CHAPTER V

EDUCATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF SALVATION ARMY IN TIRUNELVELI AND KANYAKUMARI DISTRICTS

The low caste people were not allowed to go to school; education was forbidden to these people. The high caste people did not want these people to be educated. ‘If they are educated they won’t be slaves for them’ was their strong idea. They told the low caste people that they should learn, their own trade. The agriculture coolie should be a coolie for ever. The Palmyra climber should be a Palmyra climber, a Barber should be a Barber. Totally, the low caste people were blind though they had eyes.

Even in the Government Schools low caste people were not admitted. In this situation, the Salvation Army which started village schools educated the low caste people, to have community development educational work helped very much.

During 1920 when the Army work was started in Radhapuram and Valliyoor area, of Tirunelveli District, schools were also started at Sanganeri (1940), S.S. Puram (1941), Manicakamputhoor (1937), Vagaikulam (1940), Naibiaradaiappu (1940), Ervadi (1938), Senbagaramanallur (1946) and Thandayarkulam, Valliyoor, Ervadi Nambithoppu, Priyammalpuram and Vagaikulam are the village schools still prevailing. Vallioor school was
upgraded as High School and Nambithoppu school was upgraded as Middle School. These schools are playing a vital role in the social life of low caste people.

**Valliyoor Noble Memorial High School**

During 1920 when the Army launched its evangelical work in Valliyoor area, it also started primary schools. In 1970 during the time of Lt. Colonel N.J.Samuvel, the Valliyoor Primary School was upgraded as Middle School in 1970. In the year 1978 when Colonel N.J. Samuel was the Territorial Commander, with the support of Mr.- Mohamed Usuf, the then State Minister, the school was upgraded as High School. Mr. Shanmugam was appointed as the first Head Master of the High School. From Dr. Noble Edna Trust, a new building was constructed. Presently, Mr. A.Benjamin is the Head Master of the School.

Nearly 360 children are studying in the school, 10 teachers and 2 non teaching staffs are working there. This school also supports the poor and needy children through Child Development Ministry. In the year of 2000 April S.S.L.C. Public Examination the school produced 100% Pass.¹ The Head master as well as the teachers are working very hard for good result. From January to

¹ The War Cry September edition, Tirunelveli, 2000, p.11.
March every year, they are conducting extra study time in the school upto ‘9’ o clock in the night. This school also encourages its student in sports. The N.S.S. group of the school is highly commendable.

Nambithoppu Middle School

From the year 1925 onwards, a Primary School was functioning in that village. In the time of Commissioner V. Suganantham, in 1985 this school was upgraded as a Middle School. Mr. Muthaiah is the present Head Master. Now it has a strength of 153 children studying in this school. 5 teachers are working in this school.

Vagaikulam Salvation Army Primary School

As per the Govt. order No. L.Dis. / Ci / 5651 (81) 46 10.10.1940. In 1940 Salvation Army Primary School started at Vagaikulam in Rajakkal mangalam area by Colonel T.G. Sundaram, Territorial commander. Nearly 121 students are studying in this school 3 teachers are working there. In the year 2001 Mrs. R. Jayakkani, the teacher of this school was getting award for good teacher from Tamil Nadu Government. This school is situated with in the area of 4900 sq.feet. Mrs. J. Chandra is the present Head Mistress.

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2 G.O.No.L Dis C1 / 5631 (8) 46 date 10.10.1940.
Manickamputhoor Primary School

As per the G.O.No.L.Dis No.2345 / 38 dated 28.07.37 Manickamputhoor Salvation Army Primary School started at Manickamputhoor in Dhanakkarkulam area. On 28.07.1937. Nearly 36 students are studying in this school two teachers are working there. This school is situated with in the area of 1578 sq.ft. M. Pushparani is the present Head Mistress.

Ervadi Salvation Army Primary School

As per G.O.No.L. Dis. No.8 dated 27.10.1938, Ervadi Salvation Army Primary School started at Ervadi within the 516 sq.feet area by Wi. Col. David S. Desai. Nearly 36 students are studying in the school and two teachers are working there. Mrs. M. Mariammal is the present Headmistress.

