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A HISTORY OF BAHAMIAN EDUCATION

by

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Master of Education

1947

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ABSTRACT OF

A HISTORY OF BAHAMIAN EDUCATION

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A HISTORY OF BAHAMIAN EDUCATION.

The Bahamas were annexed by the Crown in 1629 but, for a century, there was no progressive settlement. Early in the eighteenth century the islands were abandoned to the nefarious activities of pirates. Government reverted to the Crown in 1718 and ordered development began.

Education of the children of the colonists was begun in 1734 by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel but State aid was given as early as 1746. Little progress was made for a century but the advent of loyalists from the American Colonies in 1784 had a beneficial influence.

With the need for educating the liberated slaves a Board of Education was appointed in 1836. There ensued a denominational struggle for control which was resolved by removing the schools from the control of all the churches. At the same time an Inspector was appointed but progress was hindered by lack of teachers and money and by the geographical nature of the colony.

Blockade-running during the American Civil War made more money available and a series of inspectors and teachers was appointed from England. Slow but steady progress was effected, the "British Schools" being adopted as a model. Compulsory attendance became universal in 1886 but the number of schools remained totally insufficient until 1920.

Income/

Income from boot-legging during American prohibition resulted in rapid expansion both in the number of primary schools and in the provision of secondary education for negroes. The last twenty years have witnessed improvement in teachers' qualifications and the provision of scholarships for higher education. The out islands are far behind Nassau in educational facilities which are unco-ordinated in the colony as a whole.

Introductory chapters furnish a background of general history and of conditions in the colony at present. A final chapter applies the lessons of history to educational policy for the future.

PREFACE

PREFACE.Aims

Since no history of education in the Bahamas has yet been written, the present purpose is to treat the subject comprehensively rather than to attempt an intensive study of any one specific aspect. The aim of writing a history at all is not solely for its academic interest though it is believed that many Bahamians will be keenly interested in the story of their educational system for its own sake. Insularity, and consequent isolation, has always tended to a national consciousness of unusual intensity; the Bahamas is no exception though it can scarcely be credited with national sovereignty. One manifestation of this spirit is the inordinate interest of a majority of the Bahamian people in the history of their colony and it is doubtful whether this essay will be read by more severe critics than those to whom it refers. It is hoped, too, to make some small and unique contribution to an ever increasing body of literature concerning Empire history but which, up to the present, has been very largely confined to the political aspect.

There is, however, a much more urgent and practical need -- the need for guidance and inspiration in planning for the future. A survey of the present reveals, besides a great deal that is sound and good, many deficiencies, numbers of weaknesses/

weaknesses and much confusion. Those, whose weighty responsibility it is to provide and direct the colony's education, are sufficiently frank to admit present shortcomings and sufficiently alert to realize the consequences of mistaken policies but they are not sufficiently versed in educational thought and practice to locate these shortcomings with precision nor yet to know what policies are apt to be mistaken. The logical solution would appear to be to seek the advice and guidance of a competent educationist. However, the Bahamian's pride is such that he does not like to admit that a "foreigner", however expert in his own profession, can know more than he of what is wrong with, and what is best for, his colony. It may be an easy matter for the expert to diagnose the trouble and prescribe the remedy; it is quite a different matter to persuade the Bahamian to accept his diagnosis with faith and apply the prescription with confidence. The Bahamian would much prefer to effect his own salvation, to be directed by his own experience and guided by his own mistakes; in brief, he clings to his independence of thought and action. If, therefore, he can be shown what has led up to the present confusion, what policies have been tried in the past and found faulty, what past errors have brought about existing weaknesses, if, above all, it can be revealed to him what extraneous model his predecessors mistakenly tried to emulate while they should have been more intent on developing a system more aptly suited to/

to their colony's own peculiar needs and circumstances, his pride of independence is satisfied and the needs of the future more certainly assured. Such is the ambitious aim of this humble treatise to use the facts of history as pointers to a sound plan for the future.

It may also be that other colonies, whose system of education is no more mature than that of the Bahamas, could profit from the experience of another colony. Perhaps a colony, about to embark on a new experiment in education may be saved time and needless expense by knowing that the same experiment has long since been tried elsewhere in similar circumstances and the result and conclusion already established. It is unfortunately a legitimate criticism of the Colonial Empire that, for the most part, one colony does not know what the other colonies are doing and have done. This leads to a vast duplication of effort of which the colonies' limited resources could well be relieved in many instances. Such isolation also impedes progress in backward countries which can ill afford to waste any time. Perhaps, therefore, this thesis may serve as a "Warning from the Bahamas" with due apologies to Professor W.M. Macmillan.

Method and Sources of Information.

Previous work of a similar or related nature is very meagre, consists of three works only and proved of little help. Of these, the most valuable was Cole's brief history of education,

x (10), written in 1902 and beginning: "Very little can be learned from materials now available of the state of education in these islands prior to 1847" notwithstanding the fact, that subsequently became evident, that the first Education Act had been passed one century and one year earlier. Cole's history, amounting only to seven pages, was valuable in giving a resumé of education of the latter half of the nineteenth century from the point of view of one who made most contribution to it.

Wright, (45), who contributed the section on general Bahamian history to "The Bahama Islands" (37) in 1905, proved a useful supplement to Cole as he gave some account of the educational aspect of emancipation, his story beginning, earlier than Cole's, about 1832.

The historical part of the brochure written in 1924 by Bullock and Albury (9) was of little help in the presence of Cole's sketch which it simply reproduces, without acknowledgment, in a still more condensed form.

Acts of the Legislature (46) have proved the only continuous link through two centuries and, for many years, are virtually the only evidence of the existence of schools. Unfortunately, statutes do not tell us much beyond the fact that popular feeling for education was sufficiently powerful to bring about their enactment. In the extreme case, while they clearly provided the authority to establish schools, yet they/

x Numbers in parenthesis refer to Bibliography, Appendix VIII.

they give no guarantee that such schools were in fact established. Nevertheless, the long list of Acts from 1736 to the present day has supplied to the historian a skeleton which could be clothed with such other disconnected pieces of information as came to light and through the medium of which they could be so related to each other as to form a reasonably intact story. The task of finding all these Acts proved to be extremely difficult. Public records of this nature are not kept in Nassau with any degree of competence, the reason being that it has never been the special responsibility of any one or more persons to do so. It was only after a ceaseless search in all possible places in the seat of government of the colony that a very imperfect record was obtained of Acts dating back no further than 1804. The search for the earlier ones and the later missing ones was not completed for five years when they were eventually discovered in the library of the Colonial Office in London and also in the Public Record Office. Their discovery so late in research made necessary considerable revision of the earlier parts of the history.

For the many unrelated sources which have contributed information relating to different stages in the story, the bibliography may be consulted. But some are so outstanding as to merit special mention here. Chief among them is the series of Annual Reports of the Board of Education (51) which, thanks to successive Inspectors but especially to the present one/

one, have been preserved and collected, with only a few omissions, since 1865. From the same date, too, the Minutes of the Board (52) have been carefully preserved.

Another very important document was found in the Colonial Office Library. This was the Report of a Commission on Education in the Bahamas in 1835 (49), the year following the abolition of slavery. This gives an illuminating account of the state of education in the colony at that time, of the effort to educate the children of the newly freed slaves and the revival of effort to educate the children of their late masters.

The only material found to supplement the earliest Acts passed in the eighteenth century were the extremely valuable records of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (53) in their archives in Westminster. Thus it is to this Venerable Society that the colony owes, not only the first efforts at education but also the preservation of documents from which we may glean some knowledge of those earliest attempts.

Files of the colony's newspapers (57-60) have not been of very great assistance. In the first place they date back but little more than a century and for this period more complete and specific information is available. Secondly, the earliest editions contained but few references to education and these were mostly either advertisements of small private schools or else/

else accounts of the annual functions of the public inspection of the schools by all the "aristocracy" from the Governor and his Lady downwards. Thirdly, the files are not complete and even to-day, when the need should be more fully appreciated for preserving the record of all shades of opinion, for the benefit of future generations of people of all classes, as well as the peculiar class of historians, there are preserved, in the archives of the Public Library in Nassau, copies of only one contemporary journal.

Two Peculiar Difficulties.

As the writing of the history progressed, the writer, but more especially his critic, became aware of a serious deficiency. It became increasingly apparent that a familiarity with the background of the general history of the colony, particularly of the social as well as the political history, was indispensable to a full appreciation of that particular aspect treating of education. Whereas the Bahamian reader will be fully conversant with this background it is unlikely that the general reader will be. Nor can the problem be simply solved by referring to a standard history of the Bahamas because no such volume exists and such works that have concerned themselves with history are not easily available and all are out of print. It has been deemed advisable, therefore, to provide this general history in/

in summary form as an introductory chapter to this essay.

A similar difficulty arose when the time came to deduce the lessons of history and apply their morals to the problems of the present and the future. The need became obvious for a general description of the Bahamas from the political, economic and social points of view against which background the reader might consider the justification of the proposals made. This description of the colony as it is to-day has also been supplied as a second introductory chapter.

If these two chapters appear to be too long in proportion to the main part of the essay and if they seem, by virtue of this, to outweigh the educational history, then the writer will excuse this fact on the grounds that these essential background facts cannot be known from any other readily accessible source.

Acknowledgments.

In any acknowledgment of assistance and co-operation that may be made, pride of place must certainly be accorded to Professor M.V.C. Jeffreys M.A., formerly Professor of Education at Durham and now Head of the new Institution of Education recently established at Birmingham University, for his co-operation, advice and guidance and not least for his patience fortitude and endurance in supervising this work through what must have seemed to him five long years of interminable correspondence at a great distance.

The Board of Education in Nassau, who provided free access to/

to all schools in the colony under their control as well as to all their records, must nevertheless take a subsidiary place to their Inspector, Mr. T.A. Thompson, A.C.P., M.R.S.T., who had meticulously collected and preserved old documents and reports. I am indebted to Mr. Thompson in so many ways that it would be impossible here to attempt any detailed enumeration of them.

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To/

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CHAPTER I.

History of the Bahamas.

Impact of Events in Other Countries.

The history of the Bahamas has been like its climate, tranquil and gently variable, disturbed only occasionally by sudden violent storms approaching from without and not subject to control from within. Life has been free from extreme dissension or prosperity, except when major events in neighbouring countries have produced their reactions in the Colony. The revolutionary conception of the shape of the earth coupled with the awakening spirit of discovery in the Old World sent Columbus and his caravels to land on the shores of the Bahamas and so to discover the New World. Religious intolerance in Bermuda brought the first settlers to disturb the calm of a land where every prospect pleased and there was no man to be vile. Distant wars in Europe gave the Spaniards their excuse for devastating the capital and scattering the population from time to time. Following the War of American Independence that rocked the foundations of Empire came a tidal wave of immigration that spread Loyalists and their slaves over islands hitherto uninhabited and started the islands on a career of modern development. The American Civil War inflated a four years' bubble of unprecedented prosperity which burst about the heads of the people in the fury of a terrific hurricane sent as a visitation of God for their/

their wickedness during the war. In this present century a bubble, bigger than any before, grew out of a whisky bottle and burst, or rather faded away, in showers of gold. Even the Second World War was not such an ill wind that it blew the Bahamas no good.

Bahamian History a Sea Story.

The story of these islands is a sea story. The guns of the forts point seawards and the eyes of the people too have always turned that way. Over the sea came Columbus; in and out of the harbours and reefs ranged the pirates and their successors in office, the blockade runners, the whisky smugglers and the wreckers; from the time when the earliest Bahamians went "a-coasting in shallops", fishing and seafaring occupations have been among the principal means of livelihood; all communications within and without the Colony have been by sea until boats took wings and sailed the skies and dirty, dilapidated little out island sloops which defy wind and ocean, sometimes disastrously, sail unconcernedly out of the harbour past the gleaming all-metal flying boat and the proud trans-Atlantic liner.

Episode 1 : Discovery - Tragedy.

The opening chapter of Bahamian history is brief; it opens with epoch-making discovery and ends barely a quarter of a century later with tragedy.

The/

The highest common factor of historical knowledge among Bahamain children is not "William the Conqueror - 1066" but "Christopher Columbus - 1492." They will also quote the day and month, the 12th of October, which is more than English children can do for their historical invader. The first voyage of Columbus is legendary but it is by no means certain where, in the Bahamas, was his landfall. Until late in the last century it was taken to be Cat Island but now the distinction of bearing the alternative name "San Salvador" has been transferred to Watlings Island. The native name for the island was Guanahani. Columbus, believing he had reached islands off the east shores of Asia called the people Lucayan Indians. They were the handsome, peaceful and indolent Arawaks who had been pushed north from South America by the more warlike Caribs. Columbus's own description of the people ends: "I believe that they would easily be made Christians, as it appeared to me they had no religion." It was with the same noble aim that the Pope by his Papal Bull granted these and other lands of the western hemisphere to Spain. The Spaniards' method of bringing them under Christianising influences was to transport them to Hispaniola and Cuba and, incidentally, avail themselves of their labour in the mines there. The Lucayans quickly perished under the new severe conditions and were replaced by more and more natives/

Guardian, 1929 (13)

-ibid-

natives transported from the islands. This depredation began about 1509 and some 40,000 people were removed until, after eight years. the islands were completely depopulated. The islands were then abandoned by the Spaniards and, for more than a century, there is a complete blank in the history of the colony during which the islands were presumably uninhabited, though there appear to be signs of a strain of Indian blood in a few of the present day Bahamians. This may conceivably have been derived from a few stragglers of the aboriginal inhabitants.

Episode 2 : Early English Settlers.

Although there can be no doubt that the islands were known to the early English navigators it was not until 1629 that the British formally laid claim to them. Sir Robert Heath, Attorney General of England, recognizing that "it was neither "safe nor profitable for the Spanish and Dutch to be absolute "Lords of the West Indies", also conceived the strategic "importance of the islands as a base "both for the easie "assaultinge of the Spaniards' West Indies from those parts and "for the relieving and succouringe of all ships and men of Warr "that should goe on reprints." In 1629, Charles I granted to Heath that "territory in America betwixt 31 and 36 north latitude", subsequently called Carolina, together with "the islands of Veajus and Bahama and all other islands to the South." The grant is of academic interest only in that it marks the annexation/

annexation of the Bahamas as a British Colony. Heath was unable to fulfil the conditions of his charter and it was forfeited before any settlements were made.

It was William Sayle, a former Governor of Bermuda, who was responsible for the first settlement. He was a prominent Independent suspected of attempted insurrection against the Governor and Royalists in 1647. In that year he was sent by the Independents to plead their cause in England. He already knew the Bahamas. Indeed it was he who named the island of (New) Providence which, for some time, was known as Sayle's Island. He had also visited Segatoo which he later named "Eleutheria." While in England, he interested merchants in the settlement of the Islands and obtained Articles for the formation of a "Company of Adventurers for the plantation of "the Island of Eleutheria formerly called Buhama in America and "the adjacent islands." Most of Sayle's original contingent of 70 settlers were Puritans from Bermuda who hoped to establish a settlement where every man might enjoy liberty of conscience (hence "Eleutheria" from "eleutheros"). On the execution of Charles I in 1649, the Bermuda Royalists declared Charles II as their sovereign and banished the Independents to Eleutheria. This subsequently became a regular practice even criminals being thus banished.

The Adventurers had anything but an easy existence. Shortly after arriving, dissension split the group and Sayle with his party/

party removed to "a little island" now believed to be St. George's Cay on which stands the settlement of Spanish Wells. Tradition has it that this split was the origin of the jealousy and rivalry that persists to this day between the people of Spanish Wells and Harbour Island. As the land was so inhospitable the settlers were soon in such a pitiful plight as to arouse the sympathy and charity of the people of Virginia and New England and the Commander-in-Chief of Jamaica, who contributed food, clothing and money to the unfortunate Adventurers, many of whom returned to Bermuda. However, more settlers came out from England and evidently their fortunes improved as a considerable trade in braziletto wood apparently sprang up between London, Bermuda and the Bahamas. In these early years, too, were the origins of what later became the commercial enterprise of "wrecking." Occasional "providential" wrecks provided not only excitement but supplies and remunerative employment, one such "voyage" netting the wreckers £2600 mostly in actual money.

It is significant, and a fact of which Bahamians are justly proud, that the first colonists enjoyed a system of popular government under the Articles of the Company. There was to be a Senate of 100 persons responsible for government. All the original settlers were, ipso facto, members of the Senate which had power to elect others to supply vacancies caused by death or/

or emigration. There was also to be a Governor and Council of 12 who were to be elected, "by way of scrutiny and ballottes", in the first instance by the first Adventurers prior to their departure from England, and then, after these had held office for three years, "by all the free-men of the said Plantations" annually. There is little evidence of how efficiently these provisions were put into effect. There is even no record of Sayle's ever having been elected Governor but there is no doubt that he claimed to be Governor as he is so styled in many contemporary documents. It is not unlikely that the dissension mentioned above had a harmful effect on the satisfactory execution of government and, further, that the ensuing lack of co-operation and harmony among the colonists was in some measure responsible for the hardships they subsequently suffered.

Sayle himself remained in the Bahamas nearly ten years with his Adventurers, returning to Bermuda in 1657.^x He was evidently convinced that the small Company of Adventurers was unable to make a success of settling the colony unaided for he urged the Proprietors of Carolina to ask the Crown for a patent for the Bahama Islands. This they did but it was not until 1670 that the colony was granted to the Lords Proprietors of Carolina. That many of the original band of Eleutherian Adventurers remained in Eleuthera is evidenced by the persistence to-day/

x The Bermudian Royalists were subdued in 1652 and swore allegiance to the Commonwealth. ^o

~~1670 that the colony was granted to the Lords Proprietors of Carolina. That many of the original band of Eleutherian adventurers remained in Eleuthera is evidenced by the~~
 persistence to-day on that island of several surnames of the original settlers. It appears, however, that New Providence had become the chief settlement, with a population of 500, before the date of this grant.

Episode 3 : Proprietors and Pirates.

Although the Proprietors estimated that £ 700,000 would be necessary to develop the islands very little was done by them beyond the establishment of a system of government, which was far from being efficient, and the appointment of a series of governors, who proved either unsatisfactory or unsuccessful. The need for outlining a system of government again is an apparent indication that the system established for the Adventurers had either not worked efficiently or had fallen into desuetude. The Proprietors were to appoint a Governor in whose hands lay the appointment of a Council of five subsequently increased to twelve. Twenty freeholders were to be elected as a Parliament by whom laws were to be made. Thus, with slight alteration, the system of government by the Adventurers was revised and the principle of a representative assembly continued. On more than one occasion the people exceeded their liberties and exhibited a/
 a/

Guardian, 1929 (13)

-ibid-

a tendency to a republican form of government by reverting to the former practice of electing their own governor having deposed the rightful one.

Social conditions at the outset of Proprietorial Government were in a sorry state. A letter, written to one of the Proprietors by the first Governor they appointed, described the chief wants of the settlers to be "small arms and ammunition, a godly minister and a good smith." Another contemporary letter, referring to the first Governor, reads: "His brother, Capt. John Wentworth,^x debauches himself and "has corrupted the people to drink. They have chosen him "Governor and neglect their crops. He spends everything and "lets all do as they please..... In New Providence the "young and able "run a-coasting in shallops" which is a lazie "course of life and leaveth none but old men, women and "children to plant, which will be the ruine of that plantation "if you do not prevent. All the Bahamas are healthy and the "inhabits have "greater stomachs for the victuals than in any "parte of America." Mr. Thomas Gwynne has gone in a small "vessel to Bahamas. He will get the people drunk and buy up "their stuff to their ruin."

From their "lazier course of life" it was but a small step/

Hugh Wentworth, the first Governor to be appointed, died before reaching the Bahamas. The people, in ignorance of this appointment, elected John Wentworth whom the Proprietors subsequently confirmed in office.

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step to piracy and, throughout this period, pirates increased in number and lawlessness until eventually, in spite of the repeated protests and instructions to the Proprietors from England to put down piracy, the islands seethed with pirates who carried out their depredations on ships of any nation whatsoever including those of other colonies. By the end of the century the American colonies were instituting a system of convoys, Carolina complaining that "hardly a ship doth come through the Gulf or on our coast without being plundered." Even the government was largely in the hands of the pirates who made their own terms with successive governors. By no means all of the governors themselves were above connivance with the pirates; indeed this would seem to have been the only way of making satisfactory progress for Trott was such a Governor who was eventually recalled for allowing pirates the free use of the harbour in exchange for a share of the plunder. Yet in his time he built Fort Nassau, from which the present city takes its name, he rebuilt the church and was responsible for much legislation including plans for the building the "Citty of Nassau" on the site of the old capital "Charles Towne." It was subsequently said of him that "had he been an honest man he would have found himself very solitary in the Bahamas of that day." Another governor, who refused to connive with the pirates, very nearly lost his life when the Speaker of/

of the House, leading an uprising of the people to Government House, fired his pistol at the Governor, missed, wounding a conspirator, and finally struck the Governor on the head with the butt of the weapon.

Another source of unrest were the frequent attacks by the Spaniards as reprisals for piracy. On one such occasion in 1680 a large force burned all the houses and carried off the stock and many prisoners including the Governor who, according to one of his successors, was put to death by being roasted on a spit. At the same time the Eleutherans were also driven out to Boston but, when the Spaniards had departed, the pirates returned. The process was repeated in 1703 during the War of the Spanish Succession by the French as well as the Spaniards who, after blowing up the fort and spiking the guns, burned the church and the town and carried away all the negro slaves and all of the settlers who did not escape with their lives "to the bush." Once again the pirates returned in force.

Repeated attempts to quell the pirates failed. Such was the strength of their position that, on one occasion, they attempted to drive a private bargain with the Governor of Jamaica for their pardon telling him that it would be worth a "great gun" (£20,000) to him. No one could be induced to undertake the task of customs officer as it was such a hazardous occupation. It was not until well into the/

the eighteenth century that the colony was reduced to a state of law and order. This was due to the efforts of Captain Woodes Rogers, a Bristol seafarer of some renown, whose rescue of Andrew Selkirk from the Island of Juan Fernandez gave Defoe the inspiration for the tale of Robinson Crusoe.

Rogers submitted proposals to the Lords Commissioners of Trade that the importance of the islands for British trade and security demanded the expulsion of the pirates and the fortification and settling of the colony. He won the backing of merchants of London and Bristol and prominent statesmen. He argued that the Proprietors by their inefficiency had forfeited their rights to the islands and that the Crown should take possession of them. Actually, the Proprietors needed little encouragement to surrender their right to the civil and military government of the islands, and in 1717 they leased them to Woodes Rogers for twenty-one years, for £50 for the first seven years, £100 for the next seven years and £200 for the last seven years, on the condition that North and South Carolina be treated as the "most favoured people" in respect of trade and commerce. It was not for another seventy years, however, that the heirs of the Proprietors finally gave up all rights to the Bahamas, for which they received 212,000 compensation.

Episode 4/

Episode 4 : Expulsis piratis restituta commercia.

On the 11th of April 1718, Rogers left England accompanied by a force of more than a hundred soldiers. He had been appointed Governor by King George I and, in the first instance, was to govern with the aid of a Council only. He took with him a Royal Proclamation of Pardon for the pirates. The pirates were apprised of this previous to Rogers' arrival and had met in solemn conclave to discuss the situation. Most of them decided to surrender, remembering, no doubt, that former governors had been prepared to bargain with the pirates. Accordingly, they met Rogers with great ceremony, forming a guard of "honour" stretching from the beach to the Fort and greeting him with musket volleys. It is said that over 1000 pirates accepted the King's pardon, but many, including the infamous Blackbeard, refused to surrender. Several of them were hanged on the gallows when captured later.

The task confronting Rogers was formidable; the Fort was still in ruins after the attack by the French and Spaniards fifteen years before, plantations were completely neglected, roads were overgrown, there was little honest trade; in fact there was little semblance of order about the life of the colony in any respect. Although there was the/

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the perpetual danger of attacks by Spaniards, who had surprised the town thirty-four times in fifteen years, the inhabitants could not be depended upon to do guard duty at night. The problem of the pirates who would not surrender was equally vexatious. As many as two thousand were still unaccounted for and the two most prominent threatened to repossess themselves of New Providence in a short time. For defence, Rogers had only the men he brought with him supplemented by a local militia composed mostly of ex-pirates. Nevertheless, within a year he had restored the Fort at a cost of more than \$11,000 provided mostly out of his own pocket.

To re-establish the plantations and attract new settlers he formulated a scheme of grants of land on condition that it should be cleared and a house erected within three months, lumber being provided free. But the people could not be induced to work "for they mortally hate it" and they were content to live on sweet potatoes, yams and very little else although fish was abundant. "Thus they live," wrote Rogers himself, "poorly and indolently, with a seeming content and pray for wrecks or pirates." Many of the pirates reverted to their old lives, completely disillusioned as to the intentions of the new Governor and as to the desirability of living/

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living an honest life.

But if he got little co-operation from the inhabitants, he got none at all from home and the strain of his arduous and thankless labours so affected his health that he was obliged to return to England after two years. "All the unworthy usage a man can have," he wrote, "has been given me and all the expenses designed to be thrown on me." He claimed to have spent his whole fortune on the colony with little or no assurance from home of being reimbursed.

Rogers' successor was quite incapable of continuing the progress already established and, indeed, was all but a total reversion to piratical type. He and his wife monopolised trade and the cost of living became exorbitant. Phenney, the Governor, went so far as to undo Rogers' work of reconstruction of the fort and sell the iron for his own private profit while his wife sold rum by the pint and biscuits by the half ryal." Phenney became so unpopular as to lose the co-operation of his Council and be unable to assemble a quorum of members many of whom he described as "very illiterate." It was not long e'er the inhabitants requested Phenney's recall, Rogers' re-appointment and the election of a representative Assembly.

Rogers began his second term in 1729 and immediately made/

made preparations for the election of a General Assembly of twenty-four members, the first meeting of which was held in a private house on September 29th, 1729, a century after the first Royal Grant of the Islands to Sir Robert Heath. The first resolution was to appoint a committee of inquiry into the state of the colony.

What were the findings and report of this committee is not known but some indication of the poverty of the inhabitants may be gained from the fact that the Chaplain who, with the officers of the garrison, had rebuilt the church twenty years after its destruction by the enemy in 1703 was obliged to return to England as he was "unable to live on the £80 per annum which was all that the poor inhabitants could give him." Nearly half of this would go in house rent. Even Rogers himself was obliged to forego his meagre salary of £400.

For a second time, Rogers applied himself to the onerous and thankless task of developing and governing the Bahamas and regaining ground lost by Thenney. Several Acts were passed by the new Assembly including measures to encourage the growth of cotton and sugar. Attractions to new settlers produced little response immediately, though more, including some Germans from the Palatinate, began to arrive later. The defenceless state of the islands was still the most urgent problem/

Oldmixon, (32) page 431

problem and, in spite of his deteriorating health, he restored guns at the fort and built new barracks with very little assistance from the inhabitants. This was not so much the result of indolence, though their distaste for hard work was well-known to Rogers, but to express antagonism excited by the Speaker of the Assembly. This gentleman so misdirected the members that Rogers was compelled to dissolve the second session of the House within a fortnight of opening it. This did not deter the Speaker and eventually Rogers had him arrested and tried for sedition after he had stirred up the inhabitants generally and tried to incite the soldiers to mutiny. He was fined £750 and detained during His Majesty's pleasure.

It was wellnigh impossible to inspire the people to a concerted effort except, perhaps, in the presence of an immediate threat of invasion. Petty disputes, magnified out of all proportion, were allowed to impede the essential work of the community. Oldmixon wrote in 1741: "the inhabitants were so litigious, that not a Burrough in Cornwall could compare with them; which is the more amazing, because they had not much to quarrel for or to spare for Law." The task of inculcating communal spirit and mutual co-operation in such a fractious lot of people proved too tremendous and, worn out by his unremitting and unrewarded labours, Rogers died/

died in 1732 and was buried in Nassau. Many of his plans remained incomplete and several had not even been put into execution but he had finally freed the Colony from the terrorism of pirates and established it on the road to prosperity. He had not removed the menace from the Spaniards but had increased the island's chances of repelling attacks.

Reliable figures for 1731, (see Fig.1), taken from a document in the Public Record Office, show that the total population about the time of Woodes Rogers' death was less than 1400 with negroes in a minority of one third. This shows that the system of extensive plantations operated with abundant slave labour, which was a feature of southern American colonies as well as other West Indian colonies, was not developed in the Bahamas. This is also revealed by similar figures for 1784, half a century later, given in Fig.2, page 34. The small number of negro children appear to imply the recent introduction of slaves but the depopulation of the island by the Spaniards in 1703 vitiate this deduction: it is not definitely known when the importation of negroes was begun. Worthy of passing comment is that more than half of the white population was composed of children for whom no means of education existed.

FIGURE 1 : Population in 1731. /

FIGURE 1 : Population in 1731.

Island	WHITE			NEGRO.		TOTALS.		
	Men	Women	Chn.	M. & W.	Chn.	White	Negro	Total
N. Providence	190	135	308	237	172	633	409	1042
Harbour Island	31	27	102	8	1	160	9	169
Islathera.	25	28	79	30	5	132	35	167
Totals.	246	190	489	275	178	925	453	1378

	Adults	Children	Total
Whites	436	489	925
Negroes	275	178	453.
Total	711	667	1378.

With the transformation brought about by Rogers the prospects of the colony were fair and for the next forty years there was a period of reasonably ordered development though we understand that many of the governors were so "dictatorial and unreasonable" that the affairs of the colony were badly administered and the planters suffered some lean years in consequence. Nevertheless, there was now some better promise of security for planters than the unstable favour of freebooters, and the improvement of living conditions, with the prospect of a stable government, stimulated settlement but on New Providence and Eleuthera only. Some of these new settlers came from the eastern American colonies where it had by this time become apparent that even in the New World liberty of worship could be circumscribed/

circumscribed by arbitrary governors and over-zealous religious extremists. Thus many of the new immigrants were devout Protestant families, including some Germans. The increase in population from Rogers' death to the beginning of loyalist immigration may be seen by comparing Figs. 1 and 2 on pp. 30 and 34.

The population was still far from being a model of rectitude. While piracy itself was all but suppressed piratical instincts were by no means dead. Their previous outlet being denied, they were diverted into a respectable form of depredation which was tolerated under the law. Deliberate wrecking received fresh impetus as by it the spoils of piracy could be reaped without committing the sin. But, by and large, a new era of stable development had begun. That attempts at education began in the middle of this period is evidence of this.

Episode 5 : The Loyalists.

Such tranquillity could not remain unimpaired indefinitely and the even tenor of life in the Bahamas was destined to be violently disturbed yet again. The War of American Independence opened in 1775 and in 1776 the American Colonies' infant navy made a trial run to Nassau to seize powder and ammunition believed to be stored there. Admiral Hopkins/

Pascoe (33) page 219.

-ibid- page 220

-ibid- page 220

Hopkins with eight ships took possession of the town and forts which surrendered without resistance. Most of the powder, however, had already been sent off the island and the rebels found only fifteen barrels but they took more than a hundred guns. The American flag flew over the town but one day for the invaders departed immediately, taking with them the Governor, the Inspector-General of Customs in North America and a severe infection of the dread smallpox which attacked some two hundred of the men.

A much more serious consequence of the American Revolution rose from the fact that the colony depended chiefly on the continent for provisions. For some years the inhabitants were "almost reduced to a starving condition." In 1779, "the best bread" that could be obtained in Harbour Island, "even for the blessed Sacrament was made of Tree Roots." Throughout the war American ships continued to threaten the security and peace of the islands, Their crews, which apparently landed without hindrance and, perhaps, not without encouragement from some quarters, endeavoured to "corrupt the minds of the people, turning them from King George "and all government." In Nassau, those loyal to the Crown were "threatened almost every day and insulted and, having "little force to defend themselves, were in continual danger."

In 1779, Spain declared war on England and, three years later/

later, Nassau was again seized by the Spaniards for the last time. They held it for about a year, the Treaty of Versailles restoring it to England in 1783. Unaware of the completion of the Peace Treaty, Colonel Andrew Deveaux, with the assistance of men recruited en route at Harbour Island, obliged the Spaniards to capitulate that year. Since then, England's possession of the colony has remain unchallenged.

All of these incidents are trifling compared with the more far-reaching consequence of the war which brought an unprecedented influx of colonists. The loyalist refugees from the American colonies moved either northward into Upper Canada or southward to Florida. But this latter territory was given to Spain by the Treaty of Versailles and the loyalists, encouraged by liberal grants of land, began to migrate to the Bahamas in 1784. The new settlers were drawn from New York as well as Florida, North and South Carolina, Virginia and Georgia. Although numbering only 6,000 - 7,000 including whites and blacks, the extent of the influence of this immigration can be readily judged when it is realised that the total population of the colony before their advent was only 4,000. Hitherto there had been approximately equal numbers of Europeans and negroes; the new immigration doubled the white population and trebled the black, so that, for the first time, the white planters were largely outnumbered by their/

their slaves. Further importations of Africans, until the suppression of the slave trade in 1907, increased the preponderance of negroes over whites. The following estimates of the population for the years 1784-9 give an idea of the extent of this influx:

FIGURE 2 : Population 1784-9

Year	IMMIGRATION		TOTAL		GRAND TOTAL
	White	Black	White	Black	
1784	-	-	1700	2300	4000
1786	1200	3600	2900	5900	8800
1789	400	2100	3300	8000	11300

Hitherto the only islands on which any attempts at settlement had been made were New Providence and Eleuthera. Settlement of all the other islands now began simultaneously and on a large scale. Extensive grants of land were made on all the other large out islands and the plantation system of cultivation of cotton as it was known in the Southern States, was introduced to an extent previously unknown in the Bahamas. The exploitation of virgin soil led to a sudden burst of prosperity and the colony assumed an importance and a stability in world commerce that it had not enjoyed hitherto. Unfortunately, this prosperity was not long maintained. The soil, neither abundant nor very fertile under/

McKinnen (21) page 229

under the best of circumstances, was soon exhausted and quite unsuitable for the profitable production of cotton by extensive plantation methods. Added to this was the destruction of crops by the chenille and red bugs. McKinnen, on a tour of the Colony in 1804 wrote: "injudicious planting and clearing the land, either by burning the soil, exposing it too much to the rigour of cold winds or exhausting it by unremitted tillage, have been considered as fatal as the destructive agency of the insects.....(Consequently, the planters are faced with) scarcely any prospect of relief from immediate ruin or distress." By the end of the century many of the immigrants were already leaving, taking their slaves with them, until an embargo was placed on the removal of slaves from the colonies in 1807 by the Home Government. McKinnen (1804) gives as the residual population in 1801: 1599 whites, 752 free coloured and 3861 slaves but the discrepancy between this total of 6212 and that of 11,300 given above for 1789, while the number of slaves was still increasing, is so great as to call either or both of these sets of figures in question. That McKinnen may have been guilty of an underestimate would seem apparent from the first registration of slaves in 1822 when there were 10,808 slaves/

slaves. Nevertheless, the figures give some indication of the re-migration of the loyalist refugees.

In affairs of state, too, the advent of the loyalists had a profound effect. Accustomed to a large measure of local autonomy and familiar with a much more progressive and vigorous political machine, they were not a little impatient with, and critical of, the antiquated and largely spiritless system of government that had evolved but little since first set on its feet by Rogers. It is not surprising that the native-born Bahamians were resentful and jealous of these critical, energetic and superior Bahamians-by-enforced-adoption. The resulting friction was accentuated by the Governor who was inclined to share the native Bahamians' prejudice against the loyalists. The latter were impatient for reform but were powerless to accomplish it because, though they were in a majority in the colony, they were in a minority in the House of Assembly which had been elected in the early days of their coming. There was no limitation imposed by law on the life of the Assembly and both Governor Maxwell and his successor, Lord Dunmore, persistently refused to dissolve it. When, at length, an act was passed limiting the duration of the Legislature, the retiring House had been in power for nine years. The new House was more fairly representative of the/
the/

the rival factions but continuing jealousy and contention restricted the extent of progress that might have been made. Furthermore, by this time, many of the loyalists were leaving, some through failure to adjust themselves to a more confined life than that to which they had been accustomed, but mostly because of the failure of their plantation enterprises described above. However, the majority of them remained, presumably having no resources elsewhere to depend upon, and they continued to infuse an invigorating spirit into the government of the colony.

Finally, many of the loyalists were culturally and socially superior to the native-born Bahamian and consequently they had a marked effect in this respect. The state of society in the Southern colonies, whence most of the loyalists came, was similar to that of rural England of the times. The planters were an aristocracy living on their estates in dignified ease and culture commonly sending their children, or at least their sons, home to England for their education. Bahamian society, on the other hand, was on a totally different plane being but little more than half a century removed from piracy and lawlessness.

The long series of wars that characterized that period of European history had repercussions in the Bahamas. Naval activities in the West Indies during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic/

Napoleonic Wars caused continual apprehension. On one occasion, fearing an attack by the French Navy, most of the women and children of New Providence were evacuated. During the war with the United States in 1812-14, uneasiness was again experienced in the Bahamas and, in fact, the out island settlement of Spanish Wells was plundered and partly burned by an American vessel. The war proved disastrous to the trade of the islands in consequence of the closing of the American market to their produce.

Episode 6 : Emancipation.

The colonists' troubles were destined not to come singly. Failure of the cotton plantations from natural causes had, for the majority of them, followed quickly on their ill-fortune in having to abandon their homes and estates on the continent because of their loyalty to the Mother Country. Within the next few decades, that same Mother Country, as if regretting her generosity in compensating them for their losses incurred through their loyalty to her, turned on them, so it seemed to them, and sought to complete their ruin, by wrenching away the cornerstone of the economic structure which had already been badly shaken by nature. Faced with the prospect of losing their very means of subsistence by the rising tide of abolitionist sentiment in England, which they rightly believed would finally spell the doom/

Wright (45) page 445

doom of the plantation system in the Bahamas, it is small wonder that their despondence changed to fury at this "unwarranted interference" in their affairs by the Home Parliament. "Born and reared in the atmosphere of the institution of slavery and accustomed to dealing with it as they pleased, they were averse to any interference with it at all and they could not have been expected to submit without protest to such changes in the order of things as the British Cabinet proposed to them. They had inherited the prejudices which are almost universal, if not inevitable, in a state of society in which the interests of one class are subordinated to the interests of those above them."

Some account must here be given of slavery as it existed in the Bahamas. In general, it appears that the conditions and treatment of the slaves were not nearly so inhumanly bestial as they could be in the plantations of the other West Indian islands. The slave-gang of the sugar plantations where large numbers of negroes, who were ten times more numerous than their white masters, were intimidated by a "driver", whip in hand, was not a feature of the Bahamas, where, it will be remembered, there were no more slaves than whites until the advent of the loyalists. Contemporary observers record that the slaves in this colony were better cared for than in any other or in America. Findlay, in describing/

Findlay (11) page 20

Moseley (28) page 94

McKinnen (21) page 172

describing the state of the negroes under slavery, says that "in Barbados.....kindlier feelings were here traditional as between the races" than in Jamaica and elsewhere and the same appears to have been true in the Bahamas. Miss Wocoley believes that "the differences observed between the natives of the various islands of the West Indies are attributed, "not so much to the fact that they came from different parts "of the West African coast, as to the influence of their early "surroundings and masters, from whom they acquired certain "characteristics. The slaves in the Bahamas, it would appear, "had, on the whole, little cause for complaint as to their "treatment." While the last sentence may be an understatement and tends to overlook the fundamental evils of the system, it is substantiated in large measure by McKinnen, in 1864, observing affairs at first-hand. Referring to the adoption of the system of "task-work" he writes: "Their labour is "allotted to them daily and individually according to their "strength; and if they are so diligent as to have finished it "at an early hour, the rest of the day is allowed to them for "amusement or their private concerns. The master also "frequently superintends them himself and therefore it rarely "happens that they are so much subject to the discipline of the "whip as where the gangs are large and directed by agents or "overseers." Consequently, "the negroes in the Bahama islands "discover/

Pascoe (33) page 223

"discover in general more spirit and exertion than in the southern parts of the West Indies." In 1801, the Rev. D.D. Rose, an S.P.C. missionary visiting Exuma "was highly gratified by the cheerfulness with which" the negroes "went through their daily task.....Upon seeing and contemplation of their situation both in a temporal and spiritual light" he professed "that he would rather be a slave in the Bahamas than a poor free cottager in England." While the reverend gentleman may have had opportunity to regret his preference, had occasion ever arisen to grant him his choice, yet, as an opinion of a contemporary observer, the quotation is of value in showing that the lot of the slaves in this colony was not, in the main, a particularly severe one provided they were prepared to conduct themselves obediently and submissively and be oblivious to the harsh fact of their bondage. For the negro who was not so inclined severe corporal punishment was quite legal and indeed a statutory salary was provided for a "whipper" who might be called upon to administer as many as 100 lashes. In certain instances, absconding was punishable by death whereupon the owner was compensated financially for his loss by a grant from the Treasury.

The condition of the Bahamian negroes under slavery has been dealt with in some detail as it has direct bearing on the/

the subsequent stages of emancipation. It was not accomplished without a great deal of contention which lasted for seventeen or eighteen years but, generally, emancipation was effected with greater ease in the Bahamas than elsewhere. Relations between the whites and blacks never became so bitter at any time as they did, say, in Jamaica. When it became evident that, with or without their consent, the Home Government was determined that slavery should go, the white masters realised that in co-operation lay the only possible road to future success, unlike their counterparts in Jamaica, who succeeded in verifying the predictions of ruin, with which they had anticipated abolition, by resentful ill-treatment of the liberated blacks and grudging them, when full emancipation came, even the lowest hire.

The educational aspects of the liberation will be dealt with more fully later. Suffice it to say here that, prior to complete emancipation the conditions of the slaves were considerably ameliorated. By 1836 the House of Assembly had admitted into the new Slave Code almost all the recommendations of Parliament for improving the lot of the slaves. The status of the slave in judicial proceedings was enhanced and manumission, well-nigh impossible in 1784 at a fee of £90, became much easier and commoner. A decrease of 14% in the slave population, revealed by the following figures, shows/

shows this increased facility for manumission.

FIGURE 5 Registration of
Slaves, 1828-31

Year	Slaves	Free Blacks	Whites	Total
1789	(ca.7500)	(ca.500)	(3500)	(11,500)
1822	10200	-	-	-
1825	9384	-	-	-
1831	9338	3991	4240	16,499

When the new Whig Government in 1833 at home took matters into its own hands and passed a statute for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Empire, not a little surprise was occasioned in the Bahamas since the Legislature had already shown itself prepared, if somewhat reluctantly, to comply with most of the wishes of Parliament. By this Act, all the slaves were freed on 1st August 1834 and the Apprenticeship system was introduced to prepare the newly freed slave for his new mode of life. This involved the making of legal contracts between the negro and his late master, under which the former continued in his old employment, with a minimum number of days' labour to himself and the grant of a minimum amount of land. As compensation the former owners received a total of over £128,000.

There are a few points about the Apprenticeship system as it/

it affected children that need to be mentioned. The separation of husband from wife or of parents from children was forbidden. Authorisation for masters, in loco parentis, to punish boys under fourteen and girls under twelve was allowed at first but forbidden in 1835. Children of apprenticed parents were the responsibility of the parents. Children under six, born after 1st August 1834, if not adequately provided for, could be bound out as apprentices by Special Magistrates to the persons entitled to the services of their mothers, for terms of service extending to the 21st year of age. In such cases, time and opportunity were to be given for proper education and religious instruction. It stands to the credit of the Bahamian masters that they did in fact assume responsibility for many such children. A Special Magistracy was erected by Parliament for the application of the regulations of the new system. Ultimately, six of these were appointed to the Bahamas. Their chief function was to adjust the disturbed colonial society to the new relations into which its people were entering, but, of special interest here, is the part they played in the establishment of schools and education.

The local legislature voluntarily put an end to the last vestiges of slavery in 1838 by finally releasing all apprentices non-praedials as well as praedials whom it was the intention to/

to liberate two years later, and also the very young children mentioned above. In that year the indentures of all Africans in the colony were cancelled and the liberation of the slaves was complete.

One more point: a special problem had arisen subsequent to the abolition of slave trading by Parliament in 1807. Slavers, apprehended by ships of the Royal Navy still carrying on an illicit trade in negroes, were taken to Nassau (if that happened to be nearer than Africa whence they had come) and their cargoes allowed to go free. To solve this problem, two small settlements of such negroes were established at Greenwich and Adelaide in New Providence as late as 1832, but by far the most successful was immediately south of Nassau and known as Grant's Town. It is now the most densely populated area in the whole of the Colony.

Episode 7 : American Civil War.

It is said that emancipation was followed by a decline of agriculture. It is true that the colony passed through some lean years in the middle of the nineteenth century following the abolition of slavery in point of time. That there was any causal connection between the two is not so certain. No doubt the ex-slaves had not sufficient self-reliance and independence to blossom overnight into a sturdy peasantry and that agriculture suffered in consequence, but it must also be admitted that agriculture,

agriculture, especially the cotton plantations, had begun to fail long before abolition had been whispered in the Bahamas. Indeed, by the time abolition became effective, cotton had already ceased to be an important crop, and the owners of the fine estates on the out-islands had either moved to Nassau or had left the colony altogether. Moreover, it was not until 1842 that the first cargo of pineapples was shipped to England, following which a brisk trade sprang up as the Bahamian fruit had a monopoly in that market. Not long afterwards a considerable trade in citrus fruits developed with America to the extent of some thousands of pounds annually. Sponging is also a post-emancipation industry. On the other hand, there were years when droughts, pestilence and famine reduced many of the negroes to starvation and destitution and the responsibility of providing their needs devolved upon the Government which itself was not financially in a flourishing state.

Another blow to the finances of the colony befell in 1848 when, after a struggle lasting for fifty years, the Turks Islands were removed from the Bahamas by an Order-in-Council and erected as an independent administration under the supervision of the Governor of Jamaica. The revenue from the profitable salt industry in those islands, was therefore lost to the Bahamian Treasury. Further misfortune in the form of

a violent tornado came in 1850, followed two years later by an epidemic of cholera, the people of Nassau fleeing before it to the out islands. There were four more disastrous hurricanes before the end of that decade.

Wrecking, which at no time had showed any signs of disappearing, became a much more serious business, controlled by licences issued by the Governor. Illicitious practices, such as the putting out of lights or the showing of false ones, served to increase the chances of profit from the misfortunes of others. Connivance between wreckers and ships' captains, whereby the captain put his ship ashore at a pre-arranged place in return for a share of the proceeds of salvage, increased the frequency of wrecks. Concerted effort on the part of Government, shipowners and insurance companies resulted in the erection of a number of lighthouses throughout the islands which reduced the hazards of navigation and, by removing the excuse for error on the part of captains, discouraged deliberate wrecking to the detriment of the wreckers and the public revenue.

But the greatest prosperity the colony had ever known fell into its lap during the American Civil War which began in 1861. Lincoln declared a blockade of the southern ports. England needed cotton for her mills; the Southern States needed guns and ammunition for their battles. Both could supply each others needs/

Stark (40) page 94

needs and Nassau lay between. Moreover, it involved hazards and adventure at sea where the Bahamian was at once in his glory and his element. It also had that tang of defiance of authority which stirred the imagination of the descendants of pirates and wreckers. The exports of the colony leaped from £195,000 in 1861 to more than £1,000,000 the following year. By 1864 they had soared to little short of £5,000,000, while the imports exceeded this figure. Whereas but four ships had cleared from Nassau in each of the years previous to the blockade, there were no less than 588 departures in the four years of the war. The risks of capture and wreck in blockade running were enormous but so also were the profits. In 1864, the inclusive expenses of a vessel to bring back 800 bales of cotton are given by Stark as about £5,000 a round trip of which the captain received £1,000. But then cotton, which was being brought for fourpence a pound in Charleston, was being sold in Nassau for twelve times as much.

"Everyone was wild with excitement during these years of the war. The shops were packed to the ceilings; the streets were crowded with bales, boxes and barrels. Fortunes were made in a few weeks or months. Money was spent and scattered in the most extravagant and lavish manner. The town actually swarmed with Southern refugees, captains and crews of blockade runners/

Stark (40) page 94

"runners. Every available space in or out of doors was
 "occupied. Men lay on verandahs, walls, docks and floors.
 "Money was plenty and sailors sometimes landed with \$1500 in
 "specie. Wages were doubled, liquor flowed freely and the
 "common labourer had his champagne and rich food. Not since
 "the days of the buccaneers and pirates had there been such
 "times in the Bahamas; success paid larger premiums than were
 "ever attained by any legitimate business in the world's
 "commercial history, fully equal to the profits realized from
 "Spanish galleons by the buccaneers."

The Government was enabled to wipe off a deficit of
 £48,000 and the Legislature approved the building of the
 Royal Victoria Hotel in a most elaborate and expensive manner
 at a cost of over £25,000 so that "the Nassau people might
 "sumptuously entertain their Southern friends. Here the brave,
 "daring and dashing men in gray were the lions of the day, and
 were courted and feted by the high dignitaries of Church and
 "State." A new prison, a new cemetery and other public works
 were also accomplished. Real estate values increased enormously
 and a great deal of private building also took place. Standards
 of living increased among the humbler as well as the upper
 levels of society and there was abundant highly paid employment
 for children as well as their parents.

Then the bubble burst; wars never last forever and this
 one/

Bacon (2) page 37

-ibid- page 42

one was exceptional only in being followed by the most disastrous hurricane in living memory, causing destruction not since paralleled until 1926. Fortunes accumulated in a moment had already been dissipated. Increases in the colony's expenditure during the war proved an embarrassment and the old adverse balance of revenue and expenditure returned. The Treasury's deficit became nearly as large as before the war.

The effect of all this unsought affluence and unnatural scale and rate of living on the moral calibre of the people, especially the youth, can well be imagined. What is not so easy to visualize is the profound effect it must have had on the negro who had been his own master for hardly twenty five years. Bacon describes the social life of "the simple but cultured and proud aristocracy" of pre-Civil War Nassau as its Golden Age. In assessing the mark left on Nassau by the orgy of 1860's, he writes "The blockading cruise was as destructive to Nassau as a blasting fire. Indeed a more conflagration would not have left so mournful wreckage. Old custom had gone, never to be entirely restored; old values were destroyed; old memories forgotten; old traditions expunged. And the Bahamas got back nothing of value. Pirates, Spanish invaders, bad governors, red bugs, black flies, hurricanes, smallpox, blockade runners - Nassau had suffered from them all - but the worst of her troublers were/

"were (up to that time) the blockade runners."

This cycle of prosperity and adversity has been typical of Bahamian economy. The longer the tide of prosperity is delayed the more gigantic proportions does it appear to reach and the more abject the depression following on its heels. Yet, notwithstanding Bacon's views quoted above, the colony's spirit of independence, born of a ceaseless struggle for existence for two centuries, was not to be broken by the mere return of familiar adversity. Despite her crippling debt and heavy expenditure, the colony disdained the offer of a loan from the Imperial Treasury. Nassau had lost her wealth but not her pride. Unfortunately for the established church - or perhaps for her ultimate good - the brunt of the stern measures of retrenchment fell upon her income from the Treasury: disendowment was enacted in 1869.

Before passing on to comment on subsequent developments, it is necessary to glance at the state of the out island population at this time, lest the reader believe that the prosperity described was general throughout the out islands as well as in the capital. However, so far from sharing in Nassau's commercial activity and prosperity, the out islands actually suffered from the war as their population was attracted to the city by the gaiety, the improved scale of living/

living and the high price of labour. In the extraordinary traffic of blockade running, the general commerce of the islands had suffered severely through the interruption of ordinary traffic with the continent. This blow was felt largely by the out islands for whom the greatly increased cost of commodities was not offset by a correspondingly large increase in wages. Wrecking, the most lucrative "industry" of the out islands had declined sharply in consequence of the growth of steam navigation and the multiplication of lighthouses. The out islands were and have always been, with one or two outstanding exceptions, Nassau's "poor relations."

Episode 8 : Mostly Poverty.

The half century from the end of the Civil War to the end of the First World War began and ended with periods of acute depression and poverty. In between there was slow, unspectacular but sure development with never any great margin of favourable balance but a good deal of poverty and many complaints of "hard times" for the colony as well as the individual. Twice within ten years of the end of the Civil War the Treasury was so empty that salaries of public officials were as much as three months in arrears. The new hotel was offered for sale but no tenders were received. It is recorded that all industries were depressed, including even wrecking.

The sponge/

Wright (45)

The sponge industry was by this time firmly established and supplied the colony's premier export. Sisal, introduced as early as 1845, assumed second place, following the efforts of Sir Ambrose Shea, Governor about 1890. This brought a minor wave of prosperity which was short-lived. While the cultivation of pineapples declined, citrus fruits increased to considerable proportions until the trees suffered from attack of the blue-grey fly. The timber industry belongs to the present century and the export of tomatoes is later still.

At the turn of the century the colony might have been said to be enjoying a period of comparative prosperity, if public finances may be taken as a guide. In the ten years up to 1902 the revenue had increased by one-third and so also had the exports while imports had been nearly doubled in the same period. But as evidence to the contrary, the public debt had increased considerably too and there was a steady stream of emigrants to the United States "of many of the more active spirits in the population."

It was during this period that the colony first began the exploitation of its climate and natural beauty in the so-called Tourist "Industry". The first contract for a regular ocean service with New York was made with the United Line as early as 1859. Twenty years later sundry inducements were made to encourage the building of hotels but the biggest move/

Shedden (38) page 169

move was made just at the close of the century when a private concern was subsidized to operate two hotels and a winter steamship service with Miami. It was not until after the First World War, however, that the tourist business assumed such gigantic proportions and became such a profitable activity.

The 1914-18 war hit the colony a severe blow though in one respect at least it brought benefit. This was to the sisal industry; demand for that product was great and prices were high but only for the duration of the war. On the other hand, supplies of food were short and this, together with the adverse rate of foreign exchange, caused the cost of living to soar. The out islands especially were most severely affected as usual. This stimulated emigration to the state where their labour was much needed. Depopulation of the islands assumed such proportions that in the decade 1911-21 the census showed a decrease in population of 5½%. This is the only decrease in population for two centuries, the average percentage increase for the five previous decades being nearly 10%.

Of the Bahamas in 1919, Sheldon writes: "the colony was one of the poorest of the British possessions; the effects of the war were still being felt; the anchorage was depleted; trade was at a low ebb; the hotels were closed, and so there was/

was no large influx of American visitors during the winter months to bring money into the town; the adverse rate of exchange made the cost of everything purchased in America "almost prohibitive," as usual the depression was darkest just before a boom.

Last Episode : Prohibition, Tourists, War.

When the United States went "dry", vast stocks of American liquor were shipped to Nassau so that in early 1920 Nassau harbour was crowded as never before with shipping. Barrels and cases of liquor filled the warehouses, cellars, wharves, even some of the streets. An enormous sum accrued to the Treasury from import duties. When Americans had smuggled all this back into their country, the Nassau liquor merchants began to import more for re-export. The revenue reached its highest point in 1923 at 2853,000. Once only has this sum been exceeded and that during the Second World War. A detailed description of the business need not be given. In most respects it was similar to the blockade running of the American Civil War except that the actual smuggling or "bootlegging" was done mostly by Americans and that the moral repercussions of the phenomenal influx of wealth was probably more widespread.

The abnormal revenues gave the colony the opportunity to develop the tourist industry as well as many public services.

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A new hotel was built and another to replace one destroyed by fire. More frequent steamship services were subsidized and real estate has boomed. In 1931 a daily air service between Nassau and Miami was begun. Whereas 500 visitors constituted the best tourist season seventy years ago the transient tourist population is now as big as the permanent population of the colony.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, memories of the last war caused Bahamians to fear the worst. With the entry of the United States into the war, the tourist traffic virtually ceased. The colony was saved from depression, however, by the establishment of a Royal Air Force training station and Ferry Command base. Several thousand Bahamian labourers went to the States for essential work, mostly agricultural. Consequently, what might have been as severe a depression as in the First World War became a period of great prosperity with the colony's revenue exceeding even the peak of the bootlegging years.

At present, the tourist industry has been recommenced with new vigour and, in consequence of the accumulation of American savings during the war years, promises to exceed all former proportions. At the same time, however, the cost of living is also far exceeding all previous levels and a sudden failure of the tourist trade would bring disaster as the out islands still continue to be a liability to the colony.

