CENSUS OF INDIA

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CENSUS CENTENARY
MONOGRAPH NO. 9

EXTRACTS FROM THE ALL INDIA CENSUS REPORTS ON LITERACY

by

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In addition to the series of monographs mentioned above, a monograph entitled 'Indian Censuses Through a Hundred Years' has been prepared. This monograph deals with the organisational aspects of the Indian Census. The Indian Census covers the largest population—China which has a larger population has not taken a regular Census so far—and is a major administrative undertaking. The success of the Census is due to the detailed and proper planning and their prompt execution.

I am grateful to Sri Chandra Sekhar for having given me an opportunity to prepare the monograph.

Bangalore
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D. NATARAJAN

INTRODUCTION

Literacy

Literacy and Education indicate the social development of a community. Literacy and learning were considered very important in Indian society but due to foreign invasions and consequent wars, internecine feuds and the resulting uncertainties and also the natural calamities in the past, the economy was completely shattered and education was wholly neglected. The Census of 1881 revealed only 90 male literates per 1,000 males and 4 female literates per 1,000 females. Even these figures were considered to be in excess of the actual position due to faulty concepts adopted at the Census and in 1911 it was computed that in 1881 there were only 66 male literates per 1,000 males and 3 female literates per 1,000 females.

Literacy was a Census question from the very beginning of the Indian Census. In the first three censuses ending with 1891, the population was classified as 'Learning' 'Literate' and 'Illiterate'. The data collected on this basis was reported to have been vitiated as educated persons who were still 'learning' or students returned themselves as literate. This three-fold distinction was therefore, given up in 1901 and the population was divided into 'Literate' and 'Illiterate'.

Literacy was defined as ability to both read and write. Difficulties were experienced in interpreting this definition which i thus explained in the 1911 report : "No orders were is ued by the Census Commissioner as to the degree of proficiency in reading and writing which should be held to qualify a person to be entered as literate. In the Central Provinces it was laid down locally that those should be entered who had passed the upper primary school examination, or possessed educational qualifications ; and in Madras only these who were able to write a letter to a friend and read his reply. Elsewhere the practice seems to have varied, not only from province to province, but also from district to district according to the idiosyncracies of the local census staff. In some parts criteria similar to those mentioned above appear to have been taken, while in others persons were entered as literate who could do little more than write their own name and spell out a few simple printed words." In the 1911 Census though literacy was defined as ability to both read and write a letter it was explained 'that only those persons could be treated as literate who could write a letter to a friend and read his reply'. This definition was said to have been strictly followed in the next two censuses. But there appear to have been local variations. For example in the 1931 Census in the old Travancore State it was laid down that a person to be classed as literate 'should have passed the fourth standard in vernacular education or had the same degree of proficiency in

reading and writing as one who had completed the standard. In the censuses taken after 1931 also, the definition was more or less on the same lines.

In the 1891 and 1901 Censuses, in the case of a literate person the main language in which he was able to read and write was recorded. The language was canvassed in a few selected areas in the next three censuses. There was a question on literacy in English from the 1891 Census to the 1941 Census. This question was not asked from the 1951 Census - the first census after Independence. From the 1941 Census, partial literacy *i.e.* able to read only was recall. The Census also included a question on educational standard attained. This was with a view to measure the growth of higher and technical education.

The following statement shows the number of literates per 1,000 of population and of each sex from the 1881 Census :

Census	No. of literate persons per 1,000 persons	No. of literate males per 1,000 males	No. of literate females per 1,000 females
1971	293	395	184
1961	240	344	130
1951	167	249	79
1941	161	249	73
1931	95	156	29
1921	72	122	18
1911	59	106	11
1901	53	98	6
1891	56	104	5
1881	48	90	4

1881—1941 Before partition 1951—1971 After partition

In the Census of 1871-72 in some parts of the country the literacy question was not either asked or the returns were imperfect. In the areas where the returns were tabulated 'there are, among the 123 millions of people inhabiting them, only 4 millions who are returned as able to read and write, or as being under instruction ; in other words, scarcely one per on in thirty has received the barest rudiment of education.'

The fall in literacy in 1901 compared to 1891 has been attributed to the changes in the concepts. The report says 'if we leave out of account altogether the persons shown as learning at previous censuses, we get a steady increase in the number of literate males from 66 in 1881 to 87 in 1891 and 98 on the present occasion, the corresponding proportion for females being 3, 4 and 7.' The decrease was also attributed to 'the inclusion in the statistics of the present census of about 32 million

persons in Central India, Kashmir, Rajputana and other backward tracts who were left out of account in 1891.'

There is a large increase in literacy in the decade 1931—41 and no increase among males and a slight increase among females in the decade 1941—51. In the 1941 Census, in the territories which constituted British India, the literacy figures were compiled from the totals struck by the enumerators from the enumeration records. These were only provisional and later there was no tabulation to get the accurate figures. There was a doubt about the accuracy of these figures which is also referred to in the report. It says : "One Superintendent doubted whether enumerators in reaching their provisional total had always distinguished the two kinds of literacy, although the instructions were clear enough and it is possible therefore that these literacy figures may include returns only of partial literacy and to that extent be in excess. Sorting of course would have cleared up this point but until it is done the doubt must remain in British India."

To get at the true literacy rates, the age group 0—4 should be excluded from the population. The limit recommended by the U.N. is the group 0—9. Taking the figures as they stand for the whole population, the statement shows a very slow progress in literacy during the period 1881—1931. During the period of these fifty years female literacy has shown a faster growth. It has risen from 0.39% to 2.39%. In the case of males the rise has been from 9.0% to 15.6%. Before Independence education was the gateway for employment and it was therefore confined generally to urban areas and the more affluent and higher classes took to it. They were probably encouraged by the employers both Governmental and others for they naturally preferred persons with basic intelligence. The earlier census reports refer to this aspect but they lay the blame on the members of the higher castes as utilising the offer of education for the disadvantage of the lower classes. How growing unemployment in 1931 affected education is briefly touched upon in the 1931 Census report. The report says : "It is perhaps until literacy becomes a domestic acquisition taken for granted among members of both sexes, that it will cease to be regarded as a mere door way into Government or other services and principaly valued for its potentiality to that entry. The Cen us Superitendent of Cochin State ascribes a definite falling off in the number both of institutions and of pupils in the lower secondary and in the primary classes less to the general economic depression than to a growing realisation that literacy is losing its economic value as a qualification for a career. He points out that graduates of Madras University join the Police Department on a salary of Rs. 10 to 12 per month and are held fortunate in getting employment at all. On the other hand there is no falling off in the higher secondary class but a continued increase which he ascribes

to such pupils having gone too far to withdraw. The falling off in primary education he rightly regards as a bad sign, and he argues the necessity for completely recasting the educational system."

In the post Independence period there has been more rapid growth of literacy. In the case of males it has grown from 249 in 1951 to 395 in 1971. In the case of females the literacy has more than doubled itself and has grown from 79 in 1951 to 184 in 1971. The growth in the case of males during the decade 1961—71 was only about 54% of the growth during the earlier decade. In the case of females the decade 1961—70 has been a little more favourable.

One of the causes of for the smaller increase may be the differential age structure. After Independence facilities for higher, scientific and technical education has increased to a very large extent. A census of scientific and technical personnel was held along with the 1961 and 1971 censuses. A Census Monograph No. 1 has been published on the results of the 1961 Census.

The 1931 census report refers to the introduction of compulsory education in a few urban and rural areas in the north "though apparently with no very marked success". After Independence education has been made compulsory and also free and there has also been adult literacy drive. In the absence of detailed census reports in the 1951 and 1961 Censuses, it is not possible to say what effect these have had.

Urban areas have higher proportion of literacy compared to rural areas and among urban areas, the cities have a heavier concentration of literacy. This is due to the fact that opportunities for employment and facilities for higher education are greater in urban areas especially in big cities. The results of the 1971 Census show that for males compared to 61.55% in urban areas the literacy proportion was 33.77% in rural areas which is more than half the proportion of the urban areas. In the case of females, however the rural areas contained only one-third of the literates in urban areas. The percentages are urban 41.91 and rural 12.92.

Before its separation from India, Burma was the most literate Province. This, it is reported, was due to "an elaborate system of indigenous free education, which is imparted by the Pongyis or Buddhist monks attached to the monasteries, while the instruction of females is not hampered by the prejudice in favour of their seclusion when they approach the age of puberty which so greatly impedes progress in other parts of India". Among the present States, the coastal ones are generally more literate. This was pointed out as early as 1901 where attention was also drawn to ethnic group. The report says in regard to male literacy "it will be noticed that in almost all cases the proportion is highest in areas which lie along the coast, and that

it gradually diminishes as one proceeds inland. It is also worthy of note that in the North-West of India, where the Aryan element in the population is belived to be the strongest, the people are far more ignorant than in the east and south where the Mongoloid and Dravidian races predominate." The 1911 report adds that the principal explanation of the varying proportions is to be found in the period that has elapsed since the different tracts came under British influence. Education is most widespread in Bengal, Madras and Bombay because it is in these provinces that British rule was first established.

In the statement below, the States are arranged according to the order of male literacy in the 1971 Census :

All India average of male literacy 39·51%

States above the average			States below the average		
1.	Kerala	66.54	10.	Assam	37.74
2.	Tamil Nadu	51.68	11.	Haryana	37.20
3.	Maharashtra	51.30	12.	Nagaland	34.42
4.	Gujarat	46.17	13.	Andhra Pradesh	33.27
5.	West Bengal	42.84	14.	Madhya Pradesh	32.76
6.	Himachal Pradesh	42.30	15.	Uttar Pradesh	31.76
7.	Mysore	41.87	16.	Bihar	30.60
8.	Punjab	40.06	17.	Rajasthan	28.42
9.	Orissa	38.35	18.	Jammu & Kashmir	26.41

The only two non-coastal States with literacy above all India average are Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. Orissa which is a coastal State stands first in the list of States below the average. In the case of Andhra which is futher down, the coastal districts which originally formed part of the old Province of Madras have a higher male literacy rate.

The extracts from the old reports below contain also interesting discussions on the literacy of religions and castes. The Census returns have also been compared with the returns of the Education Department.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1871-72

Secretary of State for India—Memorandum on—

General Department 1876

Education

It was intended that the census should show the number of persons able to read and write, or under instruction; but in Bengal the information was not sought except in the case ofa few municipal towns. In the North-West Provinces, also, the information is known to be very imperfect, partly from omissions, and partly from the failure to put into the return a column for females, owing to which women and girls have in almost all cases been excluded. For Oudh the returns give no particulars except the number of boys and girls at school; and for Ajmere and Berar there are no details.

Seeing how imperfect the statistics must be, it is not worth while to analyse them minutely; but it may be observed that, in the nine provinces for which returns have been made, there are, among the 123 millions of people inhabiting them, only 4 millions who are returned as able to read and write, or as being under instruction; in other words, scarcely one person in thirty has received the barest rudiments of education.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1881

CHAPTER IX

The Statistics of Instructions

386. The enumerators were directed as ascertaining what persons were "Under instruction" or were "not under instruction but able to read and write," or were "not under instruction and unable to read and write." In Table X of Volume II the information thus obtained is brought together for the several Provinces and for the different religions.

The following abstracts are worked up from this table. The first gives the percentages of the uninstructed on the total population. In the second similar percentages are given after excluding the infantine population under five.

In the first the figures are ranged for Provinces in alphabetical series, in the second the Provinces are ranked in a series commencing with the country where the number uninstructed is lowest. In both cases the male population only is represented.

Abstract No. LIX

	Percentages of Uninstructed	Percentages of Instructed
Ajmere	87.9	12.1
Assam	95.3	4.7
Bengal	91.0	9.0
Berar	93.8	6.2
Bombay, British Territory	88.9	11.1
Bombay Feudatory States	90.0	10.0
Burmah	53.9	46.1
Central Provinces, British Territory ...	95.3	4.7
Coorg	87.0	13.0
Madras	86.2	13.8
North-West Provinces, British Territory ...	94.2	5.8
North-West Provinces, Feudatory States ...	96.3	3.7
Punjab British Territory	93.7	6.3
Punjab, Feudatory States	94.7	5.3
Baroda	89.4	10.6
Hyderabad ...	93.7	6.3
Mysore	88.7	11.3
All India	90.9	9.1

Abstract No. LX

	Percentages after excluding Infantine Population under five: Uninstructed	Instructed
Burmah	46.8	53.2
Madras	84.2	15.8
Coorg	85.8	14.2
Ajmere	85.8	14.2
Bombay, British Territory ...	87.3	12.7
Mysore	87.6	12.4
Baroda	87.9	12.1
Bengal	89.8	10.2
Punjab, British Territory ...	92.8	7.2
Hyderabad	92.8	7.2
North-West Provinces, British Territory	93.4	6.5
Punjab Feudatory States ...	94.0	6.0
Central Provinces, ... British Territory ...	94.4	5.6
Assam	94.4	5.6
North-West Provines, Feudatory States	95.7	4.3
All India	89.6	10.4

387. These figures show how very weak is the impression that education has made on the population of India. Allowing for the infants of tender years who are too young to be at school, out of every 1,000 males only 104 are able to read and write or are under instruction.

If no allowance is made for children of this early age, the proportion under instruction and able to read and write in every 1,000 males is 91.

388. Burma is the only Indian country where the majority of the males are instructed. There 532 of every 1,000 males are able to read and write or are at school. In Madras we find the next highest proportion. But the drop from the Burma figure is very great ; the Madras figure being 158 in every 1,000. Of the larger Provinces Bombay comes next with 127 ; then Bengal with 102. The North-West proportion is extremely low, 66 and the Punjab little better, 72.

389. Mysore and Baroda, both native States, stand well by the side of the British Provinces in the North though neither of them is so advanced as Madras. Mysore, however, has been long under British administration, having been but recently handed over to the native ruler. Coorg and Ajmere, both British Provinces, rank before either of these two States, coming immediately between Madras and Bombay.

390. It is not easy to obtain figures for European countries which we can compare with those for India though there is no difficulty in ascertaining what are the numbers of children at school in Europe. But I may note that of the entire population of France in 1864, 67.0 per cent could either read and write or read only :—

55.6 being able to read and write.
11.4 being able to read only.

In Prussia, too, of nearly 90,000 recruits enrolled in 1871, 3.42 per cent had received no instruction. In Italy, for 1861, information was collected very similar in character to that we now have for India, and the following statistics were then recorded for the Italian population.

In every 1,000 inhabitants the population who could neither read nor write was :—

	Males	Females
In the old Provinces and Lombardy ...	461	574
In Central Italy	641	750
In Naples and Sicily	835	938

Thus Madras may be said to rank with Naples and Sicily, white Burmah ranks with the better educated population of Sardinia and Lombardy.

391. For Europe, however, statistics are avilable showing the percentage borne by children receiving primary education to the total population.

These are extracted by Mr. Baines in his admirable report for Bombay, and have been made use of by other writers on the Census of 1881 in Indian Provinces. I append them, here, and place side by with them figures showing for the various Indian Provinces, where the information is available, the percentage of males under instruction to the total population.