S.S. Puram Salvation Army Primary School

As per the G.O.No.L.Dis.1A2. 143 dated 04.10.1941, Sivasubramaniapuram (Kudankulam Post, Radhapuram Taluk) Salvation Army Primary School was started by Colonel T.G. Sundaram. The school is situated within the 4454 Sq.ft. fifty one students are studying in this school and two teachers are working there. Mrs. S. Sornam is the present Head Mistress.

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4 G.O.No.L Dis No.8 / 27.10.1938.
5 G.O.No.L Dis 1 A2 143 / 04.10.1941.
Sanganeri Primary School

As per the G.O.Res.No.41/40 dated 20.09.1940 Sanganeri Salvation Army Primary School started at Sanganeri in Radhapuram Taluk by Colonel T.G. Sundaram within the area of 300.32 sq.feet. One hundred and nine students are studying in this school. Three teachers are working there. Mr. R. Muthuraj M.A., B.Ed., is the present Head Master.

Vallioor Salvation Army Nobel Memorial Primary School

As per the G.O.Rc.No.6 (33) 40 Salvation Army Nobel Memorial Primary School was started at Vallioor by William Booth on 19.06.1940 with in the area of 2 acres and 333 sq.feet. Nearly 267 students are studying in this school. Six teachers are working there. Mrs. E. Snekalatha M.A., is the present Head Mistress.

Salvation Army is also running Primary School at Thandiyarkulam and Priyammalpuram. To give better education to the poor is the preliminary aim of the Salvation Army. It is full filling its will and pleasure through the education field.

Salvation Army Nobel Memorial High School (Tamil Medium) was started at Valliyoor by Colonel T.G. Sundaram with in the area 5 acre. Three

6 G.O. Res No. 41 / 40 20.09.1940.
7 G.O. RC. No. 6 (33) 1940.
hundred and sixty students are studying in this school and nine teachers are working there. Mr. A. Benjamine, M.A., B.Ed., is the present Head Master. Nearly 360 childrens are studying in the school 10 teachers and two non teaching staff are working there.

**Nambiaradaippu Salvation Army Middle School**

As per the R.C.No. I – V Permanent L Dis. C2 (560)40 dated 10.10.40, VI – VII temporary continuity NAKADEEO Tvy 11191/A5/03 22.12.03, Salvation Army Middle School started at Nambiaradaippu by Commissioner Suganantham, Territorial Commander within the area of 43458 sq.feet. One hundred and fifty students are studying this school five teachers are working there. Mr. Y. Vethamuthu B.Sc., B.Ed., is the present Head Master. This school received the best school award shield from Director of Elementary Education of Tamil Nadu.

**Senbagaranallur Salvation Army Primary School**

As per the Res. No.L. Dis C3(28) 46 dated 02.04.1946, Salvation Army Primary School was started at Senbagaranallur in Nanguneri by Colonel T.G.Sundaram T.C. within the area of 11420 sq.feet. Fifty seven students are studying this school. Two teachers are working there. Mrs. K. Kasthuribai is the present Head Mistress.⁹

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⁹ Res No. L Dis C3 (28) 46 dated 02.04.1946.
English Medium Schools

During 1992 English medium schools were started in various places. At first it was started in Palayamkottai at the Motherless Babies’ Home premises. Colonel Girubadas the then Territorial, Commander started the school and appointed the then capt. Annal Peter as the School in charge. Lt. Ruby Stella also was appointed as a teacher in the school. Apart from the motherless babies, regular students were also admitted in the schools. Now as it cannot compete with other schools, only the Motherless Babies Home children are studying in this school.

Sambavarvadakarai School

This school also was started during the tenure of Colonel Girubadas. This English medium school is more useful to the surrounding village people. Now it has a strength of 231 students and 10 teachers and four staffs are working there.

Middle School Nambithoppu

From the year 1925 onwards, a Primary School was functioning in that village. In the time of Commissioner Suganantham, in 1985 this school was upgraded as a Middle School. Mr. M. Y. Muthaiah is the present Headmaster. Now it has a strength of 153 children studying in this school. 5 teachers are working in this school.
Vagaikulam, Thandaiyarkulam, Manickamputhoor, Vallioor, Priyammalpuram, Sankaneri and S.S. Puram in all these places Salvation Army is running Tamil medium primary Schools. To give better education to the poor is the preliminary aim of the Salvation Army. It is fulfilling it’s will and pleasure through the education field.