CHAPTER II

The Bahamas of Today.

Geography of the Bahamas.

In all, the colony comprises only 4400 square miles of land, or about one-half the size of Wales and slightly less than the area of Jamaica which is the largest of the British West Indian Islands. The individual islands, however, are scattered over a large area extending from within 50 miles of the coast of Florida to within 100 miles of the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti. The extreme length of the group is over 550 miles and (ignoring the lone Cay/Lobos) the extreme points in width are about 160 miles apart. The majority of the islands lie either on the shallow Great Bahama Bank or the Little Bahama Bank being separated from each other by shallow seas, though the islands in the south east rise from the floor of the Atlantic Ocean and are separated from one another and from the other islands by deep ocean passages which are at times very treacherous. Another such "tongue of ocean" lies between New Providence and the islands to the north and west. Thus the islands, together with the sea and ocean which separate them, cover an area of not less than 56,000 square miles of the earth's surface, or about 13 times the area actually occupied by land.

The/

The total land surface is made up of some 700 islands and over 200 cays and rocks. The largest island, Andros, is estimated to have an area of 1600 square miles but it is really an island group extremely dissected by arms of the sea and bodies of water. Apart from this there are only three islands bigger than the Isle of Man (over 200 square miles) and New Providence itself, on which the capital is situated, is just about the size of Jersey.

The islands in general are low and flat and characterised by great thinness and often sheer absence of soil, the rocks being composed solely of aeolian limestone (not coral as is popularly believed) which weathers into the most barren of soils. The climate is sub-tropical with the possibility of hurricanes in the late summer months. The summer heat, while not extreme, is made oppressive by high humidity and consequently is most enervating.

Population and Occupations.

Discussion of this question must take into consideration the existence of two broad classes of people in the colony. Scattered through some fifteen major inhabited islands or island groups and many smaller ones is the majority of the population. This section of the community is almost wholly engaged in agriculture and fishing and therefore, in respect of/

of the immediate needs of life, is more independent than the other sections though not at a high level of subsistence. Their surplus produce is exported to the capital, Nassau, in boats owned, in most cases, by the out-island inhabitants themselves. Apart from occasional employment provided by the government, such as the construction of roads, they are not wage-earners. There are, however, four capitalistic enterprises, two being agricultural, one fishing and one chemical industry. These provide employment on a wage-basis in their immediate localities.

The other section of the community is highly urban and confined to Nassau on the island of New Providence, which depends largely on the tourist industry. This class comprises the wage-earners and, although some agriculture is carried on, the people are not so self-sufficient as the out island communities. It is at once obvious that, economically, the out islands are of fundamental importance to the colony as a whole. In production of foodstuffs the Bahamas have never been self-sufficient but it is also true that they are less so now than before the First World War. In the last quarter of a century there has been a substantial migration of population to the capital. That the government views this with great concern is not without reason as it has led, not only to a dependence on/

on imported food greater than ever before, but also to serious periodic unemployment in Nassau. Although, during the Second World War, the situation with respect to unemployment was eased by the construction of air bases by the United States and by the use of Bahamian labourers in America, this employment was only temporary.

The extent of this migration has been shown by the census returns of 1943 which reveal the fact that nearly half the population of the colony is on the island of New Providence, while in 1931 the fraction was about one third and in 1921 less than one quarter.

FIGURE 4 : CENSUS RETURNS
1911 - 1943.

Population

Year	New Providence	Cut Islands	Total
1911	13,554 (24.2%)	42,490 (75.8%)	55,944
1921	12,975 (24.4%)	40,056 (75.6%)	53,031
1931	19,756 (33.0%)	40,072 (67.0%)	59,828
1943	33,350 (42.7%)	37,269 (57.3%)	70,619

The cause of this migration is outside the scope of this review but the following will be quoted from His Royal Highness the Governor's speech when opening a Conference of Cut Island Commissioners/

Russell (36) page 79

Commissioners and Public School Teachers in October 1942:

"In the first paragraphs of the extract from my last speech to the Legislature, I pointed out the difference between the position of the out islands in relation to Nassau before 1914, when the colony was so organized that they were important adjuncts to the seat of government and commercial centre of the colony, as compared to their present position of poor relations into which they have been allowed to drift for the last twenty-five years. We are all familiar with the circumstances which have brought about this change in the position of the out islands themselves, but definitely detrimental to the well-being of the colony as a whole."

The Commission, appointed to consider the June Riots of 1942, reported their finding that "if unemployment and trouble in Nassau is to be checked it is necessary that improvement in the conditions in the out islands should be proceeded with forthwith. It is impossible for us to overstate our feeling of the extreme urgency of this matter: it is past the stage of discussion."

An analysis of the 1943 Census returns shows that about 20% of the population were employed in agricultural pursuits and less than 10% of these were in New Providence. Only 2½% were fishermen and seamen and approximately three quarters of/

of these were in out islands. Those engaged in commerce and industry, general labourers and domestic servants together made up a quarter of the population more than three-quarters of them being in New Providence. The professional and official class was just over 2% most of these being in New Providence. The remaining half of the population were children, housewives, unemployed, retired and independent persons, prisoners and patients in hospital. At the time of the Census nearly 2000 Bahamians had left the colony for temporary work in the United States and were still abroad. These are omitted from the analysis.

The two main changes evident in the last two decades have been a sharp decline in the numbers of people engaged in producing food and a parallel increase in the wage-earning class of domestic servants, general labourers and those engaged in trade and industry. Figure 5 on page 63 summarizes the comments made above. It should be observed that the term "fishermen and seamen" includes fishers of sponge the decline of this industry as a result of disease destroying sponges, being contributory to the decrease in the number of people engaged on the sea.

FIGURE 5./

FIGURE 5.

OCCUPATIONS AND OCCUPATION TRENDS

1921-1943.

Occupation.	Percentage of Population.		
	1921	1931	1943.
Agricultural workers.	29.80	28.46	19.90
Fishermen and seamen	6.20	6.28	2.54.
Domestic servants.	8.38	6.52	9.12.
Trade and General Labourers.	10.84	15.40	15.83.
Mechanics.	0.26	0.44	0.77
Officials.	0.53	0.71.	1.28
Professions.	0.19	0.21	1.05
Scholars.	25.21.	24.19	22.65
Other Categories.	18.59	17.79	26.86

The people are descended from (a) original settlers, (b) loyalists who immigrated from the United States after the War of Independence and (c) their slaves, their origins, therefore, being either European (11.5%) or African (83%) with a small minority (0.5%) of other races, chiefly Greeks. There are many half-breeds of varying degrees of white and negro blood, these of "mixed" race amounting to 5% of the total. Half of the whites live in New Providence so that the percentage of whites in Nassau is higher than in most islands. Some of the out islands are peopled by Africans alone. Figure 6 shows that/

that the whites in the out islands are concentrated mostly in Abaco, Eleuthera with the associated Harbour Island and Spanish Wells, Long Island and Inagua. Spanish Wells is unique in regard to the composition of its population which is over 98% white.

FIGURE 6.

RACIAL ORIGIN OF THE POPULATION - 1943 CENSUS.

	Island	European	African	Mixed	Others	Total.
	Abaco and Cays	1311	2138	-	12	3461
	Andros.	44	6472	195	7	6718
	Berry Islands.	15	388	-	-	403
	Biminis.	64	592	62	-	718
	Cat Island.	5	3843	21	1	3870
x	Cays Sal and Lobos.	-	7	-	-	7
	Eleuthera.	620	5530	257	23	6430
	Harbour Island.	234	517	-	18	769
	Spanish Wells.	654	6	5	-	665
	Exuma and Cays.	120	3615	47	2	3784
	Grand Bahama	27	2300	2	4	2333
	Inagua.	145	611	43	41	890
	Long Cay Island.	-	2415	496	12	2923
	Long Island.	641	2886	1037	-	4564
	Mayaguana	-	587	4	-	591
	New Providence.	3950	24234	1036	171	29391
	Ragged Island.	72	336	9	-	417
	Rum Cay/					
x	Imperial Light Stations.					

Island.	European	African	Mixed	Others	Total.
Rum Cay	-	219	-	-	219
San Salvador.	21	600	-	72	693
Totals.	7923	57346	3214	363	68846
Temporarily employed in United States					1773
Grand Total.					<u>70619</u>

Economy.

The Bahamas is almost the only colony in the Empire in which agricultural products are of less value than marine products for purposes of export. Sixty per cent of the total pre-war value of exports was due to the export of sponge, which reached a value of £90,000 in 1938. The total value of agricultural exports in the same year was only seventeen per cent of the total. The disease of sponge shortly before the war put an end to the export of sponge but exports of fish and crawfish supplied the gap thus created reaching a figure of £97,000 in 1943 though only £8,000 five years previously. During the war, and as a direct result of it, there blossomed, overnight as it were, an export trade in shell and straw work which attained the phenomenal figure of £177,000 by 1943. The main export product from the land is tomatoes, the value being £40,000 in 1943. Exports of salt, a traditional Bahamian export, soared from £2000 in 1938 to £34,000 /

English figure of 1943.

to £34,000 in 1941 then subsided to a paltry £400 in 1943, largely because of wartime shipping shortages. Simultaneously, exports of lumber declined from £12,000 to £2000.

The vicissitudes outlined in the preceding paragraph, though, with one exception, resulting from war circumstances, reflect the typical ups and downs of Bahamian export trade. There is a long list of products which have flourished and withered as exports whether for economic or natural reasons. Apart from sponge, mentioned above, pineapples, sisal, citrus fruits inter alia have each had their day and then declined. Re-export of various potable forms of alcohol during the period of American Prohibition produced, for a season, fabulous incomes to individual adventurers and temporarily inflated the colony's revenue to a record level unsurpassed until recently. The other oddity of Bahamian economy is the huge discrepancy between values of visible exports and imports. During the five year period, 1933-37, the average excess of imports over exports was no less than £788,000 although the average imports for the period were but £914,000. During the war years, 1941-43, this excess reached the enormous figure of £1,193,000. Nevertheless, the Legislature prides itself on the fact that the colony has always been financially solvent and has never been a liability of the mother country. In 1937, for instance, the revenue was £399,000 and expenditure £353,000 while/

while assets exceeded liabilities by a margin of £842,000 in the same year.

This unfavourable balance of trade is offset by invisible exports chief among which is the tourist industry. At its peak during the winter months this brings to the colony, but chiefly to Nassau, a transient population numerically equal to the permanent population. The tourist trade became a war casualty but was replaced by an American construction corporation which prepared the way for a Royal Air Force training station some 2000-3000 strong. Now, the R.A.F. has gone and the tourists have returned in force as great if not greater than before the war.

Another intangible source of income is interest on investments held by many of the white inhabitants abroad. The total annual income was estimated at £30,000 in 1937. Then, during the five-year period previously mentioned, there was an enormous re-export of spirits to the United States. In evidence of this, the average annual imports of spirits during that period were valued at £125,000 i.e. equal in value to all the overt exports taken together. By 1937, this figure had fallen to £56,000. During the war years, yet another invisible export has been the labour sent to America. The compulsory deduction of 75 cents a day which has/

has been transmitted to their dependents at home had amounted to £665,000 by the end of 1946. The labourers have made additional private remittances to Nassau which, in the sum, have also been considerable. At the beginning of 1947 there were just over 4000 labourers under contract in the United States.

As to the direction of foreign trade, the colony's three best customers are the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America, the latter supplying most of the imports and all three normally taking the exports in roughly equal proportions. The war disturbed the direction both of imports and exports, trade with the North American and Caribbean countries increasing at the expense of trade with the United Kingdom.

Constitution and Government.

From the earliest attempts to settle the islands, the Bahamas, though a Crown Colony, has enjoyed some form of representative but not responsible government for three centuries. In this respect it is parallel with the other two "Bs", Bermuda and Barbados, from the first of which came many of the earliest settlers, the Eleutherian Adventurers, in 1647 bringing with them their ideals of self-government. The origin of this type of constitution is best understood historically/

historically by comparison with the American colonies in the early seventeenth century. These, too, had representative government but grave differences of opinion on opposite sides of the Atlantic as to the degree of responsibility possessed by these popularly elected representative assemblies led finally to the colonies' revolt. This problem of responsibility still causes irritation in the Bahamas though by no means to such an extent as to impair their loyalty to the Mother Country and still less to engender even the remotest suggestion of secession from the Empire.

The House of Assembly, with a tradition well over two centuries old, is broadly similar in form and functions to the House of Commons. Fifteen electoral districts, four of which are in New Providence, return twenty-nine representatives who elect one of their number as Speaker. The Deputy-Speaker, similarly elected, is traditionally the "Leader of the Opposition" to the Government, this being the Governor and his advisers. There is no system of party politics. That nearly the half of the population of the colony is represented by only eight members for New Providence while the other half of the population on the out islands are represented by twenty-one is offset by the fact that all twenty-nine are residents of Nassau, all but one or two having their places of business on/

on Bay Street or in its immediate vicinity. Five members of the present House are coloured. Women may not sit in the Assembly nor does the franchise extend to women. The qualification for membership of the House is the possession of real or personal property of the unencumbered value of £200. The ownership of land of value £5 or upwards or the occupation of a house of annual rental value of not less than 48/- in New Providence and 24/- in an out island entitles a male citizen to vote. These qualifications were first laid down in 1882 and with a decline in their comparative values the franchise has thereby been considerably extended since that time. The secret ballot was not introduced until so recently as 1939 and then only for New Providence as an experimental measure. The Riot Commission spoke of this matter at page 82 of its Report (Russell (36)) in 1943: "There is no doubt that the present system of open voting in the out islands in the presence of the candidates or their agents is liable to abuse: and there is no doubt that abuses occur." Following upon representations by the Home Government, the secret ballot was made permanent in New Providence and extended to the out islands in 1946.

Members /

~~on Bay Street or on its immediate vicinity. Five members of the present House are coloured. Women may not sit in the Assembly nor does the franchise extend to women.~~

Members of the Legislative Council, which has been separate from the Executive Council since 1841, are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Governor. The functions of this Council are similar to those of the House of Lords without hereditary right. The Council may amend Bills passed by the lower House but they may not initiate legislation. There is a tradition in the Assembly that the Legislative Council may not amend a money bill sent to them for their approval though the Council does not always acknowledge this tradition.

The third branch of the Legislature is the Governor who, as representative of the King, enjoys a capacity similar to that of the King except that, whereas the King never exercises his right to dissolve Parliament or to withhold his assent from Bills, the Governor not only can but does do both when occasion demands it. But, in addition to acting as representative of the King, the Governor performs all of the executive and most of the legislative functions of a Prime Minister without occupying a seat in the House of Assembly. He is assisted and advised by an Executive Council consisting of the Colonial Secretary/

Secretary, Attorney General and Receiver General, ex officio, and not more than six unofficial members selected by the Governor and appointed by the King. Members of Executive Council may also be members of the Legislature and one of them, after his election to the lower House, is selected by the Governor as Leader of the Government in the House of Assembly. "Government members" of the Assembly, i.e. members of Executive Council who are also members of the House of Assembly, follow the accepted practice of supporting a Government measure. Government members are always in a minority of two or three to present Government policy and navigate it through the Assembly. Bills may originate from the Governor or in the Assembly but the latter insists on the sole right to introduce money bills. Any such measure the Governor may wish to introduce is made the subject of a Message to the House which is referred by them to the Finance Committee who then bring in the necessary Bill at their discretion.

The Heads of Departments are not Ministers but permanent officials appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the recommendation of the Governor. Associated with most Departments is a Board of five members, two of whom must be members of the House of Assembly. These members are then able/

able to represent the interests of their departments in the Assembly. The boards are appointed annually by the Governor.

Legislation agreed on by the Assembly and the Legislative Council and assented to by the Governor still requires the approval of the King. Acting on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown he may or may not be advised to exercise his power of disallowance. Thus, in effect, the King (or his advisers, the Colonial Office) functions as a fourth branch of the Bahamas Legislature.

Social.

Much could be written on this topic and yet leave a very incomplete picture. It cannot be gainsaid that there are in the colony two different worlds represented on the one hand by Nassau with the modern amenities of the civilised world, and on the other by the out island settlements, some of which are decidedly progressive and many of which are decidedly primitive. Influences of western civilisation are, however, nowhere absent. Though it is not surprising to find distinct traces of American influence due to proximity to that country, yet in loyalty, as in many other respects, the colony is fundamentally British or, more accurately, Bahamian, the former term being commonly reserved with which to label "foreign" British/

British subjects.

In Nassau the "foreigner" cannot but fail to be impressed with the many church buildings and liquor stores both of which point to fundamental traits in the character of the inhabitants. The coloured Bahamian is essentially religious often emotionally so though there are all manner of gradations from the high ritual of the Roman Church which claims a considerable following notwithstanding its recent introduction, to the physical contortions of the "Jumper" sect or Church of God which, to observe, would seem to have its roots somewhere in the dances of the African jungle. The value of the annual importation of alcohol in various potable forms exceeds that of mineral waters and milk combined and not a great deal of the latter was produced within the colony until recent years. The liquor consumed is chiefly of the "hard" variety, rum taking the place held by beer in public houses in England.

Of the colony generally and less of the out islands, than of Nassau, can it scarcely be said that culture and cultural pursuits are at a premium although there are a number of organisations with laudable aims some of which have a beneficial influence within a small sphere. But by far the strongest associations among the coloured section of the community are the "Lodges" or "Burial Societies" which have their parallel in/

in the earliest type of gild in Anglo-Saxon England. These are just as strong, and maybe stronger, on out-islands as in Nassau. The lodge probably receives a great loyalty from its members as do the churches and in many cases a great deal more.

The Out Islands.

In comparison with Nassau, the out islands constitute a different world. Indeed their insularity is so pronounced that each island possesses peculiarities of its own and, while there is a monotonous sameness of topography, yet socially and economically there is considerable diversity. It is not even possible to assume that all settlements on the one island, or group of islands, are alike and to attempt a description of a typical out island community is well nigh impossible.

Eleuthera, and adjacent cays, are more advanced than any of the others as it was on this island that the first colonists from England and Bermuda settled. None of the other islands, other than New Providence, was settled to any appreciable extent for nearly another century and a half when they were all colonised simultaneously by loyalists. Apart from this general factor, other local factors have contributed to the uniqueness of each island and of each settlement. Where land communications between/

between settlements on the same island are possible it is not surprising to find that the diversity between communities is not so pronounced. Isolation and exclusiveness in some settlements have reaped the inevitable fruits of inbreeding but with improvement in communications between islands and, in normal times, with the United States these effects are not now so frequent.

A few settlements are exclusively white and a few others predominantly white but in most instances the negro race is numerically superior and in a few islands the total white population may be counted on the fingers of one or both hands. In such instances the white population is usually comprised of ministers of religion and the commissioner though this official is not always of European extraction.

None of the settlements is large, each having but a few hundred population and since, with few exceptions, there is little crowding together of houses such as obtains in the Grants Town section of Nassau, they are not at once discernible from the sea. Some planning of the settlements was undertaken but not always followed up in practice. It may be generally assumed that the word "Town" in the name of a settlement indicates that plans were at some time made for its layout. In the main, one receives the impression that the growth of settlements has been purely haphazard and the same applies to the distribution of/

of settlements on the islands.

By far the best type of house is that built with "tabby" walls. For this purpose lime-kilns are burnt and the walls constructed of stone and mortar surmounted by thatched roof. For the purpose there is abundance of limestone or "conch" shells both of which are used in the kilns. It is to be regretted that this type of house is not commonly built to-day being replaced to a large extent by wooden erections with shingled roof. These dwellings are susceptible to attacks of termites, wind, rain and hurricanes. Since they are rarely painted, the elements shorten their life and dull their appearance in contrast with the stone-built house which, with occasional applications of lime-wash and a new thatch, both of which are readily available, locally and inexpensively, is more neat and attractive. As it is, there is an air of dereliction about many out-island settlements which is increased by the frequent occurrence of uninhabited dwellings about which one can never be sure whether they are in the process of construction or destruction. Any beauty that the settlements may possess is in the main such natural beauty of the locality which has survived the intrusion of human habitation.

The spectator is then struck by the air of lethargy hanging/

Conch - *Strombus gigas*, a large marine univalve mollusc allied to the snail: a common article of food.

hanging heavily over the settlement. There is no sense of busyness. For the greater part the work of the people is not in the immediate vicinity of the village but at a distance, often of some miles, removed from it. It is reached often by boat across sea "on the main" or on foot through wild "bush" somewhere "in the back". If the "fields" (which amount to rocky, cleared bush) are at a further distance, then men and sometimes the whole family may depart thither for days or weeks at a stretch, leaving the home settlement considerably depopulated. Other pursuits such as fishing or, in former years, sponging take the men-folk away from the village for many days or many weeks at a stretch leaving the women to maintain the homes, produce food crops or even to burn and "tote" charcoal.

On Friday all go off to the fields often taking their children with them to obtain a supply of food for the weekend. Saturday is busy with preparations for the ensuing Sunday on which day the larger part of the population turns out to church arrayed in best Sunday clothes, spotlessly clean, neat, colourful and attractive in appearance.

Leisure hours are spent in visiting, talking or just nothing. Communal life may be seen in the churches but where there is a public radio set or library these are well patronised though the quality and distribution of both of these/

Wakefield, (43) page 13.

these amenities leave a great deal to be desired. In addition a considerable amount of time is spent, especially by the women, in home industries, the most common of which is the plaiting of palm leaves or "top" for making mats, baskets and other "straw" goods.

Co-operative endeavour is mostly absent in these settlements. As noted above the only general communal association throughout the islands exists for the purpose of burying one another, a ceremony accompanied by some formality. In some few localities there exist Farmers' or Agricultural Associations for the purpose of assisting and protecting the individual peasant in marketing his produce. During the present century, farmers have learnt, often by bitter experience, that so long as they stand as individuals, they are extremely vulnerable to economic and other vicissitudes. Furthermore the demand for quality and standardisation of produce, the necessity of efficiency in production and supply to markets, cannot be met except by farmers working in co-operation..... There are Farmers' Unions in some of the settlements but their efforts are not co-ordinated." In one locality there has been established a Co-operative Society patterned on the Rochdale Society in England for the purpose of encouraging and assisting its members to save and invest their money in a profitable manner.

More/

More recently one out island community has erected by co-operative endeavour a Community Hall. This type of enterprise is not as common ^{as} during last century and the earlier part of this when, it will be remembered, communities often united to build a school for themselves.

Apart from these exceptions the people are essentially childlike with no ability to assume initiative or responsibility and ever requiring strong leaders who, if they be sufficiently familiar with the practical psychology of the locality, will be readily followed by the people. This granted, such leaders whether they be commissioners, constables, teachers or ministers of religion, may achieve a great deal of constructive enterprise so long as they can maintain interest and enthusiasm. It is this latter quality that is so much needed to ^eaffect any measure of progress. While ready enough to listen to lectures and to indulge in a great deal of discussion there is not the same readiness to put precept into practice. If the community leader be successful in awakening enthusiasm, then it is unfortunately often the case that, childlike, the people all too soon tire of their new interest. Furthermore the efforts of the leader are liable to be frustrated by dissension between rival factions in the settlement, originating from family, denominational or other grounds, to such an extent that he may never be sure of having the whole community with/

with him and may often lose the co-operation of all factions.

It is not difficult to appreciate that such efforts on the part of the leader are liable to have no permanent value, unless he is able to infuse enterprise into the people so that they may learn to initiate endeavours themselves and thus become less dependent on him. Unless this can be accomplished, the leader becomes an indispensable individual and this too is liable to lead to adverse complications. At their present standard of education it is a great deal too much to hope that co-operative endeavours, altogether independent of the efforts of a gifted leader, can arise to any great extent in the out island settlements in the colony. However it should be plainly evident that, until this can be achieved, the out islands will tend to be a liability of the economic system of the colony at large, whereas they should and could play a more important part in providing food for home consumption and secondarily in the production of export commodities.

It must be reiterated that these observations cannot be applied in toto to all our island communities. Rather do they apply in varying degrees to the majority of islands and settlements on them. There are notable exceptions to the general picture that has been portrayed. The most outstanding is an exclusively white community on St. George's Bay off the north end of the island of Eleuthera. This was probably the site/

site of the first settlement by the Eleutheran Adventurers under William Sayle. Communal spirit is probably stronger here than in any other settlement in the whole colony and the populace is more enterprising. In the last few years a type of Parish Council has been inaugurated in this settlement. On the other hand another exclusively white settlement on Abaco, dating back from the end of the eighteenth century when loyalists from New York settled on the island, is in a very low state characterised by the recollection of past greatness and present hopelessness. The settlement is almost completely denuded of its younger generation and only the older people remain. It presents a striking example of the decline of an out island community following the exodus of the best of its members to Nassau. This large scale migration from the out islands to the metropolis represents a problem of the first magnitude in the colony's economy. To arrest it and to initiate a movement on any considerable scale in the reverse direction - a "Back to the Out Islands" policy - will require the application of the colony's best brains. Before any remedy can be attended by success, conditions of existence in the out islands need much improvement in order to attract residents back from New Providence.

Not least among these, more adequate facilities for the education/

education of children must be ensured. The larger schools of Nassau, much more generously staffed, housed and equipped, though by no means models of perfection themselves, are yet capable of offering an education infinitely superior to anything the out island schools, with their monitorial staffs, have to offer. There are many instances in which out island parents, while remaining on the out islands themselves, send their children to live with relatives in Nassau while receiving their elementary education in schools there. This practice, while it may be regretted, can scarcely be condemned. It reinforces the drift away from the out islands as few of the youngsters show any inclination to return when, their schooling completed, they would be of inestimable value in their home settlements. To the out islander facilities for secondary education are almost non-existent due to the inability of parents to maintain their children in lodgings in Nassau while in attendance at either of the two secondary schools. Scholarships for the purpose are totally insufficient. At the High School in Nassau there is an average of five free places, with maintenance allowance, per annum to meet the needs of a population in excess of 37,000. Prior to 1945 there was an average of just over 2 a year. The inability of out island parents to meet the cost of secondary education for their children is illustrated by the fact that in/

in 1944 there were two out island pupils in The Government High School who were paying their own fees. In 1943 there was 1 only. Nor is there any provision for secondary education for the out islands other than that in Nassau.

New Providence.

New Providence, containing the metropolis of the colony, is a totally different world from the rest of the Bahamas. Visitors to Nassau and its environs, who return to their homes imagining that they have seen the Bahamas, are apt to make sweeping generalizations about the colony which are far from the truth and which, not unnaturally, often succeed in making Bahamians very impatient, to express it mildly. Two of the outlying settlements in New Providence are not unlike their out island counterparts but their proximity to good roads leading direct to Nassau at no great distance distinguishes them at once. The third negro settlement, Fox Hill, is very nearly as old as Nassau itself and, through long and close contact with it, has developed an atmosphere and an appearance quite without parallel in the colony. It is fairly generally agreed to be the most attractive coloured settlement in the Bahamas. There is about it an air of prosperity, development and achievement quite unusual throughout the islands.

But these settlements are insignificant compared with the/

the "city", so much so that the names of Nassau and the island are popularly regarded as synonymous especially in the out islands where the inhabitants look to Nassau as to the hub of the universe., This is less the case now than a quarter of a century and more ago since the influence of two world wars and of speedy and frequent communication have caused an awareness of the outside world to penetrate even to the most inaccessible hamlet. Once again it is risky to generalize about the out islands as the remote island of Inagua is much more loosely attached to Nassau than others due in large measure, not to its remoteness, but to a considerable volume of ocean traffic calling there in normal times to embark stevedores for service at the destination.

Nassau sprawls for about three miles on the north side of the island sharply demarcated near the centre, topographically and socially, by the low ridge parallel to the coast known as "the hill". North of the ridge is the business section with the biggest stores and most important offices concentrated in no more than a mile of Bay Street - a designation thus often applied disrespectfully to a white, wealthy, ruling minority of the colony, whose places of business are here located. Between Bay Street and the hill are the older residences of the white inhabitants. Notwithstanding the volume of business and/

Gilmour (12) page 8.

and administration which is effected along this short length of Bay Street, the activity on the wharves and the large number of motor vehicles everywhere, there is not the bustle and restlessness of the American or English city. Affairs proceed with a more leisurely gait as if the ambling horse-drawn drays and cabs set the pace for life in general. The buildings themselves are not consonant with a high speed existence and are utterly devoid of the soulless garishness of the ultra-modern department store. There is about them a quaintness and complete disregard for uniformity that bespeaks a more leisurely age now past that will not be jostled or hurried. The houses are no less conservative and ensure the privacy of the occupants by verandahs or porches protected from the sun and inquisitive eyes by a lattice barricade which does not prevent an observant eye being kept from within the world and his wife as they pass by. The newer costly residences of the more wealthy whites which are not few have fled the city either "out west" or "up east" but still either on the ridge or between it and the sea. Here are the lovely "homes that contain everything that idealists can crave for in beauty of construction with delectable scenery and healthy sea-board domains." Such is one side of the picture and one side of the hill.

"Over/

Gilmour (12) page 2.

-ibid- pages 9-10.

"Over the hill" is Grant's Town "where the majority of "coloured people of the island, the rank and file, live in an "area with a density of 21,000 to an unsewered square mile." Here, as in the out islands not nearly enough of the cabins are of the tabby constructions that would be more conducive to sanitation and health. However, whereas in the out islands the houses are scattered and have abundance of space and that commonly by the sea, in Grant's Town these overcrowded houses are themselves crowded together and shelter a high proportion of the population in^a small area which, being low lying, is not an especially good housing site to begin with. But Grant's Town is not without its attractive points and can boast many proud specimens of Silk-cotton, Poinciana and other semi-tropical vegetation as well as large numbers of unrestrained poultry and domestic animals. The climate is kind; except for the fury of hurricanes, little is needed in the way of protection from the elements and there is not the same squalor of the slums that most large cities of temperate climates try in vain to conceal. As objects to see, some of the houses may, taken in conjunction with their surroundings, appear quite picturesque and not at all out of harmony with the general atmosphere of quaintness but, as places to live in, many of them "are wooden boxes, sometimes on short legs off the "ground, divided into two or four compartments.....The average "room/

"room is 10 ft x 9 ft. A family occupies one or more rooms
"relative to the family purse and ability to pay rent....
"At night the inmates are sealed into the house, windows and
"doors are closed, the large cracks in the wooden walls that
"might ventilate are plastered up with newspaper and magazine
"pictures, offending key-holes and small door faults being
"stuffed with pieces of rag; less than 100 square feet may
"support on the floor and bed six or eight adults and children,
"the owners of blankets finally cutting off the outer world
"by swathing their heads in them. This picture is not an
"exaggeration, though it is hoped its frequency is.....It is
"the result of ignorance; the fault lies with education or the
"lack of it rather than with the people.....Superstition is
"rife; the house is therefore sealed against spirits, in such
"a way that, even if they can pass in through solid barriers,
"there are no openings through which they can drag the solid
"human bodies within to their ghostly lairs outside; and lastly,
"while there is such an irresponsible outlook on the property
"of others, the home must be secured against those brave prowlers
"who would risk the demon of the night. All this seems to
"overstress these habits, but it should make it obvious that the
"provision of ideal homes would not solve the problem without
"the right kind of education, not so much academic as in outlook
"and/

"and responsible citizenship.....

"The overcrowded areas are unfortunately without proper roads, sewerage or generous water supply; the refuse nuisance is difficult to control by the Sanitary Department where the open door is the aperture for refuse. Happily the houses stand on stony ground, so that the empty tin remains on the surface, and eventually insists on its own removal, meantime having been licked clean by flies and stray domestic animals. Water is laid on in stand-pipes in these areas, doubtful wells easily contaminated in a pit-closet area are not supposed to be used. Such are the public health problems and incidentally the skeleton in the cupboard that might seriously jeopardise the tourist trade on which the community relies so much."

This is admittedly the worst side of the picture of the coloured section of the town. As evidence of a social stratification consequent upon prosperity among the negroes there may be observed, south of the hill, a centrifugal drift similar to the outward movement on the north side. Thus, in Chippingham, there has grown up and is still growing almost a distinct village with prosperous-looking concrete houses surrounded by well-kept and attractive gardens.

Finally, on the ridge itself, as well as Government House, are the oldest and finest houses of old Nassau commanding a view/

view of the city, the harbour and the ocean beyond Hog Island that rivals any other prospect in the whole of the colony.

Because of the greater concentration of population, it is to be expected, that social organizations are more numerous and more progressive in Nassau than in out islands. The churches, for instance, having a much larger number of ordained clergy in proportion to the number of churches, are less dependent on the efforts of voluntary catechists and laymen. They are thus able to have many more activities than on the out islands where an ordained missionary may have sole charge of all the churches on one island. In addition to a greater variety of meetings of a religious character there is a large number of social activities, especially for young people, many of which are very flourishing.

All youth work is not confined to the churches. Both Boy Scouts and Girl Guides have recently been revived, the Guides having been completely dormant for a number of years and the Scouts in a state of very low ebb. The inspiring attraction of Scouts is the opportunity to parade accompanied by a band. The Bahamian negro is unable to resist the emotional appeal of marching and the rhythm of a brass band and any parade, or procession, whether of Scouts, military, Lodge or a funeral will inevitably be swollen considerably in numbers/

numbers e'er it has progressed very far on its route. It is to be hoped that, in its revived form, the Scout movement will develop the wider aspects of scouting, though camping is not an easy proposition in a land of mosquitoes, rock and salt water. Along similar lines, are the Boys' Brigade and independent boys' clubs of which one is particularly popular and active. Some of the schools have a number of out-of-school activities. Many of the youth activities have cultural and educational value such as dramatic and discussion groups, hobbies clubs and the like. Unlike the out island communities there are more coloured people willing to assume leadership in social activities, and able to discharge those responsibilities with considerable efficiency. Not all social activities are either for white or coloured but not both. In the main this is so and the segregation extends in some instances as far as the churches.

Organized sport, absent from out islands, is quite strong in Nassau. Apart from the schools which have their games and athletic and swimming sports, Football, Rugby rather than Association, Cricket and Tennis are played by organized clubs. Polo, played regularly and attracting not a few spectators, is indulged in by the few as also is golf. The only two American games that have gained popularity are Basket-ball and Soft-ball. Sailing and swimming the year round are typical Bahamian forms of exercise. For the most part the coloured Bahamian is not athletic/

athletic and interest and participation in organized games is confined to a minority of the coloured folk. It is chiefly the coloured sportsman however who fosters enthusiasm for cricket which is not such a "national" sport as it is elsewhere in the West Indian Colonies. A peculiar feature of Nassau sport is its cyclic, rather than seasonal nature. A wave of enthusiasm will result in one game being played enthusiastically and almost to the complete exclusion of others. Depending on the ease with which the initial burst of enthusiasm is maintained, it will last for a greater or a less period and then vanish completely for a long time. Enthusiasm, fairly easy to arouse, is not so easily maintained. The quality of the play cannot be expected to be of an outstanding high order but, for such a small population with no outside competition and in the total absence of the professional and commercialized element, is surprisingly good. The patience, requisite for long a careful practice of a game, is not a strong feature of Bahamian sport. Needless to say, in such activity as swimming and sailing, the Bahamian is a past-master.

The adult population, too, has its social activities. A lodge of Freemasons is exclusively white as is a branch of the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire. The Y.N.C... and Y.M.C.A. of which the former is more active are organised and carried on by the negro population. The Y.N.C... pursues activity among a small group of girls and young women. The Red/

Norman (29) page 2.

Red Cross is not racially exclusive and promises to initiate valuable social work in peace-time and has done outstanding work during the war. Recently developed is a branch of the Junior Red Cross operating in the schools.

The Duchess of Windsor was instrumental in organizing a series of Child Welfare Clinics where mothers and their children may receive ante- and post-natal care. Home visits are made and, in the absence of a School Medical Service, visits are made to the public schools and absentees sought out at home for any medical attention or advice that may be necessary. An annual medical inspection is held only at The High School.

Following recent legislation, a Trade Union has recently been inaugurated in Nassau but this is the first officially recognised body and as yet is still in its infancy. Previous attempts at running such a union were not fully successful largely on account of the difficulty of obtaining full co-operation and interest of the workers. The following quotation from a "Report on the Labour Position in the Bahamas" by F.A. Norman was written before the latest Trade Union legislation: "In the Bahamas, the Trade Union Movement is undoubtedly weak, and experienced labour leadership not readily forthcoming. I am told that the Bahamas Federation of Labour has no proper rules, no recognised subscription nor dues, and has therefore no recognized, guaranteed membership."

General./

Russell (36) page 85.

General.

Let us return to the study of social conditions in the colony generally. No description of social conditions, however brief, would be at all complete without some reference to the colour problem and yet to attempt to crystallise all the diverse attitudes of various types of people to this matter would be almost as difficult as a solution of the problem. For there exist many shades of opinion in the minds of the people towards the matter, and it is probably this very fact that has thus far preserved the annals of the colony from such devastating race riots as have besmirched the history of other countries. This sentiment is contained in the findings of the Russell Commission as to the causes of the disturbances on June 1st 1942. "We think "that these disturbances were not due to racial questions. "There are no doubt a few unwise persons of both races who "would not be adverse to racial questions being raised but an "examination of 99 witnesses, of every class, leads us to the "conclusion that the suggestion of racial differences would be "greatly deprecated and resented by the general body of Bahamians." There are without doubt extremes of opinion on both sides but there is also a great deal of tolerance, broad-mindedness and sane opinion between those extremes. In strict accordance with British tradition there is no legislation whatever/

whatever to the express detriment or disadvantage of the coloured person such as the "Jim Crow" regulations of the Southern States or of the Union of South Africa. As a result the coloured Bahamian experiences in the Southern States an atmosphere of restricted liberty that is at once both irksome and foreign to his experience. It is not surprising therefore that, when emigrating to America, as many have done, he prefers to go north, commonly to New York where anti-coloured feeling is not embodied in legally imposed regulations. It is admitted, however, that there are ways other than legislation of imposing colour bars and instances could be quoted in which such bar is applied though not always rigorously. In cases where "the door is left ajar" it may appear that the selection of coloured persons who shall be allowed to enter is purely arbitrary and without principle but it is also evident that the social standing of the persons concerned is considered. Socially, blacks and whites do not mix. In the main, "coloured" people, including those of lighter hue, mix freely with the blacks though there are notable exceptions to this. These do not associate with blacks and are not accepted socially by whites. Apart from colour, wealth is the greatest influence in social stratification among all classes. Indeed, possession of wealth may annul an obvious strain of negro blood and open doors into society that would otherwise be closed.

It/

Norman (29) page 2.

It is also true that disadvantage may result from the absence of legislation or its inadequacy. In the field of labour F.A. Norman, Labour advisor to Sir Frank Stockdale wrote (1942) that "A study of this labour legislation shows that compared with the British West Indies generally, the Bahamas lag behind in the matter of labour laws and that certain gaps are found in the labour code e.g. Workmen's Compensation, Shop Assistants' Hours of Work, Trades Union Registration, Industrial and Conciliation Machinery, Old Age pensions etc." Since this was written some of this legislation has been supplied.

With the provision of educational facilities for all classes of the population, the major part of this thesis is concerned. Suffice it to remark here that these facilities leave much to be desired. The shortcomings of the educational system will be attributed mainly to the insufficiency of sums voted for the purpose and a small country, endeavouring to balance its expenditure against its revenue, is admittedly not at liberty to make such liberal provision for amenities such as education as may a larger one. The same may be said with respect to the provision of public medical facilities. But it may also be remarked that a legislature composed of business minded men wishes to see some immediate returns, in the form of revenue, for money expended. Such reimbursement education does not admittedly supply and the value of the less tangible benefits of education for the coloured population are by no means/

3.12 generally recognized or accepted. The results obtained are likely to be different for the same people in any other social reception at the time, at the same construction from the same sources. The legislation concerning education of the whites, as measured in terms of expenditure, while by no means magnificent, is greater than for all but a few coloured people.

To illustrate this difference education statistics for the years 1944-45 may be noted and analysed. The average cost during those years of elementary education for the bulk of the population in the public schools of the colony was £2: 12: 6 per child on average roll. This does not include the war-time expenditure on salary bonuses. The Treasury Grant to supplement pupils' fees for primary and secondary education at Queen's College during the same period was £3: 11: 6 per pupil. Presuming these amounts, to be spread over the full school life of 9 years in the first case and 9-12 years in the latter it is seen that the total Government expenditure on the education of one public school pupil was £22: 10/- compared with £59 - 385 on one pupil at Queen's College. It must be remembered that any school, whether for blacks or whites whether in Nassau or in an out island, is permitted under the Secondary Education Act to qualify for such a grant but, in fact, only this one school in/

Board of Education (England and
Wales), (6 & 7).

in Nassau receives any such assistance. There is thus no preferential treatment for whites in the out islands, nor for those in Nassau not attending Queen's College. The white pupils living in Nassau provided his parents could afford school fees of £15-20 per annum, could thus proceed from primary to secondary school education irrespective of his innate ability. Opportunity for a secondary education at The High School was afforded no less than one in fifty public school pupils subject to satisfying entrance requirements as to the ability to profit thereby. The annual cost of this to the government after deduction of pupils' fees which were paid into the Treasury as revenue, was £19: 2: 7 per pupil. For a 3-4 year course the total government expenditure on the provision of secondary education for one child was £57-£77. If one adds to this the cost of 7-9 years of elementary school life the total expenditure on one pupil for primary and secondary education was £81-£95.

As a criterion, which the Bahamas with its limited resources can scarcely be expected to emulate, the corresponding costs in England and Wales for 1936-37 was (a) for nine years' primary education for one child: £137 and (b) for six years' primary education followed by five years' secondary education £235 per pupil.

Turning to the opportunities for employment available to/

to the young man or woman it is at once evident that the lowest labouring classes are composed entirely of the coloured people. On the other hand, for the individual with a better education and of higher social standing only a few doors of opportunity are closed on account of colour. To an increasing extent coloured people are occupying positions, often involving considerable responsibility, in the Government service. They are represented in business and the professions and play their part in House of Assembly, Legislative Council and, since 1946, in Executive Council. The majority of the highest appointments in the Civil Service not supplied by imported Colonial Servants, however, are commonly offered to whites.

To sum up, it is not denied that colour prejudice exists but it is believe that, while social equality may not be a fact, equality of opportunity is much more in evidence, and is increasing. It stands to the credit of the colony that, while there was considerable opposition here as in other colonies to the emancipation of slaves, yet the actual liberation, rendered obligatory by Act of the Home Parliament in 1832, was accomplished with less difficulty in the Bahamas than in any other British Colony. It is also true that the further policy of emancipation in a wide sense was pursued diligently in subsequent years and a lead given to other colonies. This is without doubt due to the evenness of temper characteristic/

Macmillan (22)

characteristic of the Bahamian - white and coloured - and it is very likely that the large body of sane opinion on both sides in this colony may also lead the way to a peaceable and full solution to this problem that the world at large has scarcely begun to solve yet.

One final point may be made before leaving this question. It is the important warning to beware of ascribing to colour prejudice issues which are purely economic or political. Colour, though unquestionably an important psychological factor, is only one aspect of many problems. Undue emphasis on colour should not be allowed to distort a proper appreciation of these problems many of which are no more and no less than incidents in the economic advancement of any backward country or of social clash between different strata of any developing society. As a case in point, it may be remarked that the unique position of Queen's College described above is analogous to that of the Direct Grant Public Schools of England, a cause of sore conscience to some and of great political annoyance to many in that country.

The following paragraph from MacMillan's "Warning from the West Indies" applies quite closely to the Bahamas, a colony not included in the scope of his book.

"The strata of coloured West Indian Society are already complex. A few at the top, barristers, doctors, whatever their/

"their shade of colour, could hold their own in any circle.
 "A great many more are the intellectual equals or superior
 "of their own white contemporaries. On both sides of the
 "colour line this may rankle, producing on the coloured side
 "difficult manifestations of the inferiority complex aforesaid.
 "But the class distinctions are essentially those of our own
 "middle class society and very obviously reflect the same
 "respect for wealth and prosperity, and the same measurement
 "of values in terms of money. Here, as in Africa, conscious
 "imitation is a superfluous explanation of a development which
 "is inevitable so long as our own values are what they are,
 "and dollar worship our most eloquent lesson to all such peoples"

The Individual.

The climate of the country in common with other sub-tropical regions, while very delightful and, in one respect at least, its chief asset, is yet enervating. On the other hand, while the sea provides a ready and abundant source of one variety of food, the land is more inhospitable and through paucity or sheer absence of soil, yields moderate returns only as a result of hard physical labour. Partly as a result of this the inhabitant of the land has become an opportunist. The pirates and the wreckers are among the earliest examples of this. The blockade runners and the bootleggers came later. In more recent years the colony has become practically dependent on the tourist industry. In the intervals between periods/

periods of sudden prosperity existence for the majority has been hard.

The result of this has been a perpetual Micawber-like expectancy of something turning up and, sooner or later, something always has turned up. The dignity of labour has not thereby been enhanced, calling or occupation as a contribution to the community has been derogated and emphasis has been laid on the acquisition of money by the easiest possible means and with the minimum of labour. Money, as an end in itself, figures disproportionately in the minds of most and wealth of character, individual and communal, occupies but a secondary place. If education can achieve a reorientation of this popular sense of values; if it could achieve this and nothing more; then it is well worth while to further it.

The slave, rudely uprooted from his native land and customs, shorn of his tribal traditions, robbed of his freedom and reduced to the status of a white man's chattel, oppressed and despised, suddenly found himself, in the eyes of the law at least, his own lord and master owing no allegiance to his former owner. Remember that nearly all of those thus freed had known no state other than servility; small wonder, then, that he became an extreme individualist, interested in no rights but his own, determined to please himself at all costs, suspicious of any attempt to guide him in using his freedom profitably, admitting no responsibility to the community; a slave no longer, yet a slave, for many years to be, to his own ignorance.

Such/

Such was the newly "freed" negro; unreliable, child of instincts, whims, fancies and circumstances, undisciplined, gregarious but not co-operative save in his own direct interests and even then incapable of very far vision. To some extent he had been exposed to Christian morals but against these, as against all restraints and restrictions of personal liberty, he was liable to rebel. To label him as immoral would be to subject him to a moral code foreign to him. Amoral would be more apt, for homo sapiens is not honest, nor chaste, nor truthful, nor obedient to any of the civilized virtues by force of instinct.

The process of emancipation from ignorance has been slow and is by no means yet complete. Many of his moral weaknesses are still inherent in him. He is still unreliable to a degree and unco-operative, still prompted by his emotions and easily led, for good or ill, by a sufficiently commanding personality. He will pay lip-service readily enough to the highest principles while yet persisting in the vices they condemn. Cases of obscene language and indecent behaviour show a high incidence in the magistrate's court while petty theft, housebreaking and praedial larceny show an alarming increase. Promiscuity brings in its train the inevitable legacies of illegitimacy, high birth rate, infantile mortality, venereal disease, overcrowding of homes and general depression of standards of living and thinking. Such is, intentionally, the darkest side of the picture and while/

while it applies to some degree to the majority of the masses does not apply to those who, by opportunity and aptitude for education, have risen far above this level and have become worthy citizens of the colony. These are not few in number and are becoming more numerous with increasing opportunities for education and, what is more, an increasing desire for it.

What must not be forgotten but what is often forgotten by those desirous of educating the negro as well as those opposed to it, is that, when all adverse criticism has been levelled at his moral failings, the fact yet remains that he is but one century removed from slavery whereas the white man has had the benefit of nineteen more centuries of civilizing influences and is yet not perfect. Furthermore, that one century, with its astounding discoveries and revolutions of thought, have bewildered and left far behind not the blacks only. Indeed, viewed in this light the ground that even the average negro has gained in such short time, in a civilization with which he had literally nothing in common, has been phenomenal.

Yet there remains much to be desired. Superstition, which finds local expression as "obeah" is still prevalent. There are laws to deter those who practice the black art but human minds may not be purged of primitive fears and terrors by mere legislation. It is necessary first to dispel darkness in the mind where superstition lurks by an enlightened understanding of elementary scientific facts. It is not uncommon to regard superstition/

superstition and vestigial witchcraft as harmless, somewhat amusing, manifestations of an ignorant mind. But obeah is far more; it is a serious impediment to progress, a barrier beyond which the primitive mind cannot pass even though it has the will to do so. Consider, for example, the element of magic necessary to ensure a good harvest. So long as the negro's mind remains convinced that the practice of obeah is necessary to achieve this and other ends, so long will it be impossible for him to grasp the elementary scientific fact that he himself can have the power to control, by proper means of cultivation, the forces which he now ascribes to the spirits and demons.

Change.

It is the peculiar weakness of any survey, such as has just been attempted, that it is out-of-date the moment it is completed. Especially is this true of an account of any human society written at the present time. Even as one writes, changes are taking place which affect the economic, social and political life, not only within the colony, but in the world outside. Most of the changes within are but reflections or results of those in other countries. Others originate from within, but, whatever the source, it is probably true to say that the colony is in a more dynamic state now than it has ever been. In one respect at least, the prosperity of the 1920's differed from that of the 1860's. After the blockade-running era, the colony relapsed into its former, almost static condition. In contrast/

contrast, the rum-running activity initiated a new era of continued prosperity and development characterized chiefly by the fact that the colony is rapidly becoming more of an integral part of the world than it has ever been. This breaking down of insularity has many causes not the least important of which is that the rapid development of air transport has made the colony, or Nassau at any rate, much more easily accessible. The war, too, had a profound effect. It would be interesting to know to how many families in the United Kingdom and the Dominions the Bahamas are more familiar than many parts of their own country, as a result of the thousands of young men who came and went during the war years. Further, the peremptory command "Come to Nassau, Bahamas, Ideal Tourist Resort" is being obeyed by an increasing number of visitors annually. This breaking down of insularity is occurring within the colony too and individual islands are acquiring an increasing awareness, not only of Nassau, but of other out islands and also of the world outside.

Another factor which is promoting change is the increasing wealth both of the State and the individual in consequence of which the Bahamian is seeing more of other countries than before and imbibing new ideas. The most outstanding recent example of this is the wider experience gained by the thousands of Bahamian labourers now or recently in the States and the comparatively phenomenal wages they earned while there. This increasing wealth, public and private, is finding expression in greater/

greater amenities and social services but there has been the inevitable lag in transmitting these new influences to the out islands. These, however, may have a source of wealth of their own should the present explorations for oil prove successful.

Finally, education is producing change just as surely as in other countries. The individual is becoming conscious of his importance to, and responsibility to, the community. The immediate change is not invariably for the better due perhaps to the "veneering" process in education. The demand, however, is insistent while many who have acquired as much formal education as the colony can give are reaching out abroad for more.

But all change is not progress: a fact that most of the churches especially in Nassau, have good reason to believe. The assiduous pursuit of wealth and pleasure are apt to supplant the search for righteousness. Motor cars take their occupants to the country as easily as to church. The social activities and the serious business of the Nassau "season" tend to be more attractive than the spiritual efforts required in Lent.

Change there undoubtedly is: in what direction and to what end, must be left for a later historian to say.

PART II

HISTORY OF BAHAMIAN EDUCATION

CHAPTER III

Outline of the History.Earliest Attempts : 1734-1834.

The history of Bahamian education can be resolved into four quite distinct periods. From the earliest beginnings in 1734 and for the next century, instruction of the young was spasmodic and was left very much to philanthropic bodies and private individuals. Some of these latter were no doubt prompted by philanthropic motives, but most of them were of the class unsuited, whether by ability or inclination, for any other employment and therefore took up teaching from the profit motive. It is a fact of no little credit to the colony that, during this century, the government assumed, almost from the very beginning, some measure of responsibility for these schools. In the main, this amounted to the provision of teachers' salaries without the assumption of any initiative in inaugurating the schools but even this little loses nothing in comparison with what the government of other countries, not excluding England, were doing for the education of the working classes in the eighteenth century.

The advent of the loyalists, towards the end of the century, attended initially by political friction, hindered the well-being of the few schools in existence for a few years but, as /

but, as the political jealousy subsided, there was much more extensive State provision for education including some attempt at central supervision, control of teachers' qualifications and even the establishment of a short-lived high school.

Needless to say, the slave had no place in any of these schemes for education though there is evidence that some few negro children, presumably the children of free negroes, did attend these schools.

Beginnings of an Educational System : 1835-1864.

The year 1832 saw a Whig Government in power in England which signified a radical change both at home and in the colonies, for the same government under Lord Grey that passed the first Reform Bill also abolished slavery the following year. The welfare of the liberated negroes was championed by Government and chief among its aims was their education. The Assembly, if somewhat reluctant at first, soon joined in the cause and a new House passed a liberal Education Bill in 1836 establishing the first effective Board of Public Instruction. Prior to that date, apart from one unsuccessful attempt at central control, each school was largely self-governing and responsible for its own survival; from then on they were centrally administered. In short, the foundation of an educational system was laid. At the same time the ill-fated King's College School, which boasted the King's patronage and affiliation to King's College, London, was established to provide for the education of the children of the former slave owners./

From the beginning of this period the organisation of popular education became a source of dissension between rival religious denominations each struggling for control. Education provided a convenient battleground for the ensuing sectarian contest and the original aim was lost of for a number of years. Simultaneously, a similar conflict was being waged in England but with a different outcome. The nonconformist bodies were comparatively much stronger here than in England and their political representation likewise stronger, so that the eventual outcome in the Bahamas was the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in 1869. Long before this, education had been wrested from the control of the churches altogether so that the colony was left with no such problem as "dual control".

Consolidation of the System: 1865-1919.

Before disestablishment the colony suffered, during the American Civil War, one of those upheavals characteristic of its history. The infant education system sustained all but complete disintegration from the impact of the war which later, however, provided a new impetus in the increased revenue that it made available for the colony's public service including education. In spite of many vicissitudes, financial stringency being ever the most formidable obstacle, the educational system made sure, if slow, progress and this period saw the/

the universal application of compulsory attendance at schools. It is worthy of special comment that this took place soon after attendance became compulsory in England and long before it was possible in other colonies. There can be no doubt that the great strides made in this period were due in large measure to the determined and devoted service of George Cole, the "Father of Bahamian Education". There were renewed attempts during this period to provide separate schools for white children. These efforts, made by one or other religious domination, were more successful. The first decade of the twentieth century was one of great promise with great improvement in most aspects of education. It was followed by a long decline due to the economic depression during the First World War.

Expansion of the System: 1920 to the present day.

This period begins, like the previous one, with greatly increased expenditure due to the colony's inflated revenue from boot-legging during prohibition in the United States. This gave rise to considerable increase in the number of schools. Whereas the previous period saw improvement in the quality of education as well as an extension of its advantages to many parts of the colony the tremendous expansion of this later period took place rather at the expense of the quality of the instruction provided/

Provision of secondary education for the negro population has latterly counteracted this dilution by improving the standard of education of the teachers and a later historian will probably recognise the beginning of yet a fifth period in the present years. Prominent in this fifth period will be, it is to be hoped, increased facilities for university education, the establishment of a satisfactory system for the training of teachers and an increase and diversification of secondary education.

General observations.

Throughout the history, close similarity to the English system is clearly discernible and, in the main, the colony has aimed at emulating developments in the mother country. Thus there are found, creeping into the story, such terms as the Madras system, the Lancastrian arrangement of school rooms, British and Foreign School Society, Schools of Industry and so on. Even the misguided Revised Code with its Payment by Results had its reverberations as far off from England as the Bahamas. Unfortunately, virtues alone have not always been singled out for emulation nor have all evils, once copied, died with their prototypes. The monitorial system which was abandoned over a century ago in England, even in the school in Borough Road where it was born, persists to this day as a living/

living fossil in the schools of the Bahamian out islands. In other respects, but notably in the training of teachers, the colony has been woefully backward. In this, as in the provision of facilities for university education the Bahamas are not only far behind England but they have also been surpassed long since by most of the other colonies.

Because the government interested itself, to a greater or less extent, in education from the first, the part played by the churches has been a minor one. Pride of place must be given to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, (S.P.G.), which was first in the field as early as 1734 but from 1746 the Treasury supplied teachers' salaries and the efforts of the S.P.G. were gradually superseded. Similarly, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the nonconformist bodies (Wesleyans and Baptists) began to sponsor the education of the blacks by the establishment of Sunday Schools. The legislature which, before emancipation, had discouraged this work, itself assumed responsibility for the education of negroes afterwards. The circumstances which led to the divorce of elementary education from the churches have already been described. Nevertheless/

Nevertheless, both the Anglican church, which did not take up the negroes cause until after emancipation, and the Roman Catholic Church, which did not enter the colony until 1890, maintain elementary schools. The Anglican schools are in out islands while those of the Roman Church are most conspicuous in Nassau.