ABSTRACT NO. LXI

Percentage under Instruction on total Population

Both Sexes European Countries			Males only Indian Provinces		
Saxony	...	17.5	Burmah	...	10.8
Switzerland	...	15.5	Coorg	...	4.2
Denmark	...	15.0	Madras	...	3.5
German Empire	...	15.0	Bombay, British Territory	...	3.2
Prussia	...	15.0	Mysore	...	3.1
Sweden	...	13.7	Bengal	...	2.9
Bavaria	...	13.0	Bombay, Feudatory States	...	2.3
Holland	...	13.0	Ajmere	...	2.3
France	...	13.0	Berar	...	2.0
Norway	..	12.5	Punjab, British Territory	...	1.5
Great Britain	...	12.0	Central Provinces, British Territory	...	1.5
Belgium	...	11.9	Assam	...	1.4
Austria	...	9.0	North-West Provinces, British Territory	...	1.3
Spain	...	9.0			
Hungary	...	7.5			
Italy	...	6.5	Hyderabad	...	1.3
Greece	...	5.5	North-West Provinces, Feudatory States	...	.8
Russia	...	2.0	Punjab, Feudatory States	...	.8
Turkish Empire	...	1.0	Baroda	...	.2
			All India	...	2.8

We observe from this that all India is considerably more advanced than Russia in primary education, but is not half so forward as the backward kingdom of Greece, and that it takes a very low position by the side of the Western European Countries. Burmah is the only Province which ranks on a level with Western Europe, coming half way between Belgium and Austria. In none of the other Provinces does the figure of percentage come up to that of Greece. All the States and Provinces, except Baroda and the Feudatory States of the Punjab and the North-West, rank above Turkey.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1891

CHAPTER VI

The Distribution of the Population by literacy

> The waves of the ocean, before reaching the child, break against four walls, which encompass the water of his education or crystallisation—father, mother, brothers and sisters, and a few extra people, are his forming-world and mould. But, all this deducted, we must remember in education that its power, like that of the spirit of the age, which must not be measured by individuals but by the concentrated mass or majority, must be judged, not by the present, but by the future. —RICHTER

Where the task of public instruction is undertaken by the State to the extent that it is in India, the function of a census of literacy is to supplement the current record of progress in regard to this important matter. This can be done either by taking stock of the results on the given date, so they may be shown cumulatively, instead of merely by annual instalments, or by bringing to book the out-turn of institutions which are territorially or departmentally beyond the scope of the annual reviews. How far the census fulfils this object will be discussed in the course of this chapter. *The first point to be considered is the scope of the inquiry made at the* census. With respect to the tracts brought under enumeration, it was not thought worthwhile to attempt this detail in the wild country on the eastern frontier of Bengal and Assam, or in the very similar tract to the south-west of Orissa. Then, again, in Rajputana and Central India, the establishment available had to be treated, as explained above in connection with the return of mother tongue, with the utmost leniency, so the schedule was relieved of this column also. Lastly, in Kashmer, as the census was being taken systematically for the first time, it was held that more important statistics than those of instruction should alone be recommended. We have thus to deal with a population of 261,838,926, detailed in Table IX of the Imperial series. In 1881, nearly the same omissions as on this occasion were allowed in the Hill tracts of Eastern Bengal and Orissa. The Malabar States and those under the Central Provinces, as well as Khairpur under Sindh, and the Naga and Garo Hills in Assam, were also excluded, but have been brought on to the record of the present census, in addition to Quettah, Aden, and the Andaman settlement and the newly acquired territory of Upper Burmah.

To show the nature of the information asked for, the rules for filling up this column are here reproduced:—

1881	1891
"Col. 12. Against those under instruction write is 'learning'; against those not under instruction but able to read and write, enter 'knows'; against those who cannot either read or write, or who can read but cannot write, or can sign their names but cannot read, write 'does not know'. Only those should be shown as able to read and write who can do both."	"Col. 12. Enter in this column against each person, whether grown up, child or infant, either 'Learning', 'Literate', or 'Illiterate'. Enter all those as Learning who are under instruction, either at home or at school or college. Enter as Literate those who are able to both read and write but are not under instruction as above. Enter as Illiterate those are not under instruction, and who do not know how to both read and write or who can read but not write, or can sign their name but not read." "Col. 13. Enter here the language which those shown as literate in col. 12 can both read and write and if a person knows how to read and write English as well as a vernacular, enter English also." "This column is to be left blank for those shown in col. 12, as Learning or illiterate, and, except when English is known, only one language should be entered, namely, that best known."

Thus three classes were distinguished. First, those who were under instruction; secondly, those who had finished their schooling; and lastly, those who had not had any. Special provision was made to exclude from the category of the pupils those who attend what are known as "Rote Schools", which are numerous in the Punjab, and are found nearly all over India to some extent. In such establishments reading and writing are not taught, and the curriculum is confined to the inculcation of portions of the Kuran, with the appropriate enunciation and gestures, or of some Puranic lore, both entirely by oral tradition. Then, again, in the present day so many messengers, porters, and other menials find it to

their advantage to be able to sign their names, that they acquire this amount of literature without ever advancing beyond it; and it was held advisable to specially exclude this class from the category of literate. So far, the instructions in 1891 followed those of the preceding census. But it was thought worthwhile to attempt a further step by adding to the return of the literate, supplementary information regarding the number that were conversant with the English language. This information, it will be observed, was not called for in respect to those still under instruction, whether at school or college, as the object was to include only such as were, so to speak, out in the world. Taking the instructions as a whole, experience in every province has shown that the distinction between those under instruction and those able to read and write, but no longer in a state of pupilage, is one which it is advisable to abandon at a future enumeration, since there is a general tendency to disregard it. The former class is considered inferior to the latter, and as India is, according to Jacquemont, "l 'Utopie de l'ordre "social a l'usage des gens comme il faut," the dignity of the castes to whom literacy, according to that social ordinance, should be restricted, revolted at the notion that the half-naked urchin set to drive his father's cattle as soon as he has completed the fourth vernacular standard should be entered as Literate, whilst the Brahman reading for his degree in Arts was relegated to the category of pupils. The feeling is well expressed by the Census Superintendent for Mysore, himself a Brahman and experienced in educational matters, who writes—

> 'Moreover, the enumerated persons returned themselves in a vast number of cases as learned, though they were still learning, probably in a spirit of bravado. For it is a notorious characteristic of the student of the period that he is generally too obtrusively and superciliously self-conscious of the superior educational advantages enjoyed by himself, and as his contemporaries and seniors of the old school were returned as literate, his personal vanity was not unnaturally tickled, and many of his class returned themselves at the enumeration as learned, although still learning, thereby exaggerating the ranks of the literate, at the expense of the numbers under tuition."

The results of the enumeration were tabulated by the three age-periods, (a) under 15, (b) 15 to 25, and (c) 25 and over; so it was not difficult to see that Mr. V. N. Narsinghaiangar is right in his facts, whilst his professional knowledge of the class in question allows the presumption that he is not wrong as to the motives he attributes. It is not only in Mysore that the egg, to use a German proverb, holds itself wiser than the hen, and not alone in the Rome of Persius.

Ingenium et rerum prudentia velox Ante pilos venit.

Thus the really trustworthy division of the population in respect to literacy, so far as the census return is concerned, is into those who do not know how to read and write and those who do, whether the latter be still

TABLE A

General Summary

	Total	Males	Females
Learning	3,195,220	2,997,558	197,662
Literate	12,097,530	11,554,035	543,495
Illiterate	246,546,176	118,819,408	127,726,768
Total	261,838,926	133,371,001	128,467,925

under instruction or have ceased to be so. But for the sake of comparison in a later part of this chapter with the annual statistics published by the State Educational authorities, the three groups, as collected from the schedules, are shown in the above abstract of the general return now under review. But the depth to which literacy has filtered through the community can be better appreciated when the figures are set forth proportionally, especially if the above-mentioned age-periods are also recognised. This is done accordingly in the following statement :—

TABLE B

Proportional Abstract

	Total				Under 15		15 to 25		25 and over	
	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Females to 1,000 Males	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Learning	1.22	2.25	0.15	63	4.74	0.36	1.96	0 06	0.09	0.01
Literate	4.62	8 66	0.42	47	1.27	0.18	13.10	0.85	13.73	0.47
Illiterate	94.16	89 09	99.43	1,175	93.99	92.46	84.94	99.09	86.18	99.52

Literey of males

Now, tho salient facts illustrated by these relative numbers are, first, that in the whole population dealt with only 53 per sons in every thousand can read and write or are learning to do so, and, secondly, that of those 58, 53 are males and five are of the other sex. If we consider, first, the males only, it will be seen that of those under 15 years of age, 94 in every 100 are either learning or literate, but if we omit from the calculation all boys under five, assuming them to be below the age at which instruction may be held

to begin, the ratio of the illiterate falls to 90 per cent. After the age of 15 instruction begins to have can appreciable weight, and between that age and 25, 15 per cent instead of 10, are, to put it negatively, not illiterate. It is in this period that the confusion between pupils and literate is perceptible, and the two classes are therefore considered together. The next division of the table treats of men of full age, and the proportion of the illiterate rises a trifle. The comparatively large number of pupils in this period may be attributable in part to the technical and training institutions, or, at least in Upper India, to the adults attending religious lectures in connection with *masjid* (mosques) in the case of Musalmans, and charitable institutions of a corresponding character for Sanskrit studies in the case of Brahmans. The technical name for the former, which would no doubt be returned at the census, is "Seekers after Knowledge" (Talib ul 'ilm), while the latter would in like manner be termed "disciples."

Another light in which to view these figures is that thrown by the relative distribution of the learners and literate by age instead of that of the age of literacy, which we have been considering above. The following table gives this information. Of the male pupils, 84 per cent are under and 16 over the age of 15 years The literate of 25 years and over bear the

TABLE C

Instruction by Age

	Males		Females	
	Learning	Literate	Learning	Literate
Under 15	84.01	5.84	89.82	16.15
15 to 25	14.27	24.76	6.89	34.55
25 and over	1.62	69.36	3.29	50.70

proportion to the total literate of 69 1/3 per cent, which indicates, as it were, the cumulative results of the system of instruction. Were it not for the intrusion of the literate pupil element above noted; this ratio would no doubt reach 72 or 73 per cent. The figures for females will be discussed below.

What has preceded this chapter in the present review has no doubt prepared the reader for the great prevalence of illiteracy indicated by the above statements. First of all, we have the occupational bias of the mass of the population, which is set steadily away from literature. The agriculturist in India is in this respect probably not much below his compeers in far more civilised countries, only his numbers are more preponderant in the community. However, well his affairs may prosper, it is long before the land owner gives over personal participation in all the operations by which he has thriven, and after a long course of early rising and late return from the field, the "swinkt hedger" is seldom in the psychological conditions for the assimilation of more abstruse knowledge than is current in the friendly

circle that every evening squats down to discuss the *hukka* and *pan* of village sociability. Interested as he is in every novelty that his eye has learnt to perceive, the average ratio is not given to going a step out of his way to discover any; but when the three R's are brought within his reach, he is often quick enough to appreciate their advantages in dealing with the grain dealer and money lender, so he sends his son to school accordingly. Unfortunately, however, as the census and departmental returns show—and experience too often confirms them—the necessities of the farm generally lead to the lad's removal at a rudimentary stage in the curriculum, and by the time he is 18 years old he has forgotten most of the little he learnt when he was 11 or 12. In the towns the state of affairs is a little better, but then, as we have seen, their influence extends to less than a tenth of the population.

The second influence antagonistic to a more general spread of literacy is the long continued existance of a hereditary class whose object it has been to maintain their own monopoly of all book-learning as the chief buttress of their social supermacy. Sacerdotalism knows that it can reign over none but an ignorant populace. The opposition of the Brahman to the rise of the writer castes has been already mentioned, and the repugnance of both, in the present day, to the diffusion of learning amongst the masses can only be appreciated after long experience. It is true that the recognition by the British Government of the virtue and necessity of primary education has met with some response on the part of the literate castes, but it is chiefly in the direction of academic utterances, which cannot, in the circumstances, be well avoided. It is welcomed, too, in its capacity of affording the means of livelihood to many of these castes, as they have to be engaged as teachers, and are bound accordingly to work up to the State standard of efficient tuition. The real interest of the castes in question is centred on secondary education, of which they almost exclusively are in a position to reap the advantage. This, however, is a topic that will recur in connection with the distribution of literacy by caste, which forms the subject of a later section of this chapter.

We can thus see that the field in which the seeds of literacy have to be sown consists of a few square yards of what we may term relatively good soil, prepared to receive all the seed it can get, and thirsting for the whole of the attention of the husbandman. Then comes the vast stony waste of labour and menial offices, without sufficient depth of soil to allow the seed to strike root, and lastly, the many miles of arable mark, so taken up with the production of the food and clothing of the whole community, that whatever else is sown it is inevitably choked before it can ripen.

Literacy of females

Before taking up the next section of our subject, a glance has to be given at the return of the literate amongst the weaker sex. The outlook in

this direction is, if possible, more dreary than in that from which we have just turned. It is by the position of women in it that we judge to a great extent of the relative progress made by a community towards the complete life that we call civilisation; as the Comte de Segur has it, "leur sort est un boussole sur pour le premier regard d'un etranger qui arrive dans un pays inconnu." Though, as Burmah may be said to show us, there may be no intimate or direct connection between the status or influence of woman and her acquaintance with the three R's, a very great divergence, in this last respect, between the two halves of the community more often than not implies the relegation of the wife and mother to the position either of the queen termite, immured for life in the most remote chamber of the ant hill to fulfil her function of replenishing the numbers of the community, or to that of the household drudge enslaved to the caprice of the mother-in-law. It has been said, and we see the truth of the adage not only in India, but in the west also, that she who rocks the cradle rules the empire, and of what sort must the influence be of those, however shrewed and staunch to the better customs in which they have themselves been brought up who are unable to stray beyond their immediate and narrow surroundings, or get into touch with any thing that may help to elevate them on to a higher level ? Their utmost aim is to rear the Telemachus, of whom his father spoke in terms so affectionately depreciatory.

> Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
> Of common duties, decent not to fail
> In offices of tenderness, and pay
> Meet adoration to my household gods
> When I am gone.

According to the current theory, the first duty of a woman is to produce and rear a son to perform the funeral obsequies of her husband; and, second, to see that satisfactory meals are ready for her husband, and the third, to keep her husband's family gods in good order for his worship. Into such an ideal, intellect can scarcely be said to enter, but faith pervades the whole. On the other hand, it is to intellect alone that an appeal is made by the State system of education, under which come more than 80 per cent of the whole body of learners, and amongst nations, writes the author quoted at the beginning of this chapter, the head has at all times preceded the heart. But how if the head of the man persists in advancing, whilst that of the women and the heart of both refuses to stir ? The head is a notorious sapper of creeds based as are those of India, and the "dual life" in that country, of which a good deal has been written of late, is not a feature that one would desire to see extended further than its present sphere, where, amongst the fraction of the 6 per cent of writers and literary Brahmans whom it affects, it is comparatively harmless. The social reformer possesses, as

Carlyle has it, apprehensive tail. He returns home from his meeting or lecture in full panoply of occidental ethics and political catchwords "up to date" to cast off all these alien swaddling-bands as easily as he divests his shapely foot of its patent leather covering, and his person generally of other encumbrances that interfere with his free enjoyment of home comfort. He performs, moreover, all the ceremonies at births and deaths required by the custom of his caste, keeps his brother's widow in the orthodox servitude, and marries of his daughter at eight year old, provided he has no bridegroom ready for her at seven. "Once he has come to forty year," if by mishap he be a widower, he accepts from his friend and co-reformer a bride of as nearly as possible the same age as his daughter, and thus tradition is maintained. In these circumstances, there is practically no breach in domestic life caused by the intellectual advance of the master of the house. His studies are regarded as no more than the proper equipment in life of the class that at the festival of the Diwali pays homage to its pen as the family bread winnder, just as the trader does to his ledger, and they effect his relations with the outer world only. His indoor life is still regulated by the customs to which he duly conforms, like the philosopher of imperial Rome, who "approached with the same inward contempt, and the same external reverence, the altars of the Lybian, the Olympian, or the Capitoline Jupiter." There is thus no want in that life which the education of his wife is needed to supply. Still less is illiteracy felt in the houses of the mass the population, where the education of the men themselves is, at the best, but surface deep. Against the above remarks there will be urged, of course, the case of the Parsis, amongst the women of which race literacy is far more prevalent than in other Indian communities. The record of the State Educational Department, too may be brought up to testify against the return of the literate and pupils of the fair sex at the census, which is less by nearly one half than the former. This last argument will be examined in a later section of this chapter. As to the Parsis, they form a small homogeneous community of foreigners, who owe everything but bare existence to another race, equally alien to the country, any part of whose customs to which they may be attracted can be assimilated by them unhindered by caste or tradition. There is obviously no analogy between this case and that of a vast and heterogeneous population that has grown up within the country itself, and has by gradual and historical process, not by imitation or foreign impulse, hemmed itself in by centuries of the most exclusive prejudices and inviolable custom the world has ever seen.

