PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN MALABAR

Chapter-III

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN MALABAR

In the last chapter we have seen how education became a matter of contention in Kerala society, and the many struggles that the society had to undertake for the achievement of mass education. In this chapter an attempt is made to examine the growth of education in Malabar and the role of the people in its expansion. The activities of both the Government and the private managements have been considered.

The patronage to higher education by the feudal chieftains was a prominent feature of Malabar. They changed their attitude later with the advent of the British. They lost supremacy and thus obeyed what the colonial masters suggested. They ignored the indigenous education and favoured English education. But the indigenous education did not disappear completely.¹

The British were not at all supportive of the old system of education since it never addressed the needs of the colonial administration. The Government needed English educated people so that they could rule the illiterate masses in a better way. So they were interested in imparting English education instead of the traditional one. The British wanted only clerks to form the lowest layer of bureaucracy apart from lawyers and teachers. The achievements of the Kerala society, especially in the field of literacy, were not the contribution of the colonial regime.

¹ N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational Development in Kerala, New Delhi, 1987, p.73
A prominent historian has this view:

"The use of education as a cultural tool for colonial domination is not surprising. Education is a cultural process, which reproduces and disseminates the lived experiences and representations of the people through which the dynamic synthesis of historical reality is constructed." 2

The culture of old Kerala had fostered widespread school going. 3 This indigenous system of schooling was responsible for the higher rate of literacy. 4 But education was provided on the basis of the works that different people had to undertake.

P.R. Gopinathan Nair writes:

"Kerala has had a long and rich tradition of education, language and literature. In the pre-British period, educational facilities existed almost in every village. The higher caste Hindus, like the Brahmans and the Nairs, had well developed institutional arrangements for educating their children, particularly their sons, the Brahmans had their Mutts, the rich Nairs and the temple castes had their family tutors." 5

He continues that the former group received higher education in subjects like philosophy, religion, logic, mathematics, medicine and astronomy—all through the medium of Sanskrit language—those lower down learned the arts of reading, writing and arithmetic and also acquired the rudiments of agricultural and meteorological sciences, through the medium of the local language. The latter type of education was intended to help the lower caste people in the practice of their traditional occupation, mainly cultivation of land. 6

---

2 K.N. Ganesh (Editor), Culture and Modernity (Cultural Encounters Under Colonialism: The Case of Education in Keralam), Calicut University, 2004, p.152
3 Robin Jeffrey, Politics Women and Well-being, Oxford, 1993, p.58
4 P.R. Gopinathan Nair, Education and Economic changes in Kerala, C.D.S., Trivandrum, 1978, p.29
5 Ibid, p.26
6 Ibid, p.28
In the descending order of literacy, the position was like this: Brahmin, Kshatriya and Ambalavasis followed by Nayars and then Ezhavas and the so-called slave castes. The Christians were, of course, ahead of the Muslims and, in fact, right behind the Nayars. There were also vast sections of the population at the lowest stratum of society, mostly belonging to the agrestic slave castes, receiving little education of any kind other than that handed down to them from generation to generation by word of mouth. But there were exceptions in attaining education even among the lower castes. Even certain sections of the backward communities like those belonging to the Ganaka caste were educationally advanced. At the same time the majority of the lower castes could not gain education either due to caste proscriptions or due to their inability to meet the expenses of learning.

Even the social awakening that marked Kerala society in the late 19th and early 20th century left these groups largely unchanged. Although socially exclusive, the system of traditional, caste-based schools existed in villages all over the region. The picture changed altogether with the advent of the British. The British regime did not need mass literacy and thus they gave a blind eye towards any attempts in this respect.