It is in the provision of secondary and white education where the churches have been most active. Following the failure of two high schools in the first half of the nineteenth century, the Anglican Grammar School was established in 1854 and continued well into the present century. The Methodist Queen's College, begun in 1871 is now the only large institution catering almost exclusively for whites while subsidiary ones are conducted by Roman Catholic Sisters. In recent years both the Anglican and Roman Churches have opened secondary schools for negroes and coloured pupils. There is only one "direct grant" school in the Colony, this being Queen's College.

CHAPTER IVEarliest attempts: 1734 - 1834Before Royal Government.

Before the coming of Woodes Rogers to the Bahamas and before the expulsion of the pirates, there is no evidence whatever to show that any attempt at organized education was made. In the light of the insecure and chaotic nature of the settlements during the first decades of English colonization and the frequent depredations of Spaniards, it is almost certain that no such attempts were made. It may well be imagined that the inhabitants were far too preoccupied with providing themselves with the barest necessities of life to show any anxiety over such refinements as schooling for their children. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the pirates, accustomed to living by fire and sword, placed any emphasis on education as a preparation for life.

Not until Rogers had transformed Nassau from "a pestiferous little hole" into an ordered and reasonably industrious town, should we expect any attempt at instruction of the young and even then not for a number of years or at least until provision had been accomplished for the more urgent matters of defence, building, government, production of food and the like. As it was, bearing in mind the disorganised condition of the colony when Rogers undertook to govern it and also the lack of co-operation/

Pascoe (33) page 217

S.P.G. mss (53) C.W.Indian
Papers; Box XXVII, Folder V.

co-operation and set-backs he suffered, it stands to his credit that before his death he had represented the spiritual and intellectual needs of the place to the S.P.G. missionary in Carolina whom he urged to visit Nassau at once.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

Within a year of Rogers' death, the first S.P.G. missionary arrived in Nassau. He found that^d the people had been without the Divine ordinances for several years, that they were in general very poor and that provisions were scarce and expensive. The Governor (Fitzwilliam) with a good deal of difficulty got an Act passed in 1734 to settle a salary of £50 per annum on the minister. He failed to obtain similar allowance from the Assembly for a schoolmaster although there was "no place in His Majesty's American Dominions" where one was more necessary, "by want of which their youth" grew up "in such ignorance (even of a Deity) and in such immorality as is most unbecoming." On receiving this recommendation from the Governor the society provided a salary of £15 per annum for "a fit person." No such individual was available locally and the "allowance too small to encourage anybody to come hither to perform that service" that there was some delay in starting the school.

The school was opened in 1739 but its work was not blessed with any degree of continuity at first because of the inadequacy of the salary, the failure of the S.P.G. for some years/

S.P.G. MSS. (53) B.14 pp.259-261

S.P.G. MSS. (53) B.14 pp.255-257

years to pay even that meagre sum and to the unsuitability of teachers who undertook the task. The first teacher appointed quit the school after a few months and went off with a privateer - no doubt a more lucrative calling. Another proved objectionable on religious grounds, being a Presbyterian.

Meanwhile children grew up in the midst of "deplorable ignorance which almost universally prevailed among the lower sort." Conditions on Eleuthera and the adjacent Harbour Island, the only other inhabited islands in the colony, were infinitely worse. "The people are miserably ignorant scarce "one in fifty being able to read their poverty will not "allow them to send their children for instruction to Providence "and the distance between their settlements especially in "Islathera leaves no man the least room to hope for a competency "by setting up a school among them. Even at Providence for "want of a proper schoolmaster, we have the mortification at "present of seeing a large number of children not only "misapplying that period of time which is properest for "instruction but often contracting such vitious habits as will "not easily be removed."

First Education Act: 1746.

Twelve years elapsed since the S.P.G.'s grant and there was still no teacher permanently appointed. Since it was obvious that none was likely to be obtained until adequate provision was made for a salary the Assembly was finally prevailed/

Acts (46) 1746

prevailed upon to pass an Act to this end in 1746. In view of the insistence of the Assembly, two centuries later, that posts in the public service shall be filled, wherever possible, by Bahamians, it is interesting to notice that the reasons for imposing a further levy to raise money for a teacher's salary were, as given in the Preamble to the Act: "the youth of these islands are brought up in ignorance of the Divine laws as well as those of their country and are incapable of executing even the meanest offices of the Government." By this Act a levy of one shilling and sixpence was imposed on every "white man, Mustee, Mulattoe, Indian or Negroe Man or Women of the age of 16 - 60 years." The revenue thus collected was to be devoted to building a house and providing a salary of £60 "current money" (about £35 Sterling) in return for which the schoolmaster "shall instruct and teach in reading, writing and Arithmetick and, if required, Latin and Navigation any number of such poor children not exceeding twenty five as shall be recommended to him by the Vestry. and shall likewise instruct and teach all others the children of the inhabitants of these islands at the rate of ninepence weekly for each." The minister of Christ Church, the Speaker and two members of the House of Assembly were appointed trustees for building the house and inspecting and superintending the conduct and behaviour of "such schoolmaster as shall be from time to time licenced by the Governor."/

S.P.G. MSS. (53) B.18.pp.73-4

Governor."

The Act has been quoted at length on account of its interest as the first Education Act. In point of fact, it achieved nothing as there is no evidence of the levy ever being applied to the purpose for which it was intended or of the school being commenced for another few years and certainly the "convenient dwelling house" never materialized.

Rev. Robert Carter : 1749 - 1765

The Mission of the S.P.G. was no more fortunate for in eight years three missionaries appointed to the colony had died after short ministries. The appointment of the Rev. Robert Carter was more fortunate both for the church and for the school, as he continued in the parish for sixteen years and was a man of considerable academic standing. He assembled at once a school of thirty six boys, being "all the children in and about Nassau." Two of them were "negro boys both baptized." Besides this which he styled "The Free School," he appointed the "properest person" he could find to teach the boys at New Guinea, a settlement five miles away from Nassau and now called Fox Hill. Two "Women's Schools" were also set up by him in Nassau.

Appalled by the state of the people at Harbour Island and Eleuthera, he sent his mother, who had accompanied him, to "keep school" at the latter. Unfortunately, she soon contracted a fever and died. At that time the population of New Providence numbered 178 families, of Harbour Island 203 white/

Pascoe (33) page 219.

white men, women and children and of Eleuthera, 315 white persons.

The numbers in The Free School declined and, Carter's health failing, he was advised by the Governor to confine himself to his ministerial duties. His place as schoolmaster was taken by John Robertson, whose appointment necessitated a second School Act, not significantly different from the first, wherein it becomes evident that, for his twelve years of service as teacher, Carter received no salary either from the Treasury or from the S.P.G. and had furthermore been obliged to rent his own house.

Dissolution of Legislature over School Bill.

The need for schools was becoming more urgent for the population was increasing on all three islands. The number of families on New Providence had been almost doubled in about fifteen years. No provision for schools had yet been made on either of the out islands where there was greater need of them than in Nassau, as witness this "lamentable account" of Eleuthera in 1769: "Both men, women and children, magistrates "not excepted, are profane in their conversation; even the "children learn to curse their own parents as soon as they can "speak plain, and many other sinful habits and heathenish "practices are in use among them."

To meet this deficiency a Bill was introduced in 1770 to establish schools in the out islands as well as an additional/

S.P.G. MSS. (53) C.W.Indian Paper
Box XXVIII: Folders 11-13.

additional one in the eastern district of New Providence. Dissension arose between Council and Assembly over finance. Seven times the bill was amended by the House, sent up to Council and returned re-amended to the House who finally rejected it. The disagreement appeared to be occasioned in some way by the "Old School Act" of 1746, the offensive section being that relating to the Poll Tax of 1/6d which the Assembly was determined should not be paid. The Bill was again introduced and again Council and Assembly failed to agree so that the Governor was obliged to dissolve the House - the only dissolution that has ever been forced over an Education Bill. Substantially the same House was returned and the bickering began again. Eventually, after the struggle had lasted for two years, the Bill received the Governor's assent in 1772.

Meanwhile there had been no legal provision for the salary of the teacher in Nassau and the school had been continued intermittently by poorly equipped persons who petitioned the Assembly from time to time for remuneration in arrears for their services. One such, formerly the master of a brigantine, requested the S.P.G. to continue his salary on "it's present former footing." Complaining of another schoolmaster who was endeavouring "to Dispossess me of my living" he enclosed a list of "welwishers" and "for further proof" enclosed also a "Petition and a Resolve of the Govonor."

"A/

S.P.G. MSS (53) C.W.Indian Papers
Box XXVII, Folder 5.

"A person very improper for a schoolmaster for he can scarcely read English" was one of the scathing comments on this teacher by the S.P.G. missionary. The Governor's opinion of the teachers at that time reads: "the youth of this place
 "..... have been in a deplorable state for some years past,
 "their parents having been obliged to put them into the hands
 "of strange Straglers, extremely illiterate, mean, vulgar
 "people who can scarce write or even read English" - an opinion that was scarcely consonant with his grant of a teacher's licence to the "Stragler" he was chiefly criticizing.

Education Act : 1772.

The 1772 Act was the basis of education for the next seventeen years. It provided for the opening of schools in Nassau, in the eastern district of New Providence and one in each of the two out islands. Two years later an additional one was provided in Eleuthera, the one being at Wreck Sound (now Rock Sound) and the other at Savannah Sound. They were managed independently by governors or "School Commissioners" appointed by the Act in respect of each school. The ministers were to be commissioners of the schools within their respective parishes for the schoolmasters were still under the jurisdiction of the S.P.G. to whom they submitted annual reports. The curriculum of the schools comprised "Reading, writing and Arithmetick and, if required, Navigation and Merchant Accounts." A limited number (10 - 15) poor children were to be admitted free/

free and furnished with books, pens, ink and slates. No qualifications for teachers were laid down but each required a licence from the Governor.

The commissioners were able to put the Act into operation successfully and much more satisfactory progress was made in response to the demands of an increasing population. Among the new settlers were some persons better fitted for teaching than their predecessors and this made further contribution to progress. In addition to the schools provided for poor children by the government, other schools were opened by private individuals for the children of better class parents. In 1770 there were two "Men's schools" and five "women's schools" in New Providence in addition to "The Free School". In the same year, schools had been started at Harbour Island and Eleuthera notwithstanding the fact that the Act making provision for these schools was not passed for another two years.

The effects of the Act were comparatively so beneficial that it was continued with little amendment until 1789. There were some set-backs such as the loss of interest in the schools on the part of the parents. This feature, which may be instanced by a steady decline in the roll of one school over a period of years, was to prove characteristic of many schools in the colony in the next century. Another interruption was the occupation of Nassau by the Spaniards for a year during the American Revolution. Since the Spaniards, on this occasion, did/

House Votes (48) 1789 page 48.

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did not despoil the city as they had done in the past, it may be that the schools continued their work without hindrance.

The Quality of the Schools.

At all times they appear to have carried on their work with little or no supervision in consequence of which the schoolmasters were apt to be slack and the standards of their instruction poor. A committee of the House of Assembly, appointed in 1789 to inspect the Treasurer's books and accounts, reported that "the sum of £550 has been paid to "clergymen and schoolmasters. The purpose to which this money "has been applied is certainly laudable and necessary but we "recommend that strict attention should be paid to the employing "of fit and capable persons as schoolmasters, an object which "has been heretofore, we apprehend, little attended to." Instructions to the same effect were received by the Governor from the Home Government, stipulating that no person should be allowed to keep school "unless qualified as the law directs and without first obtaining a licence for that purpose" from the Governor. Such, indeed, had been the intended practice all along but some laxity in its application had occurred from time to time especially, in respect of private venture schools. Perhaps the Governor, being all too familiar with the dire lack of competent persons as well as the sore need of elementary instruction, was prepared to waive the principle (it was not law) in the belief that mediocre or bad instruction was/

House Votes (48) 1789 page 94.

was preferable to none.

Here was foretaste of yet another characteristic problem of Bahamian education that was destined to remain acute even until the present day. It was the problem of the inability of Bahamian education to raise its head above the low standard of instruction given by teachers who themselves had been poorly instructed. Repeated attempts to break into this vicious circle were frustrated and the problem, though not completely without solution, is yet most urgent to this day.

The Advent of the Loyalists 8 1784 et seq.

The provisions of the 1772 Act were totally inadequate to cope with the increasing demands made on the schools by the mass immigration following the loss of the American Colonies. The first indication we have of this is a petition received in the House of Assembly in 1789 for salary as a schoolmaster from the island of Abaco -- a hitherto unexpected quarter from which to receive such a petition. Consideration of this petition resulted in the adoption of a resolution to establish a school at Abaco "on such footing as free schools may be established at New Providence, Eleuthera and Harbour Island" and, it also having been represented that the same exigency exists on other islands that have lately become much populated, "resolved that the same establishment be extended to Long Island, Great and Little Exuma and Cat Island." A bill to give effect to this resolution was accordingly introduced.

Reading/

House Votes (48) 1789 page 135

Reading into this naively expressed resolution, one can detect the strong feeling of political jealousy between the original inhabitants and the loyalists. The latter, it will be recalled, (see page) were not represented in the Assembly which was therefore in the control of the original inhabitants. The House was well aware that the "same exigency" had already existed on other islands for four to five years and no attempt had yet been made to extend the existing School Act to the islands concerned - a very easy matter which could have been accomplished when last the Act came up for continuation or, for that matter, at any time. Nor, as it transpired, was any provision made for these "other islands that had lately become much populated" for another six years.

The prejudice of the original inhabitants and therefore of the Assembly against the loyalists was reflected in the dissension that again arose between Council and Assembly over the terms of the new School Bill. The Council thought it "reasonable and proper that the schoolmasters of Nassau and Harbour Island", where the original inhabitants formed the bulk of the population, "should be placed on an equal footing with the other schoolmasters" in those islands predominantly settled by the loyalists, whereas the House was inclined to show preferential treatment for the older settlements. Moreover, the Assembly wished to keep in its own hands the appointment/

House Votes (48) 1789 page 35.

appointment of commissioners to the respective schools and to this the Council would not accede. A deadlock was reached and, in spite of annual attempts to resolve their differences, the School Bill did not become law during the life of that Assembly, prolonged as it was by the refusal of Governors Maxwell and the Earl of Dunmore to bring its life to an end by dissolution.

Meanwhile, the last continuation of the 1772 Act having expired, there was no provision at all for the salaries of any schoolmasters in any of the islands. Consequently, conditions deteriorated and schools closed as indicated by the report of a joint conference of Council and Assembly: "The ruinous state of Christ Church in this town and the want of public schools your committee do most sincerely consider as very great and dangerous evils: but without entering into the discussion of subjects, which have already occupied the attention of the Legislature, they submit in general terms to the wisdom of both Houses what provisions there may be necessary to remedy the grievances complained of." One or two conscientious teachers carried on their schools for a few years but without any guarantee that the Assembly would consider favourably their petitions for compensation for their labours.

First Attempt at Central Control : 1795.

When a new Assembly was eventually elected, in 1795, the loyalists were more fairly represented and became a powerful instrument/

instrument of reform in the affairs of the colony generally. At once, a most enlightened School Act was passed which promised to lead to the development of an educational system of which the colony might well have been proud by comparison, not only with other colonies, but also with the mother country. Wisely formulated legislation, however, though indispensable, could not of itself guarantee the establishment of an efficient system of education. This could be assured only if there were a foundation of a secure and sound economy. There was every indication at first that this further requirement would materialize in the initial success that attended the new cotton plantations. Unfortunately, even before the end of the century, the plantation enterprises had begun to fail, many of the planters had begun to leave and the remainder were faced with prospects of imminent disaster. The brave new educational enterprise was the first casualty. In such circumstances, the vigour which the loyalists might have infused into education, as into other spheres, by reason of their familiarity with progressive ideas and modern methods in the more robust colonies of the mainland, was not realized to the fullest extent. Nevertheless, education did not return altogether to its former unsatisfactory state and many of the new ideas were retained and carried forward into the nineteenth century.

By way of summary up to this point (1795), the most outstanding/

outstanding deficiencies of existing education in the colony, as they must have appeared to the loyalist legislators, were briefly:

1. the insufficient number of schools;
2. the practice of having schools, however large, in the sole care of one master;
3. the unsuitability of the schoolmasters for their task;
4. the absence of prescribed qualifications for teachers;
5. the lack of inducement to suitably qualified persons to undertake the task of teaching;
6. the lack of a clearly defined curriculum;
7. the unsatisfactory premises in which many of the teachers were obliged to keep school by reason of financial stringency;
8. the lack of control over those, however well or ill-qualified, who ventured to open schools;
9. the absence of competent central supervision and direction of the work done by the teachers and by the pupils in the schools;
10. the fact that the senior officials of the colony were not sufficiently interested in, nor directly concerned with, the management of the schools and
11. the absence of provision for education higher than that afforded by the ordinary public schools.

The Act passed by the new Assembly in 1795 attempted to provide for the removal of most of these deficiencies. For the/

the sake of clarity the provision of the Act will be tabulated to correspond with the summary of deficiencies given above.

1. An additional school was provided for the Western district of New Providence making a total of three schools on that island. New Schools were provided for Exuma and Long Island, the two largest of the newly settled islands, though for some unknown reason not for Abaco or the other inhabited islands.
2. For every school with a roll exceeding 30 scholars, an "usher" was to be appointed.
3. Prospective schoolmasters were to be examined by the Commissioners and granted a certificate of competence if they complied with these requirements.
4. Teachers were to be "persons of good morals and sober life, "skilled in the English and Latin languages and qualified to "teach the same."
5. Attractive salaries were provided on a per capita basis. A teacher in Nassau would receive £180 per annum with only 30 children in his school and, for the same number of children, an out island master would receive £135. A subsequent amendment increased the former sum to no less than £450.
6. In addition to English and Latin, schoolmasters were also required to give instruction in writing, arithmetic, book-keeping and navigation.
7. Until "proper schoolhouses" should be built, generous allowances/

allowances for rent were provided and were subsequently increased.

8. No teacher, to whom the Commissioners had refused a certificate of competence, would be granted a licence to keep school. Without such licence from the Governor, no person could act as a schoolmaster or take charge of any school "appointed under this Act". This qualifying phrase still left the door ajar for private venture schools.

9. For the first time a body of Commissioners was set up who were to be in charge of all the schools in the colony; they were to examine prospective teachers and generally supervise the work of the schools.

10. The Governor himself was to be a member of this body and others included the senior officials, the judges, the Speaker of the House and the rectors of the several parishes.

11. Provision was not made at this time for higher education; this followed nine years later.

The Decline of the Schools 1799 - 1804.

It is to be regretted that there is little or no material to show how well the provisions of this legislation were put into effect. It appears that the schools were opened and continued in a fairly thriving state for a few years until the end of the century but that they speedily declined on account of the economic collapse and most of them had closed by about 1802-3. A further contributory cause of this decline was "the/

Pascoe (33) page 224.

"the constant apprehension of piratical invaders" and threats of invasion by the French during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Spanish Picaroons were "infesting their coasts and plundering their vessels" and, in apprehension of "a visit from the French", most of the women and children of New Providence were sent away.

The State of Education up to 1800.

A summary was made above of the main deficiencies of the educational system as it had existed before 1795. Before entering the nineteenth century a brief stocktaking of the educational effects of the schools may be made on the basis of such information as is available. In the main it would appear that the several attempts made by the legislators to provide for schools, and by schoolmasters to conduct them, had been productive of little improvement in the educational acquirements of the inhabitants. This was not so much the case, however, in Nassau as in the other islands where schools were fewer and of more recent origin. The chief causes of this failure were undoubtedly the lack of suitable teachers and the spasmodic nature of the attempts made. On the other hand, the advent of the loyalists had raised the standard of the educational level of the population by virtue of the mere fact that these were men who already had received an education far superior to anything that had ever been attempted in the Bahamas. The effect was two-fold for, not only were they themselves educated, but by reason of this fact, they were not likely/

• Pascoe (33) page 220

-ibid- page 219

likely to tolerate for long such a backward system of education as they found on their arrival. This contrast may be exemplified from remarks of an S.P.G. missionary at Long Island in 1790. Most of the settlers there were loyalists but they had been preceded by a few natives of New Providence. "Most of the original settlers," the missionary writes, "could scarcely read and they were addicted to the vices of a seafaring life swearing and neglect of religion." The loyalist refugees or "gentry" of the island were by contrast much more cultured and employed their leisure hours "in reading the works of Mandeville, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau and Hume" by which some of them "acquired a great tincture of infidelity." Neither of these two cultural extremes would scarcely afford any gladness to a minister of the gospel. At Eleuthera, which had had the benefit of two schools for a generation, the S.P.G.'s chief difficulty was to find men of sufficient education to act as lay agents. At Breck Sound, where one of the schools was located, "a Justice of the Peace had been accustomed to read prayers and a sermon out of one of the Society's books to the inhabitants." He had "the most learning in the place", yet he expressed a desire to be appointed "an assistant schoolmaster" not being qualified for the position of head schoolmaster. At Savannah Sound, which had the other school, only one man could read and the greater part could "scarcely say the Lord's Prayer".

Educational/

S.P.G. MSS. (53) C.W.Indian papers:
Box XXVII: Folder 5

-ibid- B.18.pages 43-44

-ibid- page 71

Council Votes (47) 1726, 7th Feb.

Educational Condition of the Slaves.

As yet, no mention has been made of the education of two groups of the population at opposite extremes of the social scale. These were, first, the majority group comprised by slaves and free negroes and, second, the small minority described by a governor as "the better sort of people of this place." Of the former, there is very little to say of educational interest. There are a few points worthy of note, however. The first is that negro children were admitted to The Free School at Nassau from the outset. Naturally, there were never many, but the first pupils that Robert Carter admitted in 1749 included "two negro boys both baptized." A year later he reported that he had "one negro boy - the other is come to England", for what purpose he did not state. In later years the number of negro pupils increased. In 1795 there was a small school in Nassau kept by a negro schoolmaster. It is possible, though there is no evidence of this, that some of the more enlightened slave owners may have afforded the children of their slaves some slight elementary instruction. It is known that Bahamians constantly laid emphasis on the importance of religious instruction for slaves. Slaves with the advantage of baptism were admitted to privileges denied to other slaves. As early as Woodes Rogers' time, the master or mistress of a family having slaves was to "send them every Saturday about "four/

Pascoe (33) page 218

-ibid- page 220

Shedden (38) page 44.

"four a Clock in the Afternoon to the Reverd. Mr. Surphey and
 "Sundays also in the Afternoon in order to receive such
 "Instructions as they are capable of in the Principles of the
 "Christian Religion." There are several references to the
 exercise of such religious tolerance by the whites towards
 their slaves throughout this century. Carter said of the
 people at Harbour Island that "they pay a strict regard to the
 "Lord's Day, and neither work themselves nor suffer their slaves
 . "to work on it, but allot them another day in every week to
 "work for themselves." Similarly, "the most sensible slaves
 in New Providence" expressed "an earnest desire of being
 baptized." In contrast with this toleration, the loyalists
 were not so genially disposed toward their slaves and they
 introduced into the colony a more severe spirit in dealing
 with negroes. One slave owner "would not suffer any of his
 negroes to receive any instruction whatever" and it was with
 difficulty that the missionary "prevailed on the people to let
 any of the negroes sit in the area of the church." In another
 island, recently settled by loyalists, the negroes were "void
 "of all principles of Christian religion owing to their want
 "of instruction." It was probably due to the fact that the
 loyalist attitude towards slaves predominated over the
 greater lenience of the native Bahamian, that the Church did
 not begin to show any great activity on behalf of the negroes
 until after emancipation. "It would seem strange to us in
 "these/

Livingstone (20)

"these days that, in so grave a moral question as that of slavery, the Church in the colony should have failed to lift her voice or to make her influence felt." As elsewhere in the West Indies, the Church acquiesced in the institution of slavery though it cannot be said of the Church in the Bahamas, as has been said of the other West Indies, that "its clergymen" with rare exceptions did not question "the assumption that there was no spiritual part in the Negroes to be attended to or developed." Nevertheless, it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the active evangelization of the slaves and their rudimentary instruction, especially in Sunday Schools, was begun by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and later by Baptist missionaries from England.

The First High School 8 1804

As to the education of the minority group of the population - "the better sort of people" - a problem arose that was to cause successive governors some anxiety. The class concerned was not large. Taking the approximate figure of 3300 - 3500 as being the white population in 1790, about 5% of these would belong to this class. In that year there were 127 planters, 29 merchants and 17 men of learned professions. Because of the low standard of the schools in the colony, the practice had grown up among this class of sending their children to England or the United States for their education. It was a matter of regret to successive governors that the United/

Wright (45)

Acts (46) 1804

United States was resorted to for the education of the children of British subjects. "Strange ideas were imbibed there and "respect for the institutions of the mother country were not "thereby increased." It was with this in mind that the Assembly passed an Act establishing the first High School in the colony in 1804. Its stated aims were "to encourage "literature and to enable the inhabitants of these islands " to have their children educated under their own inspection, "by which the morals of the children may be the better "preserved and much money will be kept in the country which is "now sent abroad for their education." The curriculum was to embrace English, Latin, Greek, French, Spanish and Mathematics, besides the less ambitious writing, arithmetic and book-keeping. For the staff of three, the sum of £800 annually was voted in salaries. No information is available to show with what measure of success the school was attended. Apart from the Act itself, the only other reference appears in the Appropriations Act five years later when the sum of £200 was voted to the visitors of the school for the purchase of apparatus and the sum of £100 each to the Reverend Dr. Stephen, Head Master, and to Wm. M.P. Christie, assistant, "for loss of time". One may only infer that the school was started but was found to be financially unprofitable and soon ceased. There were too few of "the better sort of people" to support a miniature Public School along English lines, which is what appears/

Acts (46) 1804

appears to have been intended. Some of them may not have been prepared to exchange the guarantee of a sound "classical and mathematical education" for their children abroad for the promise of a doubtful substitute at home. Whatever the cause, the forward-looking Act establishing the school was simply allowed to expire after seven years.

The Revival of the Parish Schools : 1804

We have seen how the system of schools introduced by the loyalists in 1795 was disrupted by the failure of the plantations reinforced by the nefarious activities of pirates and the threat of attack by the French navy during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The opening years of the nineteenth century held little promise for the future of education; rather were they reminiscent of conditions thirty or forty years before. But the type of settler, now forming the bulk of the population and the majority of the legislature, was not so easily discouraged nor so tolerant of such a retrograde state of affairs as his counterpart of those early years. In the last paragraph it was seen how his adversity spurred him to a level of educational effort without precedent. In the same year there was legislation on a scale wider than before for schools for the poorer white classes. By an "Act for Reviving and Regulating the Parish Schools", the schools established in 1795 were revived and additional ones opened in Long Cay and Turks Island. Supervision of all the schools by one Schools Commission was discontinued and the practice of appointing/

appointing visitors to individual schools adopted again. The strict control on the qualifications, certification and licensing of schoolmasters was relaxed but otherwise the provisions were substantially the same as the earlier Act. It was twice renewed and continued in force for seventeen years.

The schools appear to have made fairly steady progress during those years. Several islands, for which no provision was made, established their own schools and the schoolmaster claimed his salary by petitioning the Assembly annually. In such instances it became customary for the House to discharge its obligation by an arbitrary award of about £50, or rather more or less, according to the relative importance of the settlement. This practice, no doubt harmless and generous at the time, had an unfortunate consequence in that a salary of "£50 more or less" became endowed with such mystical significance as to render it almost sacrosanct, and salaries of out island teachers continued to be of such dimension for more than a century - until after the First World War in fact. By 1813, nine schoolmasters were receiving such annual grants in addition to the eight provided by the Act. The schools increased in size, too, so that the maximum of thirty scholars in each school was raised to forty. Membership of the Anglican or Presbyterian churches, enacted as an additional qualification of schoolmasters, portended the bitter denominational strife that/

Findlay (11) page 230

that was to arise after emancipation. It also indicates the activity in the colony, especially among the slaves, of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society upon whose work the Legislature virtually imposed a ban that same year by forbidding its missionaries to preach between sunset and sunrise.

The Religious Denominations.

Both the Anglican and Presbyterian churches were "established" in the colony and received a considerable proportion of their income from the public revenue. Both the Methodist and Baptist faiths were introduced to the Bahamas by American negroes before 1800 and, most probably, among the slaves of the loyalists. William Turton, the first Methodist missionary, arrived in 1800, but the negro "Baptists, the followers of St. John" were not taken into the care of the Baptist Missionary Society until the year before the Abolition. The Methodist work among the slaves was not greeted with the violent antagonism that nonconformist missionaries met elsewhere in the West Indies, especially Jamaica. There was an old Bahamian statute which prohibited preaching to slaves but it was treated as obsolete. Contrasting this reception with that accorded to Methodist missionaries in Jamaica, Turton wrote: "there is not one to move a tongue or lift a finger against" religion, "so that, if it be not universally, it is at least generally, respected." The servile insurrection in Barbados/

Findlay (11) page 237.

Barbados in 1816 caused the slave owners some anxiety and led to the imposition of certain restrictions, the chief of which was mentioned above, on the Methodist work. These were removed five years later, however, partly on account of the tolerant attitude of the Bahamian master towards his slave, but also due to the fact that at least one-third of the Methodist members were white. As evidence of this tolerant attitude and also of the emphasis laid on Christian instruction to the negro, the Assembly, so hostile only twelve years earlier, made a grant of £200 towards the building of a third Methodist Chapel to minister to the needs of the negroes. This was the first of a number of similar grants.

In addition to their work of evangelization, the Methodists regarded education as "a prime desideratum in the Bahamas not less than in other parts of the West Indies. The black people of this District, in general more intelligent and alert than those in islands where the plantation system extensively prevailed, were eager for mental improvement. The missionaries did much to promote this object. In the setting up and management of Sunday Schools" especially, both at Nassau and on out islands, "they were conspicuously successful." In these schools, as in their churches, both whites and blacks were to be found. This commingling of the races at church and in school, mentioned earlier in reference to the S.P.G. schools too, together with the/

Stark (40) page 240

the fairly general tolerance of master to slave, were powerful forces in bringing about emancipation with comparative ease and in providing subsequently for negro education. The Baptist missionaries made similar efforts to educate the negro through the medium both of day schools and Sunday schools, but this was after emancipation. Of these efforts Stark wrote: "These missions have done a great amount of good and have been "of great benefit to the negroes. In many of the African "settlements they seem to be the only connecting link that "binds them to civilization; in fact, there are more churches "and schools* in the Bahama settlements, in proportion to the "population, than there are in similar country districts in New "England."

The Anglican Church in Control.

The religious qualification imposed on schoolmasters in 1816 indicates a growing uneasiness on the part of the Anglican church concerning the progress being made in the colony by the Methodists. The position of the Anglican church was especially weak with regard to education. The S.P.G., which had pioneered in the establishment of schools, withdrew all financial assistance in 1807 and did not again turn its attention to the colony until it began to participate in the Negro Education Fund after emancipation. This lack of influence in the field of education/

* He could not be referring solely to mission schools but must have included the government public schools in this statement.

Shedden (38) page 21

education probably prompted the church to inspire the religious qualification for teachers. The rector of Christchurch felt that some ^{more} positive part should be played by the church and therefore negotiated with Bray's Associates* for a teacher. A certain Mr Cooper was sent in 1817, his passage being paid by the government, and a school was built at the rear of the public buildings. This school, which subsequently became the Boys' Central School, was strictly a church school and all pupils were required to attend both Sunday services at Christchurch on pain of expulsion for failure to do so. At these services they were responsible for leading the singing. Since the prime aim was to inculcate church doctrine, it is amusing to read that the hymnal used was that of Dr. Watts, which Mr Cooper thought was "particularly calculated to attract the children to the Church of England":

Although the battle between Anglican and Nonconformist was not fully joined for another twenty years, yet clearly one of the contestants at least was already marshalling its forces and manoeuvring for position. Although the bitter conflict between/

* The Rev. Dr. Bray was chiefly instrumental in the founding of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) as well as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.). As early as 1698, before the founding of either of these Societies, he had conceived a scheme for the conversion and education of negro slaves in the West Indies. Two friends made bequests to put this scheme into effect, the income from which is still applied to the support of Anglican schools in the Bahamas though it was not originally confined to this colony.

between Lancaster, the Nonconformists and the "British and Foreign School Society" (B.F.S.S.) on the one hand, and Bell, the Church party and the "National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, throughout England and Wales" on the other, had but barely begun in England, it is interesting to notice how quickly the contention had spread to the colonies. The Church secured the next advantage in a new Act passed in 1821.

The Beginning of the Central School § 1821

Although the latest continuation of the 1804 Act had another six years to run, it was suspended in 1821, on the grounds that it had been "found insufficient", in favour of an Act which ordained that there was to be but one public school in Nassau to be conducted "upon the Madrass or Dr. Bell's system of education and to be known as the 'Central School of the Bahamas'". The idea of a central Schools Commission was revived and this body was to be in special charge of the the Central School and in general charge of all schools appointed under the Act. The Anglican Church was put in virtual control of all the government schools in the colony and of all matters relating to them, such as their curriculum and conduct, the assessment and payment of salaries and the examination of accounts, the appointment and suspension or displacement of teachers, the appointment of Visitors for out island schools, the selection, importation and distribution of books and the nomination of poor children for admission as free scholars/

scholars.

The one school established in Nassau, replacing three formerly maintained by law, was probably to compensate for the failure to establish a high school, for the schoolmaster was to receive the then princely salary "not exceeding \$600 per annum". Only two additional schools were provided for the out islands in Turks Islands (which were already favoured with one) and in Abaco, although it has been seen that there were at least nine receiving annual assistance in addition to those maintained by existing law. The reason for this anomaly is to be found in the business acumen of the legislators who were prepared to consider these other petitions for grants annually but were not willing to commit the Treasury by law to such recurrent expenditure. Mention has been made of this distinction, which still persists between expenditure as "Provided by Law" and as "provided by Appropriation Act", because the vacillation from year to year in the attitude of the Assembly towards expenditure on education has ever been the chief cause of uncertainty in the life and work of the schools.

Three Education Acts in Three Years : 1821 - 22 - 23

As if in answer to this criticism, this anomaly was removed the following year. Before the 1821 Act had been on the statute books for a year it was also declared to be "insufficient" and was suspended. The new law authorised the Commissioners to establish "other schools" without restriction on/

Acts (46) 1823

on number and to pay salaries of teachers from £100 - £400 per annum. The responsibility of providing the schoolhouse was to rest with the inhabitants who were to forfeit all government assistance if they did not keep the building properly furnished and in good repair. Up to this time there is no evidence of the government ever having built or acquired a school building anywhere in the colony, though rents for suitable premises had been allowed. Also significant was the provision of a salary, for the first time, for a part-time Secretary to the Commissioners.

In the absence of any other information, the reading of these two Acts of 1821 and 1822 infers restless solicitude for education on the part of the legislators and ceaseless expansion and great activity on the part of the schools. Because of this, yet another Act, passed barely a year later, comes as an anticlimax. The preamble of the Act tells its own story: "Whereas the said establishments (schools), though formed and maintained at a very great expense, have hitherto been found productive of no visible advantage whatever and Whereas there is dire need for retrenchment due to the present circumstances of the colony and that all such establishments as have failed to answer the object of their formation should be reduced or discontinued", the Act proceeds summarily to suspend all the education Acts of 1816, 1821 and 1822 for a period of no less than five years. At the/

Acts (46) 1823

the end of that period, the House was about to suspend them for a further five years when it was discovered that this was unnecessary as they had already expired.

One School for the Whole Colony : 1823 - 1828.

Thus, with one blow, the legislature destroyed the whole of State public education in the colony. Yet the very next Act passed, and assented to on the very same day, bestowed the favour of the legislature on the school "in the rear of the court house" established by the Anglican church six years earlier. A liberal salary, not to exceed \$576 per annum, was settled on the schoolmaster and a generous allowance of £100 provided for books and supplies. The school was to be under the control of the rector and church wardens of Christchurch. The preamble to this Act, by comparison with the other Act, is very conciliatory and declares that "it is highly necessary and proper that the means of education should be afforded to the rising generation." For five years this was the only school in the colony maintained by the government.

No other island was so incensed by this preferential treatment of Nassau as Turks Islands, still chafing under the Bahamian yoke since their annexation in 1804. Revenue arising from their export of salt was one of the main sources of income to the Bahamian Treasury, yet little of it was returned as expenditure on the development of the island. To mitigate/

1835 Report (49)*

mitigate their grievance, one of the two schools formerly maintained there was restored in 1828 and proportionately the same financial provision made as to the Nassau school. Eleuthera, Harbour Island and Abaco, the other three largely populated out islands, long resigned to preferential treatment for Nassau, were upset by this concession to Turks Islands and, following representations to the legislature, their respective schools were re-established by an Act the following year. Meanwhile the Central School in Nassau had grown considerably, the head master eventually had two assistants and there were 200 pupils, boys and girls on the roll.

The State of Education at Emancipation.

Such was the state of education in the colony at the dawn of emancipation. There were five public schools in the whole colony with a few small private schools in Nassau. In the out islands there were but four schools for a population of about 12,000 inhabiting nearly twenty larger islands and many smaller ones and cays. Out of 2800 children between six and fourteen well over 2000 were "wholly destitute of the means of gaining any education" whatever. The schools that did exist were poorly equipped, even more poorly staffed, and the character of the teaching and work bad. In the school at Eleuthera, one pupil out of 77 had progressed beyond the four fundamental processes of arithmetic. The better class of inhabitants refused to use the schools but continued to send their/

1835 Report (49)

-ibid-

their children to England and America.

There was no semblance of a unified system. The schools that did exist were quite independent of one another and of a central controlling body. The enlightened attempt, forty years earlier, to set up a commission to examine teachers, inspect schools and generally to inaugurate a system of education, had been left in abeyance in 1804, reinstituted in 1821 and abandoned again in 1823. Consequently, the individual schools did as they pleased which, in general, was very little and, in one case in particular, the Central School in Nassau, was openly to transgress the law. Although "originally established and still ostensibly maintained for those children only whose parents are too poor to pay "for their education", there were, instead of the 200 children permitted by law, some 250 pupils "who contribute nothing whatever towards the salary of the master".

Ignorance throughout the islands was colossal. This is not surprising among the slaves, who had had no access whatever to schools, or among the people in islands where no school existed. But even in islands which had had the benefit of a school things were little better. In Eleuthera, for example, which had had a school almost continuously for sixty years, and two schools for part of that time, not more than one in three of the inhabitants could read or were learning to read. The proportion was no higher in Rock Sound, the predominantly white/

white settlement where the school was situated. Harbour Island and Green Turtle Cay, Abaco, also predominantly white settlements, where the other two schools were located, were not much better. Thus the bulk of the white inhabitants of the colony, or at least of the out islands and to a less extent New Providence, were as much in slavery to ignorance as were the black slaves to their white masters. The Abolition was destined to be no less an emancipation of whites than of blacks. With the beginning of this process we enter the second period of the history of Bahamian education.

CHAPTER V

The Foundation of a System : 1835 - 1864

Home Government and Negro Education

Parliament realized that merely to liberate the slaves from their physical and legal bonds, however desirable and morally right, was not enough. Not only were the bodies of the slaves in bondage but their minds were enslaved to the ignorance and superstition of primaeval Africa and their souls were still fettered to fetishism and witchcraft which, in many instances, were the only religion they had ever known. To make the slave his own master, especially in a democratic type of society, without the mental, moral and spiritual equipment to guide him to a proper understanding and use of his freedom, was dangerous to the community no less than to the individual. It was to this end that the programme of emancipation made provision for the apprenticeship system, for extensive schemes of education and for encouragement of the work of the various missionary bodies.

How to give effect to these plans was no easy problem. It was one thing to pass an Act in Westminster to abolish slavery throughout the Empire; it was an entirely different matter to persuade the colonial legislatures concerned to pursue an active policy of educating those despised creatures whom the Home Government insisted on regarding as their equals, as "Her Majesty's subjects." If the one was an act of Christian charity, then the other /

other was a supreme act of faith. For long enough the Legislature had resented the "entirely unwarranted and wholly unprecedented interference" with their private property, and they were now smarting under the blow to their pride inflicted when Parliament had ridden roughshod over their autonomy. The Assembly had resisted all attempts to influence them to relinquish the right of flogging female slaves; to expect this same body of men to adopt measures and take positive steps to put to school, as they would their own children, those whom they had recently regarded as their chattels, was to invite sore disappointment. Yet, to the credit of the Bahamian slave-owners, not only did they adopt such measures, but they entered into the scheme within a short time as if they had been imbued with a sense of mission to the negroes.

Co-operative Attitude of the Legislature.

It is not surprising that, at first, they refused to co-operate wholeheartedly in this move and only with great reluctance passed the most inadequate statute to provide for Negro education. Within two years, however, not only the Legislature, but the whole community was enthused with the theme of education. In the Harbour Island by-election, a seat that became vacant at this time was hotly contested over the education issue. Several public meetings were held at which "all the principal families were present" and over which the Governor presided. At one such meeting an impartial observer, a Captain in the Royal Navy, declared that he had visited all parts of the West Indies and "in none, /

House Votes (48) 1849 page 96.

"none, such great exertions were making in the cause of
 "education." A subsequent Governor, in an address to the House,
 assured them: "I have had more than ordinary opportunity to
 "compare what the Bahamas have done for education with what other
 "more wealthy colonies have done, and notwithstanding your
 "limited revenues and the heavy expense of the various depart-
 "-ments of the public service, you have set an example worthy of
 "imitation in giving the religious and intellectual training of
 " the people a preference over all other demands on the public
 "purse." His views were shared by other governors and by the
 Secretary of State.

Educational Motives.

Underlying this complete change of attitude towards the
 wishes of the Home Government in respect of negro education, were
 many factors, not the least of which was a consciousness of a
 tradition of State-aided education. Though we have seen that
 their efforts had not been attended with a very great measure of
 success yet the will had been there for almost a century. Since
 the first education statute had been written into the law ninety
 years before, there had been no fewer than twenty-one Acts
 making financial provision for the support of schools in the
 colony. This was a record possessed by few colonies. Even the
 Mother Country, whose government now presumed to advise them in
 educational matters, could boast no such record and indeed had
 only recently (1833) made its first annual grant towards the
 provision of schools. A determination was aroused to show that
 this /

this colony at least had no need of advice in the realm of education.

Secondly, the whites were alive to the need for efficient education for their own children. They had been aware of this need for a long time and they were conscious of the failure of the efforts so far made to remedy this deficiency. The better class of inhabitants desired a more satisfactory means of education than the schools then existing could supply. They were still disappointed over the failure to maintain a high school at the beginning of the century and were anxious to make another attempt in this direction for their own children. The same desire for better schools for their children was felt by the poorer white inhabitants and, from this desire to set up schools for themselves, it was not a great step to an enthusiasm for general education though of differing types best suited to the merits of the various strata of society.

The greatest impetus in this cause came from the religious bodies who arrayed themselves in two camps which vied with each other in their efforts to espouse this mission. The established Church was conscious of being in a weak position. The colony was no more than a part of the Diocese of Jamaica, seldom visited by its bishop. For thirty years they had had no financial support other than an uncertain income from the Treasury. Their greatest strength lay in the fact that they had always been in control of the schools maintained by the government; their most serious weakness was the fact that they had never /

never, until now, showed the least interest in the evangelization or education of the negroes. They were now determined to make amends lest the control of education slip from their fingers and the dissenters gain the ascendancy. The nonconformists, on the other hand, had capable leaders and were strongly supported from home though receiving no annual income from the Treasury. Their political strength was that, not only had they established churches and schools among the negroes, but there was also a substantial number of whites among their members. They were determined not to be outdone in a field where they were pioneers. The settlers, essentially religious and always willing to participate in a quarrel, were quick to take sides in the ensuing denominational struggle. The Harbour Island by-election, mentioned earlier, was a contest between an Anglican candidate and a Methodist supported by all the nonconformists. In the sectarian strife which followed, those aims that were truly educational soon became subsidiary to the consuming desire to gain or retain control of the schools. Later still, educational aims were forgotten completely in a contention waged around the endowment of the Anglican Church.

Educational Aims.

Apart from the fanatical sectarian element there was a strong body of sincere religious opinion which saw in education a means "of disposing men to the worship of God." When the slave owners saw emancipation approaching they had feared disorders and uprisings such as had occurred in other colonies.

There /

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There was also evidence to show that the influence of the evangelist was not such as to lead to insurrection but disposed the negroes rather to a law-abiding demeanour. An instance may be quoted of a settlement where "cursing, swearing, drinking to excess, Sabbath-breaking, quarrelling and every kind of wickedness prevailed" but scarcely had the missionary begun to preach than "a remarkable reformation took place evidently wrought of God." Moreover, Christian teaching was likely to inculcate, not only a moral rectitude in the life of the individual, but also an appreciation of the responsibilities of the individual towards the welfare of the community. For this reason there was always a strong emphasis laid on instruction in the catechism in the curriculum of schools and the pupils were enjoined to attend the Church on Sundays. Later, when the catechism and sectarian teaching were forbidden, scriptural teaching was still required. To this day the law still specifies the use of the Holy Bible for instruction in the public schools. A special aspect of this religious aim concerned the admission of negro evidence in court. In the interests of justice it was imperative that a negro witness fully appreciate the significance of the administration of the oath. Before emancipation the evidence of slaves had been admitted into court, but only in cases where the witness could produce a document from a clergyman testifying that he had been sufficiently made aware of the Deity as to realize the import of taking an oath.

The late masters realized that the end of slavery was also the end /

the end of their methods of cultivating estates. No longer could labour be obtained by purchase and by compulsion. While they were furious about this, they retained a sufficiently calm judgment to realize that their own future success, as well as that of the colony, lay in co-operation with the negroes whose labour was indispensable but no longer subject to enforcement. It was necessary, therefore, that the negro population should be fashioned into a reliable peasantry which would provide a source of industrious and dependable labourers. This aim the whites hoped to achieve through education and, while Infant Schools were strongly urged to instil religious precepts into the children at an early age, Schools of Industry were to achieve this other object among the older children and apprentices. As in England, there was to be no danger of educating the lower orders above their fit and proper station in life. Higher education was to be reserved for white children and so it was until well into the twentieth century.

Such were the educational aims of the legislators and colonists. They were far-seeing aims and may be credited with being lofty and yet realistic. It is to be regretted that the discredit must go to the churches where the increasingly rabid sectarianism was destined to impede the progress of education until such time as the schools were removed altogether from their control.

First Attempts /

B.M.S. Centenary (4)

First Attempts at Negro Education.

The work of the nonconformist missions in giving elementary instruction to the negroes before emancipation has already been mentioned. For the most part these efforts were through the medium of Sunday Schools as the benefits of day schools were bound to be restricted to the free negroes, the children of slaves being at the command of their owners. A few day schools that the Methodists did establish were small, short-lived and catered for children of whites and free negroes. It was not until 1834 that thriving day schools were begun in Eleuthera. The Baptist Missionary Society, which maintained a large number of schools in Jamaica, had not been established in this colony long enough to do more than open a few Sunday schools. While the native sect which styled itself "Baptist" was spread throughout the colony and doubtless had many Sunday schools, their educational value was negligible. The first Baptist missionary to enter the Bahamas in 1833 found that the "leaders of the so-called "Baptist" churches were illiterate - only one could read". Their spiritual value was not much better: "The first prayer which I heard offered was partly to Abraham, "Isaac and Jacob."

The first conspicuous attempts to conduct specific negro day schools were made by Sir James Smyth who was appointed Governor in 1829. He was a thoroughly conscientious man, persistent in his efforts on behalf of the slaves and soon earned /

earned the violent opposition of the House of Assembly. After repeated attempts to gain its sympathy and co-operation, during which the faults committed were not all on one side, he finally dissolved it and governed the colony alone for the remainder of his term. Among his other activities he anxiously endeavoured to provide some negro education. Such efforts were regarded with jealousy and suspicion by the legislators and consequently the expense of what was undertaken had to be met out of Crown Funds. He established schools at Adelaide and Carmichael, two settlements of liberated Africans, by way of experiment. For use in these schools he desired to have placed at his disposal a quantity of school supplies that were in the hands of the School Commissioners.^x This body of seven members was reticent to release the supplies for that purpose but, as Chancellor of the colony, Smyth forced them to do so. He received from them a discourteous note to which he promptly replied by putting all seven in jail. Two apologized but the remainder was left there for a few days. Smyth would never have achieved much in establishing schools for, having lost the confidence of the Assembly and having dispensed with it by dissolution, he was severely handicapped by lack of funds, not only for his schools, but also for the general expenses of the colony. His request for assistance was acceded by the Lords of the Treasury in England and /

x The School Commissioners were, as usual, the rectors and churchwardens of the parishes of Christchurch and St. Matthew.

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-ibid-

and the Bishop of Jamaica also contributed a small sum but his efforts never progressed beyond these two small schools and they ceased when he left the colony. His enterprise is of historical interest in being a pre-emancipation attempt at education of the negroes.

The immediate response of the Assembly to the wishes of the Home Government in respect of the education of the former slaves was disappointing to the Governor. Still burning with indignation at the action of Parliament, it is not surprising that they made but a token attempt to legislate for education. Even this inadequate bill was passed in 1835 by a bare majority of four after strong opposition. The final compromise amounted to a mere amendment of the scant provisions of the existing law. Admitting that there were "many populous settlements too far apart within the parishes" to be served by one school, the Act empowered the Governor to apportion the salaries already provided in three islands "among any one or more masters within the same parish" in proportion to the population of the settlements. Since the salary to be divided up in this fashion was but £200 at its maximum, the Legislature could be sure that the extra schools would be neither numerous nor yet generously provided for. For communities in those islands where no salary was already provided the Governor was authorized to appoint masters and supply stationery and other equipment. The number of such schools to be established was unspecified but the total expenditure /

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expenditure for all such salaries and expenses in the colony was not to exceed £200. As if regretting such rash liberality, the legislators added the further condition that this was to be done only if the inhabitants built school houses at their own expense - a condition that was scarcely likely to be fulfilled in communities where the inhabitants owned nothing but their own bodies, and that only lately. For the Central School in Nassau where the white children were educated, which was already provided with a head master at £300, an assistant master at £80, annual supplies at £40 and a clerk to the Visitors at £20, a further assistant teacher at £60 was provided and the permissible number of pupils increased from 140 to 200. Finally, since there was "no provision for children other than poor scholars and it "was reasonable that other children be allowed to participate", any number of "pay" scholars were to be admitted on payment of an admission fee of £1 and annual fees of £3. This concession was, of course, to apply equally to all schools and all classes of the population. Not often in the annals of the colony's legislation has so much malice been instilled into the words of a statute!

Education Commission : 1835

The Governor may have momentarily felt rebuffed but he was not to be deterred from his objective so easily. Smyth's reaction to this veiled slight of his wishes would in all probability have been to dissolve the House forthwith, but Colebrooke, though no less determined, was much more astute and diplomatic than his predecessor /

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predecessor. He saw that the legislators were willing to provide liberally for the education of white children, and he was also aware of the ambition of the upper classes to see established within the colony a Public School second to none but the old foundations in England and fashioned on similar lines. He therefore appointed a School Commission, with himself as President, "to take into consideration the state of education "throughout the Bahamas and the means by which it may be most "effectually promoted." As members of the commission he appointed the most influential individuals in the community together with all senior officials, members of Council and ministers of all denominations in Nassau.

He summoned the first meeting at Government House "and the "first subject to which the attention of the Board was called "was the great inconvenience which had been experienced in the "colony from the want of an institution for the instruction of "youth in the higher branches of education." He outlined a most ambitious scheme for the establishment of a school in affiliation with King's College, London, and under the patronage of the King. A committee was appointed to consider the matter and to it was referred, almost incidentally, the question of popular education as well. As the Governor had hoped and anticipated, the plan was welcomed at once with tremendous enthusiasm. In view of "the liberal manner" in which the Legislature had already provided for the instruction of the poorer classes in the "common /

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the "common branches of education", the question of popular education could for the moment take a subsidiary place. "The first object which the commissioners had in view was to afford to the rising generation that instruction in their native country which they could now obtain only by emigrating from it."

General Enthusiasm for Education.

The enthusiasm quickly spread through the whole community and several public meetings were held. The advantages of education were extolled in a most extravagant manner and a large number of resolutions was passed "unanimously and with acclamation". So inspired did the people become with the zeal for educating, that it was not long e'er the needs of the common people and the upper classes were as one, and it was being urged that all schools assisted by public funds be placed under one general superintendence. Having drawn up elaborate plans, complete to the most minute detail, for King's College School without having nearly exhausted the energies of their enthusiasm, the people turned their attention to the education of the lower classes. Within a month of their appointment, the committee had submitted to the commission its first report; within a year, four reports had been compiled making an intensive and extensive survey of the educational facilities, needs and desires of every island in the colony, and urging the most constructive and comprehensive plans and policy for the future. By the time its last report was submitted, the committee was able to include a description of the /

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of the schemes to which effect had already been given in various parts of the colony. There is no doubt that no committee or commission on education or any aspect of education in the Bahamas, appointed either before or since that year, has performed its task with such commendable thoroughness and real insight as did the 1835 Commission and its Committee.

The Governor was not slow to take advantage of the disposition of the inhabitants to promote the objects which he so much desired. His diplomacy had succeeded to a far greater extent than he had hoped but enthusiasm and recommendations were, of themselves, unable to produce results without the means of giving effect to them. Money for attractive salaries and a liberal supply of materials was indispensable. At the beginning of the next year, therefore, the Governor addressed the House on the subject of education, laying before them the plans for King's College School and the reports and recommendations of the commission and concluding that "the disposition so creditably evinced by all classes of the inhabitants will render it only necessary to aid them in their exertions to establish schools and to obtain for them competent teachers." No longer was the Governor speaking as the lone representative of the detested Home Government: he was speaking with the voice of the people and "vox populi vox dei". Confronted with such a formidable body of popular demands, the House had no alternative but to enact a liberal education bill.

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The Work of the 1835 Commission.

Since the 1835 Commission was destined to lead the way in the field of education, its recommendations and actions will be described. At the outset, they were compelled to admit that they found it "more difficult to determine where there does not, than where there does, exist a necessity for establishing schools and establishing teachers for the working and liberated classes." The few schools that did exist were grossly inefficient and more than half of the islands were utterly destitute of all means of moral and religious instruction. A welcome sign was that, in all these islands, there was not only an ardent desire for instruction but an eager willingness to contribute towards it as far as their limited means would allow. As for the "liberal manner" in which the Legislature had already provided for education, "the sum voted by the Assembly would of itself be wholly inadequate to provide for the expenses of a single teacher in each island."

While urging the appropriation of much greater sums to pay salaries and provide schools, the commission was nevertheless insistent on the principle that those who could afford to pay something for their children's schooling should not only be encouraged but required to do so. Firmly convinced that the benefits of education would not be fully appreciated unless it cost the parents something, they maintained that absolutely free admission to the schools should be allowed "in the case of the unprovided /

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"unprovided orphans and children of destitute parents only", adding that those who were wholly unable to pay anything were "exceedingly few". They were led to these opinions largely through the inconsistency of Government's policy of maintaining schools, ostensibly for poor children, in settlements whose inhabitants were most able to pay. In contrast, were those poverty-stricken settlements where the people were eager to pay what few pence they could afford ("no more than ten shillings per 50 children") but which had been totally denied even the most meagre assistance from the Treasury. Payment in kind should be allowed and encouraged where money was not easily come by. In all cases, however, assessment of a parent's ability to pay was to be the duty of the local school visitors for "it cannot be too distinctly laid down as a rule that the teachers must not have anything to do with the collection" of school fees. This was a wise and common-sense policy that was sorely violated later in the century before school fees were eventually abolished and its violation was, for many years, a painful "thorn in the flesh" for all teachers.