Referring again to Table B, it will be seen that the females imbued with some tincture of literacy come to about six in the thousand, or, as we are dealing with such small fractions, it will be more correct to put the number at 57 in 10,000. Under the age of 15, they come to 54, and the pupils are nearly double the number of those who have ceased their schooling

If we deduct the girls under five years old, the ratio rises to 93, approaching one in a hundred. In the next period, between 15 and 25 years old, the proportion is nearly the same, or 91 per 10,000, and the literate exceed the pupils. This follows of course, the fact that at this age, amongst the classes that mainly contribute to the returns, a girl, sane and sound, who is not married by the age of 15 is an exception, and would certainly not be paraded at school, even if returned at the census at all. The actual pupils in this period are probably, to a great extent, in normal and medical establishments, or widows, and the return shows, too, that a good many are returned from the christian community, where the age of marriage is later. Lastly, amongst women of 25 years old and over the proportion of the not illiterate drops to 47 per 10,000, leaving over 99½ per cent illiterate. This seem to indicate that the stimulus to female education was imparted little earlier then the beginning of the present generation. Table C confirms this view, as not many more than half the literate females come within this age-group. It may be noticed that the proportion of pupils in this group is higher than the males. This may be partly explained by the preference shown by females, in returning their age, for the years 25 over any year between 20 and 24 then, again, there are the special and technical institutions above mentioned, and the zanana teaching, all of which are, probably, at work in Bengal and the Malabar States, where the bulk of the class in question is to be found.

A few words more about the proportion of the two sexes amongst the literate and pupils will not be irrelevant to what has just been said. In the population with which this return deals, there are 963 females to every 1,000 of the other sex. To put it in another way, in a thousand of the whole population, there will be, on the average, 509 males and 491 females. The females under instruction number 63 to 1,000 males in the same stage, but to a thousand literate males, there are but 47 females similarly endowed. The illiterate are more on an equality, for we find only 1,075 females to the 1,000 males, a ratio that would represent an excess of the former sex of about 116, if the total number of the two were the same.

The following Table D gives the figures for 1881 compared with those for 1891 in the same tracts.

TABLE D

Comparison of 1891 and 1881

		Population		Distribution per cent		Percentage of variation
		1881	1891	1881	1891	
Males	Learning and Literate	10,526,283	13,416,398	9.05	10.42	27.45
	Illiterate	105,838,357	115.454,733	90.95	89.58	9.08
	Total	116,364,640	128,881,131	—	—	10.75
Females	Learning and Literate	432,475	589,256	0.39	0.48	36.25
	Illiterate	111,332,927	122,735,279	99.61	99.52	10.24
	Total	111,765,402	123,324,535	—	—	10.34
Total	Illiterate	217,171,284	238,190,012	95.20	94.44	9.67
	Total	228,130,042	252,205,666	—	—	10.55

There will be noticed a slight difference between the latter as there proportionately shown and those in Table B, because from the former have been omitted the returns for Upper Burma and the Malabar States, where literacy is more prevalent than in most of the tracts dealt with, but which did not come within the scope of the census of 10 years ago. As the table stands, the rate of increase of the not-illiterate is considerably above that of the population at large, and is especially marked in the case of females. But in relation to the whole population of each year, the leeway that has to be made up in enormous. Where there were four females in a thousand who are not illiterate, there are now five; and in thousand males, in place of 91, we now have 104. In a later section, the variation in the different provinces and states will be shown.

Comparison of census return with that of the State Department of Public Instruction

The next point to be treated of is the comparison of the census return with that published for 1890-91 by the various Directors of Public Instruction in India. This relates to British territory only, except with regard to the small states under Bombay which appear to be included with the rest.

TABLE E

Comparison of Census with Departmental Returns of Pupils

	Males		Females		Difference of Census	
	Departmental	Census	Departmental	Census	Males	Females
Madras	556,449	576,079	87,715	59,127	+19,630	—28,588
Bombay and States	551,216	439,360	69,282	30,745	—111,856	—38,537
Bengal	1,380,385	883,990	88,558	34,845	—496,395	—53,513
N. W. Provinces and Oudh	275,651	238,440	13,870	8,404	— 37,211	— 5,466
Panjab	223,056	158,849	22,657	7,834	— 64,207	—14,823
Central Provinces	105,699	76,306	5,799	3,901	— 29,393	— 1,898
Upper Burma	49,341	99,229	3,811	3,372	+ 49,888	— 439
Lower Burma	100,668	128,269	14,629	14,853	+ 27,601	+ 224
Assam	74,086	49,111	4,698	3,427	— 24,975	— 1,271
Coorg	4,059	4,192	736	610	+ 133	— 126
Berar	48,320	38,502	2,022	976	— 9,818	— 1,046
Total	3,368,930	2,692,327	313,777	168,094	—676,603	— 145,683

The main feature to which attention is required at present is the fact that the departmental return of pupils exceeds that of the census by 25.13 per cent in the case of males, and as already remarked above, by about 87 per cent in the case of females. It is further noticeable that the above feature presents itself in every province, with the exception of Burma and the male pupil element in Madras and Coorg, exceptions which admit of special explanations. The departmental statement is based on the returns from school and colleges in connection with the state, either directly or indirectly, as by grants-in-aid, or by being under inspection, or financial control. The extent to which non-official schools, especially those of the lower grades, are thus connected, varies in every province. In the Panjab, for instance, the return includes far more than in most other parts of the country. In Upper Burma, on the hand, the number of monasteries not brought on the departmental books is large, and even in the lower division of province there appear to be a good many that are equally ignored. As a rule, every Barmese has to pass a certain period of his boyhood as a "kyaungtha", or attendant at one of these institutions even if he may not advance to the noviciate, so the number must be enough to place this mode of instruction within the reach of every village. In Madras, the excess shown at the census is attributed in great measure to the same cause, as it occurs in the tracts such as Tanjore and Malabar, in the first of which there are known to be many elementary schools kept by Brahmans, which are not brought within the sweep of the departmental net, whilst on the Malabar coast, the religious antagonism between the Mappilah community and the rest stimulates the maintenance of many institutions within the precincts of the mosque, which are likewise not brought to the notice of the infidel Inspector, whether Christian or Brahmanic. On the other hand, at the opposite extremity of this presidency, the departmental figures for the Ganjam district show a number of pupils more then 100 per cent in excess of that found in the census schedules, and this brings us to the second distinction between the scope of the two returns. The census, it is true, includes the pupils of the institutions that do not contribute towards the departmental total, but it excludes, by the definition of pupil adopted in the instructions quoted above, all children who are not learning to read and write. The case of the Kuranpuran schools has been already mentioned, and in the Panjab we find 57,397 pupils in them, including over 10,000 of the 22,657 girls departmentally returned. In Bengal, again, this class of institution accounts for over 62,000, and in the whole of the tract covered by the return under discussion, 154,500 come under this category. As few, if any, of these pupils learn how to read or write, they were, of course, ignored in the census. We then come to the departmental return of "public schools," where 809,116 children are shown as "not reading printed books." Finally, there are the "private schools," with about 262,000 pupils in the elementary stage, out of whom

probably the same proportion, at least, as in the other class of institution, are not yet advanced enough to study printed books. All these, together with the pupils who patronise the rote schools, give a total of about 1,051,000 children in the most elementary stage of instruction, so far as literacy is in question, and as the departmental total exceeds that of the census by 822,286 only, there remains a balance of 228,770 in favour of the latter. In all probability, the excess is far greater, for in Bengal, where the difference in favour of the departmental return amounts to nearly half a million of boys and over 53,000 of girls, this return is obviously unduly exaggerated by fraudulent entries made by the hedge-schoolmaster who is more prominent feature in that province than elsewhere. The same feature appears in the return for the Ganjam district of Madras, where the departmental excess, amongst a population notoriously averse from instruction, is most remarkable, and places this tract, in point of education, immediately behind the three foremost districts of the Presidency, Madras, Tanjore, and Malabar. The proximity of Orissa, about which the Educational Inspector writes that "for one case of detection these may be a dozen that go undetected," has probably stimulated the local Pandit to go abroad to some purpose. In the Shahabad district of Bengal, the district board practically abolished the system of annual rewards in the year under review, because they "encouraged fraudulent practices." In the Dacca district, in 1890, there was discovered "wholesale fabrication of returns in two municipalities." Even under the very shadow of the central authority, in the suburbs of Calcutta, we find it stated that "it is unusual for unscrupulous men to start schools at the close of the year for the" purpose of earning rewards, which schools melt away as soon as that object is "fulfilled." In one case, the schoolmaster got the reward by showing off a school attended mostly by pupils of his colleagues, lent for the occasion. But the prize for ingenuity is taken by the Chittagong master, who held a school in a village on the frontier of the district, so that, having obtained the reward at the annual examination, he promptly transferred himself with all his pupils to the adjacent village on the other side of the boundry, and reaped his recompense at a second examination held in his new domicile. History stops at this point, but it would be interesting to learn whether the pupils who shared the toil were also admitted to the fruits thereof. It is irrelevant to the present purpose to enquire with whom lies the responsibility for this state of affairs, it is enough that it exists, and that while it exist, there is no reason to assume that the difference between the census returns and those of the State department betokens any defect in the former. But apart from intentional fraud, there is the tendency for every village school to attach to itself a sort of kindergarten, where the infants of the lower middle classes disport themselves whilst their elder brothers or sisters, who officiate as caretakers, are possibly really under instruction. In the upper grades of this undisciplined contingent, a plantain leaf, a small board with a supply of sand, or even the mud floor, serves as the medium of communicating the alphabet or the digits, whereupon the pupil is duly entered

as "under standard." In the case of females this is a very common practice and in the Punjab, for instance, where not only are half the pupils of this sex under instruction in Kuran schools, where they only learn by rote, but in other schools, more than half are under seven years old, it is clear that there is little to complain of in the small show made at the census. Some of that little, too, is explicable, the Superintendent thinks, by the refusal of rural enumerators to recognise instruction in any other character than the Persian, so that Sikh girls learning Gurmukhi do not appear in the record. Finally, there is always the confusion between literate and learning to fall back upon, but so far as the comparison with departmental figures is concerned, it is not necessary, on the facts shown above, to have recourse to its discussion in detail. In the provincial reports from Bengal, Bombay, and the Punjab, Messrs O'Donnell, Drew, and Maclagan have dealt with it in relation to their respective charges.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1901

Volume I

CHAPTER V

Scope of the Return

264. At previous enumerations the population was, in respect of education, divided into three categories—literate, learning and illiterate. The instructions then issued were as follows:—

> Enter against each person, whether grown-up, child or infant, either learning, literate or illiterate. Enter all those as "learning" who are under instruction, either at home or at school or college. Enter as "literate" those who are able both to read and write any language, but who are not under instructions as above. Enter as "illiterate" those who are not under instruction, and who do not know how to both read and write, or who can read but not write, or who can sign their own name, but not read.

It was found that the return of the learning was initiated by the omission at the one end of boys in the rudimentary stages of instruction, and at the other, of many of the more advanced students, who thought it derogatory to their dignity to call themselves, "learning" when people of far lower attainments were recorded as "literate" and accordingly caused themselves to be entered under the latter head. There was a considerable discrepancy between the census figures for the "learning" and those of the Education Department, due partly to the causes noted above and partly, it was alleged to an exaggeration in the departmental returns of the number of children under instruction in elementary village schools. For these reasons it was thought better to have the compilation of statistics regarding persons under instruction to the education authorities, and to confine the information collected at the census to the broad question whether a person can or cannot both read and write.* The rule for the guidance of the enumerators was accordingly modified on the present occasion as follows:

Enter against all persons, of whatever age, whether they can or cannot both read and write any language.

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*In his Report on the Census of India in 1891, Mr. Baines recommended the abandonment of the "distinction between those under instruction and those able to read and write, but no longer in a state of pupilage."

At the present census, therefore, the population has been divided into two broad classes, the literate and the illiterate. Literacy has been defined to mean the ability to both read and write; it thus excludes two fairly numerous groups, *viz.*, on the one hand, those who, though unable to write, can spell out the words of a book, usually of a semi-religious nature, with whose contents they are already fairly familiar and, on the other, those whose caligraphic attainments extend only to the scrawling of their own name; these are chiefly messengers and other menials, but there is also a fair sprinkling of such persons in a higher station of life. In cases where a person was shown as literate, the main language which he was able to read and write was entered and it was also stated if he was literate in English.

Extent of literacy

266. Of the total population of India only 53 persons per mille are literate in the limited sense in which this term was used at the census. One male in every 10 can read and write and one female in 144. There would thus appear to be 14 literate male to 1 literate female, but it is possible that there has been some understatement in respect of latter sex, as amongst some classes of the population there is a prejudice against admitting that women are thus qualified. Taking males only we find that under the age of 10 only 13 per mille have been returned as literate; the proportion rises to 85 per mille between the ages 10 to 15, to 132 between 15 and 20, and to 139 at 20 and over. This steady increase at successive age periods seems to show that, in spite of the instructions, the general tendency of the enumerators was to omit from the category of the literate persons who were still under instruction, even though they had passed beyond the preliminary stage of their education. The number of persons who first learn to read and write after attaining the age of 15 is infinitesimal, and unless (which is very unlikely) the persons enumerated at the age-period ' 15 to 20' have enjoyed fewer educational opportunities than did those enumerated at all the higher ages when they passed through this period of life, the proportion of the literate amongst the former would be greater than, or at least equal to the corresponding proportion at the higher ages. In 1891, when the learning were shown separately, special care was taken to prevent persons properly falling under the latter head from being entered as literate, and those of our census staff who had already been employed on that occasion may, in some cases, have been influenced by the rules which were then laid down for their guidance. The total number of literate males under 15 years of age, is 2,129,439 compared with 675, 357 literate and 2,518,240 learning at the same age-period in 1891, a decrease of 33 per cent. The only tract where a general standard of what should be held to constitute literacy was laid down, was the Central Provinces where it was ruled that only those persons who had passed the Upper Primary Examination or possessed equivalent educational qualifications should be treated as literate. In spite of this, the pro-

portion of persons returned as literate shows a better result there than in most places in comparison with 1891, and this helps to confirm the view that the general standard of literacy adopted by the census staff was higher than would be expected from the wording of the rule.