The social reform movements destroyed many customs that prevented social and economic mobility; they contributed to significant measures to the growth of educational activities also. The emergence of cultural organizations with local voluntary and popular bases had helped in

---

7 V.K.Ramachandran, Kerala’s Developmental Achievements, p.47
8 P.R.Gopinathan Nair, Education and Economic changes in Kerala, p.28
9 M.S.A.Rao, Social Movements and Social Transformation, p.78
10 N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational development in Kerala, p.18
11 V.K.Ramachandran, Kerala’s Developmental Achievements, p.55
bringing about positive results of social progress and the gains of literacy among the masses.\textsuperscript{12}

The process of rapid educational growth began in Kerala first in Travancore then in Cochin, and very late in Malabar. However, even in Malabar, the literacy rate was higher than in other parts of India during the British period. This was due to the well-developed status of the indigenous education in all parts of Kerala during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{13} The educational tradition influenced by all the three units of Kerala was largely similar in the beginning of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, in respect of indigenous education, Malabar was a little better than both Cochin and Travancore. However, by the end of the century, Malabar remained where it had been. Cochin and Travancore surged forward, in fact, to the forefront of the educational map of India.\textsuperscript{14}

It is rather important to examine the status of women education in Kerala.

V.K. Ramachandran writes:

"Kerala got ahead of the other states in respect of literacy since Kerala's culture fostered female literacy. Kerala has a history of matriliny among a significant section of the population and it did not leave a tradition of female section, except among Nambudiris and a section of the Muslims. There was never organized social opposition to women's literacy in Kerala."\textsuperscript{15}

The women belonging to major communities were almost illiterate. The Nambudiris and the Muslim women were denied education. At the same time the Nair women had excellent education.

The Local Board Act of the Madras Government in 1834 was the base on which the educational activity in Malabar began.\textsuperscript{16} During the first half of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Census Reports, p.149
\item \textsuperscript{13} P.R. Gopinathan Nair, Education and Economic change in Kerala, p.26
\item \textsuperscript{14} N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational Development in Kerala, p.82
\item \textsuperscript{15} V.K. Ramachandran, Kerala's Developmental Achievements, p.57
\item \textsuperscript{16} Thayat Sankaran, \textit{Bharathiya Vidhyabhyasam Charithravum Varthamanavakala Prasnangalum}, pp.171-72
\end{itemize}
19th century the Missionary schools were the only source of education for the lower castes as well as in the matter of girls.\textsuperscript{17}

The British Government was of the opinion that it had no responsibility to make education universal from the beginning itself. It said that the people who had interest in education should build schools; the Government would extend small financial assistance. Travancore-Cochin Governments followed this system. The Christian churches were more in Travancore and Cochin than in Malabar and they founded schools and ran the private education.\textsuperscript{18}

The schools founded in connection with the churches were the first among the number of modern schools.

It was in the last quarter of the 19th century some efforts were made to start primary and secondary schools in Malabar. Christian Missionaries were engaged to establish new schools in different parts of Malabar. At Calicut and Palakkad, Basel Mission started schools. Among the schools started at Malappuram by the Government and another at Kottakal managed by the Valathali Nair of Kozhikkode Kovilakam of the Zamorin family.\textsuperscript{19} The Roman Catholic Missionaries also established schools among the fishing communities.\textsuperscript{20}

Social consciousness was also a result of the influence of the Missionary activities in the field of education apart from the consciousness of caste discrimination.\textsuperscript{21}

As the Government did not show any interest in the mass education due to various reasons, the Christian Missionaries and the private managements

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{17}N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational Development in Kerala, pp.46-47
\textsuperscript{18}E.M.S Nambudiripad, Communist Party Kerala\textthinspace{}l, Chitha, Trivandrum, 1986, p.113
\textsuperscript{19}Kerala State Gazetteers, Malappuram, p.712
\textsuperscript{20}V.K.Ramachandran, Kerala's Developmental Achievements, p.50
\textsuperscript{21}Ibid, p.103}
were entrusted with the responsibility of imparting education. So the progress of primary education was very slow in Malabar during this period.

The following were the main causes contributed to the slow growth of primary education.

1. Wide spread indigenous school system ended

2. Local Government and bodies lacked funds for education.

3. The educated classes leaned towards English education than to the primary education

4. The officials of the education department had not realized the importance of the planning the advance of primary education in the forefront of the endeavours.\textsuperscript{22}

To boost modern education, aid was given to the private managements. This system continued till 1939.\textsuperscript{23} These types of schools were called the Grant-in-Aid schools.