In further pursuit of this policy, the Special Magistrates, local Justices of the Peace and the out island clergy were asked to hold meetings of the inhabitants of settlements and acquaint them with the Government's intentions to establish schools. They were then to ascertain to what extent the inhabitants were prepared to contribute (a) to the erection of a school building and (b)/

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and (b) to the payment of a teacher's salary. Lists of such promises were made and kept for future reference. The results in many instances were astounding; at one such meeting a suitable building was actually purchased with money subscribed on the spot. In other instances, especially where schools were already in existence and maintained by Government, the people were loathe to make any subscription whatever. We shall see that this practice of the people's providing their own school house lasted well into the present century and is still nominally demanded of inhabitants applying for new schools. In many instances the inhabitants built it on a communal co-operative basis by voluntary labour.

Strong emphasis was laid on the necessity of making the schools open to children of all classes without discrimination of colour. Hitherto, schools had existed virtually for white children alone and, in some instances, there was an express bar against negroes. The happenings of the last few years had not been conducive to friendly relations with the black population and thus it is the more surprising to hear the Commission deprecating in the strongest terms "those prejudices existing at places distant from the seat of Government, with regard to complexion, which have been so fully surmounted by the more enlightened and educated portion of the community." There was no hint of a suggestion whatever of a proposal to establish parallel schools for whites and for negroes. Nor, from that day to this, has there ever been any such racial discrimination in any /

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any school in the colony established and maintained by the government.

The schools were to exist "for the more effectual dissemination of knowledge founded on habits of virtue and industry." The operative words are "virtue and industry": they give the key both to the aim and the content of the proposed education. The scheme adopted followed closely contemporary developments in England. Infant Schools, which were more properly Nursery Schools, were to take care of pupils from the age of two to six years. The great advantage accruing to this type of school was that "the dispositions of the children will be formed and regulated from the earliest period." The children were to be supplied with sheet alphabets, pictures etc. and the teachers were also to employ familiar objects "calculated to engage the attention and interest the children" such as fruit and flowers. "Above all their tempers are to be regulated and nothing but kindness and affection shown towards them so that they may be attached and attentive to their instructress." These instructions, resembling so closely the principles adopted by Robert Owen in his infant school at New Lanark, reveal that the Commissioners had been at great pains to familiarize themselves with modern development. Even the work of Oberlin and Louise Scheppler, "the founder of infant schools", had not escaped their attention.

"The union of the system of moral and physical instruction" was to be accomplished by the establishment of Schools of Industry /

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Industry in which considerable stress was laid on the "entire separation of the sexes". Here the Commissioners were the disciples of William Allen in their emphasis on manual activity for its educational value rather than its efficiency in reducing the cost of the school. The boys were to be taught gardening and field culture for two hours daily and the girls needlework and spinning. "The older ones may also help the schoolmistress in the care of the infants" and to this end infant schools and girls' schools were usually conducted together. "To originate "a system of beneficial domestic industry for young females "..... of the humbler classes", a Ladies' Society was founded on the suggestion of the Ladies' Society in London for Promoting the Education of Negroes in the West Indies.

The limited extent of the academic work, which was to be restricted inevitably to the inculcation of the three R's together with the "extras", Grammar, Geography, Spelling from the Dictionary and Dictation, is revealed clearly and emphatically: "The rudiments of education ever continue the same and "beyond them it is not proposed in the contemplated institutions "to go." The principles of the Christian religion were to be "kept in mind in whatever species of instruction may be communicated" but one day a week was to be specially set apart for instruction in the catechism or creed adopted by the denomination to which they belonged. Around this one provision for liberty of conscience there subsequently arose so much dissension that all their other valuable recommendations came very near to being /

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being wholly ignored.

For the guidance and assistance of teachers the preparation of a "Manual for Schools of Industry", especially applicable to the Bahamian schools, was undertaken and "strict adherence to all forms and rules therein prescribed" required of all teachers. Occupying a conspicuous place in this manual were meticulous details of the "method of mutual instruction" as laid down by the British and Foreign School Society. With the careful application of this system there was "every reason to suppose" that one master would be enough for any number of children "likely to be brought together in any settlement of the colony." Thus it was, is now more than a century later, and there is no immediate prospect of Bahamian out island schools parting company with the Monitorial System whereby one "head" teacher is adequate staff for one school. There was no objection to the monitorial method of teaching but the introduction of the name of the British and Foreign School Society into the system of education designed for the Bahamas subsequently proved anathema to the Church party who had already committed the Central School at least to the Madras system of Bell.

Two other types of schools were urged. The encouragement of evening schools recognized the fact that most adults in the population, including the apprentices, were as much in need of instruction as their children. Financial provision for them out of the Treasury was recommended but the idea was never systematically adopted. They appear more or less spasmodically through the whole /

the whole of last century but the evening schools of the present century are of a totally different type from these earlier evening schools of industry. The remaining type of school, the Sunday School, was not intended as a responsibility of the Legislature for the Commission desired that these should confine themselves to moral and spiritual training rather than follow the lines of development of similar schools in England where reading and writing were also taught.

The Commission was alive to the fact that none of their proposals would bear much fruit without the careful selection of an ample teaching force on the basis of "character, temper and disposition" rather than mere scholastic attainment: but there was a distressing lack of competent persons qualified on any grounds. On many out islands there was no one who could even read the Bible and, in general, the ignorance of teachers was such as to deter parents from sending their children to them for instruction. Anticipating such difficulty in all colonies, Parliament had appropriated a sum of £5000 for Normal Schools to train teachers locally. The Commissioners sought and obtained assistance from this fund, a normal training school was established and, in 1836, a Mr. John McSwiney was sent out by the British and Foreign School Society which drew up detailed instructions for his guidance. He was to adhere to the principles laid down by the Trustees of the Mico Charity. McSwiney's instructions were concise and enlightened except in one respect /

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one respect: it was never explicitly understood who was to control the school, whether the Governor-in-Council, the School Commission, the British and Foreign School Society, the Mico Charity or the Secretary of State in London. All these were in some way concerned but none was made responsible. The "agent", (McSwiney), solved his dilemma by assuming complete independence of Government and Church. He displeased the Governor (Cockburn) by presuming to conduct his own official correspondence directly with the Secretary of State and ignoring the local executive. He established "Branch Schools" and discontinued them without any reference to the Commission and conducted the "Model School" in a manner to please only himself. Though it was well attended, Cockburn complained that the policy pursued did not serve to the best advantage "those whom the fund was intended to benefit". There can scarcely be any doubt as to the root cause of the Governor's displeasure and the opposition stirred up locally. Cockburn was a zealous Churchman, almost to the point of bigotry, and McSwiney's instructions were to admit pupils of all denominations whereas teachers had long been subject to a religious test as to membership of either of the established churches. Moreover, the basis of religious instruction was to be the Holy Scriptures only and no catechism was to be taught. The rules were calculated to meet the wishes of sectarians. About the same time, the Bishop of Jamaica, of whose See the Bahamas were a remote part, had written to Cockburn /

Cockburn referring to the success that had attended the establishment of a National School on Bell's Madras System at Kingston. A thousand pupils were in the charge of a master and mistress from England and twenty masters were being trained to conduct country schools on similar lines. This was precisely what both Governor and Church desired to see in Nassau and this news created more dissatisfaction with McSwiney and his British school. In consequence of this friction and hostility, the first bold venture of the Commission fell victim to the growing religious jealousy. This was a tragedy for Bahamian education. The fundamental problem of providing a supply of trained teachers remained unsolved both then and for several decades. Indeed, the problem remains unsolved to this day as the only other attempt to set up an institution for the training of teachers at the end of the century was also doomed to failure in not dissimilar circumstances. The one permanent outcome of McSwiney's work was that the monitorial system of instruction was introduced and firmly established in the educational system.

It must be presumed that the Commission was quick to sense the potential danger of denominational rivalry, for many of its recommendations were framed to minimize the possibility of engendering it. The greatest threat lay in the Home Government's policy of administering the sum of £20,000 voted for the education of the freed slaves. It was the intention to apply it /

apply it through the agency of the various missionary bodies already engaged in the work of education of the freed slaves. The danger of lack of co-ordination and consequent denominational competition was obvious. Thus, the Wesleyans promptly embarked on a scheme to construct two schools, one at Nassau and the other at Harbour Island both of which were reasonably well supplied with school facilities already: but it suited the political purposes of the society to establish itself firmly in those two localities. Similarly, the Anglicans wished to establish narrowly catechetical institutions. For this reason the Commission prompted an application to the Secretary of State to exempt the Bahamas from this arrangement since neither the Anglicans nor the Nonconformists and certainly not the Scottish Church had made any conspicuous venture in providing negro education prior to emancipation but the responsibility for what little had been accomplished had been assumed, unlike most colonies, by the Government. They hoped that all assistance from London would be applied through the medium of a Board of Education controlling all schools in the colony. In the establishment of the Normal School the Secretary of State had compromised with what disastrous results we have already seen.

The Commission did not content itself with making recommendations which was all that its terms of reference required. In addition, it pursued an active policy of giving effect to its recommendations as far as was possible within the restricted /

restricted framework of the 1835 Amendment of the last Schools Act. At the beginning of their work this energetic body had found five public schools in the whole colony; within a year they had seen the beginnings of six schools of industry, seven infants' schools and one evening school as well as many Sunday schools. Preparations for the opening of thirteen more schools were well advanced. Compared with 765 pupils at school in May 1835, there were now over 1600. We shall now see to what extent the Legislature implemented the Commission's sound recommendations and to what extent it undermined its work.

Establishment of the Educational System : 1836

The 1836 Act appointed a Board of Public Instruction which was to co-ordinate and direct the work of "all schools established or to be established" in the colony. Thus, for the first time, an educational system, as distinct from a number of schools each looking after its own affairs, may be said to have existed. The desire of the Commission to have "all schools for the education of children of all classes under the control and superintendence" of one authority was realized only to be frustrated a year later by an amendment forbidding the Board "to interfere with any schools which have been established and "are or may be supported by means of voluntary subscriptions or " of funds derived from any Parliamentary grant."

Schools were to be established only on the condition that the communities thus benefited expressed a willingness to contribute /

contribute to the cost. The assessment of the ability of the inhabitants to pay was to be the duty of the local commissioners of each school and the teachers were to be free from such financial concern.

Underlying all the instruction given was to be sound religious instruction and the inculcation of moral discipline. Freedom of conscience was permitted to all pupils but such as attended on Sundays were to be instructed in the liturgy and catechism of the Anglican Church. This latter clause amounted to the legal recognition of Anglican Sunday Schools maintained out of public funds. It also placed upon the teacher the obligation of acting as official catechist of the settlement and therefore implied a religious test of the most stringent kind.

As if to give full scope to the denominational contention that was likely to be provoked by this clause, the Act appointed, as members of the Board, all the members of Council, all the members of the House of Assembly, all the clergymen of all denominations in the colony, all the senior government officials, all the judges and magistrates, the church-wardens of the two Nassau parishes and the Officer Commanding the New Providence Militia. Over this formidable throng, with only a casting vote, His Excellency the Governor was to preside. With well over a hundred members on the Board and with such delicate and controversial problems to be resolved it was impossible for any degree of unanimity to prevail between the unyielding /

the unyielding and uncompromising Church and Nonconformist parties.

The Struggle for Control : 1836 - 1847

For a century the Church had had undisputed control of all public schools; it had no intention of relinquishing that control notwithstanding the fact that the dissenters were given a voice on the Board. The Anglicans, accustomed to conducting the schools on the Madras system, in which the catechism held a prominent place, were outraged by the concessions granted by the Act to the dissenters. Such weaknesses would have to be removed. The nonconformists were determined to put an end to any partiality towards the established Church; they furiously opposed any attempt at State-endowment of Anglican Day or Sunday schools which was what they feared the public schools would become. Angry discussions occurred in the meetings of the Board, meetings were conducted with increasing ill-feeling and tempers were lost completely. The Governor was wholly unable to control the wild scenes that took place; even he himself was not spared acrimonious personal attacks. Eventually he was compelled to cease attending the meetings to preserve the respect due to his office.

The Board was obviously too big and so, in 1839, it was dissolved and reconstituted to include the Bishop of Jamaica, all the Anglican clergy, the Presbyterian minister and five others selected and appointed by the Governor. These were the senior /

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senior Methodist and Baptist ministers and three laymen favourable to the Church party. The presence of three dissenters^x on the Board did not alter the fact that the Anglican Church was still firmly in control. "No pretensions to harmony were made in the Board this time. Stormy sessions and acrimonious discussions occurred with heightened ill-feeling. The dissenters had petitioned against the plan when it was first proposed but it had passed the Legislature in spite of them; they were determined that it should not operate as its movers had intended."

Feelings were now aroused in the whole colony and the healthy enthusiasm for education gave place to bitter sectarian prejudices. Systematic agitation was kept up continuously to make a change in the Board inevitable. Once again the question of its constitution went to the House of Assembly and it was at this juncture that the Harbour Island by-election was contested resulting in a victory for the Anglican party which had a majority in the House. By far the greatest number of adherents of the nonconformist churches were negroes whose voice in the colony was as yet quite inaudible. Moreover, as has already been remarked, the Governor himself was strongly prejudiced in favour /

x Although the Presbyterian church was established and endowed in the colony its minister, the Rev. Dr. Maclure, was as much a dissenter as the Methodist and Baptist ministers. Indeed, he and Capern, the Baptist, were the two most bitter opponents of the Anglican church over the education issue. Similarly, another Presbyterian minister, Rev. R. Dunlop, who also appears in the educational history, led in the struggle for Disendowment and Disestablishment at a later date.

favour of the Church. The dissenters compensated for numerical weakness by bitterly contesting every suggestion of preference or partiality to their opponents. There being no hope of reconciling the opposing factions, all clergymen of all denominations were excluded from the Board set up under the 1841 Act. The liturgy and catechism of the Church of England were still to be taught in the schools on Friday "and that day only" except to children whose parents objected. It was expressly mentioned that the Central School was to be run on the Madras system and no change was made in the opening of the schools on Sunday for catechetical instruction. The Act was satisfactory to neither side but it did remove the strife from within the Board which was thus enabled to make some headway with developing the system of education. For five years the prime task of establishing schools had been at a standstill.

Repeated attempts were made to secure the repeal of this Act but no change was made for six years except (a) to include the newly appointed Archdeacon of the Bahamas as Chairman and (b) to increase the number of members to seven, not necessarily laymen although the Governor chose to appoint such. Though strife was removed from the counsels of the Board it still continued in the colony. Opposition to the Act continued for months after it was passed and this opposition flared up again with the favour to the Church of appointing the Archdeacon as Chairman. The dissenters repeatedly assailed the Governor for excluding /

excluding them from the Board. The Baptists memorialized the Queen and the Governor requested the Baptist Missionary Society for the second time to recall Capern, the Governor's most bitter critic.

When the 1841 Act expired opposition to it was so strong that it was not renewed. It was replaced by the 1847 Act which enjoyed a life of nearly twenty years. The Governor as Chairman, with not less than three other members appointed by him, were to constitute the Board. Catechism and sectarian teaching of any kind were expressly forbidden; the stipulations respecting the Madras system at the Central School and the opening of the schools on Sundays were withdrawn. Even the injunction to pupils to attend the church of their persuasion on Sundays was omitted. The master who was to be appointed to the Normal School was to be recruited from the British and Foreign School Society's institution in Borough Road, London. All clergymen, without distinction as to denomination, were appointed Visitors^x to the schools. This Act finally removed the schools from the control of the churches. The prestige of the Anglican Church in the colony had suffered a blow from which it did not recover until after Disestablishment. If the dissenters were satisfied with this outcome of their persistent contentions, then it could be only on the grounds that, though they themselves /

x These Visitors, unlike those of the older Acts, had no authority whatever over the schools or the school masters. No persons, other than the Board and its officers, possessed any such powers.

they themselves had no share in the control of the schools, the Church had lost all it ever had.

Since the control of the public schools was wrested from the Church there was no return to the old order. Schools were non-sectarian and the denominational strife, which continued for another twenty years, was gradually shifted from the schools and no longer impeded the development of the educational system. Any schools the churches wished to maintain received no aid from the Treasury and, as a result, the colony was left with no such perennial problem as that of "dual control".

Only the Anglicans pursued the policy of establishing their own schools to an appreciable extent. Efforts by the nonconformists were not widespread or long-lived. In the fifteen years following emancipation, the S.P.G. paid to the Church in the Bahamas, out of its Negro Education Fund, more than £8000. This was used to establish schools and pay salaries but after 1850 this source of income ceased. The following year, the Rev.W.J.Woodcock, the first Anglican minister appointed especially to the care of the negro population in Nassau, died leaving the whole of his estate for the maintenance of day schools for the people of Bain's Town, a negro suburb. In addition, a small income^{was}/received from Bray's Associates, previously mentioned, and the Christian Faith Society, another society deriving its income from a charitable bequest. By making token payments of a few pounds a year to its teachers, the Church /

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the Church was able to maintain a small number of schools. They were not very efficient but they persisted and were of useful service in settlements otherwise destitute of education. Commonly, the teacher was also catechist in the settlement. These schools continue to this day, maintained out of funds derived from the same three sources.

Renewed Progress.

Fortunately, the enthusiasm of the population for education, aroused in 1835, had survived the quarrels of the intervening years and now, laying aside their religious differences, they joined again in the movement for popular education. This change of attitude may be detected in the Secretary's report on the New Providence schools for 1850. Remarking that the year had been distinguished by the absence of internal disagreements arising out of conflicting opinions, he wrote: "If any one thing "has marked the year that has now gone by more than any other, "it is perhaps that, instead of strife being as it once was for "the principle on which the children of the poor should be "taught, it has been for priority in imparting education and "for distinction in improving it." The Assembly, too, was impressed with the need for providing adequately for the instruction of the youth of the colony and was encouraged by successive governors. A severe limitation was placed on their endeavours by the straitened finances of the colony, embarrassed as they were by the loss of revenue from Turks and Caicos islands /

islands on their alienation in 1848. It is said (Wright (45)) that these interests were given claim to the first consideration in making up the budget of the colony. Nevertheless, the inclusive grant of £1510, voted for the schools in 1847, had increased by only £400 seventeen years later. It is apparent, however, that a complete change had taken place in the attitude of the Legislature towards those who had lately been slaves. They were assuming the responsibility of their welfare instead of laying it on the Mother Country as they had done immediately following emancipation.

The Educational System.

Having followed the sequence of events in the struggle for control of the system, we shall now examine the system itself. All authority and all responsibility for education was vested in the Board of Education which was appointed by the Governor. The Inspector, who was not an ex-officio member of the Board, and all other officials were responsible to the Board and it in turn was responsible to the Governor. As a tacit reminder that it was also responsible to the public conscience, the proceedings of the Board were to be open to public inspection. It had no authority over private schools or schools that were only partly maintained out of public funds nor had it any authority over secondary, industrial, technical or vocational schools but was concerned solely with "elementary" education. These details of administration remain unchanged at the present day.

The most /

The most powerful factor in welding a number of scattered independent schools into a unified system of education was the introduction of regular inspection. This was added to the clerical duties of the Secretary of the Board in 1841. He was required to visit the New Providence schools once a month and the out island schools once a year. As he received but £2 a week remuneration it was scarcely possible to hold him to very strict account for the payment of these visits, especially to the out islands. In 1847 these duties were transferred to the new office of "Normal School Master". This officer, who was to be recruited from the Borough Road School, was expected to discharge the duties of (1) Head Master of the Central School, (2) the training of teachers at that institution and (3) the inspection of all schools in the colony annually. For performing all these functions he was to receive £200 a year. Mr. J. H. Webb, who was appointed to this office the same year, appears to have been no more than human and the duties that he was able to perform were almost solely those of Inspector of Schools. The distances he was obliged to travel were too great and the schools too numerous to enable him to devote much personal attention to the Central School. This regular and competent inspection of even the remotest schools enabled the Board to maintain effective control and supervision of all schools and teachers in the colony in a way that would have otherwise been wholly impossible. The visits were by no means frequent, being no oftener than once /

once a year in most cases, but it was only by this means that the Board could direct policy and prescribe the activities of schools and be reasonably confident that its policy and instructions were clearly understood and put into practice as faithfully as possible.

Training of Teachers.

In the training of teachers a dual plan was adopted. The Boys' Central School and the Girls' Model School were developed along the lines of the Normal Schools which were springing into existence in England under the aegis of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education. Five pupil teachers, three boys and two girls, were sent to these schools for training at a "salary" not exceeding £14 per annum. After training, these teachers were placed in sole charge of schools where the monitorial system prevailed. Monitors selected from among the brightest pupils in the top classes assisted the master in maintaining order and in the instruction of the lower classes. They themselves received special instruction from the master before school hours or, more commonly, at the close of the afternoon session. Outstanding monitors were selected from time to time by the Inspector for training at the normal school. This system, while it may have worked fairly well in Nassau, could scarcely have been very satisfactory in the out islands where the highest average attainments were miserably poor. Harbour Island was an exception to this as a teacher had been brought out from England especially for the school there. The result /

result was that the Harbour Island school became a subsidiary normal school and many teachers received their training and education there.

Education was not free. A "weekly stipend of one penny sterling" was to be paid for each child, three children of one family being admitted for twopence and no parent being required to pay more than threepence for any number of children. The wise advice of the 1835 Commission was disregarded and the teacher was made responsible for collecting the fees which, in the poorer settlements, could be paid in kind. Only orphans and destitute children were admitted free, in theory at least. In practice, at least half of the pupils never paid any fees at all and the remainder were very irregular. These fees, which varied from £42 to £94 a year, provided the only income with which the Board was able to purchase school materials.

Prior to 1847, no statistics are available apart from those for the year 1836. The progress made in that year was not maintained. There were then 16 schools, other than the Sunday schools and the one evening school, and 1576 pupils were enrolled. The conflict that ensued had an adverse effect and, in the years up to 1847, there was some decline both in the number of schools and in the number of children attending them. Solution of the denominational difficulty opened the way for renewed expansion but the extent of this was limited by the size of the annual grant. By 1850, the number of schools had increased to 26, with a roll of 1857, but the cost of maintaining them /

them exceeded the grant by more than £200. The Assembly refused to meet this extra sum for the following year and the Board was compelled to close five schools leaving only sixteen outside of New Providence. Not for another three years did the Assembly increase the grant and enable four of these schools to re-open. One remained closed for ten years until 1861 when a further meagre addition of £100 was made to provide salaries for this and another school. The excitement occasioned by the Civil War and the adverse effect of it on the economy of the out islands, together with the associated drift of population to Nassau, reacted on the schools, some of which were left without teachers and were forced to close. All suffered to some extent from loss of pupils enticed away by the abundant highly paid labour in Nassau. The rapid increase in the prices of commodities made it necessary for poorer parents to put their children to work to contribute to the family income. All who could work were allured or compelled to and teachers were able to find more remunerative employment. By 1864 there were no more schools and no more pupils attending them than there had been in the first year after emancipation, thirty years before, and the average attendance was barely 60%.

The State of the Schools.

The quality of the teaching and the degree of learning of the pupils at this time cannot be accurately known in the absence of records. Only two Annual Reports of the Board can be found for the /

for the thirty years from 1836-65. For the most part the teachers were poorly equipped for their work and no amount of advice and guidance in the art of teaching and school management, given them by the Inspector on his infrequent visits, was able to compensate for their gross lack of education. Learning by rote was universal and the Inspector himself seems to have been singularly unimaginative in his conception of what constituted good teaching. Moreover, the teachers laboured under very discouraging circumstances in many cases. The school buildings were by no means well equipped and often in an appalling state of disrepair. It was not uncommon for a quarter of the pupils in a school to be sitting on the floor while others learned to write kneeling at low benches or else standing at high tables. In one school which had been open for two years the people had never been able to complete the floor and, at peril of broken shins, the children scrambled over the uncovered joists as best they could. Periodic migration of the people to clean salt ponds or to rake salt, thus denuding the school of its pupils for several months a year, was but one of the many unsurmountable difficulties arising from the occupations of the out island folk. Conditions in Nassau were far better and the schools, better housed, equipped and staffed, were by comparison in a flourishing state. Even they, however, suffered from the universal disadvantages of irregular attendance, paucity of materials, constant changes of staff /

of staff on account of resignations to seek more highly paid work and early removal of children from school to augment the family income.

These besetting difficulties imposed a severe limitation on the achievement of pupils. In 1854 there were almost 2000 children, including those in Nassau, who were attending schools in the colony. Almost half of these neither could write nor were learning to write, more than half were unable to read the Bible and nearly 60% had not begun to learn the fundamental processes of arithmetic. This means that half of them, whatever their ages, had not progressed beyond infant standard. The population that year was approximately 30,000 of which at least one fifth would be between the ages of six and fourteen. Considering, then, that two thirds of these children were not attending school at all an idea may be formed as to the immensity of the problem confronting the Board of Education.

The Board turned down annually several importunate requests from out island communities willing to build schools should the Board provide teachers' salaries. This enthusiasm for schools did not always imply a true appreciation of the value of education. A school once established invariably suffered from irregular attendance, non-payment of fees and other manifestations of the ignorance, rather than the lack of enthusiasm, of the parents. This was especially revealed in the apathy towards the education of girls. Nevertheless, a large part /

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part of the out island population, especially in the negro settlements, was completely outside the scope of the Board's activities. Several islands still had no schools whatever and most of the others had only one to serve a number of settlements which might be as far as sixty miles from the school. The plight of those settlements which had been completely abandoned by the whites after emancipation was often further aggravated by the inability of the churches to extend their missions everywhere. It is also to be regretted that the churches continued to compete with one another instead of attempting to supplement one another's work. Not being able to read the New Testament and never having had it read or expounded to them either before or after emancipation, such settlements lapsed into primitive African superstitions and heathenish practices. Nevertheless, such is the peculiarity of the geography of the Bahamian islands, such mental and spiritual darkness could continue to exist for years within fifty miles or less of Nassau. The second Bishop of Nassau, describing the moral and spiritual condition of the negroes on the out islands at a later date, wrote: "The population, almost wholly negro, of an affectionate and impulsive disposition and giving proof in many instances of a well-founded Christianity, yet need very careful watching to prevent here and there a startling falling away into sin or a relapse into the wild, nondescript religion of the African creole - half-Obeah, half-Anabaptist."

King's College School.

We must now retrace our steps to 1835, that year of great enthusiasm for education, to see what became of the ambitious venture to establish King's College School. The previous attempt to provide secondary education had failed because the parents likely to patronize it were too few in number and not sufficiently wealthy to pay large fees. The Legislature was not able to vote large sums annually for its maintenance and the school had no capital from generous benefactions and endowments. Consequently it was never more than a poor substitute for a Public School education and the wealthier parents would not patronize it and had no interest in its welfare. For this reason, the main concern in the renewed attempt to establish a high school in Nassau was to make adequate financial provision for its continued existence in a flourishing state.

The plan adopted was ingenious but grossly underestimated the cost of such an institution as they hoped to establish. A capital fund was to be subscribed by the "wealthier classes of the community" in shares of £10 limited in number to 100 shares. A proportion of these shares were reserved for "the respectable inhabitants of Turks Islands and other out islands" so that at least a pecuniary interest in the school might be general. The decision to solicit the King's patronage of the institution was prompted, in part at least, by the hope that the King's interest in the /

1835 Report (49)

-ibid-

in the school would be manifested by an endowment. It appears to have been the desire that the endowment would take the form of "King's Scholarships", tenable for two or more years, "to offer successful candidates further education at King's College, London, at a comparatively trifling expense." Whether this hope materialized is not known though the King did give his consent to be a patron.

It was to ensure that a high standard of instruction would be attained that affiliation of the school with King's College was sought. The governors of that college were asked to nominate the staff of one head and one assistant master. In its organization and conduct the school of the same name in London was to be followed. In effect, what was aimed at was a preparatory school for boys previous to their entering King's College.

In their boundless enthusiasm, the promoters proceeded to draw up the most elaborate and premature details of curriculum, examinations and activities. At the very first public meeting about the scheme, appointments were made of vice-patrons, governors and visitors. Boarding facilities would be provided in the head master's house for the convenience of out island pupils. Even the time-table did not escape their attention and, inter alia, "the business of each day commences and terminates "with prayers and the reading of the scriptures" from which none of the pupils were to be allowed to absent themselves. There was /

There was no intention of tolerating nonconformist protests or interference and none but Anglican clergy were permitted any connection whatever with the school.

The ambitious scheme encountered one set-back after another. After the first flush of excitement had paled, an insufficient number of individuals came forward as share-holders. After eight months there were still only 38 and more than two years had elapsed before the shareholders, 57 in number by that time, were constituted a corporation by Act of Assembly. A little more than two years later the corporation was in financial difficulties over the unpaid balance of the cost of the building and also over its annual recurrent expenses. The government assumed a mortgage on the premises, paid the debt and authorized an annual grant, not exceeding £500, to defray financial deficiencies. In return, the school admitted not more than twenty orphans on the recommendation of the Governor. As if to ensure its complete and ultimate failure, the House prescribed that the fees should not exceed £12.10s. per annum for seniors and £7.10s. for juniors. From time to time it was found necessary to borrow further sums from the government for the repair of buildings and for teachers' salaries. Finally, in 1845, the corporation surrendered the building to the Public Board of Works on condition that it should continue in use for educational purposes. Although Government tried to carry it on on a much less pretentious scale than had been at first conceived /

conceived, it eventually came to an end a few years later.

Twice in forty years the Government had attempted to conduct a secondary school and on both occasions had failed miserably. It took no further part in secondary education for eighty years and in the meantime this field was left completely to the churches. Only two of these attempts concern this period. In 1827, a "Classical Academy" was conducted by the Rector of St. Matthew's. Nothing more is known of it other than that its curriculum embraced languages and mathematics. Following the failure of King's College School, the Anglicans opened the Nassau Grammar School in 1854 which proved to be the first institution of its kind to achieve any degree of permanence. Its work was disrupted during the years of the Civil War and it was reorganized in 1864 by Bishop Venables, who is often, for this reason, mistakenly supposed to have been its founder. The school continued intermittently until 1922.

Review of the Period 1835 - 1864

The sources of information relating to the progress of the educational system from 1836 to 1864 are few, yet the picture they give reveals clearly and unmistakably the origins of many features that were destined to characterize Bahamian education, if not until the present day, then at least for several decades until some solution was found to the problems they presented. It would be well to enumerate these briefly so that their development may be traced through the succeeding years:

1. The meagreness /

1. The meagreness and uncertainty of Treasury grants for education. Grants were liable to sudden reduction resulting in the closure of schools and the disruption in other ways of the Board's policy. Most of the other deficiencies of the educational system were attributable to this factor.
2. The extreme dispersion of population and the geographical nature of the colony cut off the communities from civilizing contacts, intensified the mental and spiritual ignorance of the people and, at the same time, increased the task of relieving it.
3. The lack of competent teachers arising from:
 - (a) The absence of facilities for giving prospective teachers a higher standard of education than that which they were supposed to impart to their pupils;
 - (b) The insufficiency and inefficiency of facilities for the training of teachers;
 - (c) Meagre salaries which attracted poor recruits and failed to retain the better teachers causing:
 - (d) Frequent resignations which were a disturbing influence in the life of the individual school.
4. Attempted solution of this problem by the importation of an English teacher.
5. The monitorial system of teaching adopted.
6. The supplies of books and materials generally were very limited.
7. Poor /

7. Poor school buildings and inadequate equipment and accommodation contributed to the unsatisfactory and discouraging conditions under which teachers worked, especially in out island schools.
8. The ignorance of parents caused infrequent attendance and early removal of children.
9. The economic plight of the out islands caused poverty among parents, non-payment of fees, inability to keep schools in repair and the dependence of the family on child earnings.
10. A second attempt to establish a high school for the children of the upper classes failed on account of
 - (a) Lack of demand for secondary education among the parents of that class for whom such an education was deemed to be best fitted;
 - (b) Financial inability of the parents and of the colony to maintain such a school and
 - (c) Failure of the school to achieve a high standard of efficiency.
11. One difficult problem had already been solved in the total exclusion of the religious denominations from control of the elementary schools. Thus frustrated, the Anglican Church made its first excursion into the sphere of secondary education as well as operating its own primary schools.
12. The importance of an efficient and progressive Board of Education to the well-being of the colony's schools was recognized. /

recognized. Such a Board was established after the failure of an initial attempt. The dependence of such a Board for its success on a qualified education officer was quite evident. It was for this reason that an attempt to set up a central body to supervise schools prior to emancipation did not succeed although there were then far fewer schools.

By the end of this period the Government had finally succeeded in establishing a system of education. Encouraged by the Home Government, it had accomplished this primarily in the interests of the liberated negroes, having previously failed to do it for the white population. It had failed in the realm of secondary education but in this the Church had started a venture which, if feeble, was nevertheless destined to prevail. The whole system was very frail and inadequate and beset by many weaknesses. There were many among the more enlightened in the colony who were fully alive to these deficiencies but, for the most part, there was a universal complacency with the present measure of achievement. The enthusiasm of the governing classes for education, evinced at the beginning of the period, though sustained for many years, had given place to an indifference towards popular education, especially after the failure to achieve success in establishing a school for their own children.

The inadequacy and inefficiency of the system was forcibly brought home to the Legislature by its wholesale disintegration in the /

in the early years of the Civil War when, for reasons already explained, there was a precipitate decline in schools, staff, roll and attendance. The need for consolidation and improvement of the system was realized following an awakening to the continued ignorant state of the mass of the population. Moreover, the moral state of the inhabitants had not been developed sufficiently to withstand the impact of the unprecedented affluence that visited the colony, uninvited, in the 1860's. By no means of least importance, there was more money in the Treasury for education and for all other public services than there had ever been before.

CHAPTER VI

Consolidation of the System: 1864 - 1919.

American Civil War and the 1864 Act.

The excitement occasioned by the Civil War and the blockade running was increased to a frenzy by the unprecedented amount of money that this activity put into circulation. All classes in Nassau were swept off their feet in an orgy of spending. Even the legislature was caught up in the mad whirl and began to pour out the colony's swollen revenue in a variety of public services and both public and private construction, designed to improve Nassau beyond all recognition, took place. Education, too, shared in the general increase of expenditure though to a comparatively slight extent at first. In spite of the fact that the decline in the schools had reached its lowest point in 1863 - 4, more money was voted for education in that year than ever before. The chief obstacle to educational expansion apparently having been removed by this sudden influx of revenue, there was some revival of enthusiasm for education for all classes. The desire for a high school again became prominent and a petition from a large number of inhabitants for such a school was drawn up. The Assembly found itself confronted yet again with the high school issue which had defied its attempts at solution in the past. No further venture was made on this occasion, however. The Grammar School, opened by the Church in 1854, had joined with/

with the public schools in the general decline during the war but it had received a new lease of life from the efforts of the new bishop, Addington Venables. It was decided to leave the realm of secondary education to the Church which might succeed where government had failed.

The public schools however, did engage the attention of the Legislature and the outcome was a new School Act. Experience of the last two decades largely influenced the provisions made by this Act for the future. Regular competent inspection of all schools in the colony had proved its value, as much by the consequences of its neglect during recent years as by its former success, in enabling the Board to maintain effective control. The "Normal Schoolmaster" was therefore relieved of his charge of the normal school, though he had not, in fact, acted in this capacity for several years, and the task of inspection was made his chief function. As if desiring to perpetuate the multiplicity of his functions, however, the legislators allocated to him the task of Secretary to the Board and for some obscure reason this subsidiary role was made the title of his office. This officer was to be recruited, as in the case of his predecessor, from the Borough Road School of the British and Foreign School Society.

↓ The poor quality of the teachers had ever been an outstanding weakness. This was recognised and several practical steps taken to attract better teachers. The profession was given an added security by admitting all teachers to schemes of/

of superannuation and widows' and orphans' pensions. Teachers were to be classified according to ability and their salaries adjusted accordingly. All salaries were increased although the average salary, after the increase, was less than £60. Another attempt to invigorate the ranks of the teaching profession was the importation from the United Kingdom of teachers for the Central School and the large out island schools at Harbour Island and Inagua.

Another serious deficiency of the schools had been the totally inadequate supplies of books and materials. This was met in a half-hearted fashion by the provision of an annual sum of £150, out of which the board must also keep the school houses in repair and rent others. Several new schools were provided for out island settlements.

The Religious Problem.

There was no revival of the old denominational contest for control and influence. The schools continued to be unsectarian following the lines of British Schools in England. Dissension had not ceased to exist but by pursuing a course of tactfulness and discretion the Board managed to avoid any incidents, though teachers were not altogether without their difficulties. The teacher in an out island community occupied, and still occupies, an exalted position among the simple out island folk, similar to that of the village schoolmaster portrayed by Goldsmith. For the teacher to exhibit sympathies with any particular religious denomination was to engender/

engender the suspicions of other sects. Furthermore, the churches saw in the teacher who was one of their members a useful means of proselytizing the community. This aim cannot be altogether discredited. Large numbers of small scattered communities could not have the frequent care of a minister but some provision for their spiritual welfare was essential. In most instances the most capable person to discharge the function of catechist or lay preacher was the only "educated" man to be found there. For the people to look to the teacher for their spiritual leadership as well as for their secular instruction, not only enhanced the prestige of the teacher in the settlement, but also tended to give the education he imparted a strong religious basis. Petty politics ordained otherwise; the first move was a ban on the use of any school house for religious purposes without the Board's special permission which was not easy to obtain.

The next defensive move was precipitated by the incident of "Blair's Surplice". The Secretary, on an out island inspection, was charged by a dissenting minister with (1) preaching twice in an Anglican Church, (2) wearing a surplice on both occasions, (3) identifying himself with the Church party in conversation so as to intensify a feeling of sectarianism and (4) allowing the school house to be used for religious purposes and then only in the interests of a party. Blair naturally claimed the liberty of conscience to conduct himself/

Minutes (52) August 5th 1870.

himself as he pleased in such matters. This could scarcely be denied but the Governor's comment was that "he had better not go about preaching in surplices" while the Board considered that he should confine himself to his duties of inspection and avoid being drawn into any discussion of the merits of the various denominations. Such discussion might be prejudicial to the cause of education. Shortly afterwards, the Board passed a by-law prohibiting any of its teachers from accepting "appointment as the paid religious teacher of any denomination". Apart from any consideration of policy, this was a singular hardship on those whose salaries were rarely more than £50 and not infrequently as low as £25.

The inevitable result of this sectarian jealousy and suspicion was that, so far from being a spiritual leader in the community, the teacher not uncommonly sought refuge in avoiding even attendance at church worship. This was a swing of the pendulum to that extreme which caused the Board even greater concern than active partisanship. Added to this was the alarming incidence among teachers, not only of drunkenness which was proverbial among early English schoolmasters, but also of gross immorality. Many dismissals occurred on this latter charge and that of habitual drunkenness. Doubtfulness of character was not uncommon among teachers and the Board was moved to countermand in some measure its previous pronouncements and urge teachers very strongly not to neglect their own spiritual welfare and at least/

Cole (10) page 3.

least to attend regularly a place of divine worship on Sundays.

Renewed Enthusiasm and Spectacular Progress.

The first Secretary-cum-Inspector to be appointed from Borough Road was William Job. His advent in 1865 ushered in a short period of unprecedented progress and expansion in a somewhat violent manner. Job was a remarkable man, very well qualified and extraordinarily energetic. Finding much that needed amendment, to which he drew attention in no uncertain terms, he attempted extensive and speedy reforms. His one failing was that he possessed little patience and, whereas many of these reforms were eventually effected with the passage of years or even decades, he wished to accomplish all together and at once. "Circumstances however constituted a dead weight which could only be moved slowly and laboriously; and after two years of hard work, which was really attended by considerable success, though less than he desired or expected, the Secretary broke down both in body and in mind, went to America for treatment and soon died."

He arrived in the colony to find the renewed enthusiasm for education beginning to filter through to out islands. In a very short time he had fanned this enthusiasm to flame until the whole colony, but especially the out islands, was all agog with his programme for education. Statistics concerning the schools bear eloquent testimony to his inspiration/

inspiration and also to the Assembly's unwonted liberality with grants for education. Job arrived in May 1865 to find 25 schools open with less than 1600 pupils enrolled. By the end of that year there had been an increase by nearly 60%. This phenomenal increase was continued until after Job's departure so that, by comparison with the state of affairs he had found in 1865, his successor found nearly 60% more schools, twice as many pupils enrolled and almost three times as many in average attendance. In Job's first year the Assembly spent over £3800, more than double any previous year. Two years later the expenditure on education amounted to £4900, a sum without equal for the remainder of the century. As witness to the enthusiasm among parents, the amount paid in school fees at twopence a week increased more than five times in two years, and more than three times as much was received for school materials sold to pupils. In contrast with these indications of general enthusiasm and expansion, the ignorance of the pupils was colossal. In Job's first annual inspection, the numbers of passes in reading, writing and arithmetic, expressed as percentages of the roll, were 27%, 19% and 14%.^x In this respect there was no such spectacular increase during the brief period in which Job held office.

x In 1870, only 24% of the whole population of the colony (35,287), was able to read.

Retrenchment : 1869.

The zeal and expansion came to as untimely an end as Job. The financial embarrassment in which the colony was plunged, following the end of the war and the disastrous hurricane of 1866, necessitated the inevitable retrenchment in public expenditure in 1869. Education suffered severely and disproportionately. The expenditure was ruthlessly cut by one third of what it was the previous year and one half of its value in 1867. The closure of eight schools followed though the pupils enrolled at the remaining schools increased. This was but the beginning of another general decline in education such as the colony had witnessed many times over. Unfortunately, as in the past, it took a far longer time to regain lost ground than it did to destroy the progress made. Not for another fifteen years did the schools begin to show signs of recovery from this latest set-back to their development. In spite of this, these years saw a steady improvement in the attainments of the pupils. To some extent this reflects a corresponding average improvement in the quality of the teaching although, as we shall subsequently see, it was of the mechanical and uninspired variety best adapted to producing results at the Inspector's annual examination.

Very surprisingly, the new Secretary was not at all disturbed by this crippling reduction in the grant. Blair appears to have inherited, in some measure, Lancaster's genius for cheap education and he was profoundly shocked by the "far too/

Report (51) 1868

too high" expenditure per pupil. He accepted with equanimity the closing of a few "small and unimportant" schools and the reduction of salaries to their pre-1864 level and welcomed the reduction in the cost of education per child to less than one third of its value in Job's first year. In one respect the reduction of the grant was a most happy calamity as it was Blair's intention to have introduced a scheme of payment by results similar to the Revised Code of 1861 which "has caused "so much excitement and produced such beneficial results in "England". When payment by results was eventually introduced eight years later, it was in a very mild and restricted form and was soon discontinued. Blair remained in the colony for ten years and had abundant opportunity to repent at leisure his rash pronouncements on the cost of education in the Bahamas. He had completely overlooked a number of factors, peculiar to the Bahamas, such as the extreme dispersion of the population, which were bound to cause a relatively high cost of education per pupil. His untimely glibness had the effect of keeping education grants at a very low level for the whole of his service in the colony and for many years afterwards and both he and his successors found their work greatly hampered by financial difficulties.

The enthusiasm of the out island people for schools persisted for some time after the retrenchment of 1869. The onus of establishing a new school still rested with the inhabitants who had to guarantee the payment of fees and a sufficient/

sufficient attendance to justify the Board's efforts on their behalf. They were also bound to undertake the major share of the erection, furnishing and repair of the school building. In many poorer settlements, this was a sufficient obstacle to prevent the establishment of a school, yet the desire for education was great enough to overcome it. In one such instance the school was almost completed but was held up for want of lumber. The people appealed to the Board for a grant of lumber as its contribution towards the school, but its finances were in such a plight that this simple request could not be granted. The opening of this particular school was consequently delayed for another fourteen years. With such discouragement, of which this is but one of many instances, it was not long before the out islanders' enthusiasm also succumbed to the retrenchment and interest in the schools began to wane. This, coupled with their financial embarrassment, led the Board to threaten the closure of any school where the average attendance fell below 25 or the cost of maintaining it rose above £2 per pupil. A more constructive move to stimulate and sustain the inhabitants' interest was the appointment of Local School Committees charged with general supervision of the schools.

The Act of 1875 made very little significant change in the system and did not arrest the general decline except momentarily. The addition of £300 to the grant enabled the re-opening of a few schools but they were again closed when the/

the additional grant was withdrawn the following year. When the £300 was restored four years later it had no influence on the declining number of schools and attendance, as the Board was now faced with the new problem of repairing the schools already operating.

It should be observed in passing that the work of the Anglican Church in conducting schools in the islands was still continuing though they also suffered from a lack of money. Especially had this been the case since the Negro Education Fund of the S.P.G. had come to an end in 1850 and no more financial assistance came from that source. All that remained were the small grants from Bray's Associates and the Christian Faith Society in addition to the Woodcock estate. A grant from the Board of Education was sought to assist these schools but no assistance was forthcoming from that source. Even if the Board itself had been more affluent, it had no intention of giving assistance to schools it did not control. In 1872 there were 24 Anglican schools with an average attendance of about 1200. This means that there were nearly as many Church schools as government schools in the colony with an attendance of rather less than half that at the public schools.

"Revised" Code 1875.

The system was being faced with complete disintegration from internal causes as well. The teachers, of poor calibre in general, began to lose interest in consequence of the increasingly/

increasingly difficult conditions under which they worked. There was little order about the manner in which they conducted their schools and their aimlessness constituted a serious threat to the efficiency of the few schools that the Board was able to support. To check this and to give teachers some guidance in the conduct of their schools, Blair formulated his "Revised" Code in 1875. There was no good reason for designating it "revised" as it appears to have been the first code ever drawn up but its title reveals the extent to which Blair was influenced by the English Revised Code of 1861 and its associated system of payment by results. He did not achieve his ambition of introducing this latter system for two more years but his "revised" code was largely designed to prepare the way for it.

The code followed the pattern of its English counterpart. Its details will be dealt with later where they are most appropriate; suffice it here to enumerate briefly the main considerations. It laid down a rigid curriculum showing the standards of examination in all the "extra" subjects as well as the basic subjects. For the first time a classification of teachers was attempted, although the 1864 Act had required this, and rules were made governing pupil teachers and monitors. Most important of all was the formulation of a course of training for pupil teachers. It was this code that also initiated the Local School Committees. Since its most urgent considerations concerned the teaching staff/

staff and the training of teachers, these aspects of the education of the period will now be treated in some detail.

Quality of the Teachers of the Period.

It would be superfluous to attempt an assessment of the comparative effects, on the educational system of the period, of the Board's financial embarrassment and the poor quality of the teachers. The one limiting factor was clearly the cause of the other and the salaries that the Board could pay did not attract the best men to the profession. In 1872 more than half of the head teachers were earning less than £50 a year and good men could obtain higher wages as clerks or mechanics. Nearly every man who applied for the post of teacher did so because he could do nothing else. In 1880 the highest salary in the colony, except that paid to the one English teacher remaining, was but £90. Assistant teachers, of whom there were only four in the colony, were paid £10 a year and a part-time sewing teacher was paid £6. Salaries reached their highest level in 1913 as a result of successive slight increases in the education grant. This brought the average salary of head teachers up to £73 per annum - not quite £15 a year more than half a century earlier at the beginning of this period. In the same year, assistant teachers received less than £15, pupil teachers £10 and the army of monitors received 6/- a month. It is not to be wondered at that the "office of schoolmaster was the refuge of the destitute".

There/

Report (51) 1883

There were a few teachers with a sense of vocation and of a fair order of intelligence but the vast majority were poorly equipped for their work whether by intelligence, abilities or zeal. For the most part they neglected their own intellectual advancement and were consequently unfit for efficient school work. If little time was spent in study, even less, if any at all, was spent in the preparation of lessons. Many were old and infirm. Job found one out island school conducted by an old woman, 72 years old. Another, appointed when over 50, was retired at 66 suffering from nervousness to such an extent that for years he had had to employ an amanuensis to conduct his correspondence. In the same year, another was suffering from "partial blindness, "frequent deafness and generally shattered health" while yet another relapsed periodically into a state of unsound mind. Although the Board was obliged to retain many of these old teachers because they could not be replaced, they adopted a principle of not appointing a teacher more than forty years old.

When Job made his first tour of inspection he found that elements of order were mostly non-existent and discipline was conspicuous by its absence. The order in the schools was soon improved generally but for many years schools in which the discipline was good were rare exceptions. Irregularity and unpunctuality long remained common failings of teachers, especially on the out islands. "A shower of rain anywhere
"near/

Report (51) 1884.

-ibid- 1886

"near schooltime on a cloudy morning, some trifling personal "business or an ailment which did not prevent him from attending to his own affairs" was sufficient to keep many a teacher away from school or to make him late.

Teaching methods were no better. The teachers contented themselves with merely overlooking and making the children "do lessons. . . They do not take the trouble to explain, illustrate and question. Future improvement in this respect must depend chiefly upon obtaining teachers who have clearer views on what needs to be done and greater ability to do it". The Inspector's efforts to improve matters by suggestion were often attended by success but just as often frustrated by the teachers' lack of imagination. Learning and teaching by rote universally prevailed. Conditions in the grant-in-aid schools^a were infinitely worse. Here many of the teachers were scarcely literate. Of one such teacher, who had been given some training at the Harbour Island School, the Inspector wrote: "Two classes, probably containing an aggregate of from 60 to 70 children, were being taught the alphabet one at a time from little books presented to them upside down, the deficiency in aspect being atoned for by the energy with ^hwhich the sound was "shouted at them".

Whatever the teachers may have lacked in knowledge or ability to teach was abundantly compensated for by the vigour with which they administered corporal punishment. As late as

See page 241 for explanation of "grants-in-aid".

Report (51) 1889

1891 the Board expressed its disapproval of whipping with a rope. It was not uncommon for the head teacher to delegate the fatiguing task to a pupil teacher who left his other duties at intervals to dispense with those standing "on the line" awaiting his attention.

The position of the teacher invested him with a certain status and prestige in an out island community but his education was not always such as to enable him to maintain that prestige. Where a teacher was also the local Justice of the Peace, an unfavourable decision against a parent might react against the interests of his school. Frequently the teacher was not possessed of sufficient tact to guarantee the co-operation of the Local School Committee and his period of service was thereby made unhappy in that settlement. Finally, there was always the temptation to deteriorate to the general level of his environment. The Inspector was quick to realize that allowance must be made for out island teachers. "The zeal and industry of some of them is highly commendable and if, situated as they are with few or none within reach whose respectability, intelligence, tastes and pursuits are calculated to improve their own, deterioration is too often apparent, this is no more than happens to a large proportion of those, whose previous advantages have been much greater, when similarly placed".

The code of 1875 created four classes of teachers, the highest being reserved for those with satisfactory service. Although/

Although the examinations were comparatively easy and 35% of marks was enough to earn a 4th class certificate, it was found necessary to lower the standards two years later. This classification was a definite beginning of improvement in teachers' qualifications but the Board was so hard pressed for teachers that appointments had to be made from time to time of candidates who had failed to pass even in the 4th class. Not until the system of classification had been in force for sixteen years, did the Board adopt the principle of not appointing a 4th class failure to the charge of a school but this principle could never be adhered to. No figures are available to show the number of teachers allocated to each class at first but the figures for 1906 show that there were only two 1st class teachers while there were more in the bottom class and below it than in the top three classes combined. In addition there were as many more teachers, below 4th class, in grant-in-aid schools. There was only slight improvement by the end of the period.

The efforts of the Board and successive inspectors to raise the standard of the teaching staff were unremitting but there was little they could do in the face of the deplorable salary scale. At first the task was one of weeding out the manifestly unsuitable but even some of these had to be retained since they could not be replaced. The most promising possibility was to rear an efficient body of teachers/

teachers from among the best pupils and the attempts to train teachers will shortly be described. By degrees, but very slowly, it appears that these efforts brought about a general improvement. By 1880 the Board was getting into its service men who had served as pupil teachers or assistant masters. At the end of the century, while the best teachers in the service were probably not better than some of their predecessors, yet the most inefficient ones were superior to those of former years and the average efficiency was considerably higher.

Undoubtedly the most discouraging obstacle to these efforts appeared at the beginning of this century when it was becoming increasingly evident that a better type of teacher was being produced. As the need for a larger number of civil servants began to engage the attention of other government departments, they too were faced with a shortage of educated recruits. Then began the discreditable practice of filching the best men from the teaching profession and appointing them to other departments. To labour for years to cherish an inferior individual and then, when awaiting expectantly the fruits of his work in rearing more capable recruits to the profession, to see him carried off as a commissioner or a tidewaiter or a revenue officer, lured away by a bigger salary, must have occasioned sore disappointment.

Monitorial/

Monitorial System.

We have seen that the monitorial system was introduced by McSwiney in 1836 under the influence of the British and Foreign School Society. It was essentially similar, ideally at least, to the Lancastrian plan with the one outstanding difference that, whereas even the Borough Road School abandoned it in 1852, it still persists in the Bahamas a century later. There are two reasons for its perpetuation the most pressing, as usual, being the inadequacy of the Board's finances. Secondly, the extreme dispersion of the population made a large number of small schools inevitable and it was uneconomic and financially impossible to supply each school with more than one teacher. Consequently, the monitorial system became firmly established as an easy and cheap solution of the staffing problem. At the beginning of the period there were 19 monitors but by 1919 there were 184 - more than three times the combined number of head and assistant teachers. The code of 1875⁺ prescribed a hopeful set of qualifications for monitors. Any school with an attendance greater than 35 could appoint a pupil over eleven years old as a monitor, at the rate of 1/- a week increasing by annual increments of 3d. to 1/6d. This was a generous increase from 3d a week in 1866. In 1881 some monitors were earning as much as 8/4d. a month. A pupil must be able to read from standard IV lesson book, and, /

and, among other things, know the names and dates of all English sovereigns before qualifying for appointment as a monitor. Every teacher was required to devote not less than five hours a week out of school hours to the instruction of his monitors. The instruction of the youngest children was left to the monitors in most schools, the teachers generally "failing in aptitude or inclination to teach the lowest classes". It happened not infrequently that monitors were left in charge of the whole school while the teacher absented himself on other business or on account of sickness.

Importation of English Teachers.

This practice is as old as the educational system itself, dating from 1836, but it was most actively carried on in the first few years of this period beginning with Job in 1865. There was never any intention to staff the schools generally with imported teachers and the only schools favoured in this way were the Boys' Central School and the two out island schools of Harbour Island and Inagua. To reap the fullest benefit from the expense involved, a married man was usually appointed and his wife was required to conduct a girls' school.

The aim was simply to introduce teachers of superior education and training who would, be able to impart to pupil teachers a better training in teaching than the system could otherwise give them. The greatest weakness of the educational system/

system was that it could never raise its head above the low standards of instruction set by its teachers. The teachers were but poorly equipped, being themselves products of the unsatisfactory system. There was no opportunity for them to obtain any higher education within the colony and, having become teachers, they could scarcely be expected to set up a higher standard of education in their schools than they themselves had received. Consequently, each successive generation of teachers was no better than the last and the standard of education in the colony was never able to rise. Moreover, the best pupils from the schools avoided the profession and only the poorer pupils found their way back into the schools as teachers. By the importation of a few more highly qualified English teachers, the Board hoped to destroy this vicious circle.

In most instances the scheme met with success and the teachers raised their schools to a higher standard of efficiency than they had hitherto known. Several pupil teachers were educated and trained by them but none, with one exception, was disposed to remain in the colony. Unfortunately, this scheme, too, succumbed to the Board's poverty, for in 1873 the combined salary offered to a teacher and his wife was only £150 and, for this salary, they were expected to undertake a five-year contract. The British and Foreign School Society had extreme difficulty in recruiting a man at this low salary and, when he arrived, he gave little satisfaction and/

and was sent back two years later. This failure and another immediately before it discouraged the Board from any further attempts in this direction and only one more such venture was made within this period.

The scheme could have been made to work well and indeed, during the earlier, more affluent years, was attended by no small measure of success. In later years the low salary that the Board was able to offer did not bring the most satisfactory teachers and, when those teachers arrived, they found the conditions of their service were far from being attractive. Life on out islands was hard and lonely, they had no assistance in their schools other than monitors, accommodation was limited and poor, and books and materials were in very restricted supply. In such circumstances, a teacher, without pioneering zeal and a sense of mission was doomed to bitter disappointment and, from the Board's point of view, failure. The scheme did meet, however, with one outstanding success and special reference must be made to this particular individual.

George Cole, the Father of Bahamian Education.