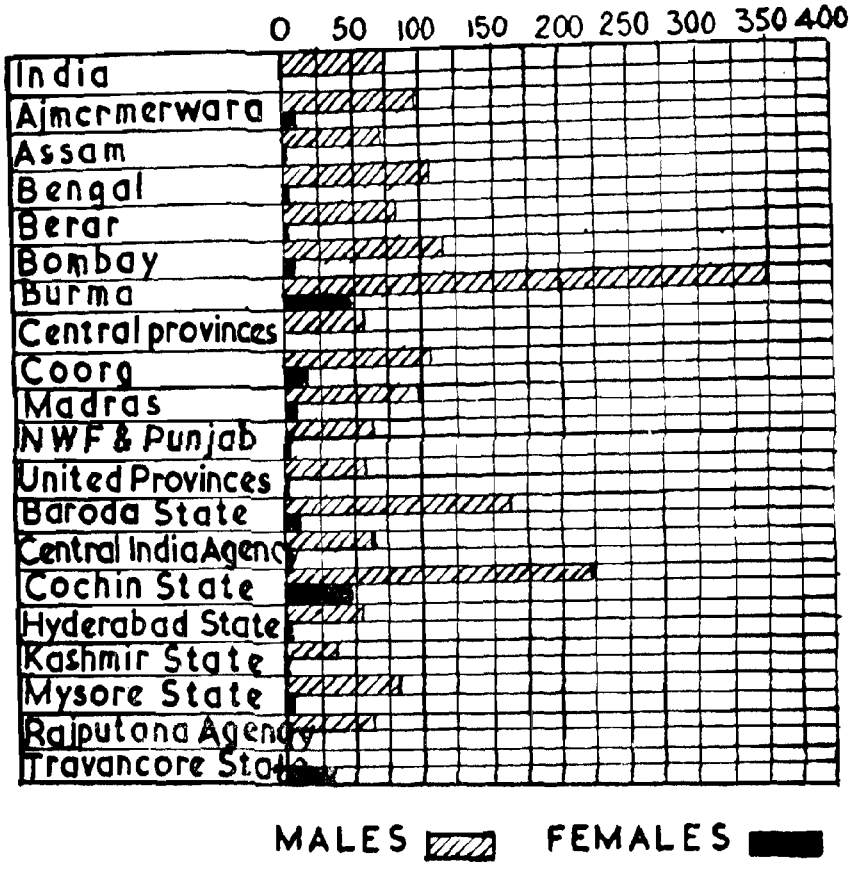
There is no doubt that many learners have been left out of account, but that their exclusion is far from complete is clear from the fact that in 1891, when they were shown separately, the persons returned as "literate" under 15 years of age formed less than 6 per cent of the total literate population, and the proportion has now risen to over 15 per cent. It is impossible to say exactly how far learners have been included or omitted, but it would seem that the method of dealing with them has varied in different localities, and in Berar, Bombay, the Central Provinces and two or three Native States, the proportion of persons who have been returned as literate at '15 to 20' is higher than that at '20 and over'. This is also the case in respect of females in all provinces, but here it is probably due to the greater progress which female education has made during the decade, as compared with that of males, and to the relatively larger proportion which the literate, including learners, at the former age bears to that at the latter. The same circumstance might possibly account for the proportions in respect of males in Berar and the Central Provinces. In Bombay, however the proportion of literate males over 15 years of age is no greater than that of literate plus learners in 1891, whereas in Bengal considerable improvement in this proportion has been recorded, in spite of the fact that the present proportion of the literate at the age '15 to 20' is less than that at '20 and over'; it would therefore seem that learners in this provinces have been more sparingly classed as literate than was the case in Bombay.

Education by locality, both sexes

267. Of the larger British Provinces, Burma easily holds the first place in respect of literacy, as defined at the census; and no less than 378 per 1,000 of its male, and 45 of its female, population are able to read and write. This province enjoys an elaborate system of indigenous free education, which is imparted by the pongyis or Buddhist monks attached to the monasteries, while the instruction of females is not hampered by the prejudices in favour of their seclusion when they approach the age of puberty which so greatly impede progress in other parts of India. Madras stands next to Burma, with scarcely a third of the proportion of literate persons returned in that province; then follow Bombay and Bengal, and then, at a considerable distance, Assam, the Punjab, the United Provinces, and the Central Provinces. In the matter of education, as in many other respects, the four sub-provinces of Bengal present very divergent results, and if Bengal proper, with a population of 41 millions, be considered separately, it will be found to rank second only to Burma; Orissa follows close on Madras and Bihar stands

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Diagram showing the number of persons per 1,000 in each province who are literate



above the Punjab, while Chota Nagpur takes rank below the Central Provinces.

The Native States, taken as a whole, have only 70 males and 6 females who are literate per 1,000 of each sex, but Cochin, Travancore and Baroda occupy a higher position than any British province except Burma, while in respect of females, Cochin divides with Burma the honours of first place. The poorest results recorded in any part of India are found in the returns for Kashmir where only 38 males and 1 female per mille have been reported to possess the slight educational qualifications recognised by the census.

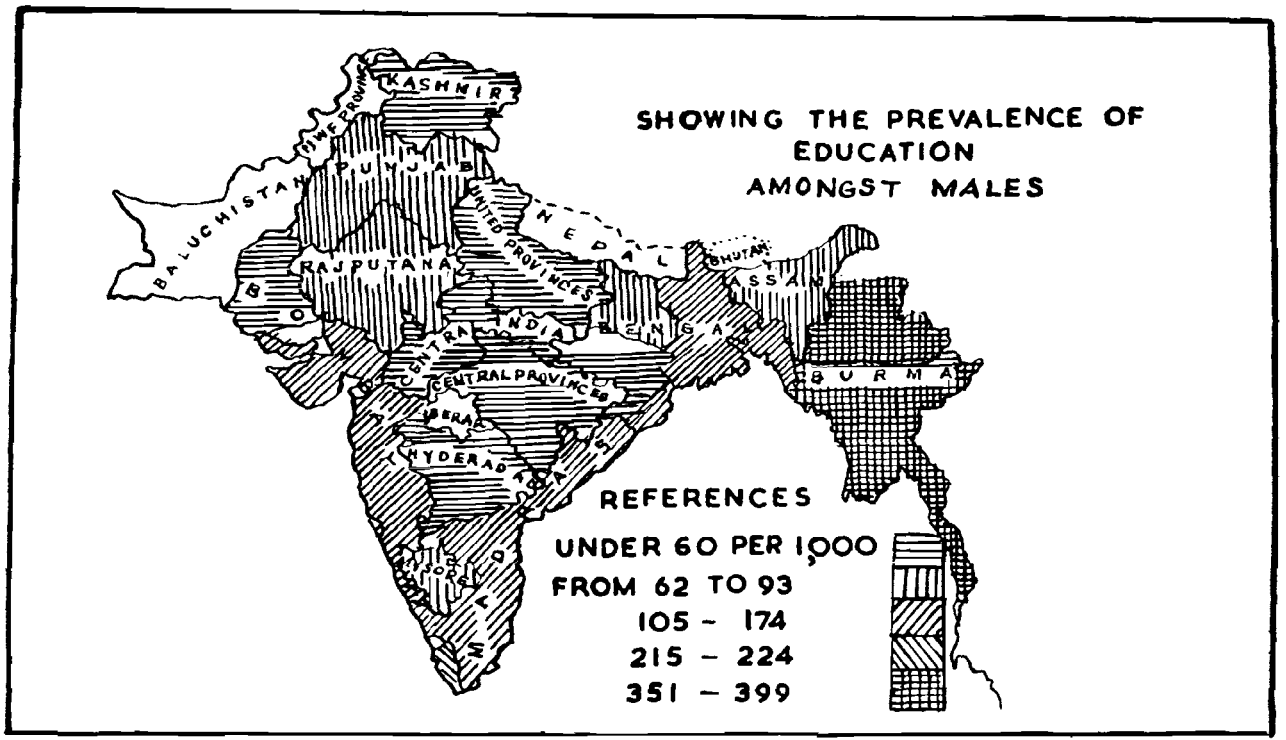
Males

268. The prevalence of literacy amongst males is shown in the accompanying map. It will be noticed that in almost all cases the proportion is highest in areas which lie along the coast, and that it gradually diminishes as one proceeds inland. The only marked exception is in the case of Upper Burma. It is also worthy of note that in the north-west of India, where the Aryan element in the population is believed to be strongest, the people are far more ignorant than in the east and south where the Mongoloid and Dravidian races predominate. It will be seen in paragraph 270, that in large cities the people are better educated than in rural areas, but in other respects, there seems to be no connection between the spread of education and the density of population. The most thickly people tracts in the whole of India are to be found in Bihar and the United Provinces, but from the point of view of education, these tracts are very backward. Bengal proper, which also carries a dense population, occupies a better position, but it is not nearly so advanced as Burma which is very sparsely inhabited. In Rajputana the State of Jaisalmer, with only 5 persons to a square mile, has double the proportion of literate persons that is found in Dholpur which has 235 to the square mile.

Females

269. The distribution of education amongst females is somewhat curious. It is not difficult to understand why the Burmese female, with her freedom from the prejudices which lead to her seclusion elsewhere, should be comparatively well educated, but it is less easy to see why the proportion should also be relatively very high in Cochin and Travancore, it is due in part to the large Native Christian population, but even excluding Christians, it is still much higher in these two States than in any other part of India outside Burma.

In Madras as a whole 11 females per mille are literate but if the figures for Cochin and Travancore be excluded, the proportion falls to 9, the same as in Bombay, compared with 8 in Baroda and Mysore, 5 in Bengal (6 in



NOTE:— For the purpose of this map the four sub-provinces of Bengal, and Lower and Upper Burma are dealt with separately and Sind is distinguished from the rest of the Bombay Presidency.

Bengal proper), 4 in Assam, 3 in the Central India Agency, Berar, the Punjab and Hyderabad, and smaller proportions elsewhere.

Education in cities

270. The inhabitants of large towns are far better educated than those of rural areas, and the special table for cities shows that 259 males and 49 females per mille can read and write, compared with only 98 males and 7 females in the country as a whole. The reasons for this are obvious. The

Number of Literate Persons per 1,000 of each Sex

Province or State	Total population		Cities	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5
INDIA ...	98	7	259	49
Bengal ...	104	5	276	63
Bombay ...	116	9	261	63
Burma ...	378	45	469	188
Madras ...	119	9	355	65
Punjab ...	64	3	185	27
United Provinces ...	57	2	176	20
Hyderabad ...	55	3	242	34
Mysore ...	93	8	304	70

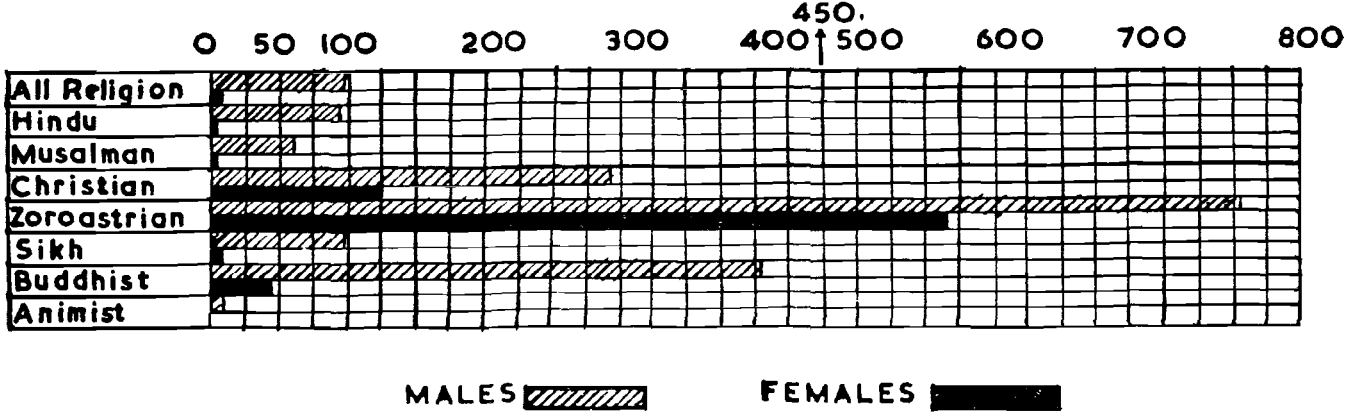
cities are not only great centres of trade and industry, but they are also, in many cases, the home of higher education, and contain colleges and advanced schools to which students from other parts resort in large numbers.

In some parts, moreover, the educated and leisured classes show a preference for city and frequently have a town-house where they reside for the whole, or a great part of the year. The presence of the Government and the High Court further raises the proportion of the literate in cities which are the capitals of provinces.

Education by religion

271. Turning to the statistics of education by religion, we find that the best results are shown by the Zoroastrians or Parsis, nearly two-thirds of whom are able to read and write, the proportion being three-quarters in the case of males and more than half in that of females. The highest proportion is at the age '15 to 20' where 91 per cent of the males and 79 per cent of the females have been returned as literate, and it would thus seem that the community is still progressing, and that at the next census the number

Diagram showing the number per 1,000 of each main religion who are literate



who are altogether uneducated will be even smaller than it is now. The Jains come next with 25 per cent of their community (males 47 and females 2 per cent) returned as literate, and then the Buddhists with 22 (40 males and 4 females). The followers of this religion are found mainly in Burma where every monastery is a centre of instruction for the children of the neighbourhood. The Christians follow closely on the Buddhists, but in their case the figures (males 29 and females 13 per cent) are a compound of a very high degree of literacy amongst Europeans and Eurasians and of a lesser one amongst the native converts, many of whom are recruited from amongst the most ignorant sections of the community. The statistics of literacy amongst Native Christians taken by themselves have not been worked out for all provinces but where figures are available, it is found that they enjoy a far greater degree of education than the other religious communities not mentioned. A long gap intervenes between the Christians and the Sikhs who have 98 literate males and 7 literate famales per 1,000 of each sex, or exactly the same proportions as in India as a whole. Among the Hindus ability to read and write is slightly less widespread than among the Sikhs, but more so by 51 per cent than it is amongst Muhammadans the latter, like the Christians, include in their ranks a high proportion of converts from the lower grades of Hinduism, whose Hindu congeners are doubtless every whit as ignorant as they are. The general position of the Muhammadans is determined by the figures for Bengal and the Punjab where the bulk of them are found ; in the United Provinces the proportions approach equality, while in Madras and the whole of the intervening area, including Mysore, Hyderabad, Berar, the Central Provinces and Central India, they claim a larger proportion of persons able to read and write than do their Hindu neighbours. At the bottom of the list come the animistic tribes who can boast of only 8 males per mille who are literate and practically no females.

Comparison with 1891

272. The change of system already described, and the uncertainty as to the extent to which persons under instruction have been treated as literate, make it difficult to institute an effective comparison between the results of the present census and those of 1891. If we leave out of account altogether the persons shown as learning at previous censuses, we get a steady increase in the number of literate males per mille from 66 in 1881, to 87 in 1891, and 98 on the present occasion, the corresponding proportions for females being 3, 4 and 7. A comparison on this basis is, however, clearly defective, and, on the whole, the most satisfactory procedure seems to be to consider only persons over 15 years of age and assuming that all persons over this age who would have been classed as 'learning' according to the rules of 1891 have on the present occasion been returned as 'literate', to compare the literate of this age at the

present census with the total of the learning and literate of the same age in 1891. The number of literate males aged '15 and over' is thus 12,560,032 or 138 per mille, compared with 11,357,996, or 141 per mille, ten years ago, and that of literate females 754,510, or 8 per mille, as against 475,842, or 6 per mille. There has been a large addition to the absolute number of both sexes, but while the proportion which they bear to the total population for which the statistics of education have been collected, has risen by 2 per mille in the case of females, that for males has fallen by 3 per mille. This decrease, however, is only apparent and is due to the inclusion in the statistics of the present census of about 32 million persons in Central India Kashmir, Rajputana and other backward tracts who were left out of account in 1891. Excluding these areas the proportion of literate males at the present census would be 144 per mille. Moreover, as already stated, the basis of comparison, though the best that can be adopted, is to some extent conjectural and, it is impossible to say with certainty how far the two sets of figures are really comparable. At the same time it must be admitted that the results are not so satisfactory as might have been expected in a country where there is so vast a field for improvement as there is in India, and it is, therefore, necessary to consider in some detail the causes which tend to retard progress, and the efforts which have been made to combat them. Meanwhile it may be noted that in respect of males, Bengal, Berar and Central Provinces have improved their position since 1891, Bombay is stationary, and Burma, Madras, the Punjab and the United Provinces have fallen back; in the Native States progress is shown only by Baroda, Mysore and Travancore. In the case of females the proportional increase is high, but the absolute addition to the female literate population is very small and the total is still extraordinarily low. If British territory only be taken into account the rise is from 6 to 9 per mille, an increase of 50 per cent. This result is due mainly to the improvement which has taken place in Burma (from 34 to 56 per mille), Bengal (from 4 to 7) and Bombay (from 7 to 10); smaller gains have been recorded in the other provinces also, except the Central Provinces which is stationary. In the Native States female literacy seems from the proportional figures to be less prevalent than it was ten years ago, but this is due to the inclusion in the returns of the statistics for certain backward areas not dealt with in 1891.