Pallivilai Primary School\(^{10}\)

During June 2003 a Tamil medium Primary school was started by Colonel Yohannan to avoid encroachment of land. It is a feeding school to the Higher Secondary School. The Salvation Army is doing not only formal education. It is also doing informal education. Now it has a strength of 50 students and 3 teachers and 1 non teaching staff working there. It is giving medical awareness education, HIV/AIDS education and social living education to the community.

ITI, Aralvaimozhi

In 2000 June 17\(^{th}\) Col. M. Abraham, the then Territorial Commander opened this ITI.\(^ {11}\) Now 94 students are studying in this ITI. 8 teachers and 2 Officers are working in this ITI.


**Attempt and Failure for a College of Arts**

It is very sad to note that the world wide Army didn’t attempt for higher education just like colleges. As castism is playing its vital role it is very difficult for the outcast people to get seats in the other colleges. So in the year 1989-1990, attempt was made to start a College of Arts at Vallioor.

The then DMK Government granted permission to start the college, but due to some bad reasons this effort was stopped. Presently somebody of this community people try to bring the college.

The Sambaver people being considered as low caste were not allowed to go to school. Education was forbidden to these people. The high caste people don’t want these people to be educated. ‘If they will be educated they won’t be slaves for them’ was their strong idea. To keep the Parayas slaves, the task masters forbid education from this people. They told the low caste that they should learn their own trade. The agriculture collie should be a coolie for ever. The Palmyra climber should be a Palmyra climber, a barber should be a barber. Totally, the low caste people were blind though they had eyes.

Even in the government school, low caste people were not admitted. In this situation, the Salvation Army which started village schools educated the low caste people. Because of this now we have IAS and IPS officers from this community. To have community development educational work helped very
much. In March 1893, Capt. Gnana Desigar, was appointed as a corps officer in Attakulam\(^{12}\) to guide the people in their spiritual life. Before becoming an officer Gnana Desigar worked as a school teacher in Palayamkottai.

Now in Attakulam on seeing the children playing in the streets without going to school he himself planned to teach the children. By purchasing cheap books and slates, Gnana Desiger taught them to read and write.

One day as usual while Gnana Desigar was conducting a class to the wandering children, the District officer Yesuretnam saw the teaching ministry of Gnanadesigar in the form of Veranda School.\(^{13}\) The District Officer was impressed with the work of Gnana Desigar and ordered all his officers to teach the children in every village in the style of Gnana Desigar. Within a short period 100 village schools were started and Gnana Desigar became schools inspector. The schools in every village brought a greater revolution among the Sambavar community. Everybody began to learn alphabets.

In 1906 a Tamil School was started in Nagercoil and 1914 an English medium school was started. Later on, the English medium school was converted to Tamil medium and served as a middle school until 1967. In 1978 through the ceaseless effort of the then Head Master Mr. Anandha dhas the school was


\(^{13}\) Ibid., p.87.
upgraded as a Higher Secondary School. The Tamil Medium Primary Schools started in 1906 was surrendered to the Government in 1957. The school building was restored in 1978 and in the place an English medium school was started. This effort gives equal education to the low caste people also.

During 1920 when the Army work was started in Radhapuram and Vallioor areas of Tirunelveli District, schools were also started Sanganeri, S.S. Puram, Manickamputhoor, Thandayar kulam, Vallioor, at Senbagaramanputhoor, Eruvadi, Nambithoppu, Priyammalpuram and Vagaikulam are the village schools still prevailing. Vallioor school was upgraded as High School and Nambithoppu school was upgraded as Middle School. These schools are playing a vital role in the social life of the Parayas.

During 1992 English medium schools were started in various places. At first it was started in Palayamkottai at the motherless babies’ home premises. Colonel Garibbdhas, the then Territorial, Commander started the school and appointed the then Capt. Annal Peter as the school in charge. Lt. Ruby Stella also was appointed as a teacher in the school. Apart from the motherless babies, regular students were also admitted in the schools. Now as it cannot compete with other schools, only the motherless babies’ home children are studying in the school.
Chemponvilai

In 1987 Colonel Garibdhas started the English medium school with 127 children. Now this school is having 5 classes. 10 teachers are working there. One non-teaching staff is working in this school.