George Cole, destined to make more contribution to Bahamian education than any other one person, came from England, but not from Borough Road, to Harbour Island in 1867. He soon transformed that school to the premier school of the colony and worked there for fourteen years with his wife who conducted a girls' school. During this/

Minutes (52) March 6th 1912

this time, and a short period at the Boys' Central School, his greatest contribution to the schools of the colony was the number of pupil teachers whom he successfully trained. He became Inspector in 1882 and continued there until his death in 1913 at the advanced age of 73. During that period of 30 years, great progress was made in all aspects of the system of popular education and he may be accorded a major share of the credit for all this advancement. Although he died more than thirty years ago, his influence has not passed away; the Education Act of 1908, formulated in his time, still forms the legal basis of present day primary education.

The Board expressed its appreciation in this minute: "Mr. Cole was unremitting in the discharge of his important duties, often involving long and dangerous journeys by sea and land. The high character which he bore and his impartiality and rectitude of purpose secured for him universal respect and the Board cannot speak too highly of his life-long exertions in the cause of education in this colony". The profound influence that he had on the personnel as well as the system of education for nearly half a century well merits his designation as "Father of Education" in the Bahamas.

Training of Teachers.

The Normal School for the training of teachers was first established in 1836 and reinstated in 1847 but such was/

Minutes (52) August 23rd 1865

was the lack of success of this institution that Job found only one teacher who had had any course of training whatever. It had been the custom to send prospective teachers to the Boys' Central School for "a month or so" before appointing them to the charge of schools. In Job's first year, four new teachers were appointed on trial for twelve months "on condition of attending the Boys' Central School "for a fortnight". The Governor thought that a solution of the problem might be found at the Mico Training Institute in Jamaica and he conducted lengthy negotiations with this in view. The Board pointed out that there could be no satisfactory solution until a specific sum had been voted for the purpose. As such a sum was not forthcoming, the negotiations with Jamaica produced no results. There was no alternative but that of perfunctory attendance at the Central School which was not accompanied by any systematic course of training.

The code of 1875 instituted the system of pupil teacher training under the care of one of the more efficient masters such as Cole who, on more than one occasion, claimed the bonus of £5 for successfully training a pupil teacher. The only qualifications stipulated for a pupil teacher were that he must be over thirteen and free from physical infirmity. He was required to sign a five-year agreement and a course of instruction was laid down, the only mention of professional training/

training being that, at the end of the course, he was to be able "to give a gallery lesson on a subject chosen by "the inspector". He received a remuneration of £10 a year rising to £20.

There is no indication that, apart from the few instances mentioned, the pupil teacher system was ever satisfactory. In schools other than those at Nassau and Harbour Island, they were little more than monitors or cheap assistant teachers. In 1881 the ever present need for economy put a stop to the pupil teacher system in all schools other than Nassau and Harbour Island thus effecting an annual saving of £20 a year. The number of pupil teachers at any one time rarely exceeded seven or eight, representing a gain of about one teacher per annum.

Meanwhile the practice of sending selected candidates of more mature years (teachers in training) to the Central School continued as before but the Board was always having to resort to the appointment of teachers without adequate training and even without adequate education. That the periodical appointment of 4th class failures which, although discountenanced in 1891, continued well into the present century, is sufficient indication of the dire shortage of teachers that persisted throughout the period. Only two other attempts were made to remedy the shortage of trained teachers. One was the abortive attempt to establish a Training Institute in 1891 and the other was the/

Minutes (52) December 13th 1870

the interrupted attempt to reorganize the pupil teacher system in 1912.

Payment by Results : 1877 - 1891.

Within two years of formulating his "revised" code, Blair succeeded in following it with payment by results. Whatever may have been the main aim of payment by results in England, there can be no doubt but that the primary object of its application in the Bahamas was economy. Although the aim of increasing efficiency was not absent from the Board's deliberations, yet it was a secondary consideration. But for the drastic reduction of the education grant in 1869, Blair would have introduced payment by results then because the cost of education per pupil was, in his own words, "far too high". The following year, the opening of a new school in Eleuthera was regarded as an opportune moment to introduce the system because the Board could not maintain the whole cost of the school.^x The Board was laying itself open to a charge of using the deplorably low standard of education in the colony as a means of economizing a few pounds at the teachers' expense. Shortly after payment by results was begun, a teacher already in the service was being transferred to another school where he was to be paid under "the new system". When it was discovered that he held a

^x The minute was later rescinded, not on ethical grounds, but because it was considered a direct violation of the 1864 Act.

Minutes (52) July 13th 1877

first class certificate the Board decided to offer him £50 plus fees instead of £40 plus the capitation grant which might prove to be at the rate of 7/6d. per pupil. Comment on these and similar instances is superfluous except perhaps the generous one that it was to such disreputable expedients that the Board had been impelled by financial stringency. It was also hoped that an improvement in attendance might be effected by placing the onus of keeping up the attendance on the teacher who would suffer pecuniarily by a decline.

Blair inserted the thin end of the wedge in the code of 1875 in which the system of classification was adapted to the subsequent introduction of payment by results. It was the Governor, however, who made the final move in his capacity as chairman of the Board. He did not wish to reduce the expenditure on education though he anticipated a saving for the first two or three years. The Board, face to face with a mass of ignorance, must discover how to provide for the education of the whole colony. He proposed to submit a measure for compulsory attendance to the House but meanwhile payment by results might certainly be tried.

It is to the Rev. Robert Dunlop, the Presbyterian Minister, that the credit must go for challenging this policy and for the fact that payment by results was never applied so ruthlessly as in England. While he did not wish to oppose the Governor's suggestion in toto yet he objected to the details of the scheme. The teachers' salaries would/

Minutes (52) July 13th 1877

would depend upon examination results obtained from one annual report by the Inspector and there might arise appeals against his report. Such appeals were out of the question, unthinkable. The scale of remuneration was insufficient and salaries would be subject to unfair fluctuation. Furthermore the standard of examination was too high. He suggested that schoolmasters be classified by examination on appointment and their salaries made to depend on this classification. Part of them, he conceded, "sufficient to make their schools well "attended and efficient" might depend on the results of the official examination. Blair was instructed to modify his scheme to embody Dunlop's suggestions.

Payment by results came into force at the end of that year but only in the case of new appointments. The basic salaries of teachers depended on their classification under the 1875 code. First class teachers received £40 and 4th class teachers £20. On the results of the annual examination, in which marks were awarded to the "extras" as well as the "primary test subjects", schools were assigned to one of four classes. Capitation grants depended on this classification, the sums paid for each child in average attendance varying from 7/6d in a 1st class school to 4/- in a 4th class school.

In 1880 the average salary paid to 14 teachers under the "new system" was £52. The scale of payments was too heavily weighted in favour of the more intelligent teacher, while Dunlop/

Dunlop also urged again a reduction in the amount depending on the school examination. The following year the scheme of payment was modified accordingly. The basic salary was increased and the classification of schools dropped. Instead, half (2/-) of the capitation grant was paid for each child in average attendance irrespective of success in the examination. The other 2/- per child was paid for each pass in a primary test subject.

The evils resulting from the system were the same as those observed in England but not so pronounced. Teachers adopted the plan of putting their pupils one or two standards down on the day of the examination in order to ensure a greater number of passes. At this time more than half of all the pupils attending school were in the preliminary standard or standard I. Although this could not be ascribed solely to the effect of payment by results, yet that system certainly retarded an improvement in this respect. The tendency to neglect the "extra" subjects for the sake of the "paying" ones, attended by no risk of loss of salary under the 1881 revision, cannot be altogether blamed on the system. This deficiency was prevalent to a considerable extent in the schools not under the "new system" and was more commonly due to the teachers' own ignorance of the "extra" subjects. It is true, however, that the Inspector's repeated plea for more imaginative teaching was totally ignored and rote methods favoured by the teachers as being productive of/

Minutes (52) October 8th 1890

of greater financial returns.

Consequently in 1887, a further modification was made so that the extra subjects entitled the teacher to additional remuneration in proportion to the extent to which they were taught and understood. The uniform grant of 2/- per pass in primary subjects was altered to a sliding scale according to the standards in which the passes were gained. The sums payable varied from 3/- in standard VI to 9d. in the preliminary standard. The Inspector was still obliged, therefore, to waste his valuable time in the fruitless task of listening to the "babies" saying their letters and counting up to 10. Whatever other effect this modification may have had or was intended to have, it certainly had the immediate effect of a saving to the Board's finances as standards above III in the colony mostly did not exist and were poor where they did. It was only in such standards where passes in primary test subjects "paid" at least as much as in the 1881 modification.

In 1890 a committee of the board was appointed to consider salaries and any other necessary alterations "to attract and retain in the service of the Board a sufficient staff of qualified teachers". The committee reported early the following year and its first recommendation on a list of ten was the abolition of payment by results. The recommendation was adopted. That this colony never introduced the system to the full extent of its tyranny and that it abolished the pernicious/

Minutes (52) May 17th 1897

pernicious system eight years before similar action in England, warrants the payment of great credit to the Board but especially to the Rev. R. Dunlop who died suddenly less than two months after this action of the Board.

But, four years later, payment by results reared its ugly head once more and again it was a Governor who wished to introduce it. For almost two years Governor-in-Council and the Board wrangled over the offending issue and no agreement was reached. Finally, both sides compromised on the payment of a bonus for "teachers whose services appear "to have been thoroughly satisfactory and deserving". With the adoption of this harmless provision, the shadow of payment by results finally vanished in the same year as the Committee of Council banished its counterpart in England.

Compulsory Attendance.

In spite of the general flocking to the schools during his short service in the colony, Job realised that there were still great numbers outside of the schools. He advocated some form of compulsory attendance from the first, pointing out, however, that only about three fifths of the children of the colony were within reach of schools. Blair, his successor, continued to urge compulsory attendance, showing that of that fraction of the child population which was within reach of schools, no more than two thirds were attending them.

The general decay of the educational system in all its aspects/

aspects during the 1870's finally compelled the Board and the Government to action along the lines their inspectors had recommended. No longer were successive governors of the colony complimenting the Legislature on its efforts to educate the slaves. On the contrary, the Governor in 1877 was quite frank in his warning that "the social, "moral and intellectual condition of many of the people "on the out islands was a disgrace to any British colony". The Board paid annually £2000 to educate 2000 children but not less than twice that number were not attending any school at all. The situation was anomalous. On the one hand the Board was helpless to respond to the numerous and repeated appeals for assistance to establish new schools because of the inadequate funds at its disposal. On the other hand, the schools that were in existence were far from being full although they were quite inadequate to accommodate all the children within reach of them.

Statistics for the decade beginning 1870 reveal the appalling state into which the schools fell. Added to the gradual decline in school roll was the fact that the average attendance fell below 50%; but this refers to attendance at such times as the schools were open. The by-laws required teachers to conduct school for 45 weeks a year but even when enthusiasm was at its peak, the average of all schools was no more than 40 weeks. In 1878, when matters had reached their lowest ebb, the average/

average had fallen to 33. Therefore, in that year, less than half of the children in the colony were on school roll, less than half of those constituted an average attendance, schools were closed altogether for an average of nearly two fifths of the year and, finally, there must be added to this the effect of such gross unpunctuality as prompted the Board to direct that registers must be closed not later than 11 a.m. The cumulative effect of these inefficiencies alone, without any consideration of the added inefficiency of the teaching staff, revealed to the Board the melancholy fact that the meagre grant was accomplishing no more than 20% of what could legitimately be expected of it.

Apart from the loss of efficiency occasioned by the low standard of the teachers, the main reasons for this depressing state were the natural indolence and ignorance of the parents. Notwithstanding the importunity of those who had no schools, the value placed on education of those who had was "almost nil". The attendance of infants was comparatively regular but older children were kept from school for weeks at a time or, more commonly, attended or stayed away as they pleased quite uncontrolled by their parents. When attempting to explain the grossly unpunctual and irregular attendance in his report for 1885, Cole adduces a long list of reasons including the scattered nature of the population and the long distances children had to travel along bad roads, the poverty of parents and the requirements of/

Report (51) 1885

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of field labour. "But I believe," he continues, "that it is mainly due to the mental constitution and domestic habits of the parents. It is not that they do not acknowledge the importance of education. Most parents wish their children to be educated if that would suffice but innumerable petty contingencies are constantly arising which make it inconvenient to send them to school just when they ought to go, and the parents have neither the foresight to provide against these contingencies nor the resolution to set them aside; for a small advantage which is present and tangible outweighs a great evil which the distant future renders vague and shadowy." Able and energetic teachers, who had preserved their influence with the parents, were able to do much to lessen the evil but the majority, being not much better themselves, were quite resigned to it and made it a convenient excuse for any amount of inefficiency in their schools.

There was only one apparent remedy, but to enforce compulsory attendance throughout the colony would have been all but impossible and would have involved such tremendous expense that the Government, and certainly ~~not~~ the Board, could ^{not} bear. In any case, there were not sufficient schools to accommodate all out island children and, for this reason, it was introduced first to New Providence in 1878, only eight years after the passing of Forster's Bill in England. Even in Nassau, to accommodate the sudden influx of pupils, an/

an extra school had to be built; it was overcrowded within six months.

The compulsory clauses applied to children between the ages of six and twelve. Exemption could be granted on account of (1) a child's being under efficient instruction elsewhere, (2) sickness, (3) possession of a certificate from the Inspector signifying the child's having attained a Standard IV level of education and (4) living more than a mile and a half from a school. As had happened so often before in Bahamian education, the effect was immediate, spectacular and transient. Within three months the attendance at New Providence Schools had leaped up by 40%. Two years later, it was worse than it had ever been. Parents were not slow to realise that, although they were required by law to send their children to school, nothing much happened to them if they did not. Although a number of parents were summoned before the magistrate there was no adequate means of apprehending offenders. This was remedied in 1881 by the appointment of a constable or school attendance officer.

Having succeeded in introducing compulsory attendance in New Providence, the Inspector proceeded to urge (1) its extension to embrace the ages five to fourteen, (2) its extension to all islands, (3) the increase of the distance limit, (4) a raising of the standard for exemption, (5) an increase in the powers of the constable, (6) inspection of private/

private schools and (7) the rigid application of the penalties so that they might act as a serious deterrent.

Compulsory attendance aggravated the problem of school fees. The payment and collection of fees had always caused a large amount of difficulty. In 1872, only a third of the fees that should have been paid were collected. Although the law provided for court action against parents for failure to pay, such a course was impracticable. In an effort to pass the problem on to the teachers and also, it was hoped, to improve attendance, the Board commonly awarded half of the fees to the teachers who were also empowered to sue parents themselves on behalf of the Board. This was an extremely ill-advised policy and had departed a long way from that recommended by the 1835 Commission. Teachers who used this power and sued parents immediately found themselves at variance with the people. In 1881, all fees were awarded to teachers in the curious hope that this addition to salaries would attract a better type of teacher to the service. The only result was considerable inequality of salaries and he who received most was more efficient, not as a teacher, but as a collector of petty debts.

The obvious solution was to abolish fees and compensate the teachers for their loss. This was done in 1886 when compulsory attendance was extended to the out islands. Similar action in England was thus anticipated by at least five years. Fees in grant-in-aid schools were not abolished and/

Report (51) 1888.

and, in theory at least, may still be charged though this provision is virtually a dead letter. However beneficial to school attendance the ultimate results of this legislation may have been, its immediate effects on the financial position was most embarrassing. While the 1886 Act authorized the compensation of teachers for the loss of fees, it made no financial provision to enable the Board to do this. For two years the Board had good reason almost to regret the abolition of fees until the education vote was increased in 1888.

Enforcement of compulsory attendance in the out islands provided to be extremely difficult. Many districts were so remote from a Resident Justice as to render it impossible to bring cases to court. This difficulty was eased by allowing Justices of the Peace to hear cases. Many of these individuals, however, were out of sympathy with the Act and showed extreme unwillingness or even refusal to impose fines. For some years it was left largely to the teachers to apply the law by persuasion. That persuasion was wholly inadequate was repeatedly impressed upon the Inspector when, for example, his annual inspection of an out island school would be vitiated by wholesale absence from school. Thus: "A schooner had begun to load with pineapples that morning and would not finish till the morrow evening. Hence the teacher could get together only 31 children, (out of 172 on roll) and those mostly little ones, for inspection."

Persuasion having failed, the Board instructed teachers to use/

use the full extent of their powers to enforce attendance. Many teachers did not respond, in spite of dire threats from Nassau but, by the end of the period, it is apparent that teachers and justices were uniting in a determined effort to apply the provisions of the Act. In 1908 no fewer than 1500 serious cases were reported. Among 1200 that were taken to court, 500 fines were imposed. Two years later there were more than this from the out islands alone. One school alone, with a roll of 166, showed nearly 10,000 absences on its register during the year. 361 fines were imposed in this one school. The problem had been tackled and overcome. Thereafter the number of cases which it was necessary to take to court diminished and attendance increased.

The result of these efforts was unmistakable as the table, Fig. 7, reveals. There were two unfortunate consequences, however, but both were transient. The first was the hostility engendered among the people of many out island settlements towards their teachers. The other was a decrease in attendance of children over the age limit. The choice of 12 as the upper limit had the effect of convincing parents that that was the proper age at which to remove their children from school. The Inspector finally succeeded in having the age increased to fourteen. At the same time, the distance limit was doubled, the fine increased to a maximum of £1 and the powers of the constable considerably increased.

Figure 7 : School Roll, Attendance and Regularity : 1836 - 1919.

Year	Schools			Av. No. of Days Open	Roll	Attendance	
	Bd	GIA	Total			Average	%age
1836	Already open		16	-	1576	-	-
	About to open		13	-	-	-	-
1850			26	-	1975	1211(b)	65(b)
1865(May)			25	-	1567	755	48
1865(Dec.)			30	-	2045	1190	58
1869			38	188(a)	3130	2137	68
1878			31(d)	168	2937	- (c)	47
1886	33	10	43	198	4679	2701	58
1896	42	10	52	202	6504	4281	66
1907	46	16	62	210	7225	5239	73
1913	48	15	63	-	7130	6014	84
1919	48	16	64	198	6733	5017	74

Key: (a) Figure for 1872; that for 1869 not available.
 (b) Figures for 1851; those for 1850 not available.
 (c) Figure not available; percentage calculated on 22 schools for which figures were given.
 (d) An indefinite number of these, probably 9, was closed; see (c) above.

Observations:

1. 1850 shows only slight improvement over 1836.
2. Compare figures for May 1865, showing the last effects of the Civil War, with those for December following Job's arrival. Enthusiasm reached its peak in 1869.
3. Figures for 1878 are unreliable but they are the best available from this decade. They are almost certainly over-estimated. Schools in very low state. Compulsory attendance for New Providence.
4. 1886: Compulsory attendance for out islands. Some improvement in attendance. Grants-in-aid have begun.
5. 1896 and 1907: Rigid enforcement of compulsory attendance. General increase, improvement and expansion in all aspects.
6. 1913: Highest percentage attendance of the whole period. Prosecution for non-attendance reached its maximum in 1911.
7. 1919: Lowest point of general decline during First World War.

Decline Arrested, 1882.

The depression, hanging like a cloud over the educational system, continued well into the 1880's. Blair left the colony on leave in 1878, obtained a post in Ceylon and did not return. He can scarcely be blamed for the economic collapse of the colony which led to the drastic reduction of the grant in 1869 thereby sending the educational system into a steady decline. Nevertheless, he was repeatedly blamed for the extent of the reduction and even as late in 1874 we find him defending himself against this accusation. Credit must be given to him for inculcating some semblance of order in the curriculum and conduct of the schools and also for the inception of the pupil teacher system and compulsory attendance. On the other hand, he was also responsible for payment by results and, in general, he does not seem to have had an inspiring influence on education at a time when it was most needed. The historian's particular criticism is of his haphazard method of compiling annual reports which are most unenlightening.

He was succeeded by Edward Begrie who had been master of the Boys' Central School. Begrie was not unlike Job in his impatience with slow progress but he was much more volatile and impetuous. He resigned from the Board's service and withdrew his resignation at frequent intervals. Outside of school he was constantly becoming embroiled with prominent citizens but, inside school, he was a most efficient master and wrought tremendous transformation in the Central School.

His/

His capable conduct of that school earned high commendation in the contemporary press. He succeeded Blair and would have had a profound influence on the whole educational system but for his misfortune in contracting a physical ailment which impaired his ability. He resigned in 1882 after three years as Inspector. There was no noticeable improvement in the schools during that brief time but he was responsible for considerable modification of Blair's system of payment by results.

The change in the fortunes of education came a year after Cole had succeeded Begrie as Inspector. How extensive was the causal relation between these two happenings it is now not easy to determine but it is certain that the gradual and continued improvement and expansion from 1883 onwards was due in very large measure to his perseverance and skill.

The educational system reached its lowest ebb around 1880 - 2. The number of schools dropped below 30 and there were at least half that number dispersed through the islands that had been closed for varying numbers of years. Roll, attendance, irregularity of the teachers the very bottom of the decline. The pupil teacher system was in abeyance and the supply of recruits to the teaching profession was such that the Board had to retain the most inefficient of men in its service or to make new appointments of the most incompetent. Discipline among them was negligible/

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negligible and the gravest neglect of duty was met with "severe censure" at worst. To the disillusioned out island communities it seemed that the Board of Education existed, not to foster education and to encourage the opening of schools, but steadfastly to refuse all appeals for assistance. We have seen to what expedients the Board was impelled by its financial embarrassment; so accustomed did it become to refusing requests that, on one occasion, it even turned down a Nassau sewing teacher's request for a pair of scissors and a work-basket.

Special Committee's Report, 1883.

In desperation, the board appointed a special committee to review the state of education in the colony and to make recommendations for its improvement and extension to all settlements. The committee reported "a state of things which imperatively calls for such an expansion of the educational system as the Board's present resources are utterly inadequate to provide for." Ignoring those children who were so scattered as not to number 25 within a radius to allow of their attendance at a centrally located school, there were 10,000 children of school age in the colony. Of these only 6000 belonged to any school and there were 2000 for whom no schools of any description existed. The other 2000 were within reach of schools but did not attend and of these 500 were

im/

in Nassau. Outside of Nassau there were at least 32 settlements or localities which had no schools whatever. None of these contained less than 25 children, four contained more than 100 and one of them had 200. Even this shocking revelation did not show the full extent of the Board's utter failure to provide schools for the people of the colony. There were in addition 33 settlements with schools not maintained by the Board. Compared with 24 settlements with government schools there were thus 65 settlements for whom the Board made no provision whatever. Indeed the greater part in maintaining out island schools was being played, not by the government, but by the Anglican Church who, pursuing a deliberate policy of maintaining schools only in settlements where there were no government schools, had 27 out island schools as against the Board's 24. Even in Nassau, the Church educated as many children as the Government. Compared with the Herculean task being performed by the Anglicans, the Nonconformists' efforts were infinitesimally small. The Baptists had two schools in out island settlements and the Wesleyans had one in Nassau. Between them the nonconformist churches educated just over 100 children while the Anglicans educated 2000, the government 3000 and nearly 900 children were in private schools. In Nassau there was an indefinite number of private venture schools with 500 pupils, while the Board and the Anglicans educated 700 each and the Wesleyans 24. Even where schools were available/

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available, many were inadequate to meet the needs of the surrounding population. "In short", the committee summed up, "it is evident that if the board were able to open immediately 10-15 additional schools, it would be but an instalment of what requires to be done."

The committee suggested two solutions. Following the disestablishment of the Church in 1869, Treasury grants were gradually discontinued as the incumbents of parishes died or left the colony. The Board requested the Legislature to consider the advisability of granting the reversion of ecclesiastical salaries to augment the education grant until it should reach the same level as before the retrenchment Act. This was done the following year and the grant reached £3500 in 1889.

Grants-in-Aid: 1883.

With this increase of finances the Board adopted a new policy designed to distribute as widely as possible the benefits that its limited resources could afford. During the dark era of the 1870's, a few out island settlements, finding no assistance forthcoming from the Board, not only provided their own schoolhouses, but also organized their own schools, appointing teachers from among themselves and paying their salaries by school fees. The Board, willing to encourage such enterprise as a solution of its own difficulties, offered small grants of money to augment the teachers' salaries and provided school materials. These "grants/

"grants-in-aid" were intended to be a temporary expedient only and a policy was to be pursued of elevating the progressive "grant-in-aid" schools to the status of "Board" schools as finances allowed. This policy was not always adhered to as some settlements were subsequently provided with Board schools while others which had maintained grant-in-aid schools for years were given no extra assistance.

This temporary expedient has never been superseded for another reason as well as the usual financial one. The Board was striving to increase the standard of its teaching staff but was always short of competent recruits. To have admitted all the grant-in-aid schools to "Board" status would have meant either (a) diluting the teaching profession with poor teachers and thus counteracting its efforts to raise standards or (b) staffing the additional schools with competent teachers whom it did not have. Moreover, the onus of supplying a teacher for a grant-in-aid school lay with the community and not the Board whose difficulties were not thereby increased. From the outset, the spectre of dual control was dispelled by the conditions attached to the award of these grants. All schools aided in this way were to be unsectarian and were to be conducted as nearly as possible on the lines prescribed by the Board. They were also to be subject to regular inspection and examination by the Inspector.

Three schools with a combined roll of 164 pupils received/

received such grants in 1883, the amount varying from £10 to £15 per annum. By the end of the century they formed 20%, and by the end of the period 25%, of the total number of schools. So far from being a temporary measure they were increasing in number more quickly than Board schools. Although some of them were in fact raised to the status of Board schools whenever their size and efficiency warranted it, the practice also arose of reducing inferior Board schools to grand-in-aid status irrespective of whether they had originated as private schools or not. The true nature of the aided schools was thus soon obscured and they became, in effect, not aided private schools but a low grade of maintained schools. In 1903 there appeared a second type of aided school; three schools received grants of materials but no monetary grant to the teacher. Fortunately, the reflection that these "M" schools cast upon the government's parsimony was more than the conscience of the Board could tolerate and they were discontinued three years later, being elevated to "full grant-in-aid status". There were never more than five of them.

As may well be imagined, these schools provided a very poor apology for education. The Inspector found that, in all but one or two, the results were far from satisfactory. Parents were indifferent, attendance poor and teachers negligent. In 1901, no more than a third of their pupils were/

Report (51) 1901.

were fit to be presented for examination at all. Only a tenth of them were examined above standard II and very few of these ever passed. Of a visit to one such school, the Inspector reported: "I arrived at the school about 11 a.m. and found neither teacher nor children present. The teacher afterwards stated that he had been to school and had gone home to breakfast."

The Churches and Secondary Education.

Having traced the course of primary education from 1864 to the beginning of Cole's regime, with a 'follow-up' of policy initiated during those years, we must now turn from the vicissitudes of the Board of Education to the work of the churches in promoting secondary education. It must be recalled that any academic education higher than the inculcation of the three R's was deemed unsuitable for the mass of the population and fit only for the children of the wealthier classes. Since a secondary school, to be efficient, demanded an efficient preparatory department, the term secondary education came to be synonymous with white education no matter at what standard. Thus the general age of admission to the "high" school, so eagerly sought after in 1804 and again in 1836, was six years and all "secondary" schools of the nineteenth century were schools primarily for white children if not exclusively so. For the Christian churches to be specially engaged in promoting institutions based on race discrimination may seem to be peculiar and indeed/

indeed caused some embarrassment to many, though not all, sincere church members. Consequently it has usually been possible, in the boys' schools at least, to find a sprinkling of coloured children.

To explain this preoccupation of the churches with white education, it is necessary to refer to the subsequent development of the denominational conflict after the great struggle for control of the public schools ended. The struggle for influence still continued even long after the disestablishment of the Anglican and Scottish churches. These two churches claimed the allegiance of the majority of the white population before emancipation and up to the middle of the nineteenth century. As the Anglican Church began to concentrate more and more upon the negroes she lost the support of the whites, the majority of whom went over to the Wesleyan Methodists. After its two failures early in the century, the government had no intention of making provision for separate white education. This continued to be a great need in the colony in the eyes of the whites who turned to the church for solution of their problem. The two churches, Anglican and Wesleyan, then began to vie with one another in supplying this want and so strengthening their hold upon the white population. The Baptists never joined in this competition as they had little or no following among the whites.

We have seen that the first Anglican attempt in 1854 suffered,/

suffered, in common with the public schools, from the Civil War but was reorganised in 1864. Seven years later a group of Methodist laymen began a small venture under the grandiose title "Bahama Wesleyan Proprietary Collegiate Institution". It was conducted for the first two years by a Methodist minister and his wife and admitted both boys and girls who were, however, taught in separate premises. The subsequent great success of this school was due to the appointment of a layman, Henry S. Rivers, "a scholar and a saint", in 1874. His administration and the influence he acquired earned for the school a high reputation and ensured its success from the first although its later history is not without its periods of adversity.

The years 1896 - 1901 saw a renewed burst of enthusiasm for secondary education including, for the first time, a demand for similar facilities for negroes. The Anglicans, although pioneers in establishing a boys' school had now been surpassed by the Wesleyans who provided for both boys and girls. Consequently, a Church High School for girls was opened in 1886 with Miss K. Brodrick as head mistress. Just at this time the Roman church entered the colony and began educating immediately. St. Francis Xavier Academy for white girls was begun by them in 1889. The Wesleyans followed the next year by moving their Collegiate Institution into new commodious premises, thus beginning, in commemoration of Queen Victoria's jubilee, what has since flourished/

Report (51) 1891

-ibid- 1893

flourished as Queen's College. The education of the negroes being regarded as the province of the government, it was left to the Board of Education to make provision for the higher education of the coloured population. This matter was considered by them in conjunction with the need for the more adequate training of teachers. As this will be fully discussed in the next section, suffice it to say here that the plan to provide a high school for coloured pupils was abandoned but a substitute scheme was introduced. This was an Evening School "in which youths and young men may confirm themselves in their previous acquirements and add thereto so far as the limited time and their own abilities and industry may render practicable." The school began in 1892 with the customary flood of enthusiasm. Out of a roll of 173 in March, the average attendance in December was about 13. A considerable proportion of the more regular pupils advanced one standard in the primary subjects during the year. The experiment came to an end after two years, its failure being ascribed to "the indifference of those for whose benefit it was intended".

The next denomination to enter the field was the Presbyterian church which joined forces with the Wesleyans in support of Queen's College. The girls' department of the school was moved to the "Kirk" Hall and became the Young Ladies' High School. In 1905 the two were again joined and/

and Queen's College has been coeducational since that date. In the same year, as a result of the efforts of Bishop Hornby, a Community of Sisters came from England to take charge of the Church High School which was renamed St. Hilda's School. The combined roll of the Anglican and nonconformist schools in 1901 was: 40 boys, 64 girls and 26 preparatory pupils of both sexes. No figures are available for the Roman Catholic School.

Private Schools.

Apart from the denominational schools of recognised standing there was a large number of all sorts of private schools both in Nassau and on out islands. There were never more than ten or a dozen outside of Nassau and their existence was due in most cases to the failure of the Board or one of the churches to maintain a school. Strictly speaking, the grant-in-aid schools were private schools though in the estimate given above they are not included. In Nassau and in one or two partially white out island settlements, they were conducted for white children whose parents did not wish them to attend the public schools and who could not afford the fees at the denominational schools. A common practice was for whites to send their young children to a dame school before proceeding at an older age to the Grammar School or Queen's College. It must not be supposed, however, that white children shunned the public schools completely. Nor must/

must it be supposed that all the private schools in Nassau were for whites only. There were black and coloured parents who did not wish their children to attend the public schools and for whom there was no other alternative but a small private venture school.

Whatever the reason for the existence of any particular school, it must be admitted that the financial limitations of the Board and of the churches created a fruitful ground for schools of this type. They were, moreover, responsible to no authority and subject to no inspection. No longer were licences needed to open schools and no permission had to be sought. And there was always a large clientele who would readily patronize such a school if they could be shown that, for a modest fee, they could claim some degree of social position by having their children educated privately. Consequently, the numbers of these private schools and of their pupils were relatively enormous. In 1883 there were as many as twenty such schools in Nassau whose combined roll exceeded two thirds that of the government schools. The introduction of compulsory attendance gave them an added stimulus as parents found they could evade their responsibilities by sending or pretending to send their children to some such school. On the other hand, as the calibre of the public schools increased, they gained a greater measure of/

of respect among those who patronized private schools whose number consequently decreased towards the end of the period. In 1901 there were still fourteen remaining but their roll had dropped by half of what it was twenty years earlier. An average sized private school had less than twenty pupils.

The quality of these schools varied considerably. No doubt the best ones maintained a fairly high standard but the worst ones were in a dreadful state. Blair declared that he was prepared to furnish proof, if need be, that some were conducted by teachers unable to write and in one or two instances by persons who could not read.

School Buildings.

From what has been said about the Board's financial limitations, it is not surprising that school buildings were hopelessly inadequate and in a wretched state of repair, while teachers were rarely, if ever, provided with houses. There were occasions when this problem acted as a limiting factor to the opening of schools but, since any four walls and a roof could be pressed into service as a schoolhouse, this was not frequent. Hurricanes were a constant menace, the great storm of 1866 destroying or rendering totally untenable 18 of the Board's 37 schools. Resulting makeshift arrangements lasted for many years and there are instances of a school being held in the jail and, conversely, of the schoolhouse being used as a court or lock-up. The people, having no high standard for their own houses, could never/

never be depended upon to keep their promises of maintaining their school buildings in good repair and the Board had not the resources to do so.

The additional grant of £300 in 1875 was earmarked for the erection of one building a year and effecting minimum repairs to as many as possible. This modest aim was encouraged by the Governor who made occasional donations out of Crown funds. The school which had to be built in Nassau to give effect to compulsory attendance in 1878 was built with such a donation.

Although the lack of buildings did not often prevent the opening of schools, the lack of teachers' residences served to make the job of teacher much less attractive to suitable recruits. It was also the cause of much dissatisfaction among teachers, who were liable to appointment in any school in the colony with or without their concurrence. Being obliged to live in a squalid house detracted from a teacher's prestige in the community and contributed to a personal deterioration to the level of his surroundings.

There was nothing that the Board could do about this evil but appeal to the Legislature. This brought a building grant of £2500 in 1900 which was entirely consumed in two years by the purchase of sites and the building and renovating of schoolhouses and teachers' quarters. Another appeal for seventeen more new buildings in 1906 brought an addition to the grant of £200 and a further £300 two years later.

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In 1908, a further £1000 increased the grant to £6000.

Prospects were much brighter at the beginning of this century than they had ever been.

Training Institute : 1891.

The first four years of Cole's tenure of office as Secretary-Inspector had seen successive increases in the education grant, the expansion of the system by grants-in-aid, the introduction of universal compulsory attendance, the abolition of school fees and an increase in attendance of nearly 60%. He had also been urging repeatedly the more satisfactory training of teachers. The educational system was less well provided for in this respect than ever for, with his appointment as Inspector, the last source of competently trained pupil teachers had ceased. In response to his recommendations, the Board appointed a committee in / 1888 to consider the training of teachers and the provision of higher grade education for prospective teachers and others.

The majority of members maintained that, with the single possible exception of the Board's poverty, the greatest hindrance to the higher and more extensive development of education was the inefficiency of the teachers. This they ascribed to imperfect training and insufficient education. The best education and the only training that was then available, at the Central School, was neither adequate nor satisfactory nor was there any prospect of improvement as that institution was then conducted. It was felt that a higher/

higher class of school for boys and girls under a competent head would remedy the evil by affording better instruction and better practice for teachers in training. At the same time, it would also supply the great want in the community for a higher education than was then available for the children of those who were "able and willing to pay for it".

The minority, recalling that the function of the Board was to provide primary education, contended that they had no right to divert any of their slender funds to the higher education of a section of the community. Such a course would be unjust to the people of those settlements where there was no school or where only a meagre grant was paid to aid a school. As for the training of teachers, the Board had but little use for the services of female teachers, there being only three girls' schools in the colony and experience showing that women did not succeed in our island mixed schools. The number of male teachers sent out averaged not much more than two a year and to establish a new and separate institution for the training of so small a number would be quite out of proportion to the desired object. Their aim could be accomplished more economically, even by sending the candidates abroad for their education and training. Any course which would greatly raise the status of the teachers would involve the Board in a much higher scale of remuneration to retain them in the service, while the children would obtain no corresponding advantage unless they were sent to school more/

more regularly and for longer periods. The general welfare of the colony required that the claims of education should not absorb more than a certain proportion of the revenue and the existing grant with the prospective increases to it reached ^{or?} ~~nor nearly~~ ^x approached that limit. It was therefore inadvisable to adopt any plan which would greatly increase the expenditure upon localities where education was already fairly provided for, as it would tend to prevent the opening of schools in destitute localities and might even lead to the closing of some already existing.

The plan to make general provision for higher education was abandoned as has been seen earlier but it was decided to improve the system in operation for the training of teachers. The old policy was followed of obtaining from England a trained master for the Boys' Central School upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the headship of that school. A copy of this minute was sent to the head of the Central School, T.W.Sweeting, but he was not so obliging as to ask for transfer or to resign! Indeed, he continued in office for another 25 years.

The British and Foreign School Society sent out C.H. Smith from one of the English training colleges in 1891.

We can only infer what that limit was believed to be. Five years earlier, in 1883, expenditure on education had amounted to 5.1% of the colony's revenue. Two years later in 1890, it had increased to 6.9%. During the period 1864-1907 it fluctuated mostly between 6% and 7% though in 1866 was as high as 7.7% and in 1873 fell as low as 4.5%.

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From the outset it appears that the omens were unpropitious. From the information available it is not possible to pass a competent judgment on the course of events but it is quite evident that strife or, at any rate, considerable friction arose between the Principal of the Training Institute on the one hand and the Head Master of the Central School, the Inspector and the Board, severally and collectively, on the other.

The headship of the Central School not having been vacated, Smith was placed in charge of that school with power to reorganise it. This not unnaturally created dissension between Smith and the head master who still retained his office. This was relieved by setting up the Training Institute separately in different quarters. Then ensued some dispute between the Principal and the Inspector with distinct evidence of Smith's reticence to acknowledge the right of the Board to interfere with details of his administration of the institute. The students who were sent to him for training were poor. Although they were all over eighteen he was compelled to devote no small proportion of his time in giving them such elementary instruction as "the children of the higher standards in the public schools should be examined in". At the end of two years when the first students completed their course, only one passed for a 2nd class certificate, two each in the 3rd and 4th classes while six failed and one had previously left. The next applicants/

Report (51) 1894

Minutes (52) May 13th 1896

applicants were worse than the last and only seven were recommended for admission. The Board immediately considered the propriety of closing the institute but decided to continue it for that year. The ill-fated venture was brought to an end before the year expired, the Principal was compensated for loss of office and he departed with an extravagant testimonial to his zeal, energy, varied acquirements and sterling worth. The reason given for this course was that "it became increasingly evident that results at all commensurate with the expenditure were not being produced".

The Board reverted to the former practice of sending prospective teachers or "students in training" to the Central School for an indefinite period. The one great convenience of this scheme to a Board hard pressed for teachers seemed to be the absence of any well defined course. Although this can scarcely have been calculated to enhance the value of his training, it did facilitate the removal of a student at any odd time. Effect was never given to a minimum period of training as may be illustrated by an important instance. W.G.Albury, a pupil teacher at Harbour Island, who became Inspector of Schools less than twenty years later, was sent to the Central School in May 1896 "till he shall be required as a teacher or till the end of 1897 which ever first occurs". After three months he was "required as a teacher" to take charge of a school of 121 pupils with the sole assistance of one monitor. Albury requested another year at the Central School/

Minutes (52) October 6th 1896

School but "the requirements of the service rendered it inexpedient to grant this request".

Consequently, the system of training teachers at the end of this period, was identical with that found by Job at the beginning more than fifty years before. This was simply (a) the pupil teacher system, there being four in 1920 compared with eight in 1865, and (b) brief attendance at the Boys' Central School, there being four such students in training in 1920 compared with twelve who attended for 1 - 2 months in 1866.

The great need of an efficient training system urged by Job upon his arrival would, if it had been supplied, have wrought more improvement in the efficiency of the schools of the colony than any other single factor. History reveals, however, that veritabily no progress in this respect was made during this period which saw so much advance in popular education in so many other ways.

Content of Education and Efficiency of Schools.

Having considered at some length the external factors which influenced the progress of education, we must consider what developments were taking place inside the schools of the period. The schools of industry, recommended so urgently by the 1835 Commission, never materialised. It is doubtful if they would have been practicable and it may have been for this reason that they never developed. The only rudiment of such a type of school for girls was the/

the half-hearted teaching of needlework. Even this occurred only in those localities where the part time services of a sewing teacher were procurable for the inconsiderable sum of £6 per annum. In 1880 there were only five, and at the end of the period, only nine such teachers in the colony. Rudiments of a similar type of instruction for boys were negligible. The infant schools suggested by the same commission suffered very much the same fate. There was never more than one in the colony though this one, located in Nassau, was a flourishing institution conducted very capably. All the schools, except those in Nassau and, for some years, Harbour Island, were mixed.

The curriculum was typical of contemporary English schools, comprising the three R's and little else besides. These were augmented first by the rote learning of the uncomprehended definitions which constituted what seems to have been taught as the one subject "grammar-and-geography". These, or this, were later joined by other "extra" subjects, notably, scripture, English history and drawing. The curriculum was made uniform in all the schools in 1875 when the standards prescribed by the English revised code were adopted for the whole colony.

Writing was ever the best accomplishment of the pupils but was hindered for a long time by the reticence or inability of parents to buy copy books. Following the provision/

provision of books by the Board there was widespread improvement and in 1895 about a quarter of the pupils could write fairly legibly on paper. Arithmetic was always the worst of the three R's while spelling and dictation were little better. Progress in reading was obstructed as much by the peculiarities of speech of the teachers as by the antiquated reading books used. These, which had been introduced some twenty years before Job, did not finally and irrevocably go out of print until 1890 when "the necessity of introducing some new series was recognised". Scripture was always the strongest extra subject, a fact which can be largely explained by the use of the Bible, in many instances, to teach all the primary subjects except arithmetic.

Improvement in pupils' attainments went hand in hand with improvement in the quality of the teaching⁺. Progress from the moribund state of affairs that Job found was not difficult and was rapid. It soon slowed down, being impeded by the factors already described but especially by the poor teaching and the irregular attendance. About the beginning of Cole's regime a level of attainment was reached beyond which there was little progress except in the number of children brought up to that standard. In 1875, there were only nine children in the colony in standard VI while the vast majority were in either the preliminary or standard I. The improvement in this respect can be illustrated by these figures showing the percentage of the roll in various standards/

standards:

	<u>1876</u>	<u>1898</u>
Preliminary and Standard I	61%	53%
Standards IV - VI	13%	17%

Not until the last decade of the century did most of the schools begin to develop standards higher than III but even at the end of the century only 4% of pupils were in the top standard. The disinclination or the inability of the teachers to teach the lowest standards was one of the main causes of the disproportionate part of their school life that pupils spent in these classes. Another was the irregularity of attendance. In 1894 the average number of days each week on which a child attended school varied from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$. In nearly half of the schools the average was less than 3 while the average length of a child's school life was estimated at no more than four years in 1887.

Schools and Rolls in 1901.

It would be advisable at this point to clarify the position of the educational system with regard to the number and variety of schools, the number of children attending them and, especially, the various authorities by which they were conducted. This is made necessary by the confusion that had begun to arise by the end of the century and which has constituted one of the major weaknesses of the system since. Complete figures are available only for the year 1901 but there was no substantial change by the end of the period in the number of pupils attending schools which were neither/

neither maintained nor aided out of government funds. Not included in the table are about 900 children of school age not attending any school.

Figure 8 : Schools, Rolls and Controlling Authorities : 1901

Authority	Elementary Schools			Secondary Schools		
	Schools	Roll	Attendance	Schools	Type	Roll
Board of Education.	N.P. 6) O.I. 38)	5848	68%	-	-	-
Private (Grant-aided)	O.I. 12	992	62%	-	-	-
Private (not aided)	N.P. 14 O.I. 9	244 166	-	-	-	-
Anglican	N.P. 5 O.I. 23	516 1114	57%	N.P. 3 O.I. 1	(1 Boys' (2 Girls' Girls'	18 33 9
Wesleyan	N.P. 1	26	-	N.P. 1 O.I. 2	Boys' Mixed	22 -
Presbyterian	-	-	-	N.P. 1	Girls'	31
Roman Catholic	N.P. 2 O.I. 1	244 166	-	N.P. 1	Girls'	-
Totals	N.P. 28 O.I. 83 111	9316		N.P. 6 O.I. 3 9		113

Hopeful Decade : 1900 - 1910.

Unlike the early years of the previous century, the opening years of the twentieth century were full of hope and promise for the future. With the unprecedented grant of £2500 in 1900 for a campaign of building, expenditure on education exceeded, for/

for the first time, the previous record of 1867. That portion of the education vote, which was lost in 1869, was finally restored in full after more than thirty years. The House continued to increase the grant slightly and consequently there followed steady increase in the number of schools, in roll and in average attendance. Every succeeding year saw new records established only to be broken within the ensuing twelvesmonths. The determined effort to apply the compulsory clauses effectively was meeting decided success and the regularity of teachers as well as pupils was greatly improving. Indeed the Inspector acknowledged that the regularity with which teachers conducted their schools reached a point in 1911 beyond which there was not much room for further improvement. The quality of the teaching was attaining new heights and the efficiency of the schools, as measured by the results of the annual examination and the Inspector's grading, was higher than ever. More pupils were being presented for examination, an increasing proportion of these were in the upper standards and all records for the percentage of passes were being surpassed every year. The board owned more land, more school buildings and more teachers' houses than ever before and the buildings had never been in such good repair. Finally, even teachers' salaries and the condition of the grant-in-aid schools joined in the general improvement and attained/

attained standards which, if modest, were nevertheless without precedent.

This comprehensive progress continued year by year until 1911 when it reached its summit. Early the following year George Cole died, still in harness at 73. In the middle of the year the whole colony suffered from an epidemic of measles. Before the year was ended there had begun another general decline in the schools which assumed alarming proportions before it was arrested well after the end of the First World War. Before considering the causes and nature of this decline we must examine the new Education Act which made its appearance during this "hopeful decade".

1908 Education Act.

The Act of 1908 relating to Primary Education will be examined in broad outline, not because it made any revolutionary change in the educational system, but because it has proved to be the only major Primary Education Act for forty years. With only slight amendments it still forms the legal foundation on which the present system of primary education rests. It was not the outcome of any great popular controversy over education nor did it signify any outstanding progressive movement. It simply happened that, in that year, the 1886 Act expired and a consolidation of sundry amendments to it appeared desirable. Consequently, the new Act did not differ very significantly from its predecessor and therefore the legal framework of the colony's system of primary education has been substantially/

Acts (46) 1908

substantially the same for the last sixty years.

The constitution of the Board of Education, apart from the omission of the Governor as chairman, remained unchanged. Its twelve members included eight from the Legislature of whom five were to be members of the Assembly. Since 1899 it had been a corporate body in whom were vested all buildings and property for educational purposes. It was charged with the "superintendence, direction and control" of Public Elementary Education and with the duty of providing, "so far as the monies from time to time at its disposal admit", primary instruction for all children from six to fourteen years "and upwards". Grant-in-aid schools were given legal sanction in the conferment of authority to the board either to aid schools or to maintain them.

The original nature of the grant-in-aid schools was completely obscured. It will be recalled that, theoretically, they were private schools aided by a nominal grant subject to satisfying a few simple conditions. The reading of the Act makes it clear that they had been completely absorbed into the system, as they were now made subject to all the provisions of the Act, with the single exception that they were excluded from the clause prohibiting the payment of fees. Since, however, they were not exempted from the compulsory attendance clauses, they were bereft of any shred of autonomy they may have retained as private schools and their right to charge fees was rendered nebulous. They had become, in fact, an inferior/

inferior type of public school, incompetently staffed and inadequately provided for, but for whose deficiencies the board was able to disclaim responsibility.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the amount of travelling involved in the inspection of the increasing number of schools assumed such proportions that the Secretary-cum-Inspector was obliged to leave his secretarial duties to an office boy to an ever greater extent. This individual was therefore raised to the dignity of Secretary to the Board in 1900 and the Inspector relieved of this function. At the same time, with the same apparent desire to perpetuate the multiplicity of his roles, this officer became Inspector and General Superintendent at the increased salary of £250 a year. Excluding the salaries of these officers, the education grant was increased by £1000 to £6000 at which sum it has since remained until 1943 when it was increased to £10,000.

One curious feature of all Education Acts from emancipation to 1905 is that no indication was given, either in specific or general terms, as to the nature of the secular instruction that was to be imparted in the public schools. This silence was broken in 1905 by a brief amending Act requiring that "elementary instruction in the principles of "temperance and hygiene" be included in the curriculum of all public schools. To these was added agriculture in 1908 and to this day the legal requirements of the school curriculum are no more than these three subjects apart from unsectarian scriptural/

scriptural teaching.

The upper age limit for compulsory attendance was raised to fourteen but the lower limit still remains at six years. The distance limit was extended to include all children within three miles of a school. These clauses were made to apply to aided schools but not to unaided private schools. These latter continued to be "places of refuge from the effects of the compulsory clauses for selfish parents and "idle children" as the statement that the "child was under efficient instruction in some other manner" was admitted as reasonable excuse for non-compliance. What constituted efficient instruction was not defined. The attainment of a satisfactory standard of instruction, testified by a certificate from the Inspector, allowed exemption from attendance but not below the age of ten. The most recent by-law relating to this standard of instruction specifies the ability to read and write and a knowledge of arithmetic prescribed for standard VI. No such exemption has been sought for many years but it is still legal.

The local school committee, which the Act perpetuated, is a useful institution providing for a sustained interest among the parents and a local supervision of the conduct of the school. Of the five members, a majority is appointed by the Governor and a minority elected by the parents. They have specific duties and rights including that of direct communication with the Board. . Monthly meetings are held and monthly/

Report (51) 1913

-ibid- 1914

monthly reports submitted. In addition to this measure of direct supervision over the work of the schools afforded to the people, the Board is still required to make its proceedings available for public inspection. This facility has been provided since 1847.

Another Decline : 1912 - 1919.

Cole was succeeded in 1912 by T.H.K.Moulder, M.A., the first and only university graduate to enter the Board's service. Unlike either his predecessors or successors, he came to Bahamian education when it had reached a peak of efficiency. Of pupils' attainments, especially of writing, he was able to report that they would bear favourable comparison with those of elementary schools in England. He found much that needed urgent attention, giving greatest emphasis like all his predecessors to the lack of efficient training of teachers, the absence of secondary education for negroes and the totally insufficient supply of books and materials. Devoting his energies immediately to the first of these, he reorganised the Central School. The previous master, T.W.Sweeting, having retired, he was replaced by two of the Board's best teachers for, Moulder maintained, "it is quite impossible for one man to supervise a large elementary school and at the same time to be responsible for the training of aspirant teachers". For the first time, the student-teachers had a prescribed course of training in which all their studies were "subordinated to the Theory and/

"and Practice of Teaching and taken from a teaching standpoint". The reward for his labour was to see two of the five potential teachers appointed the one as a clerk in the Auditor's Department and the other to a position as a book-keeper.

Moulder also placed the teaching of agriculture, required by the 1908 Act, on a systematic basis in co-operation with the Board of Agriculture. In addition he made recommendations for revision of salaries on an incremental basis, for the abolition of bonuses which, as a relief of payment by results, he did not favour and for the payment of house allowances instead of the prevalent practice of allowing teachers to live in the school building where no teacher's residence existed. He did not remain to supervise his innovations or give effect to his recommendations but left in 1915 to take up an appointment at St. Lucia. He was the last Inspector to be appointed from England, the vacancy being filled by W.G. Albury, head master of the Central School, who filled the office for twenty five years.

In contrast with the promise of the previous decade, the years immediately following Cole's death and the war years again plunged the educational system into a period of decline and depression. In 1912 there was an epidemic of measles which lasted for eight months and from which none of the islands escaped. The following year there was a similar outbreak of whooping cough. Both of these considerably decreased/

Report (51) 1920

decreased attendance and seriously impaired the efficiency of the schools. Before the schools had opportunity to recover from this set-back the war had begun to produce severe economic effects in the colony and older children were being removed from school to help augment the family income and to meet the prohibitive price of food. In the Central School alone an average of nearly twenty boys entered and left school every month. On the out islands, where food became even more scarce, the children's labour was needed either in the fields or, when matters became more desperate, in the search for food. "The majority of the people subsist chiefly on wild yam, the scholars attend very irregularly and even when they do attend there are many cases of fainting from hunger among them. (Many) children of school age have no clothes except perhaps part of a rice or sugar sack with holes cut for arms". The reduction in the level of subsistence brought in its train the inevitable series of outbreaks of mumps, influenza, whooping cough, itch, chicken pox, measles and fevers. Wholesale evacuation of the out islands began and emigration from the colony resulted in the first and only substantial decrease in the colony's population since the invasion by the Spaniards in 1703.

It became impossible to get suitable pupils to undertake duties as monitors and more frequent resignations of teachers, coupled with the appointment of others as commissioners and to/

to other government offices, seriously reduced the efficiency of the instruction in schools. There was a new outbreak of cases of immorality among teachers and several dismissals occurred for this reason. The award of a cost of living allowance to all government servants in 1917 resulted in an average increase in teachers' salaries of £10 a year. This insignificant compensation had no effect on the drift of teachers from the service. Those who were not so fortunate as to find more remunerative employment began to look for ways of augmenting their inadequate salaries. The board frowned upon this expedient but nevertheless approved of one teacher's application to open a shop. Added to these difficulties, the Board instituted the practice of withholding teachers' salaries for neglect of duty and breaches of by-laws - a practice that could scarcely be expected to lessen the teachers' discontent.

With the rising cost of maintaining the schools, the increased education vote was soon entirely appropriated and the Board had no surplus funds with which to increase salaries or to keep buildings in good repair. Persistent requests for new schools from out island settlements were as persistently refused. New economy measures were devised, the most notorious being the suspension of the inspection of out island schools for two years. By this means there was effected a saving of the Inspector's travelling allowance of £260 a year and also a further saving of £100 which the board would have had/

had to pay as bonuses to teachers on the results of the Inspector's examination. The inspection was partially resumed in 1916.

By 1919 education had reached a low ebb. Although the decline was not halted in all respects in that year, 1920 saw the beginning of a change for the better. At the end of 1919, the Legislature voted £500 for the opening of new schools and more followed in 1920. The schools continued in a low state of efficiency for many years but their number showed phenomenal increase. With this sudden and spectacular, though not completely satisfactory, inflation we enter the next and modern period of this history.

Survey of the Period of Consolidation : 1864 - 1919.

It will be useful at this point to consider those special features of Bahamian education, enumerated on page 193, which had become apparent by 1864 and to estimate what progress was made in this period towards solving the problems they presented.

1. The amount of money voted for education continued to be the most serious limiting factor in the spread of education. This is clearly illustrated by the graph, Figure 14, Appendix II. The slashing reduction in 1869 dealt a crippling blow to the educational system from which it did not fully recover for nearly twenty years. Beside/

Beside it, the 16% reduction of 1895 was insignificant. Nearly all the Board's troubles originated in its financial disability. One "temporary expedient" to overcome this difficulty was the commencement of grants-in-aid. The increase in the appropriation for education in the last few years of the period were accompanied by a decrease in attendance and efficiency. This reveals the existence of a new economic situation in the colony following the First World War in which merely a slight increase in the vote could have no arresting influence whatever in the decline of education.

2. The extreme dispersion of population added to the Board's financial difficulties since the average cost of education per child was exaggerated. Had the population been collected together in larger settlements the education facilities that did exist could have been brought within reach of a great many more people. The scattered nature of the population also rendered compulsory attendance difficult to apply. However, some sort of educational facilities were being provided in 1919 for nearly four times as many children as in 1865.

3. Second to the limitation imposed by finance, and arising out of it, the lack of competent teachers continued to be the most severe restriction on the Board's activities. There was some improvement in this respect with corresponding improvement in the general level of pupils' attainments.

(a) A suggestion to provide higher education for prospective teachers was abandoned. Their own education continued to be no higher than that which it was their function to provide for their pupils.

(b) Facilities for the training of teachers were largely unimproved. The pupil teacher system under the imported English teachers was more satisfactory but was not continued. An attempt to establish a training institute was abortive. A renewed attempt to provide efficient training at the Central School in 1914 was disrupted by the resignation of the Inspector. At the end of this period, the facilities for training teachers were no better than in 1865.