Causes of general want of progress

273. The causes of the general illiteracy prevailing in India are to be found in the history of the country and the social conditions of the people. Prior to the advent of the British, India had been for centuries, the cockpit of contending dynasties, who looked solely to their own aggrandisement and seldom or never regarded the great body of their subjects in any other light than as the source from which money was to be squeezed for the

maintenance of themselves, their courtiers and their armies. Some rulers took a greater share of the raiyats' produce than others, and occasionally large tracts were devastated by the troops of hostile armies, but in other respects the people were very little affected by the constant change of rulers. The idea that it was the duty of the monarch to govern for the good of his subjects was alien alike to Pathan, Moghal and Maratha, and the tax collector was the only connecting link between the governor and the governed. Under such conditions, it is small wonder that the common people should have lived sunk in the deepest ignorance, with few thoughts beyond the provision for themselves and their families of the bare necessities of life, and that the knowledge of reading and writing should have been confined to those who depended on it for their livelihood, i. e., to the priests, traders and accontants. The influence of caste, with its system of hereditary occupations, tended in the same direction; for not only were the learned professions the close monopoly of a few castes, but the imparting of knowledge to Sudras was stricktly forbidden.

274. This was the state of think when the British acquired possession of India and its influence still continues. On the one hand we find a limited number of castes whose traditional occupations necessitate a knowledge of reading and writing, and on the other the great mass of the people, who live by agriculture or manual labour, who have for many generations been illiterate, who are regarded by the higher castes as unfit for education, and who are themselves indifferent to its advantages and can see no reason why their children should be sent to school or taught things of which they themselves are ignorant and in which they can perceive no practical use.*

The former class have always been alive to the necessity of educating their children and in former times they maintained their own schools or *pathshalas*. When the efforts of the State were directed towards the

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* It is something alleged that the lower castes are mentally unfitted for the benefits of education, but for this statement there seems to be no justification. Generally speaking it may be said that the only racial difference between low and high castes is that the latter often contain a greater infusion of Aryan blood, but it has been shown that the prevalence of literacy does not follow racial lines and that the North-West of India, where the Aryan element is strongest, is the most backward. Moreover many of the low castes of the present day once occupied a high position, and some of them, such as the Bhars, would appear, from the ruins ascribed to the period of their supermacy, to have possessed a high degree of civilization.

advancement of education, it was too often this class who reaped the benefit of the measures which were adopted, whether they took the shape of grants-in-aid too, and the improvement of the curriculum in, indigenous schools, which was the policy generally followed in Bengal, or the establishment of new schools under direct management, as has been the usual practice in Bombay. In provinces where caste feeling is strong the indigenous schools were maintained almost solely for pupils of the higher castes, and where they received State recognition there was still a tendency for these castes to monopolize them. Where new schools were established under direct management, they merely replaced those previously in existence and, for the most part, drew their pupils from the same class. The only castes that are willing, generally speaking, to pay for the education of their children are those belonging to the limited group already referred to. The castes at the bottom of the social scale are not only indifferent to the advantages of education, but they are also generally too poor to be able to set aside the sum required to meet the fees, even if they can spare their children for the purpose and dispense with the help they receive from them in various ways, such as in herding their cattle, collecting fuel, etc.*

There is, moreover, in some provinces a strong prejudice on the part of the higher castes against allowing their children to sit in the same building with children of low origin, and especially with those commonly regarded as unclean, and the teachers often object to admitting them or, if they admit them, make them sit in the verandah.** This sentiment is especially strong in Southern India, where the views on the subject of pollution have been most fully developed ; it is said to be gradually dying out, but it is still a factor to be reckoned with. Its indirect effects are even more far-reaching owing to the fact that the officers of the Education Department, with whom the decision practically rests as to the localities where new schools are to be opened and what grants-in-aid should be given belong almost exclusively to the small privileged group of high castes. In Bengal, for example, excluding

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* There are exceptions, and some castes, such as the Shahas of Bengal, which are held in low estimation socially, have attained a relatively high position in respect of education, but the number of such cases is limited. It should be added that in the Punjab children of agriculturists are exempted from the payment of fees and in several other provinces a liberal scale of exemptions is allowed in favour of the children of poor parents.

** Cases are by no means rare where the efforts made to enforce an equality of treatment for the depressed castes have led to large schools remaining closed for years and even to disturbances of the peace and the destruction by fire of the crops and huts of the people belonging to these castes.

44 Europeans and Eurasians, who are employed mainly in administrative appointments or in institutions where higher education is imparted, there are 137 officers of the Education Department, of whom no less than 111 are Brahmans, Baidays and Kayasths ; only 9 are Muhammadans, 5 are Native Christians and 12 belong to other castes. The lower grades of the community are entirely unrepresented.*

275. We have seen that the masses do not appreciate the benefits of education ; they can ill afford to pay for the tuition of their children or even to spare them from their work at home ; the children of castes regarded as unclean are not wanted in the ordinary schools, either by the teachers or by the other pupils ; and the needs of the lower castes generally are apt to be overlooked by the subordinate inspecting officers of the Education Department. In such circumstances, it is not to be expected that they can be brought within reach of our system of instruction unless special treatment is meted out to them. That their indifference to education can be overcome if suitable steps are taken, is shown by the statistics of literacy amongst Native Christians, who in most provinces, in spite of their humble origin, claim a larger proportion of persons able to read and write than most Hindu castes. Here and there something has been done to encourage education amongst them, either by establishing special schools for impure castes and in backward localities, or by making grants for schools to missionary bodies working amongest forest and hill tribes, but attention has in the main been concentrated on the development of the general educational system by departmental agency, without reference to the castes of the pupils and no special efforts have been made to attract those of medium or low social status.** This, it would seem, is the main reason why, in spite of the constant attention that has been given in recent years to the diffusion of education, the results, as indicated by the census, have been so small.

The above remarks refer primarily to the Hindus and to the tribes hovering on the outskirts Hinduism, but they apply in the main with equal

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* Bengal Census Report, page 486.

** In Bengal proper the twice-born castes form only 12.8 of the total Hindu population and the clean sudras only 16.4 per cent. In Madras 5.7 per cent of the population rank as twice-born and 31 per cent as clean sudras ; the remaining 63.3 per cent are all more or less unclean. The measures adopted in Madras for encouraging education amongst the depressed castes (or Panchamas as they are called locally), described on page 353 of Mr. J. S. Cotton's report on the Progress of Education in India, 1892-93 to 1896-97, represent the most important step yet taken in the direction of providing education for the lower classes. But the number of pupils (69,464 in 1891-92) is still small compared with the total strength of the castes in question.

force to the rank and file of the Muhammadan community. In their case, moreover, there is further difficulty that the learning by heart of long passages from the Koran is considered more important than the acquisition of secular knowledge in the village school.

It is unnecessary to dilate at length on the difficulties attending the diffusion of education among t females, as they are well-known. In the case both of Hindus and Muhammadans it is the fashion to seclude young girls as soon as they approach the age of puberty, and there is a strong general prejudice, not only against allowing them to go to school, but also against permitting them to be taught at home. These scruples are slowly giving way amongst sections of the community, and societies are being formed, not only in connection with Christian missions, but also amongst the people themselves, for imparting instruction in the zenanas. In this way the females of the upper classes are gradually beimg brought within the reach of knowledge, and a foundation is being laid, upon which it may be hoped that the time a far more extensive edifice may be built.

Reference to statistics of Education Department

276. We have hitherto dealt with the question solely from the point of view of the census, but before leaving the subject, it will be interesting to refer briefly to the progress indicated by the returns of the Education Department. The two sets of statistics run of course on different lines, and while the latter treat only of persons actually under instruction, the census figures refer, as we have seen, mainly to those who have left schools.

An abstract of the departmental returns for each province will be found in subsidiary table No. VIII, and the totals for the whole British India are reproduced on the following page. Higher education has progressed rapidly, but the advance in respect of primary education, i. e., the teaching of reading and writing and elementary arithmetic, has been slow, except in the United Provinces and the Central Provinces where, however, the apparent improvement is due mainly to the incorporation in the returns of schools already in existence, which were previously left out of account. The recognition of these schools will no doubt result in an improved system of teaching, but it seems doubtful if it will operate to any marked extent in increasing the number of persons to whom the rudiments of learning are conveyed. In Bengal there are now fewer primary schools than there were ten years ago, and although there are slightly more pupils, it has been said that the end of the track indicated by the indigenous *pathshala* has been reached, and that the further ex ension of education and the instruction of the children of the lower classes is a problem of very great difficulty. In some parts, especially in Bihar, many of higher castes are still very backward and there is ample scope for further improvement, but it is an undoubted fact

Class of Instruction	Number of institutions		Number of scholars	
	1901	1891	1901	1891
Arts Colleges	141	105	16,703	12,165
Professional Colleges	44	31	4,851	3,424
Secondary Schools	5,461	4,967	586,628	468,069
Primary Schools	98,133	94,023	3,157,724	2,690,827
Training and other Special Schools	964	574	33,924	20,389
Private Institutions	42,343	38,244	605,212	483,038

that the classes whom the present system of edcuation chiefly affects, form but a very small proportion of the total population.

Expenditure on primary education

277. The expenditure on primary education in British Provinces from provincial and local funds is noted in the following table. It would be misleading to distinguish the contributions from these two sources as in many cases the local authority is simply an agent for administering a grant made by Government, and a great part of its disbursements is met by a countervailing allotment from Provincial Revenues, which, however, is not specially earmarked, and is shown in the public accounts merely as a grant to the local authority concerned. The actual outlay, moreover, is considerably greater than would appear from the figures, which do not include the salaries of the lower grades of the inspecting staff, who are almost wholly concerned with the supervision of primary schools. It may be added that the Government of India have recently made a eries of grants to local Governments, amounting in the aggregate to 40 lakhs, for educational purposes, and ' ave at the ‹ame time laid stress on the principle that primary education has a strong claim upon the sympathy of Government and should be made a leading charge upon the provincial revenues. In these circumstances a great extension of the present system of primary schools may be looked for in the near future. It must also be borne in mind that the expenditures from provincial and local funds is supplemented by fees and voluntary subscriptions, and that if these be added the total expenditure is

Provinces	Expenditure on Primary Education from Provincial and Local Funds		Expenditure in 1901	
	1901	1891	Per 1000 of population	Per 1000 pupils in public institutions
1	2	3	4	5
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Assam	1,71,980	1,19,968	28	1,931
Bengal	8,34,795	6,52,671	11	667
Berar	2,07,701	1,89,563	75	4,955
Bombay	19,77,022	15,66,888	107	3,839
Burma	2,91,452	1,80,529	28	2,283
Cetral Provinces	3,22,978	2,14,619	33	2,766
Madras	9,48,787	7,45,455	25	1,526
Punjab	4,39,306	3,64,005	20	3,741
United Provinces	7,18,471	5,67,822	15	2,599
Total	59,12,492	46,01,520	26	1,872

about twice as great as that shown in the above statement. The expenditure from all sources was Rs. 91,29,887 in 1891 and Rs. 1,16,07,277 in 1901.

In proportion to its population by far the largest expenditure from provincial and local funds is incurred in Bombay, and the smallest in Bengal. In comparison with its disbursements, however, the largest number of pupils is to be found in the Bengal schools, which, being administered on the grant-in-aid system, cost the State far less than those of Bombay, where the schools are under direct management. The total expenditure on primary education has risen during the last decade by 28 per cent. Bombay has augmented its contributions by 4 lakhs, Bengal, Madras, and the United Provinces by from 1½ to 2 lakhs, the Central Provinces and Bombay 1 lakh and the other three provinces by smaller amounts.*

*It is not within the scope of the chapter to discuss the question of education generally, but I may perhaps be permitted to notice the very small proportion, even of those who attend school, who advance beyond the most elementary stage. Even in secondary school a large proportion of the pupils are found in the lower classes which practically correspond to those of primary schools, and only four in 1,000 are reading in Arts or Professional Colleges.

Mean distance between schools

278. If other things were equal the facilities for education would depend on the distance which the children have to go in order to attend a school. The mean distance from one school to another (including private institutions) in each of the main provinces is noted in the following table.* For

Province		Mean distance between each school in miles
Bengal	...	1.9
Madras	...	2.5
United Provinces	...	3.1
Burma	...	4.1
Assam	...	4.4
Berar	...	4.4
Bombay	...	4.4
Punjab	...	4.8
Central Provinces	...	7.6

the purpose of this statement it is assumed that the schools are equally distributed over the whole area, which of course is not really the case. In Bengal, for example, they are unusually plentiful in the Metropolitan districts, but they are few and far between in Chota Nagpur and other outlying tracts. At the same time the arthmetical mean for a province affords a good indication of its position as compared with other provinces. It thus appears that, if all the schools in a province were equidistant, no child in Bengal would have to go more than a mile to reach one; in Madras and the United Provinces the maximum distance would be barely a mile-and-a-half, and the Central Provinces is the only tract where it would much exceed two miles.

The order of the several provinces in respect of the relative prevalence of literacy differs very greatly from that shown in the above statement. The proportion of literate persons is more than three-and-a-half times as great in Burma, where there is no caste system and the schools are open to all alike, as it is in Bengal, although the schools in the former province are twice as far apart as in the latter. There is very little difference in the proportion of the literate between Madras and Bombay, or between the Central Provinces

*The calculation is based on the well-known formula $\log d = 1.031235 - \frac{\log n}{2}$, where n represents the number o schools in 100 square miles and d is the mean distance between them.

and the United Provinces, but in both cases there is a great difference in the mean distance between schools. The absence of any clear coordination between the two data confirms the view that the spread of education does not depend primarily on the multiplication of schools, and that there are large sections of the population who will remain ignorant, however, many schools there may be, unless something more is done to attract them than has hitherto been attempted.

Comparison of literate population with educational returns

279. If the returns of the Education Department dealt with all schools in existence and were prepared everywhere on the same system, and if the proportion of pupils from year to year were fairly constant, it would be reasonable to expect a fairly uniform ratio in the different provinces between the number of pupils and the number of persons returned as literate. It will be seen, however, from the figures given below, that the actual proportion is for from uniform. The low position of Assam is easily explained by its

		No. of persons returned Pupils
Assam	...	203
Bombay	...	257
Contral	...	257
Beengal	...	263
Berar	...	264
Madras	...	342
United Province	...	344
Punjab		277
Burma	...	724

large immigrant population, almost all of whom are unlettered, while the high rank of Burma is due to its numerous indigenous institutions which are outside the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Instruction. Excluding these two provinces, the others fall into two fairly homogenous groups, viz., Bombay, the Central Provinces, Bengal and Berar with about 5 literate persons to every 2 pupils and Madras, the United Provinces and the Punjab, with about 7 persons who can read and write to 2 under instructions. We know that in Bengal almost all indigenous schools have been brought on to the books of the Education Department, while in Upper India, many of the trading castes at least, teach their children privately. At the same time the proportion of the literate to the learning in the first mentioned group seems very small and, if correct, can only be explained on the hypothesis that many of those who go to school fail to derive much

benefit from their studies and either leave before they can read and write fluently or else, by want of practice, again forget what they have learnt.

Education by caste

280. The table showing education by caste was an optional one, and even where it was prepared, the general procedure was to work out the statistics only for certain selected castes. The whole or nearly the whole Hindu population was dealt with in the Central Provinces, Mysore and Baroda; nearly three-quarters in Bengal, and nearly two-fifths in Madras; but elsewhere the scope of the table was much more restricted, and in the Punjab and several other provinces and states it was not prepared at all. In Table IX for the whole of India the field is even narrower, and only a few of the typical castes dealt within the corresponding tables of provincial series have been included. In these circumstances it is not possible to give figures for the whole country, and it must here suffice to mention briefly the general results. Further details will be found in the notes on the statistics for individual provinces and states to which the concluding part of this chapter will be devoted.