The Government extended Grant-In-Aid schools, and the Missionaries established 150 schools for the backward classes by the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{24} The annual grant given by the Government was not at all sufficient to run the schools. The management had to give remuneration to the teachers from this fund and had to meet other expenses as well. Many schools existed in Malabar were either with single teacher or incomplete.\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{22} The Imperial Gazetteer, 1901, p.417
\textsuperscript{23} Thayat Sankaran, Bharathiya Vidhyabhyasam Charithravum Varthamanakala Prasnanagalam, p.172
\textsuperscript{24} N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational Development in Kerala, p.47
\textsuperscript{25} P.R.Gopinathan Nair, Universalisation of Primary Education in Kerala, p.75
Mass literacy requires mass schooling, which began only in the first part of the 19th century. But even at the end of the 19th century, there was no mass literacy.

V.K. Ramachandran aptly comments:

"Mass education can't be that without overcoming the great barriers to mass education in Indian society—gender and caste discrimination and class oppression".

Wedded to a policy of higher education and indifference to the indigenous education, the British Malabar neither witnessed any significant Government efforts nor that of the Christian Missionaries. Secondly, the British economic policy left the land lords among the caste Hindus to take care of their educational needs in the handful of British schools, established by the Christian Missionaries, while the vast majority of population were the most rack rented in the world and too poor to afford English education.

The Director of Public Instruction, Madras wrote in his annual report that there was satisfactory progress in the number of educational institutions in Malabar, but a slight decline in the collegiate education due to large failure in the 1903 matriculation examination.

An important fact is that the lower stratum of the society could never benefit from this type of education system. The representation of various sections of people in the schools was this. The landlords constituted the largest number of scholars 41.3%, coolies 23.9%, traders 12.9%, officials 11.8% and the

---

26 V.K. Ramachandran, Kerala's Developmental Achievements, p.48
27 Ibid, p.55
28 Ibid, p.56
29 N.I.E.P.A, History of Educational Development in Kerala, p.83
30 Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Madras for 1904-05, p.39
artisans 7.7%. Over 83.6% of the male population in the collegiate and the upper secondary stages belonged to the landlords, trading and official classes.\footnote{Ibid, p.5}

The Malabar area could boast of its educational status compared to the other districts. Of all the districts of Madras, Malabar had 20% and more of pupils of school going age attending educational Institutions. In majority of the districts in the state the percentage was less than 12.\footnote{File No.A806, RAC,Chart-I}

From 1906 onwards the national leaders showed great interest in the education of the people. They formed National Education Commission and began agitation for the introduction of compulsory education. The British Government was against it on religious grounds. They believed that the compulsion would invite wrath of religions such as the Muslims. In 1910 Gokhale introduced a scheme for compulsory education in the Imperial Education Council.\footnote{Kerala State Gazetteers, Malappuram, pp.34-35}

In an attempt to spread primary education, it was made free for the girls and for the backward classes in Malabar. A special education officer was appointed. Nearly 30% of the pupils in the schools were girls.\footnote{Administrative Report of Madras State for 1909-10, p.10} The average per capita cost of education was 3 to 9 annas\footnote{Kerala State Gazetteers, Malappuram, p.712} in the beginning of the 20th century. Even though the situation was favourable, majority of the population did not enjoy any facilities for education and were there fore
steeped in illiteracy. The inherent vulnerability of Kerala society—the caste barrier—was responsible for this undesirable situation.

The Government was well aware of the caste evil in Malabar. So it decided to lift any restriction that prevented the children from attending the schools on the basis of caste. In 1911-12 Government removed restriction in admitting the pupils on the basis of caste. The important feature of the thus imparted education was that it did not prevent any persons belonging to any caste from attending the schools. At the same time in Travancore and Cochin the children belonging to the lower castes were denied access to the schools. Though the caste structure prevailing all over Kerala was the same, Malabar was a little liberal in providing education to its people. The authorities were in favour of creating a section of people with the English culture and life.

With the introduction of the Missionary education and the support from the private managements, the modern education began to show significant progress. This is visible in the increase of literacy as indicated in the following tables.