(c) Teachers' salaries were not substantially improved. The so-called "grant-in-aid" developed into a subterfuge for paying even more inadequate salaries to even more incompetent teachers.

(d) Changes in the teaching staff, whether by reason of resignation, dismissal or appointment to other government posts, assumed alarming frequency in the last decade or more.

4. The importation of trained English teachers was, on the whole, attended by considerable success in raising the standard both of schools and teachers but was abandoned by the Board. It was this policy that brought George Cole, "The Father of Bahamian Education", to the colony with great benefit to the system.

5. The monitorial system became an integral part of Bahamian education providing a cheap teaching force at the expense of efficiency.
6. There was very little improvement in the supply of books and materials.
7. The Board's finances were so sorely taxed with the provision of new buildings that the condition of existing ones became worse rather than better. Latterly, however, there was general average improvement and the building of residences enhanced the teachers' status in the out island settlements.
8. There was considerable improvement in attendance due largely to the introduction and successful application of compulsory attendance. The average attendance at schools maintained or aided by the Board in 1911 was more than five times the number in 1865. There was a sharp decline at the end of the period on account of the economic depression of the war years.
9. School fees were abolished; the Board was compelled to accept responsibility for erecting and maintaining school buildings. Dependence of family on child labour was a much less cogent reason for irregular attendance than parental ignorance.
10. The only attempts to provide secondary and white education were made by the churches who began to compete with one another in this sphere of activity. Permanent institutions were/

were started. The demand was still slight but had increased sufficiently to maintain several small schools which, had they been united, would have made a moderate sized school which could have been conducted more economically and more efficiently.

11. The unsectarian nature of the schools was carefully preserved. The financial limitation of the Board's activities left the field of elementary education wide open for denominational and private schools. The Anglican policy was to complement the Board's efforts, avoid wasteful duplication of schools and extend the benefits of education as widely as possible. The large number of denominational and private schools created two new problems for the future:

- (a) the existence of many schools over which the Board had no powers of control or inspection;
- (b) extreme diversity of controlling authorities and lack of coordination between them and the Board.

Although the problem of dual control was avoided in the previous period and again in this, in connection with the awards of grants-in-aid, the problem still potentially existed at the end of the period.

12. The efficiency of the educational system at any one time largely reflected the efficiency and skill of the Inspector, after making allowance for circumstances beyond his control. The importance of a live Board of Education was reaffirmed but, for the sake of economy, certain measures were adopted whose effect was detrimental to education.

CHAPTER VII.

Expansion of the System: 1920 - 1947.

Liquor and Education.

By 1920 the economic aftermath of the war had reached an extreme. The out islands were being denuded of their population by emigration to Florida, the cost of living was exorbitantly high and disease was rampant. Sick leave was granted during the year to more than half of the teachers. The Inspector described it as the hardest year in his recollection of school work. Conditions continued to deteriorate on the out islands for some years but Nassau experienced a boom which was quite unique in its origin and magnitude. The first ships bringing American liquor to Nassau arrived in the early months of that year and revenue began to pour into the Treasury. Consequently education among other things received a stimulus similar to that of the Civil War years.

Grant and Appropriation.

The vote for education was very nearly doubled though not by amendment of the statutory education "grant" which remained at £6000 for thirty five years. The practice, which was noticed as early as 1806, of considering annually sums over and above statutory grant, came into effect on a large scale. Within a few years, these "appropriations" far exceeded/

exceeded the grant and formed the major part of the annual expenditure on primary education.* In 1928, £30,000 was voted to primary education, though it was not all expended, but four fifths of this was additional to the legal grant. In 1945, although the grant was only £10,000 having been increased to that figure two years earlier, the actual vote and expenditure far exceeded four times that figure. Conversely, the vote for education in any one year may be ruthlessly cut from the previous year's figure without reducing the statutory grant. Thus, when the general depression necessitated retrenchment in 1930, the vote was £7000, or more than a quarter, less than in 1929 but the sum provided by law remained unchanged.

The first benefits of the increased vote were, quite rightly, to the teachers whose salaries were increased by 100%. Even this comparatively substantial increase did not meet the changed economic circumstances and the Board was faced with acute staffing difficulties for several years. The other purpose for which the increased sum was voted was the building of new schools. The House set aside a liberal sum annually for this purpose and over ten years nearly £50,000 was voted to provide schools where none before existed.

Quality versus Quantity.

The Board hesitated between two opposing counsels. For/

* Money for other forms of education is voted separately.

Report (51) 1902

Minutes (52) February 26th 1918

For many years they had received importunate appeals for schools which they had been obliged consistently to refuse. Now that the means of assistance were in their power to give they were in a quandary as to where to give it first. There were two policies advocated, one of which finds expression in an annual report: "Although the Board would gladly improve the quality of education provided in existing schools and to that end adopt a ^{more} liberal provision per school than that which is now made to suffice, it is rather for extensions of the field of operations that the most urgent calls are made." The other was the view held tenaciously by Hart-Bennett, Colonial Secretary and Chairman of the board for twelve years. At his last attendance at a Board meeting he contended that "with the very limited grant voted by the Legislature, which is administered with the very greatest economy, it is impossible to carry the benefits of education to all the youth of this colony It seems to me quite clear that the efforts of the Board must be directed, not to establish new schools in isolated and distant areas, but to encourage the existing schools in the more densely populated centres and if possible to endeavour to assist the migration to them of the people of the smaller islands." The majority of the Board was inclined to the former policy and, since Hart-Bennett, chief proponent of the latter, had left the colony when the increased vote became available, it was to an increase in the quantity/

quantity, rather than an improvement in the quality, of primary education that the new sums were applied.

Dilution of the System : 1920 - 1937.

There ensued a mushroom-like growth of so-called "grant-in-aid" schools all over the colony. So far removed were they from the original examples of this "temporary expedient" of 1883, which were initiated by the inhabitants in buildings they provided and conducted by teachers whom they appointed and paid, their twentieth century counterparts were established by the Board, housed by the Board, mostly in buildings actually built by the Board expressly for that purpose, and staffed by the Board. They were subject, not to the few simple conditions imposed upon their predecessors, but to all the by-laws governing public schools including compulsory attendance. The only remaining distinctions were the extremely hypothetical right of the teacher to charge fees, the exclusion of the teachers from classification, though in effect they constituted a new lower class, the token salary paid to the teacher and the concession of opening only four days a week to enable the teacher to augment his income by working in his fields at week-ends or in some other manner.

Even with no restrictions on the qualifications of teachers for the new schools, it was found difficult to staff them. They could not be staffed by students in training at the Central School as they were receiving £60 a year during their/

their training while the average grant was little more than £30. Consequently, the year was well advanced before the thirteen new schools were opened. In 1919 exactly a quarter of the total schools in the colony were of this type; six years later the policy to which the Board had committed itself was so far progressed that there were more grant-in-aid schools than Board schools. In that time the number of maintained schools had increased by four, the aided schools by forty. Not until the year before the war was the number of aided schools reduced below that of maintained schools. A policy was then adopted of raising to "Board status" the larger and more efficient grant-in-aid schools. With the tremendously increased vote of the last five or six years it has been possible to pursue this course to a considerable extent and the latest figures available, for 1945, show that the aided schools comprise not much more than a third of the total number of schools. This commendable policy is contingent, not only on the availability of funds, but more acutely on the supply of competent teachers. The Board is determined not to pursue this policy at the expense of a further dilution of the teaching staff. To appoint a teacher of no more than grant-in-aid calibre to a school of "Board" standing is not progress but merely a change of name. To this end attempts are being made so to educate the grant-in-aid teacher that the elevation of both himself and his school to "Board" level may be/

be deserved. Meanwhile, it is to be regretted that new schools of the grant-in-aid type are still being established, there being such an instance as recently as 1945 while an instance of the practice of reducing a Board school to aided status occurred as recently as 1944. Thus the backward population of Mayaguana - backward largely because they had no school of any description prior to 1922 - is now left without a Board school for well over a hundred children of school age.

The problem confronting the Board may best be illustrated by a brief account of the number of schools and the population they serve. Out of 107 out island schools in 1945, no more than ten had a roll exceeding 150 and only five of these had more than 150 in average attendance. No fewer than 35, or one third of the total number, had an average attendance of less than 50. It is such dissipation of effort, money and all else that pertains to education that constitutes one of the most serious obstacles to efficiency. The comparison with the number of children educated in Nassau schools appears ludicrous in the extreme. Nine schools in Nassau accommodate about a quarter of the total number of children on roll in the colony. To provide for the other three quarters on the out islands no fewer than 107, or twelve times as many, schools must be maintained. The average enrolment of schools in Nassau is over 300, on the out islands 82. To minimise the effect of the scattered/

scattered nature of the population, the Board is following a policy, wherever possible, of amalgamating neighbouring schools where this can be done without placing any of the children beyond reach of the school. The wider government policy of amalgamating settlements, though not yet beyond the experimental stage, will have the same desirable effect.

Maintained Secondary Education : 1925.

In 1922 the Anglican Grammar School closed its doors after a fairly continuous existence for nearly seventy years. In its place the Church commenced two small secondary schools for coloured children, one for boys and one for girls, with the assistance of the grant from Bray's Associates. This was the first attempt to provide facilities for secondary education for the negro population. Neither of the schools was large and neither was fairly established as the Government entered the field in 1925 and, in conformity with the Anglican policy of complementing, rather than competing with, Government efforts to educate, the two small schools were closed. The Methodist Church made a similar attempt about the same time but the venture did not succeed and came to an end after a few years.

As the combined result of political pressure and the Treasury's unwonted affluence with revenue from the liquor trade, the first state provision of secondary education for all classes was made in 1925. It was open equally to both races and for out island children as well as Nassauvians. Its benefits were not/

not free but a small number of scholarships was provided, those for out island pupils carrying an allowance for maintenance in Nassau as well as tuition and supplies. In addition the Board transferred its student teachers from the Central School to the new "Government High School". The school, however, was intended primarily as a secondary school and not as a training institution. The student teachers, therefore, received an education but not a training which latter still had to be provided in the elementary schools. The Board was disappointed that no training in teaching was given and, for a time, believed that the High School would make no contribution to the ever pressing problem of the standard of their teachers. However, many pupils, having received a secondary education at the new school, became teachers in the primary schools. The benefits which have thus accrued to the colony's schools, in raising the educational standard of the elementary school teachers, have been incalculable.

The school was attended by white as well as coloured pupils but for many years, especially during the economic depression of the 1930's, the demand for secondary education among the coloured population was small. For a time it appeared that the school might suffer the same fate as the Evening School of 1892 but it was steered safely through many vicissitudes largely by the persistence of its Head Master, A. Woods, who, in seventeen years service, confirmed the school's existence and established/

established a high standard of academic achievement. It was accorded statutory permanence by the Secondary School Act of 1927.

In recent years the demand for its facilities has increased tremendously especially among the coloured people and the school is considerably overcrowded. Its benefits have been very largely denied to the out island population because of the limited number of scholarships available and because of the practical problem of maintaining children in Nassau. The number of out island children in the school reached a maximum in 1945 but even then they constituted less than one fifth of the roll although more than three fifths of the school age population in the colony were on the out islands. No pupils of grant-in-aid schools, where the highest standard is III or IV, have ever entered the High School.

Aided Secondary Education : 1926

The year after making more general provision for secondary education, political pressure resulted in yet another new form of provision for education. This found expression in the Secondary Education Act by which state aid was given to private secondary schools. The conditions under which this aid could be received were such that two of the three denominational schools for whites were able to qualify for the grant. A secondary school was defined as one which "provides a secondary education" for more than half the pupils and the other conditions/

conditions specified as to staff, curriculum and accommodation were equally modest. No representation on the governing body in return for government aid was required and the right of inspection, though stipulated, was purely nominal. Grants were paid for average attendance, qualification of teachers and successes in public examinations.

When this law came into effect the Grammar School had already ceased to exist. The Roman Catholic School was not able to comply with the requirements as to staff, not having at least one graduate of a British University. St. Hilda's, the Anglican School for girls, was able to qualify but closed in 1931 because of financial difficulties. The only other school which has received the grant and has received it to the present day is Queen's College, the Methodist School.

The immediate governing body of this school is a committee of the District Synod of the Methodist Church in the Bahamas but, apart from this fact, the school is undenominational. There is no religious test for pupils or staff on admission and, while its purpose is "the development of a true Christian citizenship", religious instruction does not play an unduly large part in the curriculum nor is there any sectarian teaching or religious observance. The roll now exceeds 300, rather more than half of whom are of age eleven plus and therefore regarded, for the purposes of the Act, as receiving secondary education. The government grant exceeded £2000 for the first time in 1945.

The/

Q.C. Jubilee (34) 1890-1940

The Secondary Education Act "has made more difference to "Queen's College than can be easily estimated. It has turned "a school struggling for existence into one with a comparatively "assured future. Queen's College, as now constituted and as "now functioning, could not exist without this grant." Another factor which has contributed to its success during this period has been the unbroken service of its Head Master, Rev. R.P. Dyer, for the last twenty two years whereas the previous thirty five years had seen no less than eight changes in the headship. Nevertheless, while the school may not now be again struggling for its existence, it is being conducted with greater difficulty than hitherto in consequence of the war. The scale of the government grant has remained unchanged since the Act was passed in 1926 and the school is unable to pay teachers' salaries which are at all commensurate with those of Canada and England, where its teachers are recruited, and still less with the very high and still rising cost of living in Nassau. While The High School is more favourably placed in this respect, it must be admitted that neither school is so conducted, equipped or accommodated as would entitle it to be adjudged "efficient" in England. On the other hand, both schools achieve a fair amount of success as measured by the performance of their pupils in Cambridge University Local Examinations though neither school aspires to Higher Certificate standard as do schools in most other West Indian colonies.

St./

St. Francis Xavier Academy for white pupils is staffed by Roman Catholic Sisters who are American graduates. The school cannot therefore qualify under the Secondary Education Act which requires that graduates shall be of British Universities. The same inability applies to the other Roman Catholic school established in 1945 for coloured boys. In 1947 the Anglican Church again entered the field of secondary education by opening a school for coloured children which hopes to qualify for the government grant. All these schools have preparatory departments. In addition to these, there is a small Roman Catholic school at Harbour Island and evening classes, conducted privately by the head master of one of the Board's schools in Nassau, giving tuition for Cambridge Local Examinations. It is estimated that less than 400 children were receiving some degree of whole or part time secondary (i.e. "grammar" school) education in 1945 while almost every single school is quite independent of the others and controlled by a separate and distinct authority. However, of 127* candidates for Cambridge Local Examinations in 1944, only 25 passed the Oversea Junior Examination and 19 the School Certificate.

Board of Education 1925.

We must now return to the primary schools in the crowded 1920's and observe a fundamental though apparently unimportant change in the administration of primary education. Formerly the/

* This number includes 71 private candidates from all parts of the colony.

the Board consisted of twelve members with no restriction on the length of time served by any one member. At least five of the members were also members of the Assembly. In 1925, in common with all other public boards, the membership was reduced to five, of whom two were to be members of the Assembly and all five were appointed to serve for one year only though members could be reappointed. No power was given to the smaller Board to co-opt other persons whether for short or long periods. This reduced, annually appointed body was still charged with the "superintendence, direction and control" of all matters concerning the public primary schools of the colony. The only qualification required of members was British citizenship.

Up to 1908, the Board of Education was unique and especially honoured among the public boards in being the oldest in the colony and always headed by the Governor. From 1908 to 1925 the Colonial Secretary presided except for one period of four years when the Attorney General was chairman. Since 1925, this tradition has been allowed to lapse and for only eight of the twenty years since 1925 was the Board headed by a senior official. This tradition was especially valuable, for the Inspector has never been a member of the Board even when that official was recruited from the teaching profession in England which has not been the case since 1915. Consequently, a knowledge of the English educational system, which has always been used as a model for the Bahamas, was imperative of the Board's chairman./

chairman.

The Inspector has always been a servant of the Board and subject to its instructions. There has never been a Director of Education (until 1946) but the Board itself has, in effect, filled that role. Since no one Board has ever been under obligation to continue the policy of its predecessor, it is clear that the only measure of continuity of policy has rested in the length of service of individual members. With this in mind, an analysis of composition of the Board before and after 1925 should serve as an indirect indication of the degree of continuity that has permeated the educational policy during that time. Such an analysis has been made for twenty years before and after 1925.

Before 1925 three chairmen had held office for an average term of more than six years. Since then the chairmanship of the Board has been changed seven times with an average term of less than three years. In the years 1926-32 there were no fewer than four different chairmen. None of the chairmen served less than three years in the earlier period; since then, only two chairmen have served longer than that.*

In the twenty years before 1925, 37 individuals had served on the Board when it was composed of twelve members. Since then, when the Board has been composed of five members only, as many as 27 persons have served. Of these, fifteen served for one or two years only but there were only nine such/

* In this comparison, the year 1925 itself has been omitted as there were two different chairmen in that year.

such short terms prior to 1925. The average length of membership in the last twenty years has been less than half that of the previous twenty years. Finally, when there were twelve members, the average aggregate of members' experience at any one time was more than four times what it has been since.

The personnel of the Board for the years 1926-45 was: professions, (excluding teaching) 10; merchants, 9; senior officials, 5; teachers, 2. These last were the head masters of Queen's College, who served two years only, and of The High School, who served for a few months. In addition to those enumerated, there has been but one lady, who was a member for 1945.

Late in 1946, the first Director of Education was appointed but the law still required the Board to act in that capacity since there has been no amendment of the Act. How this anomalous situation will resolve itself remains to be seen.

Staffing Difficulties.

It has been seen that the Board met, in part, the perennial difficulty of staffing the schools by a wholesale establishment of grant-in-aid schools to which unqualified, untrained teachers could be appointed. The 100% increase in salaries in 1920 did not change the attitude of potential teachers towards service in the schools of the colony. Young men leaving the schools were not inordinately anxious to return to them as teachers. Those already in the service did not hesitate to leave it when opportunity of other employment offered itself. Even monitors became so scarce that head teachers were obliged to recruit them from/

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-ibid- 1930

from as low a standard as IV. A year after the increase in salary there was as much dissatisfaction as ever among teachers. "The aftermath of the war has broadened their views and they "realize as they never did before that to be respected and to "exercise influence for good in the community where they are "stationed they must receive salaries that place them above "actual want and that they and their families must be decently "fed and clothed without being dependent on the credit of the "shopkeeper. Another sore point is that personal attainments "count for little in the salaries. It naturally follows that "the most desirable young men see no attraction in the school "service which in consequence is deeply marked by deterioration."

The effect on the efficiency of the schools may well be imagined. There were a few instances where teachers were given credit for the work they accomplished in spite of the adverse environment and economic conditions. \For the most part, the teachers' main weakness was "lack of definite aim with the "absence of initiative, inventiveness, resourcefulness and "adaptability with the consequent result that the teaching is "narrow and bookish and leads nowhere."

Of much greater detriment was the consequence of frequent resignations that occurred. These led, not only to initial appointments, but also to long series of transfers of teachers from one school to another. One resignation would lead to as many as five or six transfers affecting an equal number of schools/

schools. In 1926 nearly 40 schools out of 110 suffered a change of teacher, thus lowering the proficiency of the pupils. In 1924 a fifth of the schools were closed for periods varying from one to three months because of staffing problems. On top of all these temporary closures of schools there were three hurricanes in 1926. In that abnormal year there were no fewer than sixty three interruptions in the work of the schools, many being for as long as half the year.

It is clear that the Board's policy had been disastrous. The resources of money and men had been stretched too far and chaos ensued. Not only was it impossible to find enough recruits with satisfactory qualifications; it was becoming increasingly difficult to get any recruits at all. In despair, the Board tried two solutions of their problem. These were a salary scheme such as Moulder first recommended and the renewed importation of English teachers. The obstacle to the first of these was the uncertainty from year to year of the amount the Legislature was likely to appropriate over and above the statutory £6000. There was little use in initiating a salary scale on an incremental basis when there was no guarantee that the money would be available to maintain the increments. To meet the difficulty the Board submitted the salary scheme to the Assembly by whom it was approved and the money voted to put it into effect in 1926.

New Classification of Teachers • 1926

The/

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The modest qualifications required under the new classification of teachers were a School Certificate for the top two grades and a Junior Certificate for the third grade. No qualifications were required for the "unassigned" or fourth grade other than a departmental examination at the discretion of the Inspector. The protestation that "it is the policy of the Board not to employ persons who would come within this category except in the event of qualified teachers not being available" has a familiar and almost pathetic ring. Nevertheless, such were the qualifications of the teachers already in the service that not one could qualify for any other grade but the lowest. Previous classification and length of service were taken into consideration in assigning them to the new grades. Figure 18, Appendix VI, shows that in the last twenty years the number of "unassigned" teachers has steadily increased at the expense of all three grades. The eleven pupil teachers were also classified into two grades and even the army of monitors was marshalled into grades I, II and III. By comparison with the elaborate classification, the salaries attached were unprepossessing. The average head teacher's salary was £175 and the lowest grade of monitor received £6. A ferryman, employed to ferry children across a creek on their way to and from school, received nearly as much as the average amount paid to a grant-in-aid school teacher. A foreman to supervise school building and repairs was paid the phenomenal salary of £360.

Matters/

Matters had not improved by the beginning of the war when there were only two teachers earning more than £200 a year.

This attempt by the Board to solve its staffing problems was attended by little success. In the next five years 60 teachers resigned, in addition to which four of the best were appointed district commissioners. In the eighteen years from the beginning of the decline to 1930, nearly 200 teachers had passed out of the Board's service. This in spite of the fact that the combined number of head, assistant and grant-in-aid school teachers was never higher than 140 during those years. On the staff in 1927 there were only 21 teachers with ten or more years' service to their credit. The result on the qualifications of the staff was inevitable. At the beginning of the war, there were 124 teachers in charge of schools. About half of these were grant-in-aid school teachers while a third were "unassigned" or fourth grade. The remaining one sixth, however, constituted a promise of a better future.

Against these overwhelming odds the Board was building up this small nucleus of teachers with academic qualifications of the standard of Cambridge Local Certificates. The progress made in this direction can be illustrated by the analysis given in Figure 9. This more hopeful trend is the combined result of The High School, opened in 1925, and the Night School for pupil teachers commenced in 1931, together with a desire on the part of many of the younger teachers to improve their qualifications along/

along these lines. This improvement in academic standards, though of itself not altogether adequate without professional training, is much more satisfactory than existed before the opening of The High School.

Figure 9 : Qualifications of Teachers from 1926.

Year	School Certificate	Junior Certificate
1926	None	None
1930	3	11
1934	15	25
1938	18 (8 Heads) (10 Assistants)	33 (15 Heads) (18 Assistants)
1942	44 (19 Heads) (25 Assistants)	45 (19 Heads) (26 Assistants)
*1945	40 (17 Heads) (23 Assistants)	41 (22 Heads) (19 Assistants)

*The entry for 1945 shows the effects of another increase in resignations during the war.

The Second World War brought about further aggravation of the Board's staffing difficulties. During the years 1939-45 the services of about seventy teachers were lost but only twelve of them through death or retirement. Six were appointed Commissioners and nine went to other government departments. Moreover, the general shortage of labour and increased opportunities/

opportunities for employment made it increasingly difficult to recruit new teachers.

English Teachers • 1926 - 1931.

The other attempt made by the Board in 1926 was a repetition of the experiment that had been initiated in the last century and which had been productive of so much success in raising up pupil teachers to the service as well as bringing George Cole to Bahamian education. On this occasion there was another problem to be solved. The staffing of the schools in white or predominantly white out island settlements had grown increasingly acute. These communities demanded white teachers but white Bahamians had not the training and qualifications to command the salaries paid to the English teachers and the ordinary salaries paid by the Board were not sufficiently attractive to induce them to enter the service. Nor were there any prospects of advancement in the teaching profession apart from the possibility of promotion to commissioner.

Five English certificated teachers arrived in 1926 on contract for three years and were appointed to five such out island schools. From the outset the experiment was attended by little success. The teachers did not find the conditions of their work amenable. Apart from the life on an out island, English teachers of 1926 were not so likely to regard a staff composed solely of monitors with the same tolerance as their predecessors of the 1860's. One resigned within the first year and/

and others were recruited until, in 1928, there were seven. Unfortunately, they were moved about so frequently that their services could scarcely be expected to produce much of permanent value in any one place. One teacher, who was stationed in Nassau for a reasonable length of time, was able to impart some slight training to a few student teachers. However, they were put into his charge for too short a time to allow any sound training of real value to be given to them. None of the teachers renewed his contract although a few resigned before completing three years. The last two left the service in 1931 and, once again, the Board concluded that the experiment had failed.

West Indian Teachers.

At the same time a parallel experiment was tried with teachers from Jamaica, Trinidad and British Guiana. They were agricultural teachers and the Board was more satisfied with the effects of this venture. They were more familiar with the standard of education and were more ready to remain in the colony. They were not transferred from school to school to such a great extent. One is still in the Board's service though he was seconded to the Agricultural Department in 1938 while another continued as a teacher until 1945 when he returned to Jamaica. Yet another went the way of all good teachers and became a commissioner.

Improved Attendance.

In spite of the insuperable staffing problem the Board persisted/

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persisted in opening an average of one school every two months. Six hundred more children were being added to its responsibility each year until it was finally compelled to call a halt to this expansion in 1928. Meanwhile the pupils were attending with increasing regularity and in 1929 a measure was adopted to increase it still further.

It has been described how the many private schools of doubtful efficiency acted as a means of evading the compulsory clauses for "selfish parents and idle children" and that a child's being "under efficient instruction in some other manner" was legally a sufficient excuse for non-attendance at a public school. "Efficient instruction" was not defined by the 1908 Act nor was the Board empowered to satisfy itself as to the efficiency of these other sources of instruction. The legal machinery to remedy this was supplied in 1929 when the Inspector was given the power to inspect any private school and to issue a certificate to any school which he considered was providing efficient instruction. Compulsory attendance was extended to certified schools which were obliged to keep proper registers. These provisions were not to apply to private tutors "recognized by the Board or a magistrate to be competent or to "established educational institutions recognized by the Board." This somewhat vague limitation presumably referred to such schools as the government and denominational secondary schools. Apart from these, all primary education in the colony was subject/

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subject to inspection and approval. Full advantage was not taken of this provision and no regular inspection of private schools has been undertaken mainly because the colossal task of inspecting both the maintained and the aided schools is more than the one Inspector can accomplish.

1930 . Year of Depression and Progress.

The general depression of 1930 made necessary severe retrenchment in the colony's expenditure. Education suffered another crippling blow. With a few exceptions, salaries were cut by more than half and house allowances wholly eliminated. The salary scheme of 1926 was no more. The vote for rebuilding was obliterated and that for school supplies reduced by 75%. The annual inspection of out island schools was omitted. The compulsory clauses were enforced in a negative way by excluding from the schools children below six and above fourteen. The student teacher system was abandoned. The immediate result was "almost total paralysis" of the educational system. Dissatisfaction and discontent among the teachers was rife and the general tone of their schools suffered in consequence; more than 10% of them resigned. "Henceforward the teaching "profession ceases to offer financial security the "whole educational future of the colony depends upon the "provision of an up-to-date and efficient teaching staff./ The "progress of education in the Bahamas has been delayed in all "probability for at least a decade." Not until the beginning of the war was the cut in expenditure completely restored.

Attendance/

Attendance which had also suffered a precipitous decline recovered rather earlier.

Under the circumstances of virtually having its hands tied by its financial embarrassment, the Board pursued a remarkably progressive policy in the depression years. In the year of retrenchment there had been appointed, as Chairman of the Board, G. Tracey Watts, the Attorney General of the colony. This gentleman, besides^{being}/endowed with considerable vision, was also possessed of great energy and drive. Under his chairmanship, the Board disdained to accept adversity with resignation. Nor did it rest content solely with devising means of minimizing the disabling effects of the reduction with a view to enabling the educational system merely to hold its own. Rather was the Board inspired to a positive policy of advancement and progressive development. Thus, instead of closing "two or three small and unimportant schools", as occurred sixty years earlier, the Board managed to keep all the schools open and, in the succeeding years of the depression, actually contrived to resume its policy of establishing new grant-in-aid schools and even succeeded in increasing the number of Board schools. In the same year as the grant was cut, a most far-sighted reorganization of the Nassau schools was effected following the lines recommended in England only four years earlier in the Report of the Hadow Commission on Primary Education. At the same time the monitorial system was banished/

banished from Nassau and the most satisfactory scheme of education and training for pupils so far devised was instituted. Also in the same year there was begun the extremely beneficial series of annual Teachers' Conferences which, for the first time, brought together every summer the vast majority of the teachers in the colony as one body. Arising out of this the following year was the first attempt to form a professional association among Bahamian teachers. A school medical service was commenced though it did not survive long. In addition, several other progressive measures to modernize the education system were being actively considered. Some of these found expression in practice within a year or two and some did not mature for several years. Others, while they have never fully materialized, have nevertheless stimulated educational thought along new and modern lines. In short, the 1930's were years of depression in Bahamian education but they were also years of progress and progressive thought.

"Hadow" Reorganization and the Monitorial System.

In Nassau before 1930, children ranging in ages from less than six up to eighteen and nineteen customarily attended any school near their homes. The result was congestion in the densely populated areas, extensive overlapping of the work of the schools and a "complete absence of individual atmosphere attaching to any particular school." The immediate object of the reorganization undertaken in 1930 was the development of specialized/

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specialized schools in which children could be grouped according to age. In both the eastern and western districts a three-fold classification of the schools was made to provide for children of Preparatory, Junior and Senior ages, the ages of transition being eight and eleven. Not until 1945 was the same system completed for the southern district. Under the influence of the Hadow report, the ultimate aim of the reorganization was "a continuous, graduated system of primary education, "together with a unified scheme of instruction in each particular "class of school." This object has now very largely been realized. By far the greatest development has taken place in the senior schools where a much larger number of children than before reach the higher standards before leaving school.

One result, of local interest, of the reorganization of Nassau schools was the end of the old Central School. Established by the 1821 Act as the "Central School of the Bahamas" it was conducted as a mixed school until long after emancipation. The 1847 Act established a Girls' Model School and from then until 1924 it was known as the Boys' Central School. In 1864 it was transferred from the building behind the courts of law and public offices to the former Wesleyan chapel in Nassau Court. The school virtually ceased to exist in 1925 when it was replaced by the new High School which still occupies the same building. It was reorganized as a mixed school but continued to be known as the Central School until 1930 when it was integrated into the scheme/

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scheme of reorganization as the Western Senior School. It had a noble tradition of more than a century's continuous existence, four of its head masters subsequently becoming Inspectors. For the five years 1823-28 it was the only government-maintained school in the whole colony.

Simultaneous with this reorganization, the monitorial system was superseded in the Nassau schools. The schools were more fully staffed with assistants though many of them masqueraded as pupil teachers with a consequent saving of salaries. Tracey Watts appears to have recognized the monitorial system at its true value: "The system is both inefficient and pernicious "..... (and) is merely a case of the blind leading the blind." While admitting the possibility that monitors might be useful in helping to maintain order, that their efforts could have any educative value was "inconceivable." Making the conservative estimate that £1500 was spent annually upon this "unprofitable system", he criticized as short-sighted a policy that would concentrate attention upon older pupils while failing to provide adequate instruction for the younger ones.

Precisely the same criticism however might well have been levelled against the Hadow reorganization by reading the word "Nassau" for "older" and "out island" for "younger". In Nassau, with its large compact population, the problem was relatively easy of solution, the results more spectacular and the subsequent prospect more gratifying than in the scattered out island schools where/

where the problem was much more diffuse and more difficult to solve. Thereafter it seemed as though the Nassau system became the show-place of Bahamian education, the more favoured child upon whom were bestowed many desirable things at the expense of the step-children on the out islands. For the delivery of the Nassau schools from the monitorial evil was effected at the expense of its perpetuation in the out island schools.

Figure 10 presents a comparison of the Nassau and out island schools, nine years after the reorganization in Nassau, with respect to their staffs of qualified teachers and monitors. It is seen that on the out islands, rather more than three times as many pupils as in Nassau were accommodated in more than twelve times as many schools but that the total number of qualified teachers (55 in Nassau and 60 in the out islands) was almost the same. Including on the out island side of the comparison the unqualified grant-in-aid teachers, the average number of pupils per teacher was 58 compared with 39 in Nassau. Adding now to the Nassau side the pupil teachers, who were in fact used as assistants, the staffing ratio in Nassau was more than twice that in the out island schools. Even when the army of monitors, 271 strong at 6/- to 9/- a month, is thrown into the out island side of the balance, the "teacher" - pupil ratio was only 1: 17 compared with 1: 25 in Nassau. This comparison is the reverse of what one would expect, which is to find the few large Nassau schools capable of being much more economically staffed/

staffed than the small, numerous, scattered out island schools, 25 of which demanded the services of a teacher for less than 35 pupils. By out island standards, not only were the Nassau/

Figure 10 : Staffing of Schools : 1939

	Salary in £'s per annum.	Nassau (a)	Out Islands
Schools	-	9	111
Head Teachers	(iv) 140 x 2 - 175 (iii) 160 x $2\frac{1}{2}$ - 200 (ii) 210 x 3 - 250 (i) 250 x 10 - 400	9	55
Assistant Teachers	(iv) 36 x 1 - 60 (iii) 54 x 2 - 96 (ii) 96 x 4 - 184 (i) 184 x 6 - 220	46	5
Grant-in-aid Teachers	18 - 82	-	56
Pupil Teachers	24	25	1
Monitors	3.12s - 5.8s	4	271
Average Attendance	-	2126	6769
<u>Average Attendance</u> Staff (b)	-	38.6	58.3
<u>Average Attendance</u> Staff + Ptt. (c)	-	26.6	57.8
<u>Average Attendance</u> Staff + Ptt. + Mons. (d)	-	25.3	17.5

Key:

- (a) Including Sandilands School
- (b) Staff = Head Teachers + Assistant Teachers + Grant-in-aid Teachers.
- (c) Ptt. = Pupil Teachers
- (d) Mons. = Monitors

Nassau schools more adequately and efficiently staffed, they may even be said to have been overstaffed. Another unevenness is that the best head teachers are appointed to the schools in Nassau while the best of those remaining on the out islands are periodically appointed Commissioners. If only to obtain for their children a larger share of the educational benefits provided by the Government, out islanders can scarcely be condemned for migrating to the capital.

As if by way of consolation to the out island schools, measures were adopted to bolster up the monitorial system. Steps were taken to enforce the by-laws relating to monitors to ensure that the five hours' private tuition they were supposed to have was indeed given. From time to time the Inspector has been instructed to have regard to the "qualifications" of monitors and the progress of their education, to insist that they be not appointed below fourteen or their services retained beyond eighteen should they reveal no potentialities as teachers. In spite of these undesirable resolutions, the perennial staffing problem has made it impossible to enforce the by-laws and consequently there has been little improvement. One may still find monitors of twelve and thirteen being paid to instruct children only slightly younger than themselves and their number has steadily increased until 1945, out of a total teaching force of five hundred, the battalion of monitors was three hundred strong.

Teachers' /

Report (51) 1940

Teachers' Conferences.

The first conference of teachers was conducted in 1925 when nearly fifty teachers and fifty monitors, mostly from out islands, assembled in Nassau. The sessions were taken up mainly by lectures and discussions but by far the most beneficial effect was the infusion of a corporate spirit among the teachers for whom opportunities of associating with one another are virtually non-existent outside of New Providence. It was to the mitigation of the sense of isolation among teachers that the conference largely contributed and in this respect performed a useful function. However, it was not repeated until 1930 when it became an annual event on a more ambitious scale accompanied by exhibitions of school work. For several years the conferences were financed solely by voluntary contributions but in 1936 the House voted a small sum to meet expenses. In consequence of this the conferences became even more ambitious, that of 1939 being described as the best on record. The following year, "no provision was made in the Approved Estimates, consequently the Annual Conference was postponed."

Thus ended the first attempt to instil something in the nature of a corporate professional outlook into the ranks of the Board's teachers. Among its first fruits was an embryonic Teachers' Union, inaugurated in Nassau the year following the first conference. It was a little premature and did not long survive. A revival of it occurred in 1945 and thus far promises/

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promises to be more successful. It must, however, be admitted that the general body of teachers is woefully lacking in professional unity and does not command nearly as much respect among the public or in government circles as is essential for the well-being of education.

Training of Teachers.

Another progressive move in the "Tracey Watts era" of Bahamian education was a determined and successful attempt to make the pupil teacher system more efficient than it had ever been. This must, however, be considered in relation to other efforts made in this period with the training of teachers as their aim. If any one thing in the realm of primary education has distinguished the years 1920 onwards from the earlier periods, it is the general recognition in all responsible circles of the need for some form of training of teachers. Watts among others was very forthright in his pronouncement of this need: "It cannot be too often or emphatically repeated that so long as this colony remains lacking in an efficient teaching staff, efficient not less in methods of instruction than in academical attainments, there can be no reasonable hope of progress. The creation of such a body necessitates the establishment of some central institution in which teachers can be suitably trained but without the necessary funds to inaugurate and maintain such an institution, the entire primary educational system of the colony must remain a structure poised upon rotten foundations."

If/

If, however, general agreement as to the need for the training of teachers has characterized this period, there has been a conspicuous absence of unanimity as to the means by which this desirable object might be realized. Each successive Board of Education, each Chairman of the Board, each Inspector and many other persons, the present writer not excepted, has had his own particular solution of the problem. This is not very surprising but, unfortunately, while it has occasionally happened that one particular Board has agreed upon a policy and has given effect to it, there has never been any guarantee that succeeding Boards would be bound by this policy and continue it. In consequence, almost each new year has seen some fresh contribution to the hodge-podge that has done duty as a training system during this period.

At the beginning of the period in 1920 we find in existence only those methods that had persisted more or less continuously since the time of Job and before. There was the monitorial system if this may be admitted as a system of teacher training. This was by far the strongest method but only by virtue of sheer numbers. The pupil teacher system was feeble, there being only four pupil teachers in the whole colony. In addition there were four student teachers in the Boys' Central School, who would appear to have been especially favoured individuals in that their "allowance" far exceeded the average salary of an assistant teacher. To these three categories/

categories of teachers-in-training may be added those older monitors or promising grant-in-aid school teachers who were "brought in", from time to time, from the out islands and placed in a Nassau school for "a short training course" of one term only.

English Teachers : 1925 - 1931

The first attempt to augment these inadequate methods was the repetition of the experiment of importing certificated English teachers in 1925. We have already seen how the conduct of this experiment vitiated any valuable results it may otherwise have had. The method was abandoned in 1931.

Student Teacher System.

In 1925, the student teachers were transferred from the Central School to The High School which was opened in that year. The name "student teacher" is misleading, since these individuals receive no more than a secondary education up to School Certificate standard; they make no special study of teaching methods or receive any professional training of any kind. They have not the time, nor has the school the facilities, for such training which must be supplied subsequently in the primary schools. At most they attend for four years and commonly leave or are withdrawn by the Board earlier. In return for their education, the students are bound by a contract, at the age of thirteen or fourteen, to enter the Board's service as teachers after completing their/

their secondary education.

As this system, even when in full and satisfactory operation, would yield no more than one recruit per year, it is not surprising that the Board recruits former pupils of The High School other than the student teachers. In 1944, of 124 head and assistant teachers in the primary schools, 42 had received a secondary education at The High School but only 11 of these had been student teachers. In previous years the number of High School pupils who became primary school teachers was very nearly half the total number but many had resigned to enter more lucrative occupations.

In the period under review, 33 student teachers passed through The High School but only one remained four years while more than half left or were withdrawn before the end of two years. Of the total number, four abandoned their training, six proved to be unsuitable and were withdrawn, one was suspended for misconduct, two declined to enter into agreement to become teachers and many of the others dishonoured their agreements or resigned after teaching for a short time. Only eleven are still teaching. It is clear that, although The High School has been of inestimable benefit in providing better educated recruits for the teaching profession, the student teacher system has been, if not an utter failure, then largely superfluous. It was discontinued in 1930 and remained in abeyance until 1936 since when it has produced three/

three teachers out of twelve who entered the school as students.
Pupil Teacher System.

In the years 1927-29 the number of pupil teachers was abruptly increased from 14 to 44. Owing to the failure of the supply of teachers to keep pace with the increase in the number of schools pupil teachers were being used, not as apprentices to teaching, but as low paid assistants. They were commonly placed in charge of large classes without supervision, a practice which afforded them a good deal of experience of a kind but little training. After "teaching" for the whole school day, they were themselves taught by the head master who had also been teaching all day. The whole position was most unsatisfactory: the head master's responsibilities were too heavy, the pupil teachers were too tired to respond to instruction while the pupils in the school were not receiving adequate instruction. Moreover, in Nassau at least there was too much duplication of the efforts of head masters each of whom was attempting to give the same instruction to his own pupil teachers. Some centralization of the instruction of pupil teachers was obviously imperative.

This was supplied the following year by the Night School for Pupil Teachers conducted by T.A. Thompson the present Inspector, who was then a head master. Some of the monitors as well as all pupil teachers were required to attend. Since some of the pupil teachers were high school pupils who already/

already possessed Cambridge certificates the class was very heterogeneous. Its two-fold aim included the preparation of some for Cambridge examinations and the instruction of all in the elementary theoretical aspect of training. The combined effect of The High School and the Night School gave rise to an anomalous position. In 1934, the so-called "pupil teachers" possessed more academic qualifications than twice as many head teachers and assistant teachers combined. The anomaly was removed by creating a new class of teachers, the Junior Assistants, thereby adding more confusion to the already complex classification of teachers. Admission to the two grades of the new class was contingent upon the possession of a School Certificate or a Junior Certificate.

The Night School enjoyed a relatively fair measure of permanence. It was discontinued in 1936 "for financial reasons" although in the same year a much more costly scheme of training was launched. It was resumed the following year only to be finally discontinued in 1940.

Training at Tuskegee : 1936 - 1941

For many years the Booker T. Washington institution for negro students at Tuskegee in Alabama had stirred the imagination of many Bahamians including members of the Board of Education. It will subsequently be seen how it influenced the trend of opinion on vocational education as well as the training of teachers. In 1936, six head teachers were sent to/

to a summer school for industrial courses in agriculture, woodwork and domestic science. Up to 1939, twenty head teachers had attended such courses and "the very marked success of this experiment" induced the Board to send four teachers for a year's training as Jeanes Teachers and Community Leaders. This was repeated the following year when expenditure on the training of teachers reached its highest peak of $3\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the total expenditure on primary education. The year after, both types of training had the same fate as their predecessors and have not since been resumed.

Correspondence Course : 1940 - 1943.

With the object of improving the educational standard of grant-in-aid teachers a correspondence course was commenced in 1940. Instruction was given by certain teachers of Nassau Schools and was followed up in 1943 by a four weeks' summer school in Nassau. At the end of three years, seven of the teachers sat the Cambridge Junior examination and three were successful.

Summer School : 1943 - 1946

A more recent venture has been a revival of the Teachers' Conference and, therefore, not specifically in the nature of teacher training. The first was in 1943 and has been described as winding up the correspondence course for grant-in-aid teachers. That of 1944 "was more ambitious" and/

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and provided short courses in needlework and preparatory teaching methods as well as a general series of lectures.

Agricultural Training : 1943

Following the cessation of courses at Tuskegee, it was decided to arrange courses in agriculture locally with the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture. The first of these materialized in 1943 when six teachers were given "a short course in theoretical and practical gardening." The course was conducted for one year only.

Normal School Training in Canada : 1946

Following a visit of the Inspector to Canada in 1946 where he was in consultation with the Ontario Department of Education, a small number of pupil teachers was sent to Canada in that year to avail themselves of the Department's offer of a year's training at the Toronto Normal School.

This completes the extremely chequered outline of the various attempts to train and educate teachers in this period. With the addition of the three-weeks' Summer School and the new experiment in Canada which has not yet borne any fruit, the system of teacher training is the same now as it was in 1920 at the beginning of the period and as it was in 1865 when Job reported that, in the colony's educational system, "the great need is a training system."

Inspection of Schools.

The failure of successive attempts to maintain schools in/

in the pre-emancipation period, on account of the lack of a central controlling authority, was described in chapter IV. Attempts to provide co-ordination of schools by the appointment of a body of Commissioners in 1795 and again in 1821 both failed because neither of these bodies had an education officer to inspect the schools and effect liaison between the Commission on the one hand and teachers on the other. Not until 1836 were both of these deficiencies effectively supplied and the foundations of a system of education surely laid. Emphasis has been laid on the extent to which the subsequent consolidation and development of the system have reflected the efficiency and foresight of successive inspectors. This office has been the indispensable pivot of the whole structure of the educational system for over a century and in all that time there has never been more than one officer to discharge the duties of this arduous and extremely responsible position except for two brief periods during the recent war.

The officer appointed under the 1847 Act was charged with the functions of Head Master, Supervisor of Teacher Training, Inspector of Schools and Superintendent of Education. The 1864 Act relieved him of the first two of these duties but replaced them by the function of Secretary to the Board. There were then only twenty five schools in the colony. Nearly twenty years later, when George Cole assumed/

assumed the role of Inspector, there were still only thirty; but, by the end of the century the number was doubled and the task of inspecting them had more than doubled as nearly all the new schools were on the out islands. In 1900 the offices of Secretary and Inspector were separated but the general superintendence of education was still, and is still, the charge of the Inspector. Nearly forty years later, the number of schools had again been more than doubled but there was still only one Inspector. Moreover, the scope of his duties had increased to include, to quote only two examples, the inspection of private schools and the Primary School Leaving Certificate. Not until 1939 was the office of Assistant Inspector created but, since the Inspector retired the next year, there was still only one officer for the next five years. The office has been filled twice since 1945. In 1942 a desirable move was made in the creation of the office of Out Island Superintendent of Education. This office, which would have proved of inestimable value to out island education, was filled by the Secretary of the Board, who was not qualified for the post. Two months after appointment, he was seconded to the Labour Office and the post has not since been filled. Not until 1946 has there been a Director of Education.

The consequence of this ill-advised policy has been the inevitable and wholesale neglect of out island schools. There/

There has never been a complete inspection of all schools in one year since 1912 when Cole, at the age of 73, inspected all 64 schools in that year. At the beginning of the First World War, the inspection of out island schools was suspended as an economy measure. It was never completely resumed because of the increasing number of schools and the Inspector's increasing administrative duties. The greatest number ever inspected in one year was 77 out of a total number of 95. This task, accomplished in 1924, kept the Inspector on tour of the out islands for six months. From that year the length of time available for out island inspections steadily diminished until, in 1931, only 17 schools out of a total of 119 were inspected, this requiring 31 days' tour. There was no inspection at all in 1928, when the Inspector was on leave and he had no deputy competent to undertake the task, and again in 1930, when inspection was suspended as an economy measure.

In an attempt to solve the problem in 1941 certain Board school teachers were deputed to supervise the grant-in-aid schools in their area. A similar practice is to have inspections performed by Commissioners, many of whom were formerly teachers. Consequently, many out island schools are never seen by the Inspector for years on end. Even where inspections are undertaken, they amount to no more than a visit of one day in the year.

The/

The by-laws make provision for "surprise visits", without previous warning, in addition to regular inspections. Should this one overburdened officer, in charge of 120 schools scattered over 4400 square miles and with hundreds of miles of ocean and rocky tracks between them, ever find it possible to visit these schools more than once a year, the additional visits would indeed be "surprises".

Curriculum and Attainments.

In contrast with their limited academic qualifications and training, the range of subjects in which the teachers in primary schools must be versed is remarkable. The phenomenal growth of grant-in-aid schools which has characterized this period has been paralleled only by the expansion of the curriculum. To trace this expansion from its beginning one must return to the year 1905, when an Act of the Legislature required the teaching of temperance and hygiene in addition to the other eight or nine subjects of the curriculum. To these extra "extras", the Board added "the restoration of the apparently drowned." The practical teaching of hygiene had undoubted utilitarian value, involving as it did the maintenance of the school building, playground and latrines in a clean and sanitary condition. No part of the Board's limited resources has ever been set aside for the cleaning of the school premises and "the necessary sweeping, dusting, scrubbing, weeding and removal of rubbish shall be performed by the pupils under the direction of the Headteacher."

The act of 1908 made the further addition of agriculture which involved the teachers in the extra responsibility of maintaining school gardens. Making a garden in the Bahamas is a most disheartening task. The soil, if there is any at all, is concealed in small holes or pockets in the calcareous rock. Being itself calcareous, it is not retentive of moisture and this feature, prolonged droughts and relentless sun combine to defeat the most earnest endeavours even of the full-time farmer. That the ill-paid teachers, whose multitudinous duties ranged from the diplomatic handling of the School Committees to the supervision of the cleaning of the school latrines, should yet find enough time to create a garden (bearing in mind that three quarters of the pupils are girls or youngsters under ten) speaks well for their ^{determination}/devotion and, not least of all, their versatility.

No further additions were made until the beginning of the First World War when members of the Police Force began to drill the boys of Nassau Schools. When this was discontinued in 1916 for the usual "financial reasons" the duty devolved upon the teachers and became general in all schools. Music and bookkeeping made their first appearance the same year. Woodwork was introduced at the Boys' Central School at the end of the war and was extended to several other schools. It is now taught in both the Senior Schools in Nassau/

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Nassau and in a simple way in some out island schools. Masonry was also undertaken at the Boys' Central School a few years later. To the long-established sewing for girls was added, at the same time, cookery at the Central School. This later developed into domestic science and as such flourishes in both Senior Schools in Nassau. The native cottage industry of "straw" plaiting, with the associated hat, basket and mat making, and sisal and raffia work were introduced, especially to the out island schools, about 1930.

Nature study developed as a companion subject to agriculture. In 1932, English History was replaced by Empire History in some of the schools "as a more suitable "subject for study by the children of this colony whose "geographical position renders it peculiarly susceptible to "foreign influences." A few years earlier, text books had been provided to the teachers "by the direction of His Excellency the Governor" to enable pupils to receive instruction in "morals and the building up of character." This teaching was subsequently widened and became another new subject, citizenship. After the second Teachers' Conference in 1931, instruction cards in semaphore signalling were issued and by the end of the year "good progress had been made by some of the pupils."

In 1935 the Boy Scout movement was revived in the colony and within three years almost every school in the colony/

colony had a troop of scouts attached to it. However desirable this may have been as an out-of-school activity, the zeal of the Inspector of Schools, who was Commissioner of Scouts, had the effect of giving departmental sanction to this activity and scouting as a qualification of teachers was at a premium. The enthusiasm did not long survive, however, and had waned considerably by the beginning of the war. Scouting has been recently revived again by the Governor together with Girl Guides which formerly flourished to a limited extent.

In view of the seemingly unlimited expansion of the curriculum just described, it became desirable for some resolution of policy with respect to the curriculum in 1930. A further complication had also arisen from the lack of secondary education for coloured pupils prior to the opening of The High School. It had become the policy of the Board to encourage pupils to prepare themselves for the Cambridge Junior examination and this practice had been continued in the Nassau schools after the establishment of The High School. However, the Board became apprehensive lest too much attention be concentrated upon those children who were thought capable of sitting for these examinations to the detriment of the majority.

In making its statement of aim, the Board believed that, children should be trained "in a manner which shall best fit "them/

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-ibid-

"them to fill whatever stations in life may be open to them upon "leaving school." For this reason, particular emphasis was placed on agriculture and the Board regretted that "their "financial position renders it impossible to embark upon any "scheme of vocational training." Being more concerned with "the formation of solid, reliable character rather than the encouragement of academical brilliance" the Board's two-fold aim was to afford

"(a) a suitable educational grounding for children generally and
 "(b) a qualifying standard sufficient to enable those children
 " who are in a position to do so to proceed to a course of
 " secondary instruction." This "qualifying standard" was fixed as one equivalent to that of the old Cambridge Preliminary examination.

In preference to an external examination the Board encouraged an internal Primary School Leaving Certificate examination which had been introduced by the Inspector as early as 1918. This aimed at a modest level of attainment which standard VI or VII pupils might reasonably be expected to attain before leaving school at fourteen plus. It was held only in New Providence for many years but in 1944 was extended with success to a few out island schools, which might be expected to reach the same standard. A comparatively high standard is set and only a small number of pupils take the examination. In 1943, /

1943, when the best results were achieved, 58 pupils passed the examination out of 78 who entered. The size of the fourteen plus year group in Nassau in that year was rather less than 300.

Because of the many adverse circumstances which militated against the proficiency of the schools in this period - the rapid expansion of the system far beyond the Board's limited resources of teachers, money and materials, the lack of consistent policy, competent direction and adequate inspection, and the endless stream of poorly equipped teachers in and out of the service - the standard either of instruction or of pupils' attainments can scarcely be expected to have progressed much beyond the high degree of efficiency attained by the end of the first decade of the century. Nevertheless some progress has been made especially in the Nassau schools in consequence of the greater efficiency resulting from the reorganization in 1930 and the replacement of monitors by assistant teachers. In the colony as a whole the number of pupils reaching the higher standards has increased but is still comparatively small as Fig. 11 shows. It is estimated

Figure 11 . Grading of Pupils. 1876-1945

Year	Preliminary	Standards I - III	Standards IV -VI
1876	37.1%	49.6%	13.3%
1898	-	-	17.8%
1920	36.4%	41.3%	22.3%
1933-35	36.8%	41.5%	21.7%
1943-45	42.6%	35.7%	21.8%

that about 8% of the pupils in all primary schools never reach standard IV but leave school from standard III or below. A correspondingly higher proportion never reach standards V or VI. In 1941 only 3.2% of the pupils were in standard VI. The increase, in recent years, in the proportion of children in the preliminary classes is not a welcome sign but it is probably due to the considerable increase in roll since the late 1950's.

Literacy figures from the 1943 census reveal that 22,697 individuals could neither read nor write. This figure includes, however, not only children under school age, but also those children who are attending school but have not yet acquired literacy. If, therefore, one deducts from this figure the whole of the population below the age of eight, one is left with 7517 individuals who cannot read or write. This amounts to 14% of the population over eight years old. This estimate is subject to considerable error.

Vocational Education.

Throughout the depression of the 1930's the Board succeeded in keeping all its schools open in spite of its severely reduced income. There was, however, a considerable decline in attendance but, as the colony began to feel some relief from the economic stringency, both the attendance and votes for education recovered their former level. The recovery coincided with the beginning of a new phase of education. In 1936 the Board committed itself to a policy "in the direction of vocational education in their schools." The first expression of /

of this policy was the inauguration of vocational training for teachers at Tuskegee. The idea was by no means new but was rather the culmination of many years of thought along these lines. Up to this time the board had been deterred from giving itself unreservedly to the policy because of the possible expense that might be involved. Consequently, to trace the development of the vocational idea, we must go much further back than the beginning of this period.

The earliest mention of a subject with a practical bias is in the first School Act in 1746 when Navigation was prescribed as an optional subject. To this "Merchant Accompts" was added in 1772 but these Acts did not envisage vocational education as such. For the origin of the vocational idea one must go back to the 1835 Commission who conceived, not one school to provide manual training, but the whole educational system built up of schools of this kind for girls as well as for boys. There was this difference, that the manual work of the schools of industry was intended as a vehicle for imparting the rudiments of an academic education rather than as training for specific occupations. The more recent conception was the narrower one of a trade school which would be concerned solely with the production of a better type of skilled artisan. Not until very recent years has vocational education been regarded as providing practical instruction, not as an end in itself, but as /

as a means to a wider cultural education of a different type from that supplied by an academic secondary school course. It is doubtful, however, if this loftier, less utilitarian ideal has yet gained much acceptance among the majority of the coloured population or much favour among the legislators.

The recommendation concerning schools of industry suffered the same fate as others of the Commission's carefully considered suggestions. — The only practical subject to be taught with any measure of consistency last century was needlework. Attempts to teach agriculture were not attended by very much success despite the fact that it was the means of subsistence for the bulk of the population. Tailoring and shoemaking were taught in some of the schools at one time and the Board engaged the services of a cutter of cameos for two years in 1884. These isolated instances, together with instruction in the use of the mariner's compass, constituted the sum of the teaching of practical subjects in the nineteenth century.

At the turn of the century considerable dissatisfaction with the content and trend of education was being expressed in administrative circles. The Governor was satisfied that the type of education was not that best suited to the needs of the people. At that time there was not one master carpenter, blacksmith or mason in the whole colony nor was there any means of training such. To supply the great need for a good class of artisans a system such as that of Booker Washington at Tuskegee /

Wright (45) page 600.