The most noticeable feature of the return is that everywhere the professional and trading castes take the lead. The proportions vary in different tracts, and high castes in one area may be more backward, from the point of view of literacy, than castes of far lower rank elsewhere. For example the Babhans and Rajputs of Bihar are outstripped in the race for education by the Chasi Kaibarttas of Bengal proper. But in any given area the general rule is that, if the divisions are not too minute, the degree of education varies directly with the social position of the caste. The Brahman does not always stand first. In Madras he does so, but in Bengal proper he is headed by the Baidya, in Bombay by the Vani and Prabhu, and in Central India by the Mahesri. Nowhere, however, is he surpassed by any caste of the same locality which does not claim a twice-born origin. The other castes of this standing almost invariably possess a larger proportion of literate persons than any clean Sudra caste; the latter again rank higher in this respect than the unclean Sudras, and the unclean Sudras than those the are altogether outside the pale of Hindu society. There are occasional exceptions, where a caste, such as the Shaha of Bengal, is for better educated than its social position would indicate; in such cases it is generally found that the community in question is at the present time more prosperous than its neighbours and claims a much better position than that assigned to it by the leaders of Hindu society.

The knowledge of English

281. Of the total population of India 68 males and 7 females in every 10,000 persons of each sex were returned as literate in

English. This is inclusive of Europeans and Eurasians. If the Christian community be excluded, the proportions fall to 56 males and 1 female. The Christians, as a whole, including Native Christians, are, however, far surpassed by the Parsis, of whose males no less than two-fifths, and of whose females one-tenth, know English. The

Religion		Number in 10,000 who know English	
		Males	Females
Hindu	...	64	1
Jain	...	134	1
Musalman	...	32	—
Christian	...	1,289	615
Parsi	...	4,075	961
Sikh	...	52	—
Buddhist	...	24	1
Animist	...	2	—

Jains and Hindus, who come next to Christians, have a very low general average, but, as will be seen further, on, some of the higher castes, such as the Baidyas of Bengal and the Prabhus of Bombay, possess a remarkable number of persons acquainted with this language. The Sikhs rank next to the Hindus in this respect and then come the Muhammadans and Buddhists. Amongst those who were returned as Animistic by religion, practically none knows English.

Excluding the minor political units, the study of English is most popular in Bombay where 112 males and 15 females are acquainted with it, compared with 90 males and 10 females in Madras and 89 males and 6 females in Bengal. In Bengal proper the proportions are 138 and 9 respectively, but in the remaining sub-provinces they are lower than in any other part of British India, of which the United Provinces, with 35 males and 5 females is the most backward. The Native States have generally a comparatively small English-knowing population, but this is not the case in Cochin, Travancore and Mysore.

Statistics of the number of persons acquainted with English were collected in 1891 only for those returned as 'literate' and not for the 'learning', and this must be borne in mind when comparing the proportions shown in subsidiary table No. IV with those of the present census. Excluding persons shown as learning, only 36 males and 5 females per 10,000 of each sex were then returned as literate in English. The apparent proportion for males

has thus nearly doubled during the decade, while that for females shows an increase of less than 50 per cent, but it is impossible to say to what extent the result is due to the fact that in the case of females the total number of persons knowing English is so small that those who are European or Eurasian by race bulk much more largely in the total. The rate of increase amongst natives of the country is probably at least as great in the case of females as great in that of males.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1911

CHAPTER VIII

Education

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The scope of the return

349. In 1891 the population was divided in respect of education into three catagories, viz., learning, literate and illiterate. The instructions issued were as follows :—

> Enter against each person, whether grown-up child or infant, either learning, literate or illiterate. Enter all those as "learning" who are under instruction, either at home or at school or college. Enter as "literate" those who are able both to read and write any language, but who are not under instruction as above. Enter as "illiterate" those who are not under instruction, and who do not know to both read and write, or who can read but not write, or who can sign their own name, but not read.

When the results were compiled it was found that the return of the learning was vitiated by the omission at the one end of children who had not been long at school, and at the other of many of the more advanced students, who returned themselves as literate. There were thus marked discrepancies between the number of persons recorded as under instruction and the corresponding statistics of the Education Department. In his report the Census Commissioner, Sir Athelstane Baines, recommended the abandonment of the distinction between those under instruction and those able to read and write but no longer in a state of pupilage, At the next census, therefore, the population was divided into two broad classes, literate and illiterate. The instruction to the enumerators was as follows :—

> Enter in this column against all persons of whatever age, whether they can or cannot both read and write any language.

No orders were issued by the Census Commissioner as to the degree of proficiency in reading and writing which should be held to qualify a person to be entered as literate. In the Central Provinces it was laid down locally that only those persons should be so entered who had passed the Upper Primary school examination, or possessed equivalent educational qualifications ; and in Madras only those who were able to write a letter to

a friend and read his reply. Elsewhere the practice seems to have varied, not only from province to province, but also from district to district, according to the idiosyncrasies of the local census staff. In some parts criteria similar to those mentioned above appear to have been taken, while in 'others' persons were entered as literate who could do little more than write their own name and spell out a few simple printed words.

350. At the present census the information collected was the same as in 1901, but the wording of the instruction was slightly altered :—

> Enter against all persons who can both read and write any language the word "literate." Against persons who cannot read and write any language make a cross in this column.

This rule was supplemented by the explanation given in Madras in 1901, that only those persons should be entered as literate who could write a letter to a friend and read his reply. It will appear further on that the application of this standard has made it somewhat difficult to gauge the progress of education during the decade by a comparison of the results of the present, with those of the preceding census. It is unfortunate that this should be so, but it is obviously desirable that we should be able to say exactly what is meant by our statistics ; and this we are now able to do for the first time. Moreover, even if the above standard had not been laid down, there would still have been room for doubt as to the comparability of the present figures with those of 1901. The latter, as noted above, depended on the interpretation of the rule by individual census officers, and it would be very rash to say that those in each district or part of a district would have construed it exactly as their predecessors did ten years ago.

A further small difference as compared with the previous enumeration remains to be noted. On that occasion the standard form of schedule provided for the entry of the vernacular languages which literate persons could read and write. The information thus obtained, though important in one or two provinces where there are rival scripts, was not found to be of any general value. On the present occasion, therefore, the question was omitted from the general instructions, but Local Governments were allowed to insert it should they wish to do so. This was done only in the United Provinces, the Punjab, Kashmir, Mysore and Travancore. As in 1901, a record was made of the persons able to read and write English.

Extent of literacy

352. Of the total population of India, only 59 persons per mille are literate in the sense of being able to write a letter to a friend and to read his reply. The number who can decipher the

pages of a printed book with more or less difficulty is no doubt much larger. Throughout India there are many Hindus who, though unable to write, can drone out at least the more familiar parts of the Mahabharata or Ramayana to their neighbours, who feel that it is meritorious to listen to the recital of the sacred texts, even though they, and possibly the reader also, may not always fully understand the meaning. Similarly there are many Muhammadans, especially in Northern India, who can read the Koran, though they cannot write a word. Of this minor form of literacy the census takes no count.

The number of persons who are literate in the sense in which the term was used at the present census i divided very unequally between the two sexes, of the total male population, 106 per mille are able to read and write, and of the female, only 10. In other words there is only one literate female to every eleven males.

In the last Census Report (paragraphs 273 to 275) I pointed out that the causes of the general illiteracy prevailing in India are to be found in the history of the country and the social conditions of the people. Prior to the advent of the British, the idea of State-aided education was practically unknown. The country had been for centuries in an unsettled condition, and the common people were sunk in the deepest ignorance. Under the caste system, the learned professions were the monopoly of a few castes, and in the law books the imparting of knowledge to Sudras was forbidden. The influence of this state of things still survives. The great mass of the people, who live by agriculture and manual labour, are indifferent to the advantages of education, while they need the help of their children in looking after their cattle. etc. Though an improvement is taking place in many parts of India, low caste children are still far from welcome in the village school ; and if admitted, are made to sit in the verandah. Efforts have been made of late years to offer special facilities for the education of the depressed classes.

353. If we leave out of account children under 15 years of age, the number of literate males per mille is 149, and that of literate females 13. The proportion of literate females is highest, 21 per mille, at the age '15-20', and it falls to 12 per mille at '20 and over'. Amongst males, on the other hand, the proportion rises continuously from 12 per mille in the age-period '0-10' to 95 per mille at '10-15', 144 at '16-20' and 150 at '20 and over'. The steady rise in the proportion upto the age-period '15-20' is readily intelligible, but it is not so clear why there should be a further rise amongst persons aged '20 and over.' It will be seen further on that education is steadily spreading ; and it would seem, therefore, a priory that the proportion who are literate between the ages of 15 and 20, i.e., amongst persons who have just passed the ordinary school-going age, should be larger than that amongst

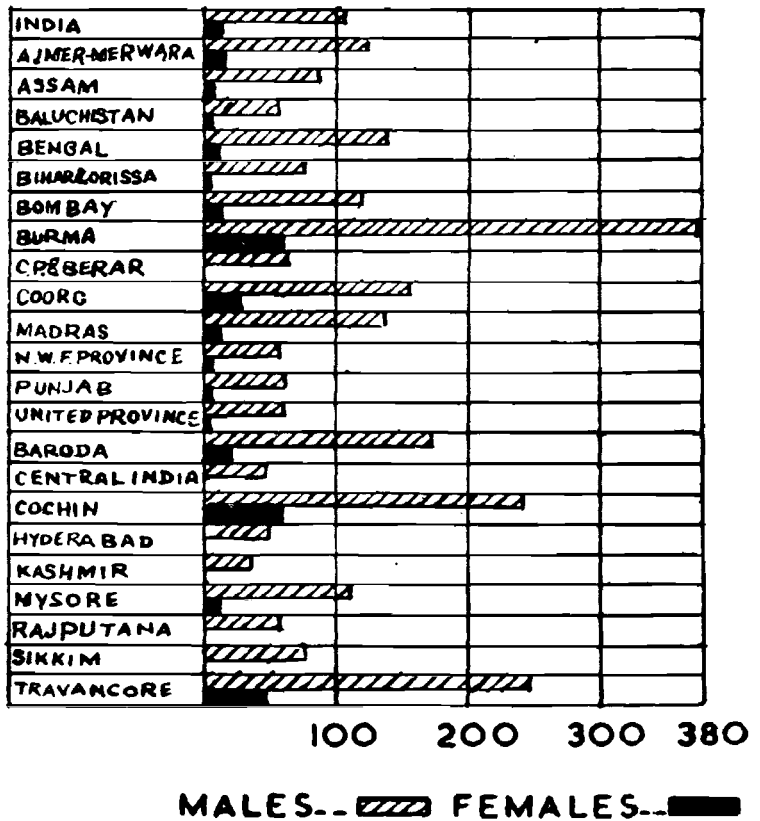
older persons, many of whom passed the school-going age at a time when the opportunities for learning were far smaller than they are now. Three reasons may be adduced to account for this apparent anomaly. The first is that even at the age of 15, a boy's education is sometimes not sufficiently complete to qualify him to be classed as literate in the sense of being able to write a letter and to read manuscript. The second is that, in the case of youths, the enumerators were perhaps apt to be stricter than at the higher ages, when they would more readily accept an affirmative answer to the question "Can you both read and write?" Thirdly, amongst the trading classes, who generally have a large proportion of literate persons, the knowledge is picked up gradually in the course of business, and a youth may often be 20 years of age, or even older, before he is fully competent to read and write. The fact that amongst females the proportion who are literate at the age-period '15-20' is much greater than at the higher ages admits of ready explanation. Until recently, very little encouragement was given to females to keep up previously acquired knowledge after marriage, and many soon forget what they had learnt at school. But the main reason no doubt is that at the present time education is spreading very rapidly amongst them, and the number who are being taught in the schools now is very much larger than it was even a decade ago.

Education by locality

354. Thanks to the free instruction in the monasteries and the absence of the *parda* system which hampers the education of females in other parts of India, Burma easily holds the first place in respect of literacy. In the whole population 222 persons per mille are literate, and the proportion rises to 314 amongst persons over 15 years of age. In every thousand persons of each sex, 376 males and 61 females are able to read and write. Of the other main British Provinces, Bengal and Madras come next with 77 and 75 literate persons per mille respectively".* Bombay follows closely on their heels. Then, after a long interval, come Assam, Bihar and Orissa and the Punjab. At the bottom of the list are the United Provinces and the Central Provinces and Berar, with 34 and 33 literate persons per mille respectively. Differences similar to those noticed above sometimes have their counterpart within provincial boundaries. Thus, in Bihar and Orissa, the Orissa natural division has 64 literate persons per mille, and the Chota Nagpur plateau only 28. In the Central Provinces and Berar, the proportion ranges from only 6 per mille in the Chota Nagpur States to 54 in the Nerbudda valley.

*These proportions, like those taken for the purpose of the following diagram, include States in political relation with Local Governments, except in the case of Madras, where they exclude Cochin and Travancore.

Diagram showing the number of persons per mille in each Province, etc., who are literate



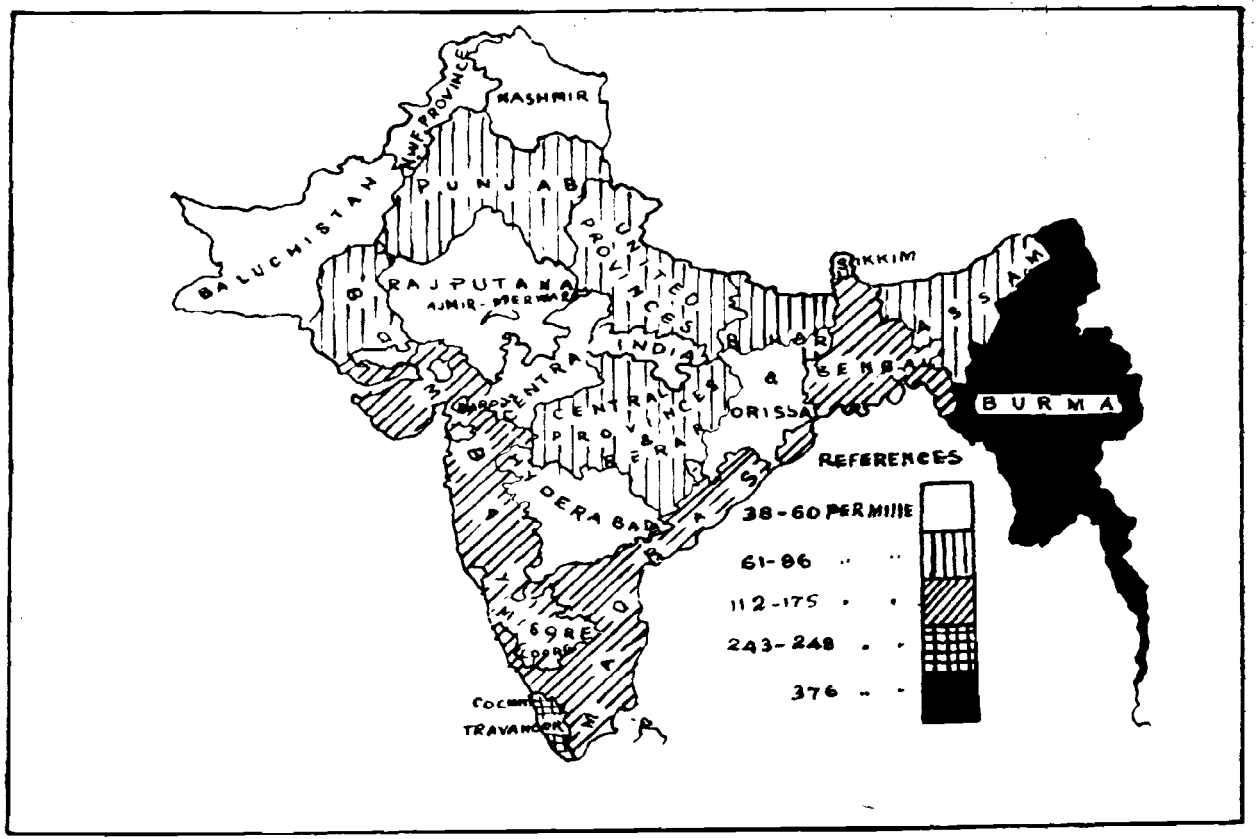
Education is more widely diffused in British Provinces than in the Native States, which, taken as a whole, have only 79 males and 8 females per mille who are literate, as compared with 113 and 11 in British territory. The three Native States of Cochin, Travancore and Baroda, however, take rank above all British Provinces except Burma; while in respect of female education Cochin divides with Burma the honours of first place. The Kashmir State, where only 21 persons per mille can read and write, is in this respect the most backward part of India.