Thuckalay School

On 6th June 1994, Major Sam Devaraj, the then Educational Secretary started this school. Now this is also a Primary School with 51 children 5 teachers and 2 non teaching staffs are working here.

The Salvation Army Hr. Sec. School, Nagercoil

In 1914 the School was started as an English Medium school by Lt. Commissioner Clara Case. Brigadier Larson, the then Swedish missionary was the first Correspondent of this school and he was responsible for the construction of the first school building. Mr. Thirumal Pillai was the first Headmaster of the school.

In 1967, the school was upgraded as Middle School, when Commissioner Joseph Dahya, the then Manager to the school trying of fulfil the long-cherished wishes of the Salvationists and well wishers of this area succeeded in his efforts to get it upgraded into a High School. Mr. M. Anandadoss, the then Headmaster of the school played an important part in achieving this goal.

The need for additional accommodation and playground was felt. Commissioner Joseph Dahya through his moral power and high office was good enough to move the international leaders and secure the amount needed for the same. In this regard, mention must be made of the active and keen interest shown by overseas Salvationists and international leaders for the financial assistance they had whole-heartedly given. Colonel Bramwell Lucas, the then Chief Secretary had the distinction of digging the first sod for the new building on 26-06-1968. General Frederick Couttts dedicated and declared open the building on 7-12-1968.

The school celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in the year 1974. The Salvation Army General Erik Wickberg inaugurated the three day celebrations on 21-01-1974

During the managership of Colonel Maurice C.Griffiths the need for another building to accommodate the increasing number of pupils was deeply felt and the Colonel was good enough to approach the International Headquarters and got sanctioned the money needed for the building. General Clarence D. Wiseman laid the foundation stone for the building on 23-2-1976.

The construction work commenced when Colonel N.J. Samuel was the Manager. The building was declared open by Dr. H.S.S. Lawerence, the then Director of School Education, Tamil Nadu on 8-4-1978. It was the time when the
Higher Secondary Course was about to be launched in the State and the Colonel's efforts came to bear fruitions when the school was upgraded into a Higher Secondary School in 1978.

Colonel Inez M Newberry, the then manager, sanctioned money for the construction of a well-equipped Chemistry laboratory and a compound wall around the school playground.

Now the school has a strength of 500 students. There are 22 teachers and 5 non-teaching staff members serving in the school. We have a good library. There are well-equipped laboratories for Chemistry, Botany, Zoology and Physics. Various activities are being carried out in the school with the aim of bringing an all round development in the children. The spiritual welfare of the pupils are given importance. With this in view, scripture lessons are taught and prayers are conducted in the morning. The school pupils participate in various sports and games and win prizes. Under the leadership of two scoutmaster and two guide captains coating and guide activities are functioning well. Educational tours and field trips are conducted every year.

Most of the pupils studying in the school are from socially, economically and educationally backward families. The teachers as a team serve the really unprivileged lot by imparting education to them.
Com. M.C. James is the present Manager of this school. Now Mr. M. Kingsley is serving as the Headmaster of this school.\textsuperscript{14}

**Vallioor Noble Memorial High School**

During 1920’s when the Army launched its evangelical work in Vallioor area it also started Primary Schools. During the 1970’s the Vallioor Primary School was upgraded as Middle School. In the year 1978 when Colonel N.J. Samuel was the Territorial Commander with the support of Mr. Mohamed Usuf, the then State Minister the School was upgraded as High School. Mr. Shanmugam was appointed as the first Head Master of the High School. From Dr. Noble Edna Trust a new building was constructed. Presently Mr. A. Benjamin is the Head Master of the School. Nearly 360 children are studying in the school. 10 teachers and 2 non teaching staffs are working there.

This school also supports the poor and needy children through Child Development Ministry. In the year of 2000, April S.S.L.C. Public Examination the school produced 100% pass.\textsuperscript{15} The Head Master as well as the teachers are working very hard for good result. From January to March every year they are conducting extra study time in the school upto 9’o clock in the night. This school also encourages its students in sports. The NSS group of the school is highly commendable.

\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Mr. Kingsley, Head Master Salvation Army Higher Secondary School, 16.10.2011.

\textsuperscript{15} The War cry (Tamil) September edition, Tirunelveli, 2000, p.11.