---

36 P.R. Gopinathan Nair, Education and Economic changes in Kerala, p.28
37 P.R. Gopinathan Nair, Universalisation of Primary Education in Kerala, p.33
Table-1

Literacy in Malabar from 1891-1951.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>22.08%</td>
<td>3.92%</td>
<td>13.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
<td>3.02%</td>
<td>10.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>22.57%</td>
<td>3.46%</td>
<td>13.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>22.92%</td>
<td>6.36%</td>
<td>14.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>47.00%</td>
<td>22.00%</td>
<td>34.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-2

Literacy in Kerala from 1901 to 1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Literacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>15.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>21.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>25.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>47.37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Census Reports of relevant years)

These tables reveal the percentage of literacy in Malabar and Kerala from the last decades of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century.
In 1901, literacy in Malabar was 10.1%. At the same time the literacy in Kerala was 12.25%. It is significant that in respect of literacy, Malabar was not much behind when Kerala as a whole was considered. The difference was only 2.22%. In 1911, the difference increases and at last when it reaches 1951, the average literacy in Kerala exceeds Malabar by around 13%. Even though the percentage of literacy shows regular increase, Travancore and Cochin attained further in mass literacy.

In the 1st quarter of the 20th century, Malabar witnessed great progress in the elementary education and secondary education owing to encouragement given by the Madras Government.\(^{38}\) But at the same time these attempts were not at all sufficient to impart education to the majority of the people and thus Malabar lagged behind Travancore and Cochin. The reasons for the same were the following.

a. Opposition of the Muslims to the modern education

b. Malabar lacked leaders to promote education which Travancore and Cochin had.

c. The upper layer of the society benefited by English education in Malabar became instrumental in igniting a national feeling and kindling movement from the caste structure. The mobilization of Thiyyas of Malabar against the caste rigidities would not have happened without English education.\(^{39}\)

The Government had entrusted the Local Boards with the responsibility of education. At the same time they lacked sufficient funds to support the

---

\(^{38}\) Kerala State Gazetteers, Malppuram, p.712  
\(^{39}\) M.P.Sarojini Amma, Ph.D Thesis, pp.103-104
system. So the Taluk Boards levied education cess under the elementary education act of 1920.40

According to the report of the Mappila Education Committee, compulsory education was introduced in seven municipalities of Ernad and three of Ponani and one in the Manarghat union, in the municipalities of Calicut, Cochin and Tellicherry. The number of Public Elementary Schools for the Mappilas rose from 1239 to 1365 and the strength wen: up from 86315 to 96794.41

At this time also the Government never tried to build schools in large scale, instead supported the managements to build them. The Government provided them with some financial assistance, in the form of Grant-in-Aid. The private managements considered the running of school a business from the first decades of the 20th century.

The Malabar District Board founded in 1920 gave impetus to the elementary education and the District Educational Council was formed for making the attempts more rigorous.42

The Government attention to promote Malayalam education began only after 1921. Government of India act 1919 transferred education to the Indians. Primary education was given greater care. District and Taluk Board schools were established in villages and Taluks. Muslims and the depressed

40 File No.A825, RAC, pp.5-6
41 File No.A829, RAC, p.23
42 Thayat Sankaran, Bharathiya Vidhyabhyasam Charithravum Varthamanakala Prasnangalum, p.172
communities did not take to education early owing to serious economic and social hindrances.43

Primary Education Acts were passed in various provinces and presidencies of the introduction of compulsory education. They were even completed in few-selected urban and rural areas.44

As per the Elementary Act passed in 1920 each Local Board formed fund for the elementary education as a result many schools were founded.45 The teachers with graduation were selected as Deputy Inspectors and the secondary school teachers were appointed as Junior Deputy Inspectors.46 The education cess would be collected from the October 1, 1925.47

To strengthen the growth of special night schools, the management of English and higher elementary schools in Malabar district gave more importance in appointing better staff rather than expanding high schools and were efficiently supervised. They not only continued the teaching of 3 'R's (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic) but also taught Hygiene, Civics and Geography.48

The Devdhar Malabar Reconstruction Trust also conducted classes at four centres for adult education. They were open to all castes.