-ibid-

Tuskegee was required. "Until that or some similar scheme, "based upon industrial training as the main factor in "educational method, is adopted I fear no improvement in the "condition of the large native population in this colony will "be manifested." He was not very hopeful that such a radical change would be effected, however, because of the perennial problem of the insufficiency of the revenue to meet the calls made upon it. Moreover he had found but little disposition on the part of the Legislature to assist the Government in its efforts to encourage practical agriculture "which, after "all, is the industry upon which the mass of the people must "rely and about which, at present, they know next to nothing."

Early in this century the negro institution, founded by the eminent American negro, Booker T. Washington, at Tuskegee in Alabama, attracted the attention and stirred the imagination of an increasing number of coloured Bahamians. To have a Bahamian institution of a similar nature became the ambition of many, while others, realizing the impracticability of such an undertaking in the near future, thought in terms of a school giving training of a vocational character to boys and girls on leaving the ordinary primary school. More than once, Bahamians saw skilled artisans imported from the States or from other West Indian islands to work on major projects in Nassau because of the lack of master craftsmen in the colony while they themselves supplied the common labour. The conception of providing an education of this type was by no means novel or original /

original though this was the first time that a general demand for education of such a character had arisen from that section of the people for whom it was to be provided.

The Boynton Normal and Industrial Institute, established in 1905, was the first concrete manifestation of this demand. The intention was to duplicate Washington's Normal and Industrial Institute at Tuskegee. At one time a site had been secured and a building was in course of construction but the school had no endowment or government recognition and the project failed when public enthusiasm died out.

If, as the Governor had asserted, the Legislature was not disposed to vote funds for the encouragement of agriculture, it went so far as to legislate for its inclusion in the curriculum of the colony's schools without, however, making any additional financial provision for this. The study of agriculture and the keeping of school gardens was introduced in 1906. It was revived by Moulder who attempted to put the subject on a satisfactory basis. His successor, W. E. Albury, was very zealous in this respect and a peak of enthusiasm was reached near the end of the First World War when every school had its garden. Some teachers, with commendable enterprise, had encouraged their pupils in the keeping of home gardens. Thereafter, as usual, enthusiasm waned and so also did the number and quality of the gardens. The schools in which the subject of agriculture was intelligently taught became "very, very few." With a view to reviving it, the Board appointed /

appointed four agricultural teachers brought from other West Indian islands in 1928. The retrenchment of 1930 was another set-back to the development of agricultural teaching but it was again revived in 1936 with the training of teachers in agriculture at Tuskegee. Yet another reawakening of enthusiasm occurred during the Second World War when the need for locally produced food became urgent.

The introduction of other practical subjects has already been mentioned. The most noteworthy development of these has been in the two senior schools in Nassau where the woodwork classes for boys perform a useful service to the impecunious Board by making considerable quantities of school furniture for our island schools. The domestic science departments of the same schools are no less deserving of commendation in that they are completely financed by the schools themselves, no grant being made by the Board for their maintenance. None of the out island schools is able to boast such progress but there, sewing and the cottage industries are cultivated.

Interest in the Tuskegee institution, first aroused by the Governor at the beginning of the century, developed at first slowly and then became more general in the 1920's. Consequently, interest in and demand for vocational education in terms of a separate school as distinct from practical subjects in the curriculum of the ordinary schools, is a development of this latest period of education. In 1923 the Inspector /

Inspector and the Chairman of the Board visited Tuskegee and submitted a report to the Board. No action, however, was taken for many years. The issue again became the topic of active discussion in the "Tracey Watts era." Deploing the fact that there was no provision for technical education, Watts pointed out that the importation of skilled artisans and domestic servants, because of inadequate and inefficient local supply, resulted in increased unemployment and a diminution of the wealth of the colony. Again there were no practical steps taken on account of the severe retrenchment in 1930 and succeeding years.

There was, however, a private venture initiated at that time by the Hon. Lady Dundas, wife of the Governor. This school, which became known as the Dundas Civic Centre, had as its aim the training of domestic servants especially for employment by winter residents, who commonly brought servants with them, and for the hotels. Until 1933 it was financed solely by private donations but in that year the House voted £200 towards its expenses and later increased it to £500 per annum. A qualified domestic science teacher was imported from England and later from Canada. Up to 1940, instruction had been given to more than a thousand young men and women, the majority of whom had little difficulty in finding employment as cooks, butlers, housemaids, waiters and so on.

With /

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With the return of prosperity the Board finally decided to supply the deficiency of vocational education and adopted two lines of action. The first of these, the training of teachers in agriculture and other practical subjects at Tuskegee, was undertaken immediately. To permit progress along the other, the House voted funds and amended the Education Act to authorize the Board to provide "vocational training for children not exceeding eighteen years of age." A building was erected in 1939, a member of the staff of Tuskegee was called into consultation to advise on the conduct of the school, a head master was selected, estimates prepared and the House asked to vote more funds. The House declined to provide enough money for the ambitious scheme the Board had adopted and the whole matter was left in abeyance for a few years.

When its consideration was resumed the plans were modified to provide instruction "to as high a standard as may be practicable without the installation of expensive equipment or elaborate apparatus." The chief aim was the encouragement of improved methods of agriculture. Pupils taking these courses were to be assisted to settle on the land, to build homes and raise first crops concentrating on subsistence foodstuffs rather than exportable crops. They were also to be given such instruction as would enable them to erect and maintain /

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-ibid- 1943 page 12

maintain their own houses and boats and also to earn wages when employment could be obtained. In short, the aim was the encouragement of the independent, self-sufficient smallholder upon whom, it was believed, depended the economic stability of the colony, especially the out islands. For training in crafts and trades, schemes of apprenticeship were to be negotiated with government departments and private firms. To lead up to such apprenticeships the school would provide elementary instruction in carpentry, masonry, painting, motor mechanics, electrical work and plumbing, as well as the other courses in agriculture, poultry-farming and fishing. The immediate need was to appoint a competent Head capable, "if not himself sufficiently experienced to teach all the subjects ^b above enumerated", of directing and supervising courses in them.

The Board was unable to make any further progress and the next move was made by the Assembly but not until 1943. This amounted to a recommendation "that an investigation should be made by some competent person into the possibility of opening the vocational school." On this occasion a teacher on the staff of a vocational school in Toronto was brought to the colony to advise on the opening of the school. After considering his report the Board recommended to the House that he be appointed principal. The House declined to accept the recommendation /

recommendation because the scheme outlined in the report was too ambitious and the expense involved too great.

The matter was next taken up by a Committee of the House of Assembly which reported in favour of the experimental initiation of vocational education on a comparatively small scale. To this end the existing High School was to be expanded both in point of view of numbers and of the scope of its curriculum. In effect it was to be enlarged into a multilateral secondary school with commercial as well as agricultural and technical courses. This recommendation had the dual advantage of providing "parity of esteem" for different forms of secondary education and of economy in the cost of maintaining both types of educational facilities. Plans for giving effect to this new policy were drawn up but the cost of carrying them out proved prohibitive due to the abnormally high cost of building under war conditions. A further suggestion to instal the projected multilateral secondary school in the unsuitable building originally erected as a vocational school was abandoned. No further progress has since been made towards the provision of secondary vocational education.

Universal Primary Education.

It would be opportune at this point to survey the present /

present position of universal compulsory primary education in the colony both with regard to numbers of schools and pupils and also the diversity of authorities concerned in providing school facilities.

The age limits for compulsory attendance still remain fixed at six and fourteen respectively. Attendance without these limits is optional but the lower limit is more universally recognized than the upper. That is to say, although many children begin school at five the majority do not commence till six. On the other hand continued attendance beyond fourteen is very common, not only in the private and government secondary schools, but also in the public and private primary schools. Since 1930, when such attendance was prohibited with a view to effecting economy, the Board has on several occasions been at great pains to encourage attendance after fourteen. The total number of children enrolled in all schools in 1943 was 14,571. As just explained, this number includes some children below five and above fourteen. On the basis of the census taken that year it is estimated that the number of children in the colony above six but under fifteen was 14,442. This number intentionally includes a whole year group above the upper limit for compulsory attendance. A comparison of these admittedly rough /

rough statistics leads to the reasonably safe conclusion that nearly all children in the colony within the limits of age for compulsory attendance are, in fact, attending school. There are still a few beyond the reach of any school. Government may therefore be satisfied that universal compulsory attendance at primary schools, between the statutory age limits, has now practically become an established fact. At the same time it must also be observed that, in the same year, average attendance was only 86% and has never been significantly higher.

The provision of education, with respect to the authorities providing it, is much more complex now than it was in 1901 for which figures were given in Fig. 8, page 261. The number of Anglican schools has slightly diminished during the century as a result of that church's policy of "pulling up its stakes" in a locality as soon as the Board moved in. For the same reason the number of private venture schools has also decreased. On the other hand, Roman Catholic schools have increased five-fold with regard both to schools and pupils and Baptist and Seventh Day Adventist schools have made their appearance. The preparatory department of the Methodist Queen's College continues to flourish. Consequently, there are six distinct and independent authorities providing primary education in addition to eleven small private venture schools in Nassau. There are no fewer than eight secondary institutions /

institutions in the colony, seven of them being in Nassau, provided by four different authorities in addition to two private ventures.

A quarter of all the children in the colony are attending private schools, half of these being in Roman Catholic schools. In New Providence the proportions are even more extreme, in that island as a whole, but chiefly in Nassau, nearly one half of the children are attending private schools and, again, half of those are in Roman Catholic schools. 36% of all the children in the colony are attending schools in the one island of New Providence. The number of children in any one year group receiving or likely to receive secondary education is about $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the total number of children of the same age. Of these, approximately one third are negro or coloured whereas, according to the 1943 census, these classes constitute 88% of the population and European races $11\frac{1}{2}\%$.

Higher Education.

Throughout this history, which is now at an end, there has been no mention of university education or any form of education higher than that provided by the secondary schools. Obviously the colony is too small to maintain any such institutions of its own, but, until 1944, there had never been any scholarships or financial assistance of any kind to assist Bahamians to pursue courses at universities or other institutions /

institutions for higher education. An attempt, early in this period, to make provision for university scholarships was quashed by the Legislative Council after it had received the approval of the Assembly. A similar attempt three years ago succeeded to the extent of drawing from the House a resolution to give "their sympathetic consideration" to any recommendation the Governor-in-Council might make for the specialized training of any government employee if such training would benefit the Civil Service.

This resolution did not provide for students who wish to proceed directly from secondary school to higher education nor for those whose contribution to the general welfare of the colony lies in avenues other than government service. Finally in 1946, provision was made for two three-year scholarships of £400 per annum, tenable at universities in the Empire, for students under twenty. The two first awards were made at the beginning of 1947.

This new phase of state provision for education is a very apt climax to this history of two centuries of education in the Bahamas. The House of Assembly was not twenty years old when, because "there hath not been any provision hitherto "made.....to instruct the Youth of these Islands," it passed its first Education Act in 1746. It would have been disappointing /

disappointing had this bicentenary been allowed to pass without being marked in some unique way. There would have been no more appropriate commemoration than the first provision ever made for university education.

Survey of the Period of Expansion . 1920 - 1947.

1. The considerably increased expenditure on education has permitted the opening of schools throughout the colony so that practically all children from six to fourteen years of age are receiving primary education. Finance still continues to be a serious limiting factor with respect to those aspects which affect the quality of the education provided. Towards the end of the period there was some indication of the beginning of the end of grants-in-aid.

2. The extreme dispersion of the population remains an unsolved and seemingly insoluble problem. The drift of population to Nassau has increased the problem in that city without solving the difficulty of the out island settlements.

3. As distinct from the quantity of educational facilities, which has increased enormously during this period, the average quality has not greatly improved, rather has it suffered because of the dilution of the teaching profession in consequence of the numerical increase.

(a) Secondary education became available to coloured pupils. The academic qualifications of a nucleus of the primary school teachers /

teachers have increased in consequence.

(b) In spite of many disconnected attempts to train teachers, no substantial progress was made.

(c) Teachers' salaries are still such as to repel the best prospective recruits from the service of the Board. Their uncertainty is an even greater deterrent.

(d) In consequence the attachment of teachers to their profession is extremely tenuous and, for the most part, the first opportunity of more lucrative employment elsewhere is seized. In this respect, Government has "a beam in its own eye" in the readiness of other departments to recruit their employees from the ranks of teachers, even in the case of student teachers under contract with the Board of Education. The lead is set by highest authority, the teaching profession is regarded as the recruiting ground for out island commissioners.

4. A reported experiment in the employment of English teachers was not conducted to the best of advantage and failed. An experiment in the importation of West Indian teachers was rather more successful.

5. The monitorial system was abandoned in Nassau schools but continues to be the "mainstay" of effective instruction in the out islands.

6. The supply of books, materials and equipment is sadly deficient. Enterprising schools make their own provision by concerts and the like.

7./

7. The one-roomed building is still the typical out island school with children of different ages classified as well as possible. The buildings in Nassau are better but inadequate for the demands made upon them.

8. Attendance has greatly improved but is yet no higher than 86%

9. Demand for primary education has become fairly general throughout the colony and the value placed upon it by parents has increased. The demand for secondary education has increased but is largely restricted to Nassau.

10. A government maintained secondary school, open to all classes on the basis of a selective test of ability, was established. The demand for its facilities, though feeble for many years, later became clamorous. The denominations continued to provide secondary education which became even more unco-ordinated than primary education. An attempt to provide secondary vocational education did not mature.

11. Schools continued to be unsectarian and dual control avoided. The Board was given power of inspection over the smaller primary schools but regular inspection has not been introduced. One quarter of the children in the colony are now attending private or denominational schools.

12. The one Inspector was quite unable to cope with the increasing responsibilities of inspection and superintendence. Provision for an assistant was made but the post not permanently /

permanently filled. Educational policy, as directed by the Board, has been vacillating and lacking in continuity. A change in the constitution and appointment of the Board was largely contributory to this.

13. The history ends with the first provision for University and higher education in 1946, the year of the bicentenary of the passing of the first School Act in 1746.

CHAPTER VIII

Guidance for the Future from the Past.

The aim of this chapter will be to apply the salient lessons of experience, as they have been revealed by the history, to the educational problems that now confront the colony. As far as possible, the lines along which development is suggested will be made to emerge quite naturally out of the story that has just been told. Opinion, whether of the writer or not, will be excluded so that controversy over this or that aspect may not arise to obscure the main aim which is so to direct the educational system that the potentialities of individual citizens may be fully realized and the human resources of the colony developed to the best possible advantage.

In any discussion of education some overlapping into other spheres of public policy is inevitable. It is not the present purpose to pursue the implications of the discussion into those spheres. As a statement of a unified and comprehensive policy for education in the colony, this chapter must consequently be incomplete and a trifle ragged. But the present aim is not to paint a perfect picture of education for the future; the intention is solely to project the imperfect picture of yesterday on to the as yet unspoiled canvas of tomorrow, attempting in the process to eradicate any flaws there may exist in the theme but accepting the background as it stands.

It is /

It is pointless to attempt an arrangement of the various topics in order of relative importance. Some are manifestly more urgent than others but this does not imply that those less urgent considerations can, for the present, be neglected so as to concentrate attention and effort on the major issues. This would be merely to repeat what has been the chief fault of the past and would lead only to a continued unbalanced development of the educational system. Moreover, most of the aspects are interdependent and hence cannot easily be compared in relative importance. The chief instance of this is the origin of most of the problems of education in the question of finance which will therefore be given priority of treatment.

1. Public Expenditure on Education.

It would be idle to outline all that is ideally desirable, to estimate the cost of it and then to demand the money to give effect to one's plans. Yet into this error the champions of education are too liable to fall. The framework of the educational system of the colony must be such that its cost - the cost of maintaining it rather than building it - bears due relation to the total economy. There is a popular temptation to think of the Treasury as a sort of widow's cruse which is automatically replenished whenever revenue is spent. The colony cannot spend more money than it earns or, at least, it cannot do so without serious consequences. It is with the avoidance of these consequences that the legislators are very justifiably concerned. There are many considerations that must influence them /

them in their decisions to spend, or not to spend, the revenue and chief among these is the fact that, apart from its climate and its scenery, the natural resources of the colony are by no means abundant. For this reason, the enthusiasts who clamour for education must also be prepared to urge the people to maximum effort in order to make the most of the limited resources and so provide revenue.

To build a sound educational system it is essential that it be built on a sound economy and the extremely fickle tourist industry is not altogether stable. On the other hand, a colony which can at least feed itself well whatever befalls has the foundation at least of a sound economy. If this desirable aim is not altogether within the bounds of possibility, the colony could certainly go a long way further towards realizing it than is at present the case. Herein lies the soundness of one aspect of the policy of the Board of Education throughout this century - its desire to foster the teaching of small scale farming especially in the out island settlements. An otherwise poorly educated but independent and self-supporting peasant proprietor is a much happier man than the educated but dependent urban wage-earner without a job. And it might be legitimately be argued that, in so far as an ignorant man can achieve happiness in the modern world, a government's prime aim is to give its people happiness rather than education.

It is not the purpose of this paper to direct the Government to a /

to a sound economic policy. Still less can one presume to tell the Government just how much of its revenue it can afford and ought to spend on education. That is the business of the House of Assembly to decide and it is a duty which that body may be entrusted to claim assiduously as its exclusive right. Attention can be drawn, however, to the value placed on education, as measured in terms of expenditure, by other colonies of the West Indies, remembering that in 1835 it was said of the Bahamas that "in none (of the West Indies) such great exertions were making in the cause of education." The figures given are taken or derived from the Economic Survey of the Colonial Empire for 1937. The table, Figure 12, is a modified form of that given in Mr. S. A. Hammond's "The Cost of Education" (15), at page 25, published in 1945 by the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies. With the exception of Bermuda and Trinidad, it is seen that the Bahamas spent more per head of population than any other West Indian colony in that year. It is unfortunate that the geographical nature of the colony caused the dissipation of such a large proportion of it. /As a result, the educational advantages procured by this expenditure were no more than in many other colonies where the expenditure was much less but where it was possible to gather together the child population into a smaller number of larger schools. Thus, in St. Lucia, chosen for comparison because its population was almost identical with that of the Bahamas, the expenditure per head of /

head of population was the lowest in the West Indies with the single exception of the small Virgin Islands. But the compact nature /

Figure 12 : West Indian Expenditure on Education.

Colony	Total Government Expenditure per head of population.			Expenditure on Education 1937			Estimated Population on 31st December 1937	
				Actual	per head of pop'n.	% of Total		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	%	
Bahamas	5	5	8	22,943	6	10	6.49	66,908
Barbados	2	14	1	63,995	6	8	12.38	190,939
Bermuda	13	19	8	29,614	19	2	6.84	30,951
British Guiana	3	6	8	96,002	5	8	8.54	337,039
British Honduras	3	17	0	18,295	6	5	8.35	56,893
Jamaica	1	16	8	245,450	4	3	11.61	1,152,528
Turks & Caicos	1	16	3	1,038	3	7	10.79	5,300
Cayman Is.	2	2	8	1,280	3	9	8.81	6,800
Trinidad & Tobago	4	7	1	187,915	8	3	9.46	456,043
Antigua	2	7	4	5,962	3	5	7.30	34,523
St. Kitts &c.	2	11	0	9,150	4	9	9.42	38,057
Montserrat	2	4	4	2,796	4	1	9.19	13,712
Virgin Is.	-	19	9	602	1	10	9.70	6,288
Dominica	1	6	8	7,490	3	2	11.33	49,483
St. Lucia	1	7	7	6,968	2	1	7.49	67,404
St. Vincent	1	10	7	12,158	4	3	13.83	57,526
Grenada	1	14	3	16,266	3	8	10.76	88,201
Whole area ^x				676,521	5	3		
England & Wales					46	11	call.00	

x Excluding Bahamas and Bermuda.

nature of the population in that colony made it possible to concentrate that small expenditure on only 50 schools as compared with 123 which had to be provided in the Bahamas. Moreover, all the schools in St. Lucia are denominational schools and government expenditure on education is not required to maintain but only to aid them.

It has been said earlier that the expenditure on education must bear due relation to the total economy of the colony. A comparison may therefore be made between the amounts expended on education and the total expenditure of the colonies concerned. Viewed from this angle the Bahamas compares much less favourably with the other islands. The Bahamas can afford to spend in all more per head of population than any other West Indian colony but the proportion of this which is spent on education is less than in any of the other colonies. The entry in the table for England and Wales shows that a few West Indian colonies actually spent a larger proportion of their revenues on education than the Mother Country.

Considerable changes in all these figures have taken place since 1937. Including war bonuses on salaries, the Bahamas spent in 1943 more than half as much again on education than in 1937. This amounted to 7.1% of total expenditure or 6.3% of the total revenue. Meanwhile, similar changes have been taking place in other colonies but by far the greatest added expenditure on West Indian education in that period has come from the Colonial /

Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Between April 1943 and August 1945 the expenditure of almost two million pounds on various non-recurrent educational schemes in the West Indies was approved. Similar grants could have been made available to the Bahamas but the Legislature preferred not to qualify for this assistance. Thus, while a grant of £511,600 was made to Jamaica for agricultural training schools, the Bahamas at the same time was obliged to abandon the building and equipping of a new secondary school to provide vocational as well as academic education because of the expense, £60,000, involved. It is not the concern of this chapter to question the propriety of the Legislature's decision not to accept this assistance but it is unfortunate that the education of Bahamians may not benefit from this generosity of the Home Government.

The factor of expenditure influences all other aspects of education and it will therefore be necessary to make repeated reference to it. There are two points that may be mentioned here. One of these is the desirability of a reversion to the practice of voting funds for education en bloc as was formerly the custom. There seems no reason to suppose that the expending of these funds would be attended by any less degree of economy than if they are voted item by item as is at present the case. Under the existing practice, whenever it seems desirable to effect economy and reduce total expenditure, this is accomplished by deleting or amending specific items in the Estimates rather than /

than by a reduction in the total vote. Nor is it permissive for the Board to supply such a deleted item, no matter how urgent and educationally desirable it may deem such expenditure to be, by effecting a saving in some other direction and applying the amount thus saved to the deleted item, thereby not exceeding the total sum voted. The consequence is that the Assembly virtually assumes administrative powers in addition to its legislative function and may amend or completely override policy already agreed upon by the Board. In effect this creates an anomalous situation wherein, with one hand, the House confers upon the Board the duty "to superintend, direct and control" primary education in the colony, but takes away the full exercise of the power to do so with the other. A further complication of this practice is occasioned by the fact that the Estimates are not customarily approved until late in the year and expenditure under any item which is not normally recurrent cannot therefore be undertaken no matter how urgent it may be. If, instead, having examined the itemized estimates of expenditure on education, the House should decide that a certain percentage of economy in the total sum must be effected, the Board could then spread the necessary reduction as evenly as it deems desirable over several items so that no one suffers by complete annihilation if this is considered inadvisable.

The other point that will be mentioned here is the uncertainty from year to year of the total sum of money that will be /

Rules, (61) Section 49, page 14.

Report (51) 1939, page 51.

will be available for essential recurrent items over and above the £10,000 provided by the latest amendment to the Education Act. This reacts chiefly on teachers' salaries and appointments. The salaries of head and assistant teachers are "such as the Board may from time to time determine." Having served a satisfactory period of probation, but not less than five years, a teacher may be permanently appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Board. His salary is then fixed according to the scale of salaries then in force and his service becomes pensionable. The total number of such teachers on permanent pensionable establishment cannot be such that the total of their salaries exceeds the fixed grant of £10,000 yet the total of salaries paid in 1945, not including war bonuses, was £22,534. The salaries of all other teachers, for whom there is no room on the pensionable establishment, "depend on the annual grant to the Board." They may, for instance, be subject to as ruthless a reduction as 55% as occurred in the 1930 retrenchment or, should the Board decide in such a case not to distribute the reduction evenly, they may in some instances be obliterated. In any case they can not be pensionable and this also applies to all grant-in-aid school teachers. Thus it is that the teaching profession offers few prospects of permanence and less security to prospective teachers. It is vitally necessary that the statutory portion of the annual vote be considerably increased so that the Board may be in a position to attract recruits to its service /

service with prospects of a permanent future and a greater measure of security.

2. Administration.

The history has proved repeatedly the value of the Board of Education to the Government in its control of education to enable it to keep itself in touch with public opinion as represented by the Legislature, which is concerned with the maintenance of the schools, and also as represented by the general public, which is concerned with their use. But the educational system has grown, over the period of a century, into a ~~vast complicated~~ and specialized mechanism which is no longer within the abilities of a body of laymen, however well-meaning and well-intentioned, to direct and control. To make this affirmation is not to deprecate the efforts of the Board in the past. To control a handful of small schools in the nineteenth century, when education was in its infancy in all parts of the world other than this colony, may with some justification have been regarded as a spare time task for men without any specialized knowledge; but the sheer magnitude alone of the educational system, not to mention the modern ramifications of the work of educating, has grown beyond the ability of the Board to direct. Education in the twentieth century is a highly specialized task which demands specialized knowledge and skill to understand, still more to control and direct.

The confusion which has permeated education during the last /

last period but, above all, the lack of clearly defined purpose and continuity of policy are evidence in plenty of the current breakdown of educational administration. The Board itself has realized its inadequacy to cope with the many problems that confront it and has admitted it. However, the educational system cannot afford to dispense with the Board of Education any more than Government can continue to dispense with a properly constituted Department of Education staffed by competent education officers with specialized training. This is made the more necessary by the widening of the scope of education in the colony. Secondary education, vocational and technical education, remedial education and even provision for higher education have sprung into existence during the present century alongside an ever-expanding system of primary education. Other forms such as continuation classes, adult education, youth service and professional education are no less urgently needed. And with a Board which has been increasingly confounded with the task already in hand, the tendency has been for these new forms to lead an independent existence. In consequence, the appearance of education today is that of a complex patchwork with no single thread running through all the various parts. To borrow a phrase which, a few years ago, introduced every annual report of the Board, "Education in the Bahamas is unco-ordinated." It is perhaps fortunate that it was, for had the overwhelmed Board been saddled with any additional responsibilities that it /

that it could not understand, the present crisis might have been much worse.

Department of Education.

The one, sadly over-worked Inspector and General Superintendent of Schools needs to be replaced by a Department. At the head of this there must be a Director of Education whose function shall be, as his name implies, to direct education. No longer can the one chief officer be expected to discharge all the duties of administration and inspection that devolve upon the central education authority. He requires the assistance of a small number of officers who should preferably possess a wide range of ability to enable them to advise on development and policy as well as to undertake general inspection of schools. For this reason it were better to describe them as Education Officers rather than Inspectors as the latter title is too limited in scope. It is imperative that there be at least one woman Education Officer since the system is concerned with girls' education no less than with boys'. An officer with knowledge and experience of agricultural education is also necessary. Ideally there should be one Education Officer appointed to each of about six areas in the colony each comprising a major island or group of islands. Within that area he would be responsible for the superintendence, as distinct from the mere inspection, of all schools. In addition he would be loosely attached to the one large "Central School" in a supervisory /

supervisory capacity. Under his supervision, the training of pupil teachers, so long as this system is retained, at the central school could be made more efficient than ever before.

Board of Education.

The Board of Education is an indispensable body but its statutory functions require to be modified to relieve it of the too onerous responsibilities of direction and control. These properly belong to the fully competent Director and his staff of trained Education Officers who can devote their full time and necessary specialized knowledge to the efficient working of a system that has got out of control for want of skilled supervision. Being relieved of this duty would enable the Board to concentrate its whole attention on a consideration of educational policy on which it would be their duty to advise the Government and enter into consultation with the Director. It is policy with regard to local conditions, needs and resources that will be the most difficult aspect of education to supply and the Board must be given the fullest opportunity, unpreoccupied by administrative details, to consider and advise upon the adaptation of proposed and adopted policy to the peculiar needs of the colony. The Board must also be given opportunity, and also be required, to take the initiative in the consideration and the advising on matters of policy.

To this end it must be composed of individuals, women as well as men, with deep insight into local needs, as distinct from wishes, /

from wishes, and also foresight to adjudge the effects of projected policy. They must also be competent to pass judgment on the economic as well as the social implications of policy and to advise against schemes likely to cause attenuation to the point of breakdown of limited financial resources. For the full discharge of these responsible duties it is essential that the constitution of the Board be freed from its present restriction in size and duration of appointment though both maximum size and maximum duration of appointment of individual members must be specified. There must be no danger of allowing individual members to vegetate if they appear to have ceased to make valuable contribution to the Board's deliberations. The actual personnel appointed is a matter for the Governor to decide but it seems obvious that the Legislature and the denominations engaged in education must be represented. In this latter case, experience has shown that it is desirable to free the Board of Education from that restriction which stipulates British citizenship for its members, to allow of the appointment of other than British subjects when this seems eminently desirable. It further seems desirable to utilize the services of experienced educationists. Perhaps the time is not ripe for the appointment to the Board of teachers in government service though this ultimate desirability should be borne in mind. Restricted powers of co-option for limited periods may also be given to the Board. Finally, whether or not the

Director /

Director be a member or its chairman he must be afforded the right to attend and the Board be empowered to require his attendance.

Other Schools.

The ultimate aim of bringing together all schools, whether maintained, aided or not provided by the government, into a unified system of education must continually be remembered. To this end regular inspection of, and advice to, private primary schools needs to be initiated without delay. This is already provided for and would be welcomed in most cases by the authorities concerned. The desirability of any closer integration of these schools into the general system of public education will be a matter for the Director and the Board of Education to consider. For the present it seems more imperative for the Government maintained system to set its own house in order first before taking steps to incorporate any schools outside that system.

The same may be said about secondary education in Nassau. At present, the secondary schools are making reasonable progress along traditional classical lines and it would be unwise to add them to the already heavy responsibilities of ordering the primary system which must for a considerable time fully occupy the attention of the Board and the Director. However, the ultimate desirability of co-ordinating all into one system of education may be kept in mind in the event that both Department and Board /

and Board prove themselves adequately able to extend their concern to wider fields. This does not imply that all independent secondary schools whether aided or not shall eventually be controlled by Government. Rather is it a plea for more co-ordinated endeavour, sharing of experience and pooling of ideas. This ultimate desideratum may indeed be anticipated by the schools themselves. The denominations have been sufficiently enterprising to inaugurate and maintain secondary schools. It would not be unlikely if they should see the need for closer co-operation and assume the initiative towards co-operative effort in the interests, not of this or that school, but of secondary education in general. This might take the form in the first instance of an unofficial Secondary Schools Association of representatives of governors as well as head masters. Such a body could not assume any authority over independent schools but, at least, it could make a beginning in co-ordinating the many isolated efforts with secondary education as their common aim.

At present the only body in existence in any way concerned with all the secondary schools is the Local Committee for Cambridge Examinations. Only Queen's College, whose Head Master introduced these examinations to the colony, is represented on this committee. Although its prime function is the supervision of the annual Cambridge examinations, this committee, if truly representative, could well initiate a policy as to the part these/

these examinations should play in secondary education.

These suggestions, however, are not permanent alternatives to the ultimate responsibility of Government for all phases of education in the colony from the small private venture primary school to the award of scholarships for university education. How soon it may be possible to bring all these under the aegis and inspection of the one Board and Department of Education must depend on their competence to concern themselves with this wider responsibility. Meanwhile, the secondary institutions appear to be in a far more flourishing condition than the schools under the control of the Board of Education.

Local School Committees.

On more than one occasion the Legislature has shown considerable foresight in making educational provision, their good intentions only to be vitiated by a failure to give full effect to the statutory provisions thus enacted. In illustration one may quote an early and a recent example: (a) the inauguration of State-maintained education as early as 1746 which did not fully mature until a century later and (b) the provision for regular inspection of private schools within the last twenty years, an opportunity which has not yet fully been seized. Another such instance was the creation of Local School Committees as early as 1875. Fifty years later it was reported that not even a majority of these bodies was taking an active interest in the schools and in the performance of their duties.

The Local/

are not our friends
in the same report as
the reports!

The Local School Committee is potentially most valuable in being the modern version of the communal self-help in providing schools in post-emancipation years. While the communities have been relieved of the duty of providing their own school buildings and contributing to their teachers' salaries, it is to be regretted that they have tended to go to the other extreme of complete lack of initiative and dependence on the government. There is a great deal that these bodies could do in furthering the interests of their own schools. In the light of the comparison made in the second chapter between Nassau and the out islands it is not surprising that these committees in Nassau do in fact take a live interest in their schools. This is not generally true of the out islands but there are a few notable exceptions depending usually on the enterprise of the teacher.

With a view to encouraging these bodies to greater enterprise on behalf of the schools, it might be possible to extend their powers in certain cases. One suggestion only will be made. It is that, when a vacancy occurs, the Local School Committee be given some share in making a new appointment. This need only take the form, for example, of submitting a short list of names, any one of which would meet with final approval, from which to choose their own teacher.

3. Primary Schools.

The classification of schools in Nassau on a zonal basis, as well as /

as well as according to the age of the pupils, has amply proved its value and effectiveness in the fifteen or so years that it has been in operation. The establishment of a third Senior School in the south in 1945, this being the first step towards extending the classification to meet the needs of the growing population in that district, should be followed as speedily as possible by the separation of the preparatory and junior departments still jointly occupying the one building.

There are many suggestions that one might make towards an improvement of the educational system in Nassau but there is a temptation to concentrate on these schools, where it is relatively easy to conceive and give effect to progressive schemes, but to do so at the expense of the out island schools. So, for the most part, Nassau should remain content with the system it already has and concentrate, not on new spectacular schemes, but on improvement of the quality of what it already has. For the system in Nassau has great potentialities which are not yet fully realized. Perhaps the weakest link in the chain is the Junior School.

For this reason no recommendation for the establishment of nursery schools will be made. It is well worth while, however, considering the advisability of lowering the compulsory school age from six to five for Nassau only. Even this suggestion would be omitted if the home environment of the bulk of the children were better. But since this is not the case, and since a large /

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Ans.

a large town does not provide as congenial an atmosphere for the nurture of such children as the rural settlement of the out island, it is believed that the lowering of the age of admission, while involving added expenditure on behalf of the Nassau child, would do not more than off-set the advantage of environment possessed by the out island child.

Other special types of education could be provided to some extent without incurring great expenditure. There is little provision for the special education of handicapped children, whether by reason of physical or mental defect. One small school is maintained especially for backward children; elsewhere they can be and are accommodated in special classes. It should be ascertained that the instruction they are given is specially suited to their limited abilities and not, as is often the case, an inferior replica of the ordinary curriculum. As to those defective in speech, hearing or sight, the number of such children is small. In 1943 the total number of all such defectives of all ages in the colony was 263. It may be estimated that about a quarter of these, or 65, are of school age. These are scattered throughout the colony but about 20 will be in Nassau. This number is not too small to warrant the creation of a special class in one of the schools but it would necessitate the employment of a specialist teacher. This seems to be an opportunity for valuable social service by a voluntary body.

The /

The out island settlements, because of their geographical distribution, present a totally different problem. The first and most obvious need affects the grant-in-aid schools: those "temporary expedients" which have now enjoyed a fair degree of permanence for more than sixty years. It is to be hoped that the long-delayed policy of converting them to Board Schools, commenced at long last in 1938, will be proceeded with in the immediate future as speedily as possible. This policy will be governed by the supply of competent teachers, fit for "Board" appointment, and by expense. As to expense, it is urged that grant-in-aid schools be given a prior claim to available funds. If anything, the grant-in-aid school is a worse blemish on Bahamian education than the monitorial system. The latter at least is what its name implies whereas the former is really an utterly inferior makeshift, for which the Board is now wholly responsible, masquerading as charitable assistance to struggling private schools.

The extension of the Nassau system of classification to the out islands is impossible. The classification of children within schools on the basis of age and attainments is more nearly possible and is largely in effect. It will never be thoroughly satisfactory until more than one qualified teacher is appointed to each school, a policy that should proceed as actively as possible, in the larger schools in the first instance.

The Board /

He is his on another
between two lines
2 out there

The Board has also tried to follow a policy of amalgamating small schools wherever the distances involved are not too great. This policy is obviously of limited application without the provision of facilities for transport. In some islands land travel is impossible in the absence of roads while in others the roads are so notoriously bad as to vitiate this solution of the problem. Government has already carried out an experiment in the amalgamation of small settlements. This, too, is of very limited application as it is not always easy to persuade the inhabitants to move from their old homes. There is only one other possible solution; that is the provision of boarding schools.

Since the vast majority of out island pupils are under the double handicap of being denied opportunity both for secondary and for senior school education, it seems only fair and not outside the bounds of possibility for them to be supplied with a small number of centrally located "Central Schools" at which boarding facilities for pupils of senior age and both sexes could be provided. Ideally there should be one such school for each island or for each of about six out island areas. The title "Central School" is suggested in preference to "Senior Schools" as it is not intended that these schools should reproduce the traditional academic curriculum of the Nassau senior schools. Rather should they aim at vocational education, from which subjects of cultural value cannot be excluded /

excluded, especially adapted to the needs of the out island communities. The emphasis would be essentially on agriculture and housecraft (including home industries) and, to this end, a close co-operation could be sought with such private farming enterprises as exist on the out islands and also with the Agricultural Department. In the latter case an associated development of small mixed farms for demonstration purposes may well be contemplated.

To realize the full potentialities of the central schools as well as to provide for the adequate full-time care of the pupils, they would need to be fully staffed with competent, carefully selected assistant teachers. Since, to the academic and vocational aspects of the school work, could be added that of the training of pupil teachers in the local public school, it seems advisable that the schools should be headed by Canadian or English teachers, to recruit whom the House has already given approval and financial provision. It has already been suggested that each Education Officer be loosely attached to the Central School in his island or area when not on tour. This will give added qualified assistance and advice to ensure the full success of the experiment.

Attendance at the central schools would need to be voluntary and therefore a careful selection of prospective pupils would be necessary to give the schools the greatest possible chance of initial success. For the same reason, nominal fees may be charged /

charged for board as the parents would have to maintain their children at home in any case. This would further serve to give the schools an added prestige and render attendance at them extremely desirable in the eyes of the inhabitants. Attendance until the age of fifteen at least, preferably sixteen if the age on entry is twelve; should be required. The expense of maintaining these schools would naturally be heavy especially in the first instance but the schools may set themselves the goal of approaching, as nearly as possible, to self-sufficiency.

The potentialities of such rural central schools in adding to the amenities of out island life are considerable. It would serve no useful purpose here to pursue them in full; suffice it to quote one. The essence of the experiment is that the schools should be distinctively characteristic of the out islands. They must be something that the colony has never seen before; something that the Nassau dwellers may well covet but cannot have for themselves. Thus, for a change, the eyes of longing may turn from Nassau to the out islands; they have gazed in the opposite direction long enough.

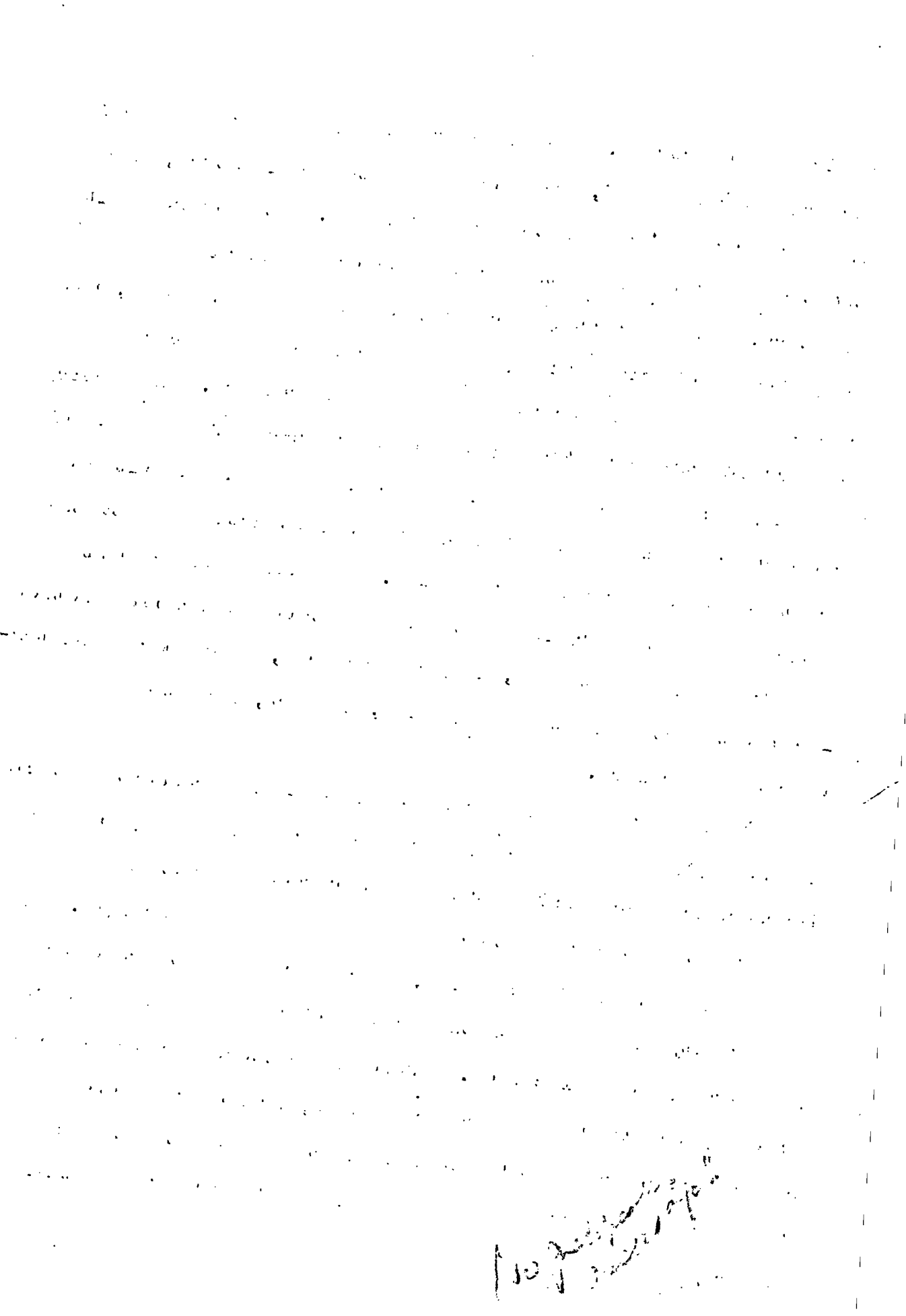
It cannot be too strongly emphasized that these central schools must have adequate and competent staff. Failure to ensure this requisite may have very serious consequences.

4. Teaching Staff.

It has been urged that important prerequisites for substantial progress in education are a live Board and an efficient /

efficient Department. But these can do little more than point the way to reform and, with the aid of the Legislature, make the necessary provisions to bring it about. It will rest with the teachers working in the schools to translate aims into practice. It is scarcely necessary to underline the need, not only for a sufficient supply of teachers, but also for a sufficient supply of teachers of the right calibre. The policy of securing the necessary number of teachers at the expense of lowering standards has already been tried with the inevitable consequences both to the quality of the instruction and to the prestige of the teaching profession. It will depend almost entirely upon the quality of those who staff the schools whether the plans worked out will, in years to come, be of merely historical interest or whether they will, in fact, lead to educational reform.

The history has shown repeatedly that the greatest obstacle in the way of supplying an adequate and competent body of teachers has been that teaching as a career has not been sufficiently attractive to the best pupils of the schools. The provision of adequate salaries, of prospects of advancement and of security all depend on the amount of money available which has already been discussed. These are matters for the House of Assembly but it might be remarked that, so long as these deficiencies are not supplied, it is to be expected that a considerable proportion of the money spent on education will either /



either be wasted or will produce returns of very doubtful value.

Perhaps in no other respect has the piecemeal administration of education been revealed so manifestly as in the intricate system of teacher classification and salary scales. Head teachers are classified in four grades according to qualifications and further subdivided into four classes according to proficiency. In addition to these sixteen categories there is a not inconsiderable number of acting head teachers, four grades of assistants, four grades of subordinate teachers (pupil teachers and monitors), two grades of grant-in-aid teachers apart from sewing teachers, woodwork teachers and student teachers. This formidable fabric of well over a score of compartments has been gradually constructed by successive amendments and additions over a period of several decades. Salaries may or may not be fixed according to category, but the Board, finding the system too restrictive, reserves the right to transgress its own classification and elevate a teacher to any class irrespective of qualifications. Salaries of acting heads are "such as the Board shall determine" while there always remains the condition that salaries of teachers not permanently appointed by the Governor shall depend on the annual vote for education.

A straightforward, easily worked salary scale such as the English Burnham Scale would be more satisfactory and simple than the present complication. The same scale, having a basic commencing salary and a fixed maximum, would then apply to all assistant /

assistant and head teachers. Initial appointment would be on probation and subject to confirmation at the end of one year provided that the teacher is then over a minimum stipulated age. An extension of probation on grounds of proficiency but not economy may be desirable. Long probations are discouraging and unsettling particularly when there is no certainty as to their duration. The obstacle to this recommendation is the size of the statutory grant. Confirmation of the appointment of younger teachers would take effect immediately upon their attaining the stipulated age. This should not be more than twenty or twenty one but it seems inadvisable to offer permanent appointment to a less mature individual.

Salaries would be subject to annual increments of fixed amount to be withheld only in the case of unsatisfactory service during the year and to commence from the confirmation of appointment. Increments, as an addition to the commencing salary, would be awarded for such special qualifications as (a) not less than four years' secondary education, (b) Cambridge certificates; it seems that for some time yet the Junior must continue to be regarded as an academic qualification, (c) higher academic qualifications, (d) Bahamian teaching certificate and (e) higher professional qualifications. Head teachers would receive promotion increments depending on the size of the school. Such appointments could also be made on probation for a limited time. To avoid placing non-Bahamian teachers, who may be brought to the /

This would make
the whole thing
S. Smith!

to the colony, outside the scope of the ordinary scale, special increments would be awarded for experience and an oversea allowance added. All these increments would be added to the fixed maximum as well as the commencing salary. All appointments would become pensionable upon confirmation provided total service exceeded a stipulated minimum.

Such a scheme is admittedly ambitious and the ultimate annual cost would first need to be computed bearing in mind the increasing number of teachers required to instruct an increasing child population. The Legislature may wish to avoid incurring a heavy burden which could not be borne in a time of economic crisis. This could be done by stipulating that the total cost of salaries must never exceed a fixed proportion of the total revenue. The cost of pensions would also need to be calculated. Towards this pension the teachers could make their own contributions in the form of a percentage deduction from salaries. These would be returned in the event of a teacher leaving the service without qualifying for pension.

When a young woman with a secondary education will take up teaching to maintain herself until she can become proficient in typing and shorthand to qualify for a position as a stenographer; or when a young man will resort to teaching "until something better turns up"; then it must be admitted that the prestige of the teaching profession has been allowed to fall to a deplorably low level indeed. So long as teachers are prepared to abandon such /

such an exalted calling in life as the education of the young for a "career" of pen-pushing then there must be something sadly at fault with the educational system. It is not believed for one moment that the provision of larger salaries and greater security will alone remedy the evil and restore teaching to its rightful place of respect in the community but it is certain that without them neither the teaching profession nor education itself will ever realize its full potentialities of service to the community and the colony.

5. Training of Teachers.

Larger salaries may attract more and better educated recruits to the schools but they do not, of themselves, provide better teachers. Fortunately, it is not now necessary to make repeated recommendations that teachers be given adequate training: the need for this is now generally recognized. But it is necessary to urge that the need is immediate and that some satisfactory system be worked out and put into practice without further delay. Each year's delay involves the appointment of more untrained teachers and this in turn involves the passing out from the schools of hundreds more adolescents, with their potentialities as citizens incompletely developed, to increase the social dangers attendant upon the "veneering" process in education.

The Demand for Teachers.

Before considering measures for the training of teachers it is /

it is obvious that one must know how many teachers are likely to be required over a stated period of time. Including pupil teachers but not monitors, the average teacher-pupil ratio throughout the colony was approximately 1:50 children in average attendance in 1945. In round numbers, for the sake of ease of computation, there were 200 teachers and 10,000 children in average attendance. The actual numbers were 203 and 9927 respectively. Recalling that about one third of the schools have less than 50 in average attendance, the extent of the responsibilities of the teachers in the remaining two thirds is seen to be quite considerable. It is therefore highly desirable that this ratio be increased as speedily as possible. If a 1:40 ratio be aimed at within the next ten years, this aim is no less than is necessary or desirable and no more than should be possible. This will necessitate an increase of fifty in the number of teachers if the population remains constant. Presuming, however, that the teacher-pupil ratio be allowed to remain constant, then the need for teachers will depend on the retirements and resignations. Assuming that teachers retire after forty years of service, then fifty retiring teachers will need to be replaced over a ten-year period. If we make the hopeful presumption that no teachers will resign in the ten-year period there still remains one further factor in determining the number of teachers necessary.

The/

The average annual increase of population in the decade 1921-31 was about $1\frac{1}{4}\%$. The corresponding figure for the twelve years 1931-43 was about $1\frac{3}{4}\%$. There is no reason to suppose that this increase will not be maintained and it will be accompanied by a slightly higher increase in the number of children in the schools. During the years 1931-45 there was an average annual increase in the roll of schools under the Board of Education of about $1\frac{3}{4}\%$, while the increase in the last eight years was about $2\frac{1}{4}\%$. Using the conservative estimate of 2% as the increase that may be expected in the ensuing ten years, and presuming for the moment that there will be no improvement in absenteeism from schools, there will be an increase of well over 2000 children in average attendance by the end of that period. According to whether one adopts the 1:50 or the 1:40 teacher-pupil ratio, there will be a need for forty or fifty additional teachers to meet this increase.

Summarizing, there will be a need for ninety new teachers in ten years if there are no resignations, no reduction of absenteeism and no improvement in the teacher-pupil ratio. But if, during the period a 1:40 teacher-pupil ratio be aimed at then an additional sixty teachers, making a total of 150, would be required. It is not possible to predict what improvement there may be in attendance. An improvement of 4% from its low level of 84% in 1945 would bring it slightly higher than its previous record level./

level. Such an increase would create a need for 10-15 more teachers. No attempt will be made to forecast the probable number of resignations in this period, but to allow for these and to allow for wastage in training and for unforeseen events such as deaths, a goal of 200 new teachers in ten years or 20 a year must be aimed at.

The Need for a Better Educated Teacher.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the various means by which teachers may be trained, it seems necessary to emphasize the continued need for a better educated type of teacher. It has been seen that a nucleus of teachers, with secondary education and with one or other Cambridge Certificate, has gradually been built up since 1925. It is essential that this nucleus continue to grow. There has been a tendency in many quarters to stress the need for the training of teachers at the expense of their education and qualifications. A popular fallacy in recent years has been to depreciate the value of Cambridge Certificates. While it is true that, of themselves, they are poor qualifications for teaching it would be very wrong to discountenance them and insist on professional training instead. Professional training for teachers without better education is of much less value than secondary education without training. If a choice be forced between these two alternatives then it must be urged that the primary need is for a better educated teacher.

Training/

Training Outside of the Colony.

The success of the experiment in training teachers in Canada must be awaited before passing any judgment on the efficiency of this scheme but some observations at this time would not be out of place. It is highly desirable that Bahamian teachers be afforded opportunities for some experience outside the colony whether in Canada or the United Kingdom, or in other British West Indian islands. The present policy of the British Council would appear to indicate that it believes that the public school teacher is the best channel through which knowledge of the British way of life and institutions can be disseminated through other countries including the colonies. It is similarly desirable that a close bond be established between the colonies in the western hemisphere and the Dominion of Canada. Perhaps the present gesture of the Ontario Department of Education may be regarded as one indication of the recognition of responsibility of the elder brother for the welfare of the younger members of the Empire family. However, the link that has already been forged to the greatest extent is not within the Empire at all but with the southern United States. The desirability of this will not be discussed here except to remark that in these States there is a racial discrimination and a racial bitterness that is entirely foreign to the Bahamian, white or black. It would be quite contrary to the aims of education if Bahamian teachers/

teachers were to be so imbued with this spirit of animosity as to disseminate it in the communities where they labour.

As a complete solution to the problem of training, it is, however, neither wholly desirable educationally nor within the bounds of possibility economically in the immediate future. The Canadian Normal Schools exist to train Canadian, not Bahamian, teachers and the training they provide is adapted to this end. There is much in common to training courses in any country but there are also many special needs of Bahamian teachers that could not be supplied in Canada. To quote only one obvious example: a knowledge of the possibilities and methods of agriculture in Canada would be but poor solace to the Bahamian teacher when, with cutlass in hand, he proceeds to explore the depth, in inches, of the "soil", or detritus, in this or that pot-hole in the school garden. There is the added disadvantage that the course given will, in all probability, presume a higher standard of previous education than most of the Bahamian students will have had. They will thus be prevented from receiving the fullest benefit from their training.

The decision will have to be faced whether the relatively large expense involved in this practice is justifiable in view of the total lack of facilities for training at home and to which the money might more profitably be devoted. The scheme can never be adopted in more than a few cases; these/

these might be chosen from teachers who have already gained some years' experience and who show a desire to remain in the profession. On the other hand, such a course can not profitably be postponed until too late in the teacher's career when he has become set in his methods and not so well able to devote himself to earnest study. There is the further disadvantage that teachers get married at a relatively early age thus denying them the opportunity to profit in this way. Another difficulty that must always be remembered is the probable unwillingness of many students trained abroad to enter or return to teaching. To them the lack of prospects and of opportunities for promotion will appear as an even greater deterrent than to others without their training while their better education and wider experience will make their services more attractive to other employers no less than to the government.

Concluding, it is educationally and economically unwise to attempt a full solution of the problem of training in this manner in the immediate future at any rate. A few established teachers would undoubtedly profit from such a course provided that the risk of losing their services be reduced to a minimum by creating sufficiently attractive conditions of employment on their return. As for the training of the majority of teachers, it is increasingly evident that a solution to this problem must be provided within the colony. Apart from the various disadvantages attending/

attending training abroad it is vitally necessary that Bahamian education should stand on its own feet and effect its own salvation as far as it is able.

Training Within the Colony.

The teacher ^equirements of the educational system of the colony, while they are large in comparison with past success in supplying them, are not sufficiently large to warrant the establishment of a separate training institution such as was attempted in 1891. Any such attempt must be a very miniature affair with an extremely small staff and to a large extent it would be concerned with providing the same facilities for secondary education as already exist at The High School. Any education higher than School Certificate standard that may be desirable could also be supplied more efficiently by the larger number of specialist teachers comprising its staff than by the much smaller staff of a training institution which, in addition to such more advanced academic work, would also be saddled with those aspects of the course more specifically associated with professional training. Considered from the financial point of view, it would be much less economical with regard to buildings, staff and other aspects, to maintain two institutions where one would suffice.

Student Teacher System.

The "student teacher" system as described in the last chapter/

chapter of the history stands condemned by its own inefficiency. It should be discontinued in its present form but, if desired, the name could be retained for the course of training about to be described. It is retained in this sense here but the name makes little difference to the practicability of the scheme. Since the student teacher system, as it is now known, offers opportunity to out island pupils for secondary education, compensation should be made for its discontinuance by an increase in the number of four year scholarships tenable at The High School which are available for out island pupils. It is not reasonable to expect a child of twelve to fourteen to enter into an agreement to follow any particular profession at the conclusion of his education. Still less is it reasonable to allow a parent to enter into such an agreement on his behalf. Nor is it sound policy for the Board to guarantee employment as a teacher to a youth who may, after a few years, prove totally unsuitable. The temptation to undertake such an agreement for the sake of obtaining a secondary education, to be followed eventually by dishonouring the agreement, is undesirable both for the pupil and for the Board which, its prestige thus slighted, finds that it can do veritably nothing to enforce the terms of the contract. Moreover, the system is superfluous as the number of former pupils of The High School who become teachers is far greater than the number of student teachers./

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teachers.

