5th. Thus a good number of Pulayar reached high school classes.

_Census of Cochin 1931,_ reported that a considerable number of depressed class children attended the lower classes of primary schools, most of them dropped off after that. Their social and economic condition prevented them from attending the school. They had to look after the younger ones at home. Some times poor parents pledged their children to the money lending land lords as security for loans. It was very hard for the children to go through circuitous thorny fields and foot paths.

K. K. Kochukuttan and K. K. Dakshayny passed the SSLC examination as the first ones from the depressed class in 1931 A. D. It was a landmark in the educational history of depressed class in Cochin. Kochukuttans village, Keecheri was the border of Travancore.
and Cochin. In Travancore his caste pupils, Kanakkan / Paravan had to pay half fees in schools, but in Cochin they were exempted from the payment of fees, free books, slates, pencils, cloths and noon meals were also provided to them. Besides that he got stipends in high school classes, Rs. 3 per month. So he studied in the Mulamthuruthy school in Cochin

Kochukuttan studied in the Mulamthuruthy High School which was seven miles away from Keecheri. A large number of Namboodiri families lived in the area between Keecheri and Kanjiramattom. When the Antarjanams were on the way, Kochukuttan had to move off by hearing their hoi, hoi sound. Thus he had taken a lot of time to reach Mulamthuruthy school

C. Mathai in his speech, on 08 August 1928, said that 20 night schools were started in Elamkunnapuzha, Njarakkal, Chalakudy, Vellikolangara, Kariyarkutty etc. For getting grants each school had to have a minimum number of 30 pupils – government had granted some relaxation to depressed class schools. In the year 1930 A. D, 134 night schools functioned in the state with 10,220 pupils.

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288 Ibid, 152.
290 Speeches of C. Mathai, on 08 - August - 1928, Cochin State Legislative Council Proceedings, PP. 709-710.
The percentage of literates among Pulayar in 1921, A.D, was 0.9% it increased to 5.3% in 1931 A.D\textsuperscript{292}.

Full fee concessions and stipend of Rs. 10 per month was sanctioned to all depressed class pupils in college classes. They were also exempted from the payment of caution money to join the college hostel. Rs. 30 was granted to all students to meet the initial expense, for the purchase of books, clothes etc. One senior university scholarship of monthly value of Rs. 8 for two years for the B. A course, six junior University scholarship of Rs. 6 per month for two years for the intermediate course were also provided.\textsuperscript{293}

K. K. Kochukuttan wrote that when along with Dakshayani he had entered the college classes in 1931 AD he did not receive the sanctioned stipend of Rs. 10 and Rs. 30 evenafter one month\textsuperscript{294}.

Weekly doles were given to the depressed class pupils in the beginning to attract them to schools during Shanmugham Chettis time. Hil Tribes pupils in the forest tracts were fed daily. Since 1936 -37 A.D weekly doles were suspended in the affluent months of \textit{Makaram}, \textit{Kumbham}, and \textit{Meenam}. When the educated Pulayas had increased, free supply of clothes were with hold in 1936 – 37 A.D, weekly doles were abolished in 1937 -38 A.D.

\textsuperscript{292} Census of Cochin 1931, Op. Cit., P. 209
\textsuperscript{293} Report on the Educational Survey of the Cochin State for the year 1108 ME [1932 – 33 A.D], PP. 42-43
Free spectacles were given to the deserving students from the year 1934-35 A. D onwards. Government sanctioned to supply free of cost Vernacular dailies and non technical magazines dealing with hygiene, sanitation etc, to certain localities in 1935-36 A.D.

In the year 1938 – 39 A.D, government stopped to give free education to those pupils who failed three times in a class - half fees were levied from them forth year onwards for three years, then they had to pay full fees.

The number of educated Pulayar had increased in 1937 A.D. Sirkar restricted the stipends to two hundred pupils in the lower secondary department and one hundred in the upper secondary. Then the number raised to 230 and 110 respectively. In 1937 A.D. in private college the monthly stipend was reduced to Rs 5 per pupil and number of stipends and annual grant of Rs. 35 per pupils were fixed at ten. Two students in the St. Thomas college, Trichur and two students in the St. Theresas Cossledge Ernakulam were exempted from the payment of class fees and government agreed to pay the university fees of all depressed class pupils⁹⁵

The year 1937 A. D, had great importance in the history of the education of the depressed class. K. K. Dakshyani passed the

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graduation and won the credit as the first Pulaya lady graduate. In 1939, K. K. Madhavan passed the graduation, he was the third graduate from the depressed class. In 1946 A.D, Madhavan became the first law graduate among depressed classes. In 1937 A.D, there were three depressed class student in the college class. The percentage of literacy among the Pulayar was 5.3% in 1931, it reached 9.8% in 1941. In 1945-46 A.D, there 12 Pulayar, 01 Sambavan, 02 Kanakkan and 12 Kudumi Chetty were in the college classes excluding Sanskrit College, Trippunithura. Some Pulayar entered into the state service, though they did not occupy any important posts.

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