There were attempts to promote the Mappila education.

---

43 P.R. Gopinathan Nair, Universalisation of Primary Education in Kerala, p. 75
44 Kerala State Gazetteers, Malappuram, p. 35
45 Thayat Sankaran, Bharathiya Vidhyabhysam Charithravum Varthamanakala Prasnangalum, p. 172
46 Ibid
48 File No. A832, RAC, p. 35
To make the Mappilas of this area interested in education and to make them with good manners the following measures were adopted for the Mappila schools.

1. The financial condition of the Mappila boys and girls schools should be improved.

2. The books taught there should contain stories relating to loyalty to the king, patience and communal harmony. This should also be from the religious books of the Musalman.

3. To teach reading and writing of Arabic and also to teach the meanings, new exercises should be included in the textbook.

4. The matters relating to the Musalmans were to be taught (both in Malayalam and Arabic)

5. By keeping the normal subjects unaffected, a third and fourth subjects should be included in the working hours.

6. The crafts should be taught using different equipment.

7. The poverty-ridden children should be provided with slates, books and scholarship.

It is remarkable that no religious instruction could be imparted in schools.

Due to the increased activities of many agencies mass education rapidly increased during the period from 1921 to 1939. Even though mass education got impetus, fees were levied from the students. Fees were levied by all Board schools from children except from the backward and the depressed classes. All municipal schools were to be accessible to all classes.

---

49 Malabar Gazette, 1923,p.2
of children irrespective of caste or creed. All children irrespective of caste barriers, who won the primary examination, were admitted to the commercial classes at the Government School of Commerce at Calicut in 1921.

In 1920s there were 0.4 schools/ Sq.mile. About 38.1% of the school age group population attended schools.

The reason why Malabar lagged behind Travancore in 1920s was the spread of education among the Ezhava people. Sree Narayana Guru led the movement for educating the masses in Travancore. At the same time Malabar lacked such a movement. Besides the ideological differences, the Muslims had economic problems to deal with. Most of the Mappilas were the tenants or agricultural workers. The major beneficiaries came from the tenants, merchants, Government servants and landlords.

The Mappila rebellion of 1921 was a heavy blow for the people of Malabar. Many schools were closed down and free activities were about to end. They feared to open the schools in spite of repeated efforts by the Government. Some schools remained closed in Ernad after the Mappila Rebellion and still remained closed.

The endorsement of the Assistant School Inspector was received seeking the direction what action to be taken against the schools, which still remained closed. There were also issues relating to the admission of the lower castes to the schools. It is to be noted that many schools were located in such

---

52 Malabar Gazette, 1923, p.7
53 Ibid, p.25
54 Ibid, 1922, p.6
55 V.K.Ramachandran, Kerala's Developmental Achievements, p.56
56 P.R.Gopinathan Nair, Universalasation of Primary Education in Kerala, p.75
57 Malabar Gazette, 1921, p.20
places where the lower castes could not reach. Some brave steps were taken to ensure the presence of the lower castes at the schools. Some of the schools were shifted to convenient places so as to ensure the entry of lower castes to them.

To make more improvement to the school, the Kunisseri Girls school had been shifted from the middle of the Brahmin locality to a convenient place.\textsuperscript{58} Here the word ‘improvement’ actually means the admission of the oppressed castes. The Brahmins would never allow the presence of the deprived classes in their areas then.

All the Harijan children under the Board school would be provided with free slates and books.\textsuperscript{59} This measure was taken to help the parents to escape from the burden of buying study materials for the children.

The criterion for recognizing any school was that they should admit all the Adidravidas in their schools.\textsuperscript{60} So it was mandatory for the schools to admit the Adidravidas and other suppressed communities to comply with the decision of the Government.

By 1951 about 50% of the Kerala population were literate. This was an amazing achievement by a state that suffered much under the yoke of the landlords and the British regime. It is however evident that mass literacy was the aim of the social reformers in Travancore and Cochin. At the same time the social reforms in Malabar were not so popular as in Travancore.