In connection with this comparison of the results in different provinces it is necessary to bear in mind the standard on which the statistics collected at the census are based. If it had been a higher one, the relative position of the different provinces would have been a higher one, the relative position of the different provinces would have been materially altered. In Burma, for example, where there is the largest proportion of persons able to read and write, there are comparatively few who have received a University education or studied in a High or Middle School.

Males

355. Males bulk so largely in the total number of literate persons that the diffusion of education amongst them corresponds very clasely to that in the population as a whole. It will be seen from the accompanying map that the proportion of literate males is ordinarily highest along the coast and diminishes gradually as one proceeds inland. The proportion again is smaller in the north-west of India, where the Aryan strain predominates, than it is in the south and east, where the main ethnic element is Dravidian or Mongolian. The predominant position of Burma is, as already pointed out the result of its indigenous system of monastic education. Elsewhere, the principal explanation of the varying proportions is to be found in the period that has elapsed since the different tracts came under British influence. Education is most widespread in Bengal. Madras and Bombay because it is in these provinces that British rule was first established. It was extended subsequently to inland provinces, such as Assam, Bihar, the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and Berar and the Punjab, in all of which again the proportion of literate persons is higher than it is in newly acquired territory, such as Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province, or in the majority of the Native Sates, including Hyderabad, Kashmir and the Rajputana and Central India Agencies. Although, throughout India, education is more widespread in urban areas than in rural, there in no correlation between density and literacy. The densely peopled tracts of Bihar and the United Provinces contain a far smaller proportion of literate persons than Burma and Bombay where the population is relatively sparse.

Map showing the number of males per mille who are literate



Females

356. The local distribution of education amongst females follows somewhat different lines. Of the main provinces, Burma again heads the list, but while in respect of males Bengal comes second, both Bombay and Madars have a larger proportion of literate females. It would seem as if the diffusion of female education varies inversely with the prevalence of the *parda* system. The spread of Christianity is a secondary factor of importance. In the south of India the influence of the matriarchate, or the custom of tracing descent in the female line, has also to be reckoned with. Where this custom prevails, women occupy a higher position than elsewhere, and this appears to have influenced the educational facilities afforded to them. The proportion of literate females is highest in Burma, where there is no seclusion of women, and in Cochin and Travancore, where also they move about fairly freely, and where in addition there is a large Indian Christian community and many of the castes recognize matrilinear descent. The effect of this system of descent is clearly seen in Madras. It prevails chiefly in the West Coast Division, where there is one literate female to every six males, while in the Presidency as a whole there is only one to evere ten.

In former times it was thought improper for respectable women to be educated. Writing of Southern India in 1817 Abbe Dubois said :—

> "The immodest girls who are employed in the worship of the idols and other public prostitutes are the only women taught to read, to sing and to dance. It would be thought the mark of an irregular education if a modest woman were found capable of reading. She herself would conceal it out of shame."

Education in cities

357. The advantage which the inhabitants of large towns possess in the matter of education over those of rural will be clearly seen from the accompanying statement. The proportion of literate males is three times. and that of literate females nine times, as great in cities as it is in the general population. There are many reasons why this should be so. The cities are the great centres of social, intellectual and commercial life. They are better provided than the villages with schools, and they contain most of the higher educational institutions which attract large numbers of students from other parts. They also contain the principal law courts and some of them are the headquarters of the Local Governments.

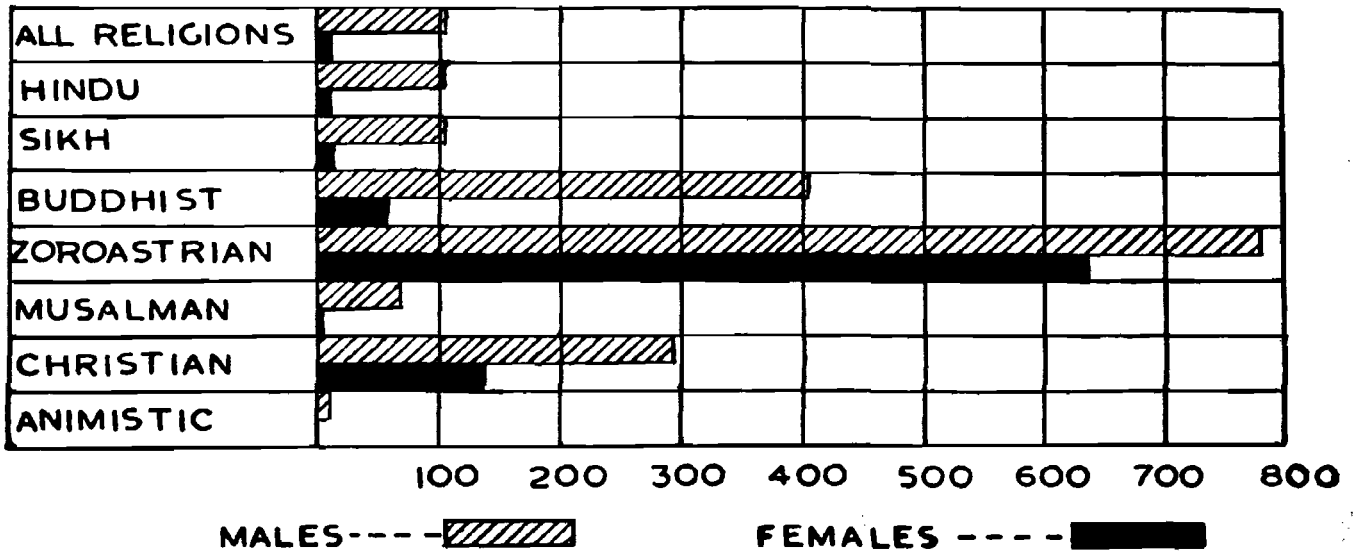
Province, State or Agency	Number of literate persons per 1,000 each sex			
	Total population		Cities	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
INDIA	106	10	303	91
Bengal	140	11	389	146
Bihar and Orissa	76	4	252	34
Bombay	120	14	283	99
Burma	376	61	479	280
Central Provinces & Berar	62	3	260	50
Madras	138	13	422	108
Punjab	63	6	214	62
United Provinces	61	5	198	41
Hyderabad State	51	4	239	44
Kashmir State	38	1	153	22
Mysore State	112	13	354	118
Rajputana Agency	59	2	190	13

NOTE.—Places with a population 100,000 and upwards, are treated as cities.

Education by religion

358. Of the different religious communities, excluding the Brahmos and Aryas whose numbers are insignificant, the Parsis easily bear the palm in respect of education. Of their total number 711 per mille are literate, and the proportion rises to 831, if persons under 15 years of age are left out of account. Of the males nearly four-fifths are literate, and of the females nearly two-thirds. Amongst those over 15 years of age only 8 per cent of the males and 26 per cent of the females are unable to read and write. The Jains, who are mostly traders, come next, but they have only two literate persons to every five amongst the Parasis. Half the males are able to read and write, but only 4 per cent of the females. It is noticeable, however, that whereas the proportion of literate males is only slightly greater than it was at the commencement of the decade, that of literate females has doubled. The Buddhists follow closely on the Jains, with one person in four able to read and write. Here also we see the phenomenon of a practically unchanged proportion of literate males (40 per cent) coupled with a large increase in that of literate females, which is now 6 per cent compared with 4 per cent in 1901.

Diagram showing the number per mille who are literate in each main religion



359. The Christians (22 per cent literate) are almost on a par with the Buddhists, but in their case the inequality between the position of the two sexes is much smaller, the proportion of literate females being nearly half that of males. In order to ascertain how far the high position of Christians is due to the inclusion of Europeans and Anglo Indians, the figures for Indian Christians have been worked out separately. The result is somewhat surprising ; for although the Indian converts to Christianity are recruited mainly from the aboriginal tribe and the lowest Hindu castes, who are almost wholly illiterate, they have, in proportion to their numbers, three times as many literate persons as the Hindus and more than four times as many as the Muhammadans. One Indian Christian in six is able to read and write ; for males the proportion is one in four, and for females one in ten. The influence of Christianity on education is strikingly illustrated by the figures for the province of Bihar and Orissa, where the proportion of Indian Christian who are literate is 76 per mille, compared with only 5 per mille amongst Animistic congeners. It has to be remembered, moreover, that many of the Indian Christians had already passed the school-going age at the time of their conversion: the proportion who are able to read and write must be far higher amongst those who were brought up as Christians.

360. The Sikhs come next in order of merit, with one literate person in every fifteen; for males the ratio is one in ten, and for females one in seventy. Here again, while the proportion for males shows only a slight improvement, that for females has doubled during the decade. The Hindus have almost as large a proportion of literate males per mille (101) as the Sikhs, but fewer literate females (8). The Muhammadans, with only 69 and 4 per mille respectively, stand at the bottom of the list, execept for the Animistic Tribes, of whom only 11 males and 1 female in a thousand of each sex are able to read and write. The low position of the Muhammadan is due largely to the fact that they are found chiefly in the north-west of India, where all classes are backward in respect of education, and in Eastern Bengal, where they consist mainly of local converts from a depressed class. In the United Provinces Madras and the Central Provinces and Berar they stand above or on an equality with the Hindus, and the same is the case in Bombay excluding Sind. In Sind the Muhammadan population is exceptionally illiterate, but in the rest of the Presidency it consists largely of traders, and education is much more widely diffused amongst them than amongst Hindus. The figures for Hindus again are a general average for all castes, high and low. It will be seen further on that some of the higher Hindu castes are better educated than the Buddhists, while others are even less so than the Animists.

Comparison with 1901

361. The general instruction, which was issued for the first time at the present census, that no one should be regarded as literate unless he could write a letter to a friend and read his reply, though very necessary for the sake of uniformity and precision, renders it difficult to institute any effective comparison with the results obtained in 1901. In most provinces no general instruction was then given as to the degree of proficiency in reading and writing which should qualify a person to be shown as literate. The decision was left to the local officers, and there is nothing to show what standard was applied; it probably varied not only from district to district, but also from charge to charge and from block to block. It is however tolerably certain that in 1901 the standard was generally a lower one. In the absence of any definite test there can be no doubt that many persons were then entered as literate who would not have been so entered on the present occasion. It is impossible in any other way to explain the large decrease (from 151 to 127 per mille) in the proportion of literate males in Orissa. In that tract, owing to the influence of the Vaishnava faith, many persons learn to read the scriptures of the sect but pay less attention to the art of writing; and some of these have evidently dropped out of the return. Special enquiries made in an Assam district proved conclusively that the new standard was much higher than that applied ten years ago; and Mr. Blunt shows that the same was the case in the United Provinces. Further confirmation of this view is afforded by a comparison of the results of the two enumerations in Madras, where the standard now laid down for all India was prescribed in 1901 by the Provincial Superintendent. In the whole of India excluding Madras the number of persons returned as literate exceeds by only 16 percent. the number so returned in 1901, but in Madras the increase is no less than 28 per cent. If this comparison can be taken as a guide to the real rate of increase in the number of literate persons through out India, it follows that it is at least 50 per cent, greater than would appear from the returns. This should be borne in mind in appraising the figures noted blow, which refer to the census returns as they stand.

The total number of literate persons has risen during the decade from 15.7 to 18.5 millions, or by 18 per cent. The number of literate males has increased by 15, and that of literate females by 61 per cent. The proportion who are literate per thousand males has risen from 98 to 106 and the corresponding proportion for females from 7 to 10. If persons under 15 years of age be excluded, the proportions are 138 and 149 for males and 8 and 13 for females. The great improvement in the proportion of literate females is most encouraging. It is true that too much stress should not be laid on this when the actual number is still so small, but, on the other hand, it must be remembered

that the rate of increase was equally great in the previous decade, so that it has now been continuous for twenty years. The total number of females over 15 years of age who can read and write is now a million and a quarter compared with less than half a million twenty years ago.

362. In endeavouring to gauge the progress made in the campaign against illiteracy, the age-period '15-20' is a critical one. It includes those who have just passed the age when the art of reading and writing is usually learnt; and the proportion who are literate at this time of life may be taken as a measure of the effectiveness of our schools. In the whole of India the proportion per mille of literate males aged '15-20' has risen during the decade from 132 to 144 and that of literate females from 14 to 21. In both cases the rate of increase is much the same as amongst older persons. In view of the greatly increased number of schools and pupils this result is somewhat unexpected. It may be ascribed partly to the fact already alluded to, that the enumerators were more critical when appraising the literary qualifications of adolescents, than they were when dealing with adults and partly to the circumstance that the rapidly increasing circulation of vernacular newspapers and cheap literature, and the growing recognition of the advantages of a knowledge of reading and writing have resulted in more persons keeping up their knowledge of that accomplishment than was formerly the case. Of the main British provinces, Assam, Madras and Bengal are the only three where there has been a marked improvement since 1901 in the proportion of literate males. In several Native States, especially Cochin, Travancore and Mysore, the improvement is more noticeable, but in others, such as Hyderabad and the Central India Agency, the proportion is lower now than it was ten years ago. In the case of females the progress has been more general. Of the British provinces it is most marked in the Punjab and the United Provinces, where proportion who can read and write has more than doubled. But if we take into account the actual as well as the proportional figures, the best results of all are shown by three Native States. In Baroda the number of literate females per mille has risen from 8 to 21, in Travancore from 31 to 50, and in Cochin from 45 to 61.

Comparison with returns of Education Department

363. It will be interesting to compare briefly the satistics of the census with those of the Education Department. The number of pupils in the different classes of educational institutions in the main British provinces in each of the last three census years is shown in Subsidiary Table VII. As boys go to school at different ages and remain there for different lengths of time, it is impossible to establish any definite relation between the attendance on a given date and the proportion of the persons of school-going age who thus become literate. One boy may go, say, at the age of 6 and pursue his

studies until he is 25, while another may go at 13 and give up his studies within the years, without having acquired any knowledge worth mentioning. In order to ascertain how many of the pupils at school at any given time become literate, it would be necessary to know how many years it takes to acquire the art, what proportion of the pupils attend school for at least this period, and what is the average length of time for which such pupils continue their studies. Another difficulty lies in the fact that these statistics exclude children reading in indigenous institutions outside the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Instruction, and also those who learn to read and write in their own homes. Finally, there are many who acquire the art in their youth but, for want of practice, forget what they have learnt in the course of a few years. For all these reasons it would be idle to expect definite relation between the number of pupils and the number of literate persons.

364. At the same time it may be of interest to compare the two sets of statistics. And the best way of doing so is perhaps by onsidering, on the one hand, (a) the proportion which pupils in the various educational institutions bear to the total number of persons in the age-period '10-15', which

Province	Number of pupils per 1,000 persons aged '10-15'	Number per 1,000 persons aged '15-20' who are literate
1	2	3
INDIA	235	91
Assam	252	69
Bengal	316	100
Bihar and Orissa	186	59
Bombay	429	105
Burma	312	290
C.P. and Berar	235	64
Madras	254	107
N.W.F. Province	134	51
Punjab	154	54
United Provinces	121	50

NOTE.—The proportions refer only to British territory.

corresponds fairly closely to the (Primary) school-going age, and on the other, (b) the proportion which those who were returned at the census as literete at the ensuing age-period, which contains those who have just passed the time of life when that art is usually learnt bear to the total number of persons of that age-period. Of all the provinces, Burma is the only one where there is a fairly close correspondence between the two figures. Elsewhere the proportion of literate to pupils ranges from about two-fifths in Madras and the United Provinces to one fourth in Bombay and the Central Provinces and Berar. Apart from the reasons already given for the want of correspondence between the two sets of figures, there is of course the further one that many of the children at school are under 10 or over 15 years of age, so that the proportion shown in column 2 is somewhat misleading. But it is to be feared that the chief explanation is that many of the pupils in primary schools never attain the requisite standard of proficiency. The reason why in Burma there is not the same disproportion as elsewhere is that in that province many persons learn to read and write in the monasteries, and of these the education department takes no count.

