

make a full statement of the condition of the schools and of their plan of operations for the ensuing year. The Government would, through its inspector, satisfy itself of the correctness of the information given, and would also have the power of requiring that certain portions of the grant should be spent on any object which might on his recommendation appear advisable. Mr. Clarke appears to insist too much upon definite conditions on which the Government grant should be apportioned. The District Boards being the centres of action, the practical organization of the schools and the future development of the system should be entrusted to them, and it would seem to be unwise to attempt to lay down any uniform rule as to conditions on which grants should be made. The apportionment of the grant to different districts should not be fettered by any predetermined rule, such as population or contributions by Natives, but should be made to meet the requirements of each individual case. Local Village Boards would spring up in the course of time under the District Boards, whose constitution powers and mode of action should be left to District Boards, subject to the interference in extreme cases of the central controlling power of the Government.

I would submit that the only essential and permanent features of an education scheme are—(1) Division into districts; (2) Formation of Boards; (3) Active Government inspection, with power to organize and suggest measures to meet individual cases. This last point is really the key to success in whatever plan may be adopted. Nothing else can ensure a necessary amount of uniformity of system.

I may observe that it is found in European schools in the Colony, and I believe generally, that Boards are not useful from any combined action which might be expected to issue from them, but only as inspiring a degree of public confidence, diffusing an interest in the undertaking, and forming a salutary check on the one individual who is sure to do all the work of the Board in each case. The central boarding schools would naturally continue under the control of religious bodies, and from these the Boards of the primary schools would draw their masters. The Government would help them according to numbers and other points as suggested by Mr. Gorst, not as propagators of special doctrines of the merits of which it cannot judge. It would deal directly with the financial managers of these institutions. The religious difficulty, as it is called, has really little existence, except in the minds of a few interested persons, and vanishes insensibly as it comes into contact with common sense and practical work.

I am of opinion that if any legislation is brought forward, it should be of a general character, giving wide latitude in the administration of the funds which may be set apart for Native education; that it should deal broadly with the following points:—

- (1) Division into districts (perhaps the Commissioners' and Resident Magistrates' districts would be found the most convenient to begin with).
- (2) Formation of District Boards, consisting of not less than three nor more than nine persons, of whom the Commissioner and Resident Magistrate shall be "ex-officio" members, and with whom Natives shall be associated, in the proportion of not less than one-third of the number constituting the Board.
- (3) Aid to boarding schools in such sums and subject to such conditions as shall be determined after reports from the inspector.
- (4) The appointment of a permanent inspector, who shall report upon the points treated of in sections 6, 7, 8, and 11, "Native Schools Act," and advise the Government generally as to the distribution of the grant and the peculiar wants of the several districts.

As to the amount of funds which would be required I would observe that the sum of £7000 would, judging from the expenditure in past years, be sufficient to appropriate for the ensuing year, and I would submit that an annual appropriation would be more likely to meet the real wants of the Natives than a permanent appropriation for a series of years; the latter would not be made from a consideration of the real requirements of the case, and must be fettered in some measure with conditions which might be injurious to the object it was intended to promote. An educational system to be successful must be elastic, and must spring from the circumstances of the time and the people whom it is intended to benefit.

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