It is recommended that facilities be provided at the school for a two-year course to follow the School Certificate course of secondary education. This extra course will include further education as well as specific training in teaching. To reduce wastage to a minimum the first year would largely be spent in observation and practice teaching in the Nassau public schools, during which both prospective teacher and prospective employer would be free to decide on the desirability of proceeding further with the training. The second year would involve rather less practice teaching and more academic education and theoretical training. Running through both years would be a course in gardening and farming with special reference to out island conditions. Other vocational subjects may be added or substituted for women or as deemed desirable in individual cases. On the results of the work of this course a teaching certificate would be awarded. The certificated teacher would then proceed to the year's probation mentioned earlier, the certificate and his appointment being subject to confirmation at the end.

There are two main objections to this. While secondary education is an ultimate desideratum for all teachers, this scheme places too heavy a premium on it under existing circumstances. It would imply that an out island pupil, denied the opportunity for secondary education for financial reasons, would/

would also be denied certification as a teacher. Secondly, it is open to question whether seven years' residence in Nassau, which would be involved in the secondary education followed by the training, is desirable for all prospective teachers. While it will have a broadening influence on the individual's experience it is also liable to have an unsettling effect when the time comes for return to the much less luxurious existence of the out island settlement. It is also open to question whether Nassau is, in fact, the best centre for training teachers for service in out islands.

Training of Teachers in Out Island Central Schools.

These objections prompted, in part, the recommendation for the out island rural central schools outlined earlier. In these schools an approximately similar plan could be adopted. It would, in effect, be the pupil teacher system reorganized on sounder lines. In these schools the pupil will receive a senior school education with a vocational bias. The subsequent pupil teacher training will need to last longer than the training of student teachers with secondary education. The length will, however, depend on the measure of success achieved by the central schools. Since, in these cases, the previous education has already had a vocational bias, the further education should be rather more academic and could aim at least at the Cambridge Junior Certificate. The professional training will be less advanced than that for student teachers, practice being obtained/

obtained not only in the central school but also in the ordinary public school in the same settlement. Teachers trained in this way would also be certificated and it is to be hoped that the central schools will obtain a sufficiently high level of education as to justify the accordance of parity of esteem to both types of certificates.

Importation of Teachers.

With regard to the recruitment of teachers from either Canada or England, the history has revealed that certain precautions must be taken to avoid a repetition of the failure of this practice. Most of these precautions have already been observed in the plans for the out island central schools to which it is recommended that such teachers be appointed. They must be provided with full staffs of competent assistants, with adequate buildings and with sufficient materials and equipment; like men skilled in all other professions and trades, they will do the job provided they are given the tools. They must be given the fullest opportunity to know what their conditions of work and life will be in their new sphere and what the task is that they are expected to accomplish. Their contentment in their work must be insured by a salary in proportion to the high cost of living and the onerous responsibilities being laid upon them. It will be fatal if, once aware of their new sphere, they begin to look for escape. Two things above all: they must not spend their period of service in a tour from school to school and finally they will need/

need encouragement in abundance. The place of these central schools in out island education can not be over-estimated; neither can the importance to their success of a contented and enterprising head master with a loyal, competent and hard-working staff.

Monitorial System.

To condemn the monitorial system as obsolete, inefficient and detrimental to the progress of out island education is to make no fresh contribution to educational thought and policy. Attitudes towards it fall into two main categories. There are those who, knowing its deficiencies, condemn it but accept it with resignation as a necessary evil. There are others, notably the large majority of the out island population including not a few out island teachers who, knowing no other system of "instruction", regard it without dismay as an integral part of the established order of things. Therefore, it seems necessary to reiterate that, in spite of its century-old tradition, it must still be regarded as a "temporary" and most undesirable expedient, dictated by financial limitations, but an expedient for which there should be a steadily diminishing need as funds become available. Instead, history has shown that as funds became available more and more monitors have been employed in consequence of the educational policy of pursuing quantity at the expense of quality. The exception to this is the staffing of/

of Nassau schools by assistant teachers since 1930, described in the last chapter of the history, when monitors were banished from the schools of the city to seemingly permanent exile in the out islands.

To recommend alternative provision that is at once both sound educationally and feasible financially is not easy. The only solution that is educationally sound is the ultimate replacement of these monitors by qualified assistant teachers preferably recruited from the out island population itself, and, as far as possible, receiving their education and training in the out islands. Whatever salaries may be afforded for these posts will continue meagre for some time to come and it is not reasonable to suppose that teachers will proceed from Nassau to the out island schools at these small salaries. Therefore, the out islands, no less than the colony as a whole, must be given the opportunity to bring about their own educational salvation so far as may be possible. To this end they must aim at raising up their own body of assistant teachers for their own schools. In this process the central schools will play a conspicuous part.

The extent to which this reform may be accomplished depends primarily on the votes for education. As these increase the monitors may be gradually replaced by assistant teachers though it has been urged earlier that prior claim/

claim on increased expenditure be accorded to improvement in the status of grant-in-aid schools. However, there are many claims upon the education vote, and progress inevitably will be slow and, in any case, depends on the further factor of the training of these out island assistants. Meanwhile, it is worth consideration whether some measure of improvement may be effected in the out islands at the expense of stricter economy in the staffing of Nassau schools thus releasing more of the vote for salaries for application to the out island schools.

Before proceeding with such a task it is necessary to know its magnitude in order to permit estimation of the ultimate annual cost of maintaining it. The 1939 staffing position, referred to earlier on page 305, may be used as a basis for such calculation. Allowing one assistant teacher for every 40, or part of 40, children in excess of an average attendance of 35, it would have required 112 additional assistant teachers to supply all the out island schools, in addition to the head teachers and the five assistants already there. This would have given the 111 schools a total staff of 228 teachers including grant-in-aid teachers and a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30 which, by existing standards, is exceedingly generous. Accept, for the moment, the traditional salary of £50, not because it is necessarily deemed adequate, but because in that year it was (a) the salary of a Grade IV assistant with fourteen years/

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years' experience, (b) just less than the Grade III minimum, (c) the median salary of grant-in-aid teachers and (d) the approximate cost of two pupil-teachers of a dozen monitors. By these standards, the additional assistants would therefore have cost £5600. Deducting the saving of the monthly allowances of monitors and sewing teachers (16/-) thus effected, the net increase would have been £4180 or 25% of the total salaries paid in primary schools that year, 16% of the total cost of primary education or 12% of the whole cost of education.

This increase may be compared with the cost of giving effect to the similar recommendation of the West Indian Royal Commission of eliminating the pupil-teacher system in other Caribbean colonies. Hammond has estimated that £1,126,000 would have been required for salaries in place of the £640,000 actually paid - an increase of 75%.

Until such a reform can be put into practice, considerable restrictions should be placed on the use of monitors and also on their number. There is too great a tendency to regard monitors as "subordinate teachers", which indeed is the official inclusive term used for them and pupil-teachers, and to use them too much for instruction rather than for supervision and maintenance of order. The actual instruction should be rather the function of the head teacher but, since a reduction of this/

this individual's responsibilities has been urged, it were better to reduce the curriculum and his many duties to an essential minimum and so permit an improvement in the quality of the instruction at the expense of the number of subjects taught. It is increasingly apparent that, in most aspects of Bahamian education, the aim must be concentration instead of dissipation of efforts and resources.

Professional Unity.

It is eminently desirable that the teachers themselves should make more positive contribution to the cause of education in the future as a profession than as mere employees giving services in return for wages. It would serve no useful purpose to describe the multitudinous obstacles to this; suffice it to suggest that the teachers be given every encouragement and every facility to achieve this. Teachers' Conferences can make great contributions to this end as also can the newly established Teachers' Union. Attendance at the Conferences should preferably be on a voluntary basis; any attempt at coercion, as is implicit in a recent amendment of the Rules of the Board, may defeat the very ends which it is designed to achieve.

Conversely, it would be an improvement if the teachers were treated more as professional persons than as employees. Salary deductions for offences against the by-laws, if indeed strictly legal, are at best a rather puerile form of ensuring compliance with trivial details of administration. Similarly, /

Similarly, it would be well worth considering whether the system of filling vacancies might be modified to give teachers opportunity to apply for such appointments instead of being directed to this or that post in any island. It would help to guard against discontent among teachers were they to be appointed to settlements of their own choosing. Further, if Local School Committees were also to be given a part in making appointments as was suggested earlier, they might be more disposed to cooperate with the teachers whom they choose.

Loss of Staff to other Departments.

With final reference to the staffing of the colony's schools it seems desirable that some understanding be arrived at with other departments and with Government itself as to the recruiting of teachers on to their own staffs. Especially is this desirable in the case of persons under contracted obligations to the Board. Any other department offering employment to such an individual is, in effect, abetting the dishonouring of these obligations. Lastly, so long as Government persists in its practice of appointing the best school teachers as commissioners it seems only fair to education to permit the payment of such salaries to these teachers as would not incur financial loss to them in the event of their preferring to remain in the teaching profession. It also seems desirable that some other system of recruitment and training for Out Island Commissioners be inaugurated./

inaugurated.

6. Content of Primary Education.

With regard to the curriculum of primary education, the chief fault has been, as in other aspects, the failure to cut the coat according to the cloth. As a result the school time-table has at times been strewn with subjects or scraps of subjects that may or may not have borne any relation to the lives and needs of the pupils or to the knowledge of the teacher and his ability to impart it. In consequence, much precious time has been wasted in the imperfect teaching of these subjects if they were taught at all, which was infinitely better. Moreover, in those subjects which might, under certain favourable circumstances be justifiably included in the curriculum, aspects of them have been prescribed for study which were quite beyond the ability of the teacher to teach or of the pupil to learn. The prime need, especially in the out islands, is the simplification of the curriculum and concentration on an essential minimum. It is futile to debate the desirability or otherwise of adding a particular subject, such as semaphore signalling or the staff notation in music, without regard for the (sheer) impossibility of teaching effectively a large number of subjects to a hundred or more children of ages six to fourteen with no assistance save that afforded by selected senior pupils.

There has also been, and there still is, a tendency to regard/

regard education as an end in itself and the subjects taught as means to that end. This view is inclined to attach equal importance to all subjects with special emphasis given to the newer and less common ones. But perhaps the chief outcome of this attitude has been the emulation of English primary education and the adoption of its content irrespective of local needs. This error is not nearly so common now as it was last century; instead, the pendulum, of educational thought at least, has swung to the other extreme and underlines the utilitarian view of education at the expense of its elementary cultural value.

Whatever the educational aims that may be adopted, instruction in the three R's still remains the inalienable right of every child. If, at the end of the primary school course, a child can read with understanding, can write with facility, can give expression to his thoughts intelligibly and can do the simple calculations that are necessary to his subsequent occupation; if he has been taught this much and nothing more, then, under the conditions obtaining in many out island settlements, both pupil and teacher may be said to have succeeded abundantly. Without this much, it will not be easy for those in authority to reach the minds and wills of the people in their efforts towards a fuller realization of the colony's resources, both human and material. Literacy is an economic necessity/

necessity not only in childhood but in later life. In many schools other "academic" subjects of the curriculum were better ignored completely than that time should be consumed in the rote learning of the uninspired rudiments of history, geography and the like.

Every Education Act for a century has prescribed the use of the Bible in schools and it is highly desirable that the strong religious convictions of the majority of the people should be perpetuated in their children. None of the government schools are under the authority of the religious denominations and the impetus to scriptural teaching may therefore be lacking. However, all ministers of religion are the only unofficial persons with right of entry to the schools as visitors. It is desirable that this right be used more frequently not only in the out islands but also in Nassau where there are many more influences to estrange the people from religion.

The need for relating the instruction given in the schools to the pursuits of the children in later life has long been realized and there is every reason why the teaching of such crafts as plaiting, mat-making, sewing etc. should be continued. There is a great need for the inculcation of a higher standard of perfection in this work; much of the straw-work and shell-work that comes from the out islands is not of the best quality workmanship. The teaching of gardening has engaged the attention of the Board/

Board throughout this century. While it is eminently desirable it is doubtful whether it will ever be effectively taught so long as the teachers are obliged to conduct their schools without competent assistance.

7. The Tools for the Job.

There is no doubt that the schools are, and always have been, inadequately supplied with books and materials of all descriptions. There seems little point, therefore, in extolling the value of such up-to-date school equipment as film-strip projectors and other visual aids to education. The prime need is for books. Having said this there is little more one can say as their provision depends, like most other things that pertain to education, on the amount of money available to buy them. This problem has been solved in other West Indian colonies by grants from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund but the schools of this colony will have to continue to depend on the five or six hundred pounds available annually for the purchase of all primary school supplies.

There is scope here for co-operative activity on the part of the school and the Local School Committee. Most of the Nassau schools have done splendid work in this respect and have raised funds to buy books, pianos, teaching materials and even refrigerators and other domestic science equipment. The out island schools are not so favourably placed for raising funds but many of them/

them have already been successful in small efforts.

A great need of the colony is an efficient unified library service. Many sums are voted annually for the maintenance of small independent libraries scattered through the out islands as well as in Nassau. Most of the funds are taken up by remuneration to librarians and the supply of books, even in Nassau, is very limited both in quantity and range of interest. A circulating library with its headquarters in Nassau would be much more efficient and economical. Individual libraries would then be able to draw on a much larger stock of books than at present is the case. Moreover, the buying of new books could be conducted more efficiently and a wiser selection made.

Greater provision needs to be made, too, for children's sections in the libraries. The Imperial Lighthouse Service maintains for its light-keepers a number of boxes full of books which are left at the various stations for a time and then exchanged when next the lighthouse tender visits the station. This valuable idea could, with great profit, be adopted in the schools, not only for the use of the children, but also of the teachers whose own libraries only too often can boast only a score or so of volumes, and those mostly text books.

The use of broadcasting in the islands has great potentialities for the schools. Initial experiments have already been carried out by co-operation between the Nassau schools/

schools and the local broadcasting station. As great a value lies in the opportunity thus afforded for hearing the correct use of English as for its informative value. Community radios are provided in many settlements out of public funds; some of these are located in the schools as the most convenient place but a great many more schools are without them. A School Broadcasts Committee might well be appointed to explore fully the most profitable ways in which these services can be utilized.

The screen as an educational agent seems not to have been discovered. It is believed that the proprietors of the cinemas in Nassau would gladly provide facilities for this purpose. In this connection, a much more strict censorship of films with regard to their being seen by children is very necessary. There is every reason to believe that the proprietors, even to the detriment of their receipts, would strictly enforce the exclusion of children from their cinemas during the showing of such films as might be ruled unsuitable for universal exhibition.

8. Secondary Education.

Reference to the secondary schools has already been made with respect to their place in the whole pattern of education. The suggestion made there for the closer association of these schools, but more especially of their head masters, cannot be too strongly urged: but the voluntary nature of such an Association also needs emphasis. Unfortunately/

Unfortunately, a Committee of the House recently made the blunt and ungarnished recommendation that all schools of all descriptions be placed under the authority of the Board of Education. The effect was immediate: all the private institutions sprang at once to the defence of their traditional independence and autonomy and successfully petitioned the House against the recommendation. Their action can scarcely cause surprise; while the education of all its people must be the ultimate responsibility of Government, the fact remains that it had made no permanent provision for secondary education prior to 1925 and had completely failed in its few attempts to do so. The private bodies, however, had not only succeeded but, within the limits of their restricted resources, were doing commendably good work. To recommend placing these institutions under the control of a Board which, on its own admission, was unable to cope with the task of primary education that it already had in hand, was derogatory to these independent bodies. In consequence, any official move to set up a Secondary Schools Association may be regarded with some suspicion. Nevertheless, it is believed that they would welcome a concerted approach to the problems associated with secondary education and also that they have sufficient initiative to make the first move to this end. A further obvious advantage is that such an Association would prove of great value in keeping Government advised on the progress of/
of/

of secondary education. It could very profitably produce periodical memoranda on the function of secondary education in the colony and on the progress being made.

Opportunities of Out Islands for Secondary Education.

The chief outcome of the absence of co-ordination in the realm of secondary education has been the concentration of effort on behalf of the pupils of Nassau to the virtual exclusion of those on the out islands. It is lamentable to reflect that there are four different authorities engaged in providing facilities for secondary education for three or four hundred children in Nassau while two thirds of the child population are still, in the middle of the twentieth century, without access to anything higher than a primary education of low average quality. With the single exception of the localized effort of the Roman Catholic Church at Harbour Island, the only body extending a helping hand to the out islands is, very appropriately, the government. Even this assistance, which reached approximately one half of one per cent of out island children in 1945 represents an improvement on former years through the increase of out island scholarships in 1944 from five to sixteen.

The out islands must have greater opportunity for a higher standard of education than at present afforded to them if they are to take any share in solving their own problems, educational and otherwise. The Out Island Central Schools/

Schools are one answer but they cannot take the place of freer access to the Nassau secondary schools since it does not seem practicable to establish a secondary school in the out islands. Apart from the children on the one island where such a school might be situated it would be even less accessible than those in Nassau. Moreover, with a constant eye on economy, it would be inadvisable for the government to maintain two schools where one would suffice. The only solution lies in an increased number of out island scholarships but, since there is already £1000 a year being spent on the maintenance of sixteen such places, the most economical plan would be the provision of boarding facilities. It is also seen to be socially desirable when it is considered that these young people may be as young as twelve, have probably never been from their home settlements before and may or may not have relatives or close friends in Nassau.

For the present it does not seem advisable to abolish fees for the secondary schooling provided by the Government. Apart from the effect that the payment of fees has on the value placed by parents on the opportunity thus procured, the amount contributed is relatively considerable, amounting to about one third of the total cost of the school. There is room, however, for an increase in the number of free places maintained by various philanthropic/

philanthropic bodies. All those now provided benefit Nassau pupils only, as the cost of a maintenance allowance is too great for any one of these bodies to meet. It would be a great service if they were prepared to contribute to a general fund for out island free places though they would not then have the satisfaction of knowing that this or that pupil was maintained in school by them.

Course and External Examinations.

The only school that has formerly maintained anything like a full length secondary course is Queen's College where pupils enter the upper school at eleven plus and spend five years preparing for the Junior Cambridge examination and another one or two preparing for the School Certificate. While this lengthy course may be adjusted to the capacities of the majority of its pupils, it would seem that the abler pupils are thereby being denied an opportunity to proceed to the Higher Certificate without which they experience difficulty in entering Canadian or British universities. Without some selection of the brighter pupils, which the size of the school does not warrant, it does not seem possible to shorten this course to less than six years. At the other extreme, the length of the course to School Certificate at the High School was, until recently, only three years which, being far too short, is apt to degenerate into a continuous drive with only one end in view/

view - to get the certificate and get out. In 1946 the course was lengthened by one year but even this involves high pressure of work and a narrowly confined curriculum. An extension of the course to five years depends on the provision of additional accommodation and on the ability of parents to see the desirability of this, as every extra year in school involves ten guineas in fees and one year less earning capacity. The same aim is necessary here, as in other aspects of education, or pursuing quality at the expense, if necessary, of the quantity of results. What policy the two newer secondary schools propose to adopt in this respect remains to be seen.

It may seem that too much emphasis has been laid, throughout this chapter, on the Cambridge Local Examinations. It is becoming fashionable in some quarters to decry these external standards without, however, making any alternative suggestion. Whatever their disadvantage they serve an extremely useful purpose in the colony as a whole. It cannot be denied that their introduction to the colony has raised the standard of education in the primary as well as the secondary schools and is still continuing to do so. In the total absence of inspection these examinations are a valuable criterion by which to assess the academic progress made in the schools. Then, too, the commendable efforts of our island students, especially teachers, to qualify for these certificates would pass/

pass unnoticed, and would lack stimulus, without them. The real danger lies, not in the certificates themselves, but partly in the attitude of pupils and parents towards them and partly in their domination of the curriculum at The High School and to a less extent at Queen's College. These faults can be rectified by an education of public opinion on the one hand and by a lengthening of the school course on the other. The desirability of making the examination adapt itself to the curriculum rather than vice versa is a reform well within the bounds of possibility. The Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate has already shown its willingness to adapt its requirements to local needs and it is urged that the schools avail themselves of these facilities to a greater extent in the future. Little can be done, however, without co-operation and this reform is a task to which a Secondary Schools Association or a truly representative Cambridge Local Committee might well apply itself. So also is the recommendation of the next paragraph.

One reform of this system of external examinations that is imperatively urgent is to follow the lead set by Trinidad and other West Indian colonies of discontinuing the Junior examination. It has an undesirable effect on the secondary school course which, instead of being a unity is reduced to an abridged edition with an appendix. It is even worse than this for an abridged edition/

edition is at least complete in itself which is rather more than can be said for the Junior curriculum. It may first be discontinued in the major schools two of which are either maintained or aided out of public funds but, for the present, retained for private candidates, especially those in out islands, to whom it represents a relatively considerable level of achievement. If this reform be adopted, and the schools might well assume the initiative themselves, then the Act under which Queen's College draws its grant will need amendment accordingly. The grant at present payable for each success in this examination before the age of sixteen would be replaced by doubling the similar grant for each success in the School Certificate. Better still, since there is no useful purpose to be served by perpetuating this vestige of payment by results, both these grants might be discontinued and the capitation grant increased not only to compensate for this amendment but also to meet the considerably increased cost of acquiring competent staff.

Teaching Staff.

There is a natural desire among Bahamians to supply all government posts as well as posts in other avenues of service in the colony by Bahamians. It was to further this desire that the first Education Act was passed two centuries ago. Until very recent years, the graduate staff/

staff both of The High School and Queen's College were recruited either in England or in Canada. Latterly, however, two Bahamian graduates have been appointed to the staffs of both these schools, two of them having professional training in addition to university degrees and all, except one who was a former pupil of the old Grammar School, former pupils of the schools to which they were appointed. This marks a significant stage in the evolution of Bahamian education and portends yet a fuller measure of educational self-sufficiency. To achieve this desirable end, however, it would be mistaken policy to lower the standards of the qualifications demanded of teachers. A university degree, preferably honours, plus a university diploma in education have been tacitly accepted as the minimum requirements of teachers for these schools, whereas both the Secondary Education Act and the Secondary School Act demand only university degrees of a proportion of the staffs. These commendably high standards should be maintained no less for Bahamian recruits than for English or Canadian teachers. The appointment of Bahamian teachers to Bahamian secondary schools has two disadvantages: (a) the restriction of the choice of applicants and (b) the ever-present danger of losing contact with educational developments in other countries, accompanied by an unconscious lowering of standards through having no criterion, /

criterion, other than an external examination and one or two similarly placed schools, against which to measure one's progress. The second disadvantage might well be overcome by a system of regular exchanges with teachers in other countries. The main advantage of local appointments is their more permanent nature whereas imported teachers are usually on three year contracts. For the present, however, it appears that the secondary schools must continue to import nearly all their graduate staff from England or Canada.

Scope of Secondary Education.

There is need for all these schools to develop a wider conception of post-primary education. Their development in the past has been exclusively along traditional grammar school lines. Even science is of recent introduction in the two major schools, one of which has an inadequate laboratory fairly well equipped for the teaching of biology and the other neither laboratory nor equipment despite which fact tolerably good results have been obtained in general science in Cambridge examinations for six years! The proposal to develop The High School as a multilateral, or at least as a bilateral, school could profitably be adopted by the other schools especially since these are either non-selective or not so highly selective as The High School has been in the past. The provision of vocational education as a part of the existing/

existing High School will be sound both educationally and economically. That vocational and grammar school education should be separately provided would not only involve unnecessary duplication both of effort and expense but would tend to destroy the parity of esteem that the English white paper on "Educational Reconstruction" so urgently claimed for all types of post-primary education. For the same reason, a clear-cut division into two departments of the projected bilateral school is to be shunned as assiduously as the provision of two distinct schools. Finally, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the best training for master craftsmen, of which the colony is in such dire need, is not a vocational school or any other type of school but a well-organised and respected apprenticeship system which at present does not exist. In conjunction with this, but not without it, can such a school be expected to produce skilled tradesmen. That is not the function of vocational education.

9. Adult Education.

The history has revealed, as much by its silence on the matter as by repeated reference to parental ignorance and lack of appreciation of the value of education, the paucity of provision for adult education. That this exists to some slight degree in Nassau but is largely/

largely deficient in out islands was described in Chapter II. Incidental reference was also made when dealing with the provision of more adequate and efficient library facilities. The radio, too, could be made more instrumental in promoting adult education and indeed beginnings of this service have already been made. A positive policy of education through film "shorts" which accompany the feature picture in cinemas is another desirable possibility. By far the most effective means of adult education is through voluntary associations and societies. The churches especially could well promote such means. The domestic science departments of the senior schools as well as the Dundas Civic Centre could promote classes in cooking, dressmaking and handicrafts.

There is also a need for more formal education for certain groups in the community such as nurses, clerical workers, employees of technical departments and concerns. The government especially, as an employer, should recognize the need - and the demand - of its clerks, junior members of its Electrical and Telecommunications Departments and of the Hospital for continuation education. This is almost obligatory since the policy of promoting clerks on the results of examinations has been adopted. The staffs of the secondary schools as well as many other specialists in the community are well able to give the necessary instruction if only such facilities were once organised/

organised and some degree of official recognition accorded to them.

It is easy enough to make such recommendations for Nassau but in the out/island settlements one is thrown back on the already overworked commissioners, teachers and ministers for initiative in inspiring and fostering such schemes. Here the library and the radio are the most powerful agents other than voluntary associations which are apt to fail through the lack of constructive leadership. In the absence of the screen, extensive and constructive use could be made of the film strip projector which is comparatively cheap to procure and simple to operate while the film strips themselves are cheap to buy, last a long time with careful handling and can easily be circulated by post. Moreover, there are some excellent photographers in Nassau with exquisite collections of pictures of the colony already which might well be used for disseminating information about the colony. Pictures of events and public functions in Nassau could easily be made into film strips and sent to out island settlements which would then not feel so utterly isolated and cut off from their capital.

To explore all the manifold possibilities of adult education it is suggested that an ad hoc committee be set up representative of the various agencies especially active in the out islands as well as in Nassau.

Conspicuous/

Conspicuous among these would be the Education and Agricultural Departments, the Medical Services, the Churches, the Red Cross and other voluntary associations.

10. Higher Education.

It is self evident that university, advanced technical and other specialized forms of education must be sought outside the colony. Although some few have received further education at Codrington College in Barbados, the eyes of Bahamians are in general turned away from the other West Indies. They have disdained economic and political federation; they have declined to help maintain the new West Indian University College. Consequently, those who have been able to proceed abroad for their further education have gone as far from home as they could afford or deemed desirable and so, in recent years, a majority have gone to the United States. Another reason has been the difficulty of gaining admission to Canadian and English universities because of inadequate qualifications acquired from their secondary education and the extraordinary facility with which they seem to be able to gain admission to some institutions in the southern States with qualifications that would elsewhere be rejected.

It is submitted that, if Bahamians are to go abroad at all, then it were better for them to proceed to institutions of recognized standing than that they should return to the colony with academic qualifications of doubtful value./

value. There are many institutions in the United States of exceedingly high standing and a few Bahamians are attending them but it seems preferable that subjects of a British colony should, if possible, aim at acquiring their initial higher education at British institutions. That this is also the desire of Bahamians themselves is witnessed by the sudden influx of students from the colony into England and Scotland since the war to read medicine, law and accountancy, to name a few.

The vast majority of Bahamians, however, are totally unable to meet the cost even of travelling as far as Canada or the United Kingdom. The promise of help held out by two university scholarships, both of which are now taken up for the next few years, and the promise of "sympathetic consideration" to proposals for training Civil Servants do not go very far towards meeting the expenses of all who wish to go. More such scholarships are urgently needed provided that due regard be paid to the number of highly trained personnel whom the colony can absorb. There seems no danger of that limit being reached for some time to come and, if the Legislature feels unable to commit the colony to the further expenditure on additional scholarships, then it may well consider the desirability of modest interest-free loans to promising students to be repaid in reasonable instalments on their return. There is also room for private benefactions and endowments which have been conspicuously absent/

absent from the colony. Philanthropic institutions might also assist as indeed one has already done.

The present trend of opinion seems to make it unnecessary to urge that no conditions of return to the colony or subsequent service to the government be attached to any awards made out of public funds. It has already been described how this final phase of education is now bearing fruit in the colony's schools and the same is true in other branches of government service as well as outside it. There is little reason to doubt that, so long as opportunities for employment and service are provided for them, then Bahamians will return to the Bahamas. As for stipulating a minimum period of Government service, this is tantamount to denying that an educated man can contribute to the welfare of the colony outside the Civil Service which is but a poor compliment, for instance, to members of the Legislature themselves among countless others who labour to improve the colony in scores of ways other than the public service.

11. Other Forms of Education.

"Approved School" type of education for boys has been provided in Nassau since 1928. There has never been such a school for girls although the Juvenile Offenders Act 1936 empowers the Court to commit a child to such an institution. The provision of a home for delinquent girls is/

is already under consideration. There is a need, however, both for this and for the boys' school, of an efficient "after-care" system for keeping in touch with and assisting pupils as they leave the schools. This is another opportunity for social work by voluntary associations in co-operation with the Heads and Visiting Committees of the respective schools. It seems that the Visiting Committees should assume the initiative in this regard.

The many boys' and girls' clubs need every encouragement in their efforts to continue the informal education and character training begun in the schools. For younger children there is need for the provision, but more particularly the reservation, of spaces for play. The example set by Canada and other countries of organized supervision of play and playgrounds could profitably be copied. Here is another field for voluntary social work and the Board of Education might well take the initiative in sponsoring what is a vital need in Nassau - a Youth Service Council - to co-ordinate, encourage and assist the many efforts being made on behalf of the young by voluntary bodies.

The health of the school child demands an annual medical inspection and also clinical facilities such as have already been provided at The High School through the co-operation of the Chief Medical Officer and the Staff of/

of the hospital. In its absence from the primary schools, the Social Welfare Nurses have already inaugurated a system of school visits followed by the visiting of absentees at their homes. This also affords a useful supplement to the work of the School Attendance Officer in Nassau. Moreover, through the co-operation of a Nassau optician and by virtue of a special fund operated by the nurses for the purpose, children who need spectacles have little difficulty in getting them.

CONCLUSION.

Conclusion.

The foundations of Bahamian education were laid no less than two centuries ago. Throughout the greater part of the time that has since elapsed the colony has been striving to erect the walls of the ground floor. Several times they have tumbled down partly for want of material, partly because of political and economic storms but also because there was nothing above them to help keep them in place. Several times the first storey was begun only to collapse, until voluntary bodies achieved some measure of success but in one corner only. It was left to Government to provide the remainder but not until twenty years ago. The benefit to the ground floor was almost immediate but still the fabric was incomplete. In the last two years a start has been made with the top and there is every promise of a much greater degree of cohesion about the whole structure.

Educational history is still being written and there is discernible the beginning of yet another period which has already begun with the start made in university and higher specialized education. This new era will presumably warrant description as the "Period of Consummation" when both primary and secondary education will realize their full potentialities through the benefits conferred from above downwards. At last there is reason to believe that the vicious circle of Bahamian education may be upset and primary/

primary education may be enabled to rise through the leavening and elevating influences of secondary and university education. The structure can never be self-sufficient as it must continually look to the more advanced educational systems of bigger countries for its standards and the higher education and training of some of its personnel. Apart from these respects it is very necessary that the colony should solve its own educational problems as far as possible.

One of the greatest needs is that the teachers shall make themselves heard in formulating and advising upon policy for the future. To do this it is imperative that they earn recognition and respect as a professional body most competent to know what is best for the children and their schools. Experience in other countries has shown that if the teachers do not make their voices heard then their opinions are seldom sought. They must therefore rise to assume their full responsibility for the future of education. It has been left too long in the hands of politicians who, faced with the necessity of doing something and not finding, or else discarding, the competent guidance they needed, have done the best that it was within their limited powers to do.

As to the need for better education, it is now universally recognized that an enlightened and happy people can be a country's most precious asset. It is equally certain/

certain that ignorance, and the concomitant evils of suspicion and lack of enterprise, are unsurmountable obstacles in the rise of a country to its rightful place among the other countries of the world and to the full realization of its potential resources. It would not be out of place to end where the recent White Paper of the British Government on Educational Reconstruction begins: "The Government's purpose in putting forward the reforms described in this paper is to secure for children a happier childhood and a better start in life; to ensure a fuller measure of education and opportunity for young people and to provide means for all of developing the various talents with which they are endowed and so enriching the inheritance of the country whose citizens they are."

"Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends."

A P P E N D I X I

Map of the Bahama Islands

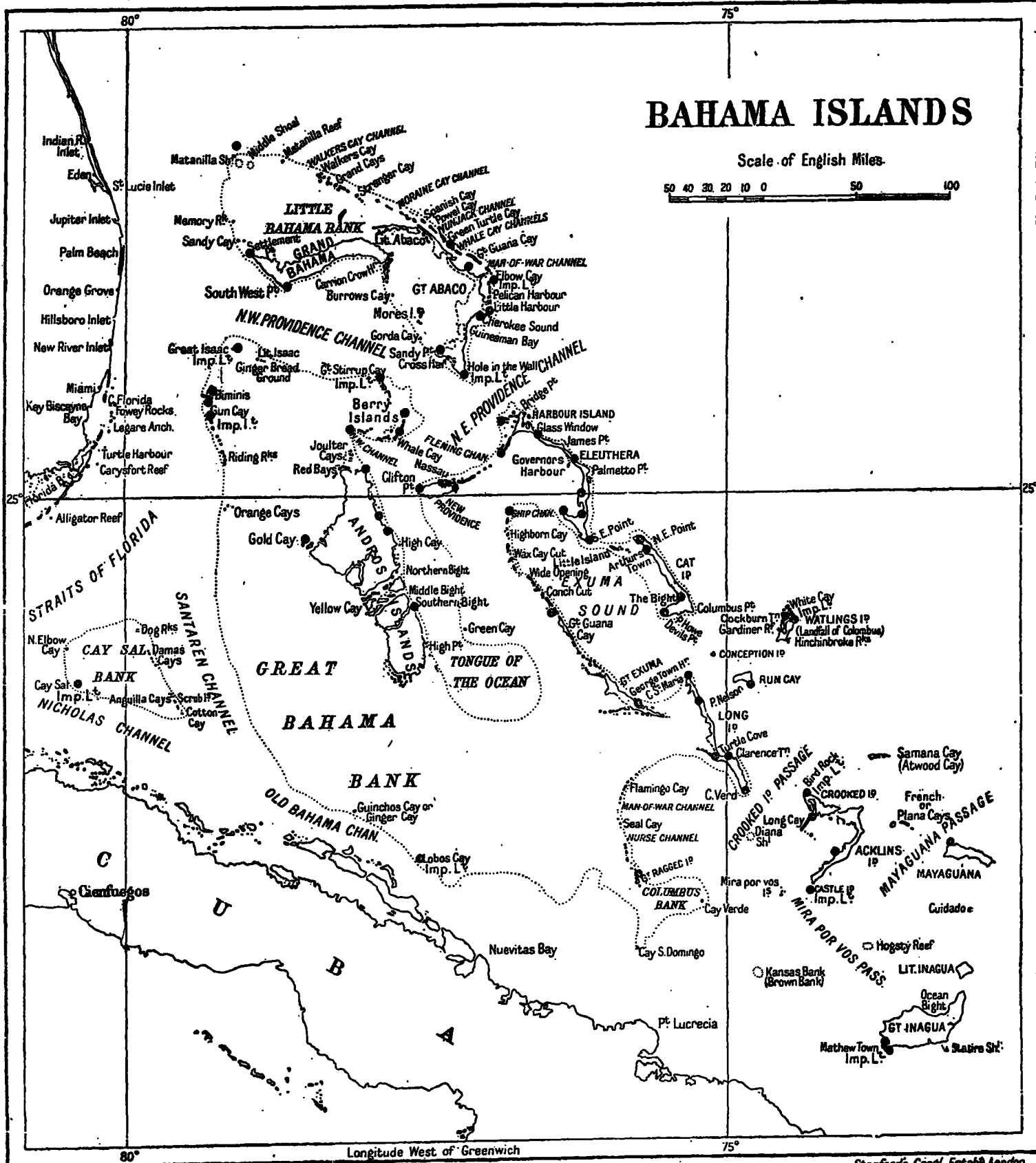
A P P E N D I X I I

Graph showing Progress : 1865 - 1920

BAHAMA ISLANDS

Scale of English Miles.

50 40 30 20 10 0 50 100



GRAPH SHOWING PROGRESS

1865 - 1920

INSPECTORS JOB NONE

BLAIR

1870

BECRIE

COLE

ALBURY

1865

SCHOOLS

80

60

40

20

16

12

8

4

0

TOTAL SCHOOLS

BOARD SCHOOLS

EXPENDITURE

GRANT-IN-AID SCHOOLS

EXPENDITURE (£)

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

13,000

12,000

11,000

10,000

9,000

8,000

7,000

6,000

5,000

4,000

3,000

2,000

1,000

1920

1910

1900

1890

1880

1870

1865

APPENDIX II

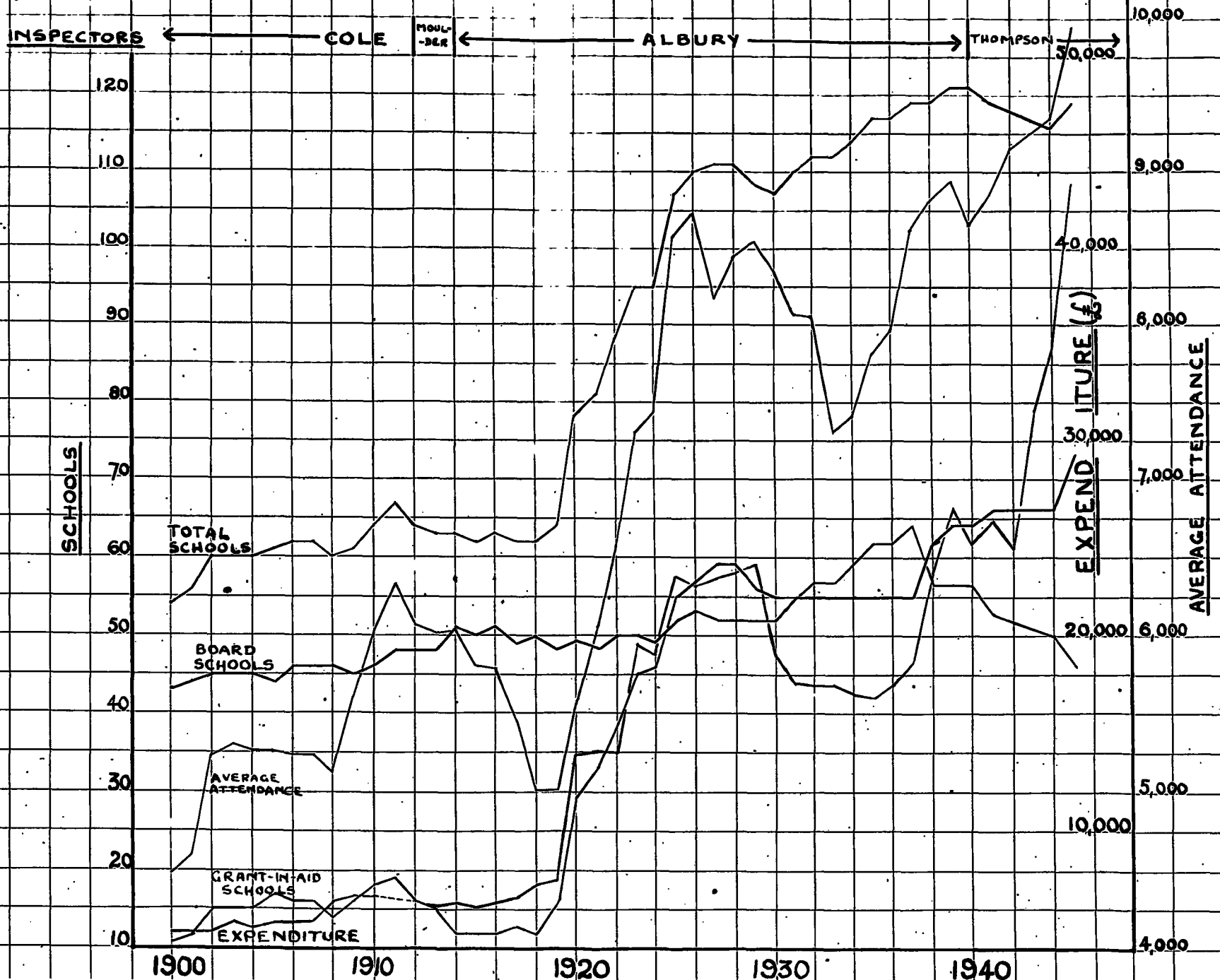
A P P E N D I X I I I

Graph showing Progress : 1900 - 1945

A P P E N D I X IV

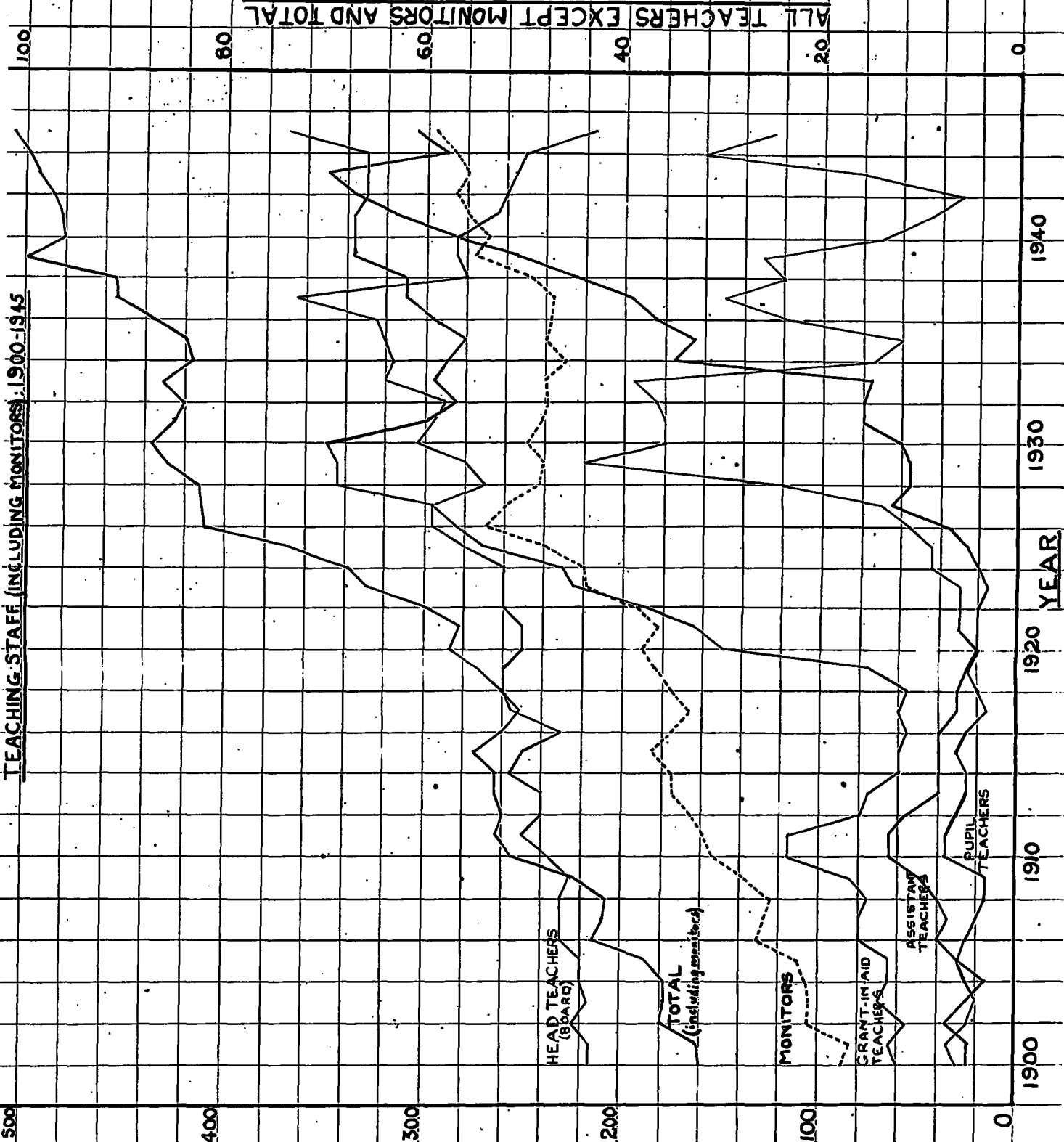
Graph showing Teaching Staff : 1900 - 1945

GRAPH SHOWING PROGRESS: 1900-1945

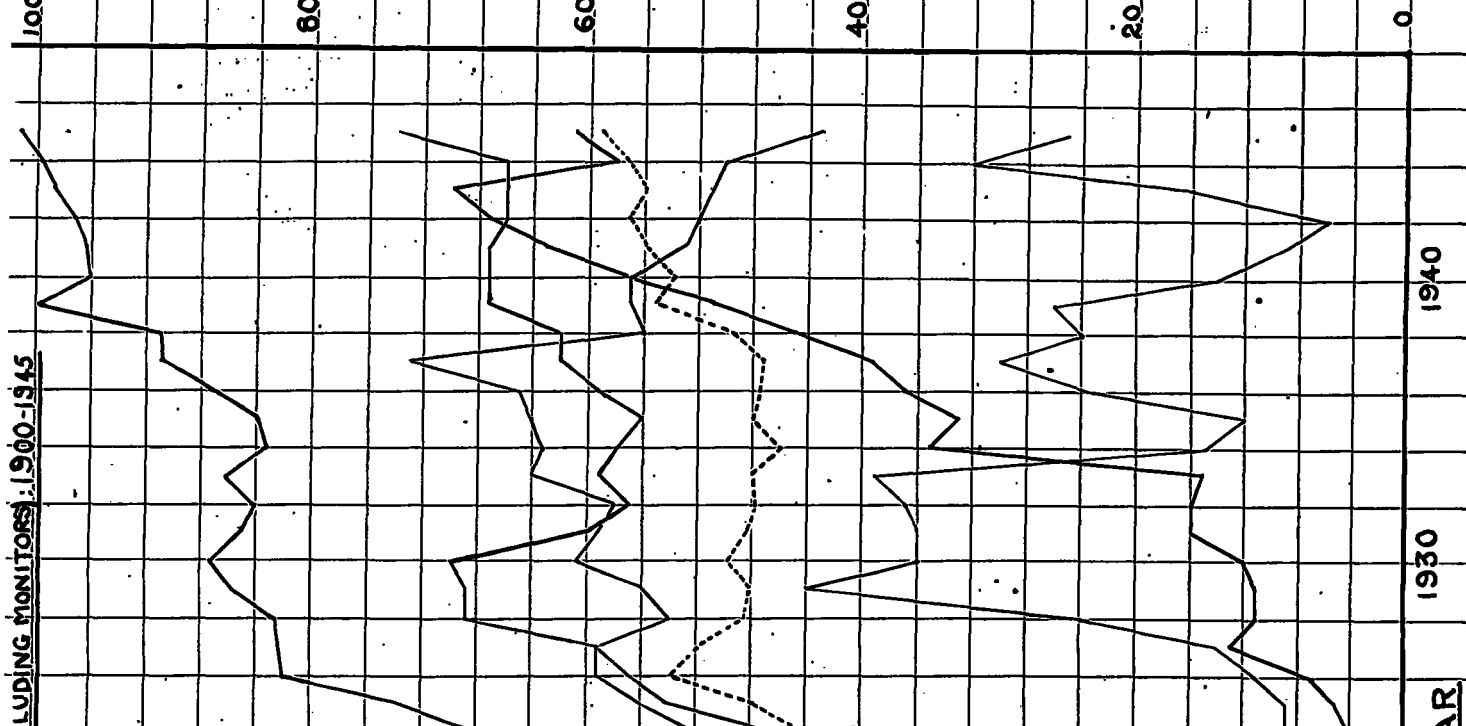


APPENDIX III

TEACHING STAFF (INCLUDING MONITORS): 1900-1945



ALL TEACHERS EXCEPT MONITORS AND TOTAL



APPENDIX IV

A P P E N D I X V

Public Schools, Pupils and Expenditure

1836 - 1945

APPENDIX VPublic Schools, Pupils and Expenditure : 1836-1945.

Year	Schools	Roll	Average Attendance		Expenditure Actual per child	
1836	29	1576	-	-	-	-
1850	26	1975	-	-	£1368	-
1851	21	1857	1211	65%	£1152	£-.12. 5
1854	27	1978	-	-	-	-
1865(May)	25	1567	755	48%	-	-
1865(Dec)	30	2045	1190	58%	£3832	£1.17. 5
1866	37	2714	1715	63%	£4097	£1.10. 2
1867	-	-	-	-	£4898	-
1868	39	3032	2014	66%	£3317	£1. 1.11
1869	38	3130	2137	68%	£2666	£-.17. 0
1870	38	3251	2156	66%	£2400) Statutory grant: not expenditure.
1871	-	3156	-	-	£2400	
1872	31	2790	1524	55%	£2400	
1873	-	-	-	-	£2475	
1874	32	-	-	-	£2475	
1875	34	3001(?)	-	-	£2700	
1876	33	2805	-	-	£2400	
1877	-	-	-	-	£2400	
1878	31	2937	-	47%	£2400	
1879	-	-	-	-	£2400	
1880	-	-	-	-	£2700	
1881	30	2596	1649	64%	£2700	
1882 /						

Year	Schools			Roll	Average		Expenditure	
	Bd	Gia	Total		Attendance		Actual	per child
1930	52	55	107	10169	8351	82.1%	£19032	£1.17. 6
1931	55	55	110	9326	8070	86.5%	£17687	£1.17.11
1932	55	57	112	9374	8062	86.0%	£17459	£1.17. 3
1933	55	57	112	8885	7317	82.4%	£17460	£1.19. 4
1934	55	59	114	8841	7423	83.9%	£16982	£1.18. 5
1935	55	62	117	9112	7778	85.4%	£16802	£1.16.11
1936	55	62	117	9464	7966	84.2%	£17553	£1.17. 2
1937	55	64	119	9978	8668	86.9%	£18690	£1.16. 8
1938	62	57	119	10215	8801	86.0%	£23067	£2. 5. 2
1939	64	57	121	10379	8925	86.0%	£26491	£2.11. 1
1940	64	57	121	10101	8671	85.8%	£24845	£2. 9. 2
1941	66	53	119	10484	8847	84.4%	£25868	£2. 9. 4
1942	66	52	118	10685	9167	85.8%	£24444	£2. 5. 9
1943	66	51	117	10783	9251	85.7%	£31592 ^x (£26816)	£2.18. 7 ^x (£2. 9. 9) ^x
1944	66	50	116	11246	9384	83.4%	£35032 ^x (£30047)	£3. 2. 4 ^x (£2.13. 5) ^x
1945	73	46	119	11799	9927	84.1%	£43444 ^x (£35414)	£3.13. 8 ^x (£3. 0. 0) ^x

^x These figures include War Bonus on teachers' salaries. The figures in parentheses omit this item of expenditure.

A P P E N D I X VI

Public Schools Teachers : 1900 - 1945

APPENDIX VIPrimary School Teachers : 1900-1945

Year	1	Head Teachers					Total	Ass	Gia	Ppl	Mons	Sew	Total
		2	3	4	U&A	0	Heads						
1900							43	5	12	6	87	7	160
1901							43	5	13	7	84	10	162
1902	3	10	11	10	11	-	45	7	11	5	105	7	180
1903	2	11	9	10	13	-	43	5	14	4	104	6	176
1904	2	10	10	11	11	-	44	3	13	5	107	5	177
1905	3	10	11	14	8	-	44	6	13	6	112	7	188
1906	2	9	11	15	9	-	46	8	16	5	132	9	216
1907							46	7	16	4	127	9	209
1908							46	8	15	3	124	11	207
1909							45	10	17	3	138	13	225
1910							47	13	23	7	153	11	255
1911							50	13	23	7	159	11	263
1912							48	11	16	6	166	13	260
1913							48	8	15	5	174	13	263
1914							51	8	12	5	173	13	262
1915							50	8	12	6	186	12	274
1916							46	8	11	5	175	12	261
1917							51	6	12	3	167	13	252
1918	2	14	12	15	9	-	52	6	11	4	177	11	261
1919	2	18	14	10	7	-	52	5	15	5	184	11	272
1920	/												

Key: U & A - Unclassified (or unassigned) and Acting. 0 - Others
 Ass. - Assistants. Gia. - Grant-in-aid teachers.
 Ppl. - Pupil teachers. Mons. - Monitors. Sew. - Sewing teachers

Year	1	Head Teachers					Total 0 Heads	Ass	Gia	Ppl	Mons	Sew	Total
		2	3	4	U&A								
1920	2	17	11	11	9	-	50	4	30	4	190	8	287
1921	3	15	11	12	9	-	50	4	33	6	183	7	283
1922	3	14	10	17	7	-	52	4	38	6	193	6	299
1923	3	11	17	11	10	-	52	3	45	6	218	4	328
1924	3	9	15	10	15	-	52	4	46	9	220	6	337
1925	4	8	15	14	14	-	56	5	54	9	238	7	369

1926 : New classification. New
classes of Heads are:-

	1	2	3	U	A	0							
1926	1	8	17	20	7	5	59	7	57	11	270	6	410
1927	1	6	16	22	7	7	59	13	59	14	258	9	412
1928	1	6	20	22	6	14	69	11	54	24	243	13	414
1929	1	7	23	19	7	12	69	11	56	44	240	9	429
1930	1	7	28	15	10	9	70	12	61	36	249	7	435
1931	2	3	23	13	9	10	60	16	59	36	241	14	426
1932	2	3	22	13	10	7	57	16	58	37	239	14	421
1933	3	2	25	12	10	7	59	15	64	39	240	13	430
1934	3	2	24	13	11	5	58	35	63	15	230	16	417
1935	3	2	25	12	10	4	56	33	64	12	240	15	420
1936	3	0	29	13	10	4	59	37	65	23 ^a	237	15	436
1937	3	1	27	12	16	3	62	39	73	30 ^b	234	16	454
1938	1	1	26	11	23	0	62	45	56	24	247	22	456
1939	1	1	22	43	0	0	67	51	57	26	276	21	498

1940 /

Key: U - Unassigned (or 4th Class). A - Acting. Other abbrev-
iations as on previous page.

a - 16 of these are described as "Acting Pupil Teachers"

b - 25 of these are described as "Acting Pupil Teachers"
"Others" includes English, West Indian and "Commissioner-
-Teachers."

Year	1	Head Teachers				0	Total Heads	Ass	G1a	Ppl	Mons	Sew	Total
		2	3	U	A								
1940							67	57	57	14	269	17	481
1941							67	63	53	9	278	13	483
1942							66	67	52	6	286	10	487
1943							66	70	51	16	280	11	494
1944							66	58	50	32	286	6	498
1945							74	61	43	25	294	9	506

A P P E N D I X VII

Authorities, Schools and Pupils : 1945

APPENDIX VIITable 19 : Authorities, Schools and Pupils : 1945

Authority	S c h o o l s Type	New Providence				Out Islands			Grand Total
		NP	OI	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	
<u>Primary Schools</u>	Board of Education	Infant	3	366	318	684			
		Junior	2	383	433	816			
		Senior	3	476	460	936			
		Mixed	2	63	295	342	637	3568	3281
		Gn-in-aid	2	44	27	35	62	999	1014
									2013
Total		12	107	1547	1588	3135	4567	4295	8862
	Anglican	Mixed	3	18	137	119	256	184	212
	Roman C.	Free Ss.	5	13	721	785	1506	231	252
		Preps. of 1 Sec'y.Ss.	1	1		(a)45		(a)16	2050
	Methodist	Q.C.Prep.	1			137			137
	Baptist	Mixed	2		179	181	360		360
	7 Day Adv.	Mixed	1	1	73	52	125	30	33
	Private	Mixed	11		108	139	247		247
Total		24	33			2676		958	3634
TOTAL PRIMARY SS.		36	140			5811		9820	15631
<u>Second- ary Ss.</u>	Gov't.	High S.	1	56	45	101			101
	Methodist	Queen's C.	1			174			174
	Roman C.		2	1		(a)67		(a)14	81
TOTAL SECONDARY SS		4	1			342		14	356
TOTAL ENROLMENT OF ALL SCHOOLS					6153		9834	15987	

Key: NP - New Providence OI - Out Islands Ss - Schools
 QC - Queen's College. Prep. - Preparatory Department
 (a)- Estimated from total roll of the whole school.

A P P E N D I X V I I I

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

APPENDIX VIII

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