The census report has this to add:

---

\textsuperscript{58} Malabar Gazette, 1922 January, p.3  
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, June, 1934  
\textsuperscript{60} Malabar Gazette, 1935, p.1
“The examination of the process of educational growth shows however, that in Malabar, the policy followed by the British was the same as that, this perhaps accounts for the fact that the difference between Malabar on the one hand and Travancore and Cochin on the other tended to widen during the period 1901 to 51. In contrast to the British policy of neglect of primary education in Malabar, there were positive factors that contributed to the development of education in Travancore and Cochin.”

Only Malabar and South Canara and southern districts had more than 23% of pupils attending schools (Primary stage) of population strength.

English had been the medium of instruction in the upper and lower secondary schools from the early stage. The department advised the managers to adopt vernacular as the medium up to 3rd form or the 7th standard. In those days learning in English was a symbol of status. So this suggestion was disregarded.

Even in the 1930s the literacy among the Muslims and the other lower castes was much less and negligible among the slave castes. In 1931, the region under this district had 15% of male and 3.35% of female literates.

Out of thousand Mappilas 55 were literate; among the Scheduled Castes and Tribes only 10 out of 1000 were literate.

The growth of collegiate education was also to be considered, though their number was less. By the year of 1931, there were 4 colleges, 62 secondary schools including 34 Aided, 4134 elementary schools and 11 training schools in the whole Malabar. Out of the 4134 elementary schools 2548 were under

61 Census Reports, 1951, p.37
62 File No.A806, RAC, Map.III
63 File No.A809, RAC, p.21
64 Kerala State Gazetteers, Malappuram, p.709
private sector and 103 were for the girls. There were 13 special schools, out of which 7 were Aided.65

The Government made several attempts to enhance the educational facilities of the Muslims. Many sessional schools were opened for the training of the Mappilas and Musaliyars from 1932 to 1934.

Proposals were there for the formation of the education committees in the villages. The aims of the committees included bringing of the backward class children to the schools. Steps were taken to increase the facilities of religious instruction in the elementary school for the Mappilas by arranging a short course for the training for the Mulas and Musaliyar for making them qualified as regular teachers to become the staff of the recognized elementary schools. The special training school for appeal teachers at Malappuram was made permanent and improvements and extensions to its buildings completed. The lower training schools for Mohammedan mistresses were started in 1928-29.66

The Report of the Director of Public Instruction says:

"The chief problem in regard to the education of the Moplas is that of wastage."67

This indicates that the Government could not spend money allotted for the education of the Mappilas in a meaningful way. In other words, the Government failed miserably in attracting the Mappila masses towards education.

In the 1930s the policy on elementary education was this:

65 Ibid, p.712
66 File No.A833, RAC, p.8
67 Report on Public Instruction, Madras, 1932,p.34
Elementary education was free and compulsory for boys of school age, free but not compulsory for girls.\textsuperscript{68} Compliance with the Elementary Education Act was made compulsory while selecting the places for the construction of educational institutions. Educational institutions were to be established in such a place that all the people could reach and also be having good light and air circulation as per the Education Rule.\textsuperscript{69} This Act put forth other revolutionary suggestions. As per the Education Rules, the following castes needed only half of the fee- Girls, Mohammedans, Adi Dravidas and all those belonged to the rule 17 (a) of the Madras Education Rules.\textsuperscript{70}

An important decision taken during this time was on the naming of the schools. Earlier all the elementary schools under the Board had been called Hindu Elementary School or Mappila Elementary School. This was to be changed as Board Elementary School. The decision of the Board was taken on the 26\textsuperscript{th} of October 1936. Elementary schools for all castes could not be called Hindu elementary school. The word Hindu was to be deleted.

The girls schools and Mappila schools would remain in the same name. The decision was taken on December 4, 1936.\textsuperscript{71}

Many of the representatives of the District Boards were eager to end the Caste discriminations still followed by a section of the people.

E.C. Kunhikkannan Nambar raised this question in the District Board:

1. "Whether any rule that denies the entry of the Harijans in the schools does exist?"

