

CHAPTER XII.

THE EDUCATION OF THE HANDICAPPED.

1. Any system of education will be incomplete if it does not make provision for those unfortunate children who come under the category "The Handicapped". Demands of Universal Primary Education and of the other rapidly expanding grades of education loom so large in our eyes, that schemes for the adequate development of educational facilities for the handicapped are apt to recede under financial pressure. But we cannot be blind to the needs of the blind. Some provision, small though it may be at the beginning, must be made in the hope that better times will dawn and enable us to make satisfactory arrangements for the education of these children.

2. There are now two institutions for the education of the physically handicapped, one at Mysore managed by Government and other at Bangalore managed by the Corporation. There are also a few private Associations like the Asakthaposhaka Sabha which make some provision, though not on a planned basis. The strength of the two institutions mentioned above is a little over a hundred, roughly equally divided between the blind and the deaf and mute. The courses of study provided in the Government institution are both literary and vocational. Blind pupils are taught through the Braille medium. For deaf pupils the standard is lower than that of the Lower Primary School and instruction is imparted by means of lip-reading. Blind boys who have an aptitude for music are given a special course in the subject, both vocal and instrumental. The vocational subjects for the deaf cover a wide range, such as Spinning and Weaving, Fret-work, Book-Binding, Basket-making, Rattan-work, Carpentry and Tailoring.

3. We estimate the number of the blind in the State between the ages of 6 and 14 to be 12,000 and the deaf-

mute at an equal number. But this is a very rough estimate and we consider that there is need to conduct a detailed survey of the number of defective children, including both the physically and mentally defective in the State. We recommend that a committee may be constituted to conduct the survey and to prepare a comprehensive plan for the education of the defectives.

4. We are of the opinion that in the meanwhile the existing institution at Mysore should be re-organised and put on a better and more efficient basis. Our Sub-Committee for Primary Education have paid a visit to the institution and given us their valuable report. We recommend that the following measures be adopted to re-organise the institution :—

(i) *School and Workshop.*

(a) A fully trained and qualified person should be appointed as the Superintendent of the Institution.

(b) The teachers also should be specially trained in methods of teaching the physically defective children. In view of their special training and qualifications and the special work involved in dealing with the defective children, special grades of pay must be given to them. The present salary scales may be revised suitably.

(c) The menial staff should be reduced to the barest minimum, all the work in the kitchen and work relating to community health and hygiene being done on a co-operative basis by the students themselves. When employing servants and helpers, the claims of ex-students of the Institution may receive preference.

(d) The present provision under recurring cost for Industrial Arts, Braille Printing, Contingency and Postage is very inadequate. It may be increased from Rs. 1,305 to Rs. 4,160. An extra grant of Rs. 1,500 for Braille Printing may be made. Some more handicrafts may be introduced, for which an additional grant of Rs. 2,500 may be provided under Industrial Charges.

(e) The existing equipment in the several sections is very poor. The following funds may be allotted for additional equipment :—

			Rs.
1. Deaf Section	..	..	8,000
2. Blind Section	..	..	8,000
3. Braille Press	..	..	2,000
4. Music Section Instruments	..	..	1,500
5. Industrial Section tools and equipment	..	..	4,000
6. Office: Typewriter, furniture, etc. ..	..	..	1,500
7. Workshop—Tools and machinery ..	..	..	5,000
8. Hostel's Vessels	..	..	2,000
		Total	₹2,000

(f) The provision of Rs. 8,000 may be sanctioned for deputing the teachers for training.

(g) A follow-up record of each student who leaves the institution should be maintained to supplement the school records and to assess the success of the work done in this institution.

(h) While the principle of separating the blind and the deaf is acceptable, suitable re-adjustments may be made, for the present, in the existing arrangements to avoid any difficulties instead of bifurcating the institution immediately.

(i) It is necessary to provide for a separate school for the physically defective girls. It may be started in the neighbourhood of the present school.

(j) There is no need to separate the deaf-mute children and adults.

(k) The branch school now being conducted at the Vocational Institute for women need not, perhaps, be continued; it may be merged with the main school.

(ii) *Hostel.*

(a) There is no need for the Government to take over the management of the hostel. It may continue under the present management. The co-operation of private bodies and philanthropic individuals should not be overlooked, but on the other hand attempts should be made to secure more liberal contributions from them.

(b) The present annual expenditure on the hostel is about Rs. 9,060. The present provision of Rs. 7 per mensem for food and Rs. 3 per annum for clothing is very meagre. The inmates are undernourished. These amounts should be raised at least to Rs. 18 per mensem and Rs. 15 per annum, respectively. The total provision may be increased accordingly.

(c) In the matter of providing clothes, arrangements should be made to make the institution self-supporting. Yarn may be spun and woven into cloth by the deaf-mutes. It will be possible to produce nearly 1,000 yards of cloth if 40 students were to spin and weave for two hours a day. Even if self-sufficiency cannot be attained, a portion of the total cost may be realised in this manner. Besides, spinning and weaving are educative activities. There is plenty of land available in the premises of the Institute for growing vegetables. The students of the hostel should grow as much of vegetables as possible for their own use.

5. A State Council—an Advisory Body—may be constituted to lay down policy and standards and to plan expansion. Representatives of the Education Department, University, Local Bodies and other organisations, and donors may be taken on the Council.