\textsuperscript{68} The Malabar Gazette, Thalassery Supplement, 1932, p.25
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid, 1931, October, p.1
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, 1933, September, p.11
\textsuperscript{71} The Malabar Gazette, January 1937, p.52
2. "Are there any schools where the Harijans are not admitted?"  

The reply he received was that there were no schools in which the entry of the Harijans was restricted. An important decision taken during this period was that the schools exclusively for the Adidravidas (Panchama schools) were to be abolished. All schools under the board were to be open to the Adidravidas as well.

Even though the officials were constantly affirming that the entry of the lower castes was not restricted, there existed some schools where they were not welcome.

In Chirakkal Taluk, the Cherukunnu Girls High School and Tiruvattoor Hindu Boys High School, Kooyo-d, and in Palakkad, the Hindu High School Kollankode and the Girls High School Palakkad were not in places where the Schedule Castes could enter.

All schools, except the Thiruvattoor High school, were shifted to places where they could enter. At Naniyur the upper caste Hindus strongly resisted the admission of the Harijans to the school. Due to the strong opposition the District Board decided to stop the functioning of the school.

A decision was taken to form committees to bring all the Adidravida children to the schools. For this purpose, it was decided to undertake propaganda. The Adidravidas, due to their birth or failure to lead a life, if unable to send their children to the schools, were to be admitted to schools.

---

72 Ibid, July, 1937, p.4
73 The Malabar Gazette, 1935-36, p.26
74 Ibid, p.28
75 Ibid, 1935-36, p.27
The schools were compelled to bring the Adidravidas residing within a distance of one mile. The rule 15 (2) of the Education Rules recommends so.\textsuperscript{76}

The description of the Adidravidas was:

'Those who follow the Hindu religion and the Parayas, Chakkilians, Thottiyans, Cherumans, Madigan, Holiyan, Pallan, Valluvan and Malan'.\textsuperscript{77}

The Government took action against those who violated the enforcement of compulsory education. Where there was compulsory education, the parents of the children who violated Rule 49 shall be fined with not less than the least amount and not more than the Maximum amount. Ten amsams in Ernad Taluk and three amsoms in Valluwanad Taluk followed compulsory education. There were provisions in the Education Act of 1920 for those who violated the norms of compulsory education. In Ponani Taluk Board, fifty three parents violated the provisions. There were cases against them. Forty were warned and nine fined.\textsuperscript{78}

In Ernad, sixty eight parents were warned and nine parents fined. In Valluwanad, the poverty-ridden people were not warned.\textsuperscript{79}

In 1939, the District Education Council was abolished. The Grant-In-Aid was disbursed through the District Educational Office.\textsuperscript{80} During this period the

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid, March, 1935,p.22
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid, November, 1931,p.3
\textsuperscript{78} The Malabar Gazette, August, 1935,pp.10-11
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid, February, 1935,p.21
\textsuperscript{80} Thayat Sankaran, Bharathiya Vidhyabhyasam Charithravum Varthamanakala Prasnangalum, p.172
Government had shown great interest in establishing Aided schools in different parts of the remote villages.\(^81\)

The progress in number of schools in Malabar indicates a satisfactory position. (See Table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-23</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>1391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>1276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>1225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1066</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Malabar Gazette for relevant years)

The *Adidravadas* had only five schools-three in Chirakkal, one in Ernad and one in Calicut.

A test was conducted to know whether the upper castes would tolerate the lower sections of the society. When the *Adidravidas* were admitted to three Board schools in Valluvanad, the upper Hindus and others left the schools.

---

\(^81\) Cherukad, *Jeevithappatha*, p.143
The District Board did not change the decision. Later they changed their minds as per the changing time and agreed to what the time demanded.\textsuperscript{82}

As educational activities caught more and more attention in Malabar in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the educated group began to play critical role in the society. While the society was running after mass education, the political situation in Malabar was becoming more turbulent. The people were in a do or die struggle to get rid of the alien Government.

\textsuperscript{82} Malabar Gazette, 1935, p.23