It must be remembered that the second column of the above statement is calculated on the total number of children under instruction, and not on the number of children who are actually at school for a period of at least five years, which is the minimum necessity for an adequate course of primary instruction. The Hon'ble Mr. Sharp informs me that the average duration of school life is rather less than four years, and he calculates that if a quinary period from the completion of the fifth to the completion of the tenth year be taken, the proportion per mille of children at school for a minimum period of five years would be 148. This compares much more favourably with the 91 per mille who are literate in the age-period '15-20'.

365. Before leaving these statistics of schools and scholars we may glance briefly at the progress which they show is being made. The total number of scholars in all kinds of educational institutions in 1891 was only 3.7 millions. In 1901 it had risen to 4.4, and in 1911 to 6.3 millions. Mr. Sharp calculates that 17.7 per cent of the population of school-going age were at school in 1912 as compared with 14.8 per cent in 1907. Between 1891 and 1911 the number of students in secondary schools and Arts Colleges has doubled, and the number in primary schools has increased by 67 per cent the proportion ranging from 39 per cent in Bombay to 204 per cent, in the United Provinces. It will be seen from Subsidiary Table VIII, which shows the main results of University examinations, that excluding Madras, where a school final examination has recently taken the place of the Matericulation or Entrance examination of the University, the number of persons passing that examination has risen from 4,079 in 1891 to 10, 512 in

1911. Including Madras the number who passed the Intermediate examination in Arts or Science has risen during the same period from 2,055 to 5,141, and that of those who obtained a degree in Arts, Science, Medicine or Law from 1,437 to 5,373. The general conclusion appears to be that, while the general rate of progress is far greater than would appear from a comparison of the census returns of 1901 and 1911, it is most marked in respect of secondary education.

Education by caste

366. The main features of Imperial Table IX Education by Caste, Tribe or Race have been reduced to proportional figures for some of the main castes in Subsidiary Table VI. The castes are there arranged in order of merit. In southern India the Brahman leads the way, but elsewhere this is not so. In Bengal he is surpassed by the Baidya, Subarnabanika and Agarwal · in the United Provinces by the Kayastha, Agarwal and Saiyid ; in Bihar and Orissa by the same three communities and the Karan; and in the Punjab by the Khatri. Agarwal and Arora. The castes that compete with him most closely are either writer castes, like the Kayastha and Karan, or trading castes such as Agarwal and Khatri. As a rule, the high castes stand at the top, and the low castes, such as Teli, Shahi Kalwar and Pod, often take a much higher position that would be expected from their social rank. In some cases this is because they have adopted trade as their means of livelihood, for which a knowledge of reading and writing is almost essential. In others it is accounted for by a recent rise in their material position which has not yet had time to affect their social status.

The statement that the diffusion of education tends to vary with the social precedence of the different castes must be qualified by the remark that refers only two a given locality. Low castes in advanced provinces often have a larger proportion of literate persons than high castes in backward ones ; many Sudra and even lower castes in Bengal have a larger proportion of literate persons than the Brahmans of the Punjab or the United Provinces. It is also worthy to note that some of the depressed castes are now making rapid progress. A notable instance of this is furnished by the Parayans of Madras, who have now nearly three times the proportion of literate persons than they had only ten years ago.

In the south of India, as a general rule, the Brahmins have the largest proportion of literate females, but further north various castes excel them in this respect. In Bihar and Orissa and the United Provinces female education has made most progress amongst the Kayasthas, and in Bengal amongst the Baidyas. As a general rule, the trading castes have comparatively few literate females, but an exception must be made in favour of the Khatris in the Punjab and of the Subarnabanika in Bengal.

The knowledge of English

367. In the whole of India 1.7 million persons are literate in English. Of every ten thousand persons of each sex, 95 males and 10 females possess this knowledge. Excluding the small Brahmo community, whose total strength is only 5,504, the knowledge of this language is most widespread amongst the Parsis, of whom one person in every three can read and write it; half their males can do so and one-sixth of their females. When it is remembered that these proportions refer to the total population including children, they may fairly be characterized as extraordinary. Though the proportion of Indian Christians knowing English is only one-tenth of that claimed by the Parsis, this community takes the second place. A long interval separates them from the Jains, and the Jains from the Hindus and Sikhs. Then follow Musalmans and Buddhists, and last of all come the Animists, of whom only 2 persons in 10,000 are literate in English.

Although the proportion of English-knowing persons is very small amongst the Hindus, taken as a whole, it is often very high amongst some of the superior castes. In Bengal nearly two-fifths of the Baidya males and one-fifth of the Brahman and Kayastha males are literate in English, and in Madras the proportion of Tamil Brahmans who are so is also about one-fifth. Of the major provinces, the knowledge of English is most widespread in Bengal where about 2 per cent of the male population can read and write it. Bombay comes next, and then Madras. In all other provinces the proportion is less than 1 per cent, and in the United Provinces and Bihar and Orissa it is less than 5 per mile.

A comparison with the corresponding figures of the last census shows that the knowledge of English is spreading very rapidly, the total number of English-knowing persons is greater by nearly 50 per cent than it was in 1901. The rate of increase is much the same for both sexes. If we take the absolute as well as the proportional figures into consideration, the greatest progress has been made in Bengal, but the proportional growth has been even more rapid in Burma and in several of the smaller Native States.

The scope of the return (CENSUS OF INDIA, 1921--Literacy)

139. In previous census reports this chapter has usually been headed "Education", a title which might comprehend any range of literacy ability from the scrawl of a signature on a cheque to the composition of a political leading article. The census statistics, however, are in fact of a more modest nature, being confined to a record of those who can read and write. Even so, to understand the meaning and significance of the returns, it will be necessary to consider the criteria which have been held at this and previous censuses to justify the return of an individual as literate. Before 1901 the population was divided in respect of this return into three categories learning, i.e., under instruction either at home or at school or at college ; literate,

i.e., able both to read and write some language but not at the moment under instruction, and illiterate, i. e., not under instruction and not able to read and write any language. The classification was found, however, to be unsatisfactory and misleading. The group of those recorded as learning was depleted by the omission, at the one end, of the younger pupils who had recently joined the schools and, at the other, of the more advanced students who claimed to be literate, and consequently the number of persons recorded as under instruction differed substantially from the corresponding statistics of the Education Department. This triple classification was therefore abandoned in 1901 and the population was divided into the two classes of literate and illiterate. No orders were, however, issued as to the degree of proficiency in reading and writing required to satisfy the test of literacy, and the decision being left in the hands of the local staff considerable variations naturally resulted. A clear definition was first adopted in 1911, when it was laid down that those only were to be considered literate who could write a letter to a friend and read the answer to it. This definition has been retained at the present census and the returns are therefore directly comparable with those of 1911.

It is not easy to compute the degree of accuracy which the statistics represent. There are a considerable number of persons who can read but not write, chiefly Muhammadans who have learnt enough Arabic to be able to read the Koran. This class has some pretensions to literacy and has been separately recorded in the Baroda schedule. It does not however, qualify under the definition laid down. So far as the human equation is concerned ambition on the part of the public to be recorded as literate was probably met by exclusiveness on the part of the educated enumerators, who had the last word in the matter. In the North-West Frontier Province, where the sword is more respected than the pen, there is said to have been some reluctance on the part of the tribesmen to confess to so unmanly a quality as literacy, while there seems in various provinces to been an inclination for the census staff to interpret the simple and practical census criterion in the less elastic terms of a school standard, and to allow literacy only to those who had passed the fourth primary course. As will be seen later on difficulties appear in the analysis of figures of literacy by age which perhaps suggest some inconsistency of record, but on the whole there is a consensus of opinion that the simple criterion laid down was easily understood and sensibly interpreted. No question was prescribed as to the language of literacy, as enquiry on this point made in 1901 had shown that each person was almost invariably returned as literate in his mother tongue. In Baluchistan, Baroda, Kashmir and Mysore, however, further information on these lines was obtained and tabulated.

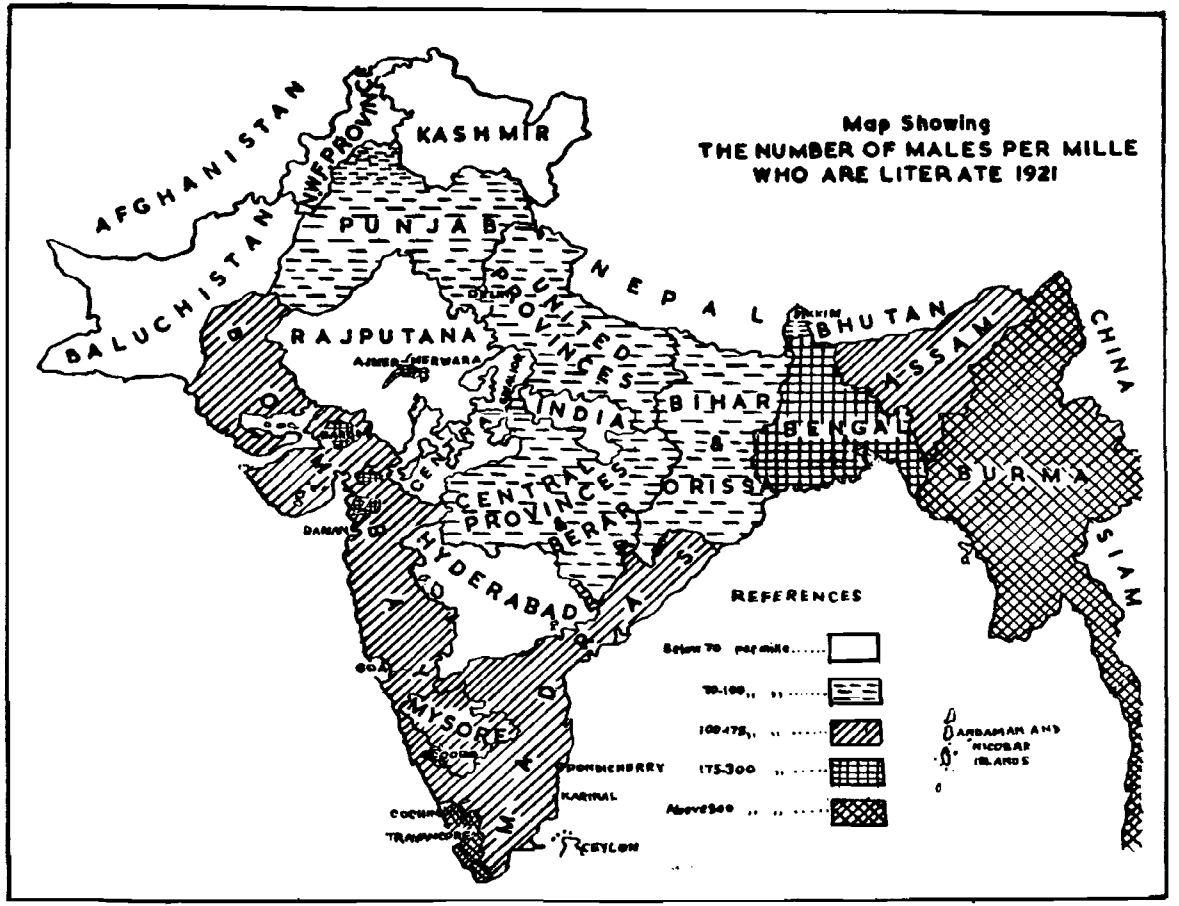
Extent of literacy

141. The main figures of literacy by age and locality are given in the following table.

Province, State or Agency	NUMBER PER MILLE WHO ARE LITERATE										
	All ages 5 and over			5-10		10-15		15-20		20 and over	
	Persons	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
INDIA	82	139	21	29	10	110	28	174	36	171	20
Assam ...	72	124	14	35	8	110	21	164	23	150	13
Baluchistan ...	47	76	7	104	76	289	187	301	217	346	166
Baroda ...	147	240	47	43	20	280	99	354	105	265	34
Bengal ...	104	181	21	45	11	144	29	214	28	225	21
Bihar and Orissa ...	52	96	6	18	3	70	8	111	10	126	7
Bombay ...	95	157	27	42	15	146	42	217	53	184	24
Burma ...	317	510	112	96	45	373	115	569	156	620	118
Central India & Gwalior	37	65	7	14	4	51	8	78	11	82	7
Central Provinces & Berar	49	87	9	17	5	80	12	142	18	104	9
Cochin ...	214	317	115	69	45	251	150	359	174	397	113
Hyderabad ...	33	57	8	16	5	46	10	86	14	67	8
Kashmir ...	26	46	3	7	1	28	3	53	4	61	3
Madras ...	98	173	24	35	12	129	33	204	44	214	22
Mysore ...	84	143	22	35	12	128	36	174	43	169	19
N.W.P. Province ...	50	80	10	11	3	47	11	114	20	102	11
Punjab with Delhi ...	46	76	9	6	3	54	12	98	17	97	10
Rajputana and Ajmer ...	42	74	6	10	2	49	5	86	9	97	6
Travancore ...	279	380	173	135	148	357	210	437	226	440	160
United Provinces ...	42	73	7	14	3	62	9	92	12	89	7

The diagram opposite illustrates the regional figures in each sex. The number of persons recorded in the present census in India as literate, in the sense of being able to write a letter and read the reply thereto, is 22.6 millions, amounting, if children under five years of age be excluded, to 82 in every thousand of the population. Of males 139 in every thousand at age five and above are literate, the corresponding proportion in the case of females being 21. Taking males we find that in the ages 5-10, 29 per mille only age literate; the proportion rises to 110 between the ages 10 and 15 and to 174 between 15 and 20 and thereafter drops to 171. The age-group 15-20 is usually considered to be the most representative period in considering the extent of literacy in the population. By fifteen school boys have generally passed the fourth primary standard and can therefore read and write without question, while presumably few who have not learnt to read and write by the age of 20 will acquire that faculty in after life. At the same time it may be argued that the literacy of boys and girls at school is only of potential importance and that effective literacy begins at about 20 years of age. At any rate this drop in the proportion at 20 and over is at variance with the experience of previous censuses, when the proportion of literate males older than 20 far exceeded the proportion between 15 and 20. The point will be discussed later on when we have more fully reviewed the statistics for localities and communities. Meanwhile we may note that the proportion among literate females is highest (36 per mille) at the age 15-20 and falls to 20 per mille at 20 and over. Apart from Burma where monastic education is traditional and more than half of the population over five years old is literate, we notice in the map opposite, the high standard of literacy round the coastal tracts of eastern southern and western India, as compared with the mass of illiteracy in the purely agricultural population of the northern and central portions of the country. We can recognize various influences in this distribution – economic, political, social, religious and even racial. Literacy will always be high in commercial and industrial tracts and in the large cities round which they lie. The growth in Bengal of the middle class, with its exclusively clerical traditions, is the result, partly of the system of land tenure in the regularly settled tracts and partly of the political history of eastern India, where condition have for long been more settled and peaceful than in other parts of India.

The proportion of literacy varies considerably within the boundaries of the provinces. Thus in Assam the ratio per mille is 83 in the Burma valley and 70 in the Brahmaputra valley. In Bengal the central portion which contains the metropolis is the most literate, having 143 literate persons in every thousands; the western division has 127 literates while the east and the north, with 91 and 76 respectively, are much more backward. Orissa again has ratio of 79 per mille; South Bihar has 66, and North Bihar only 45. In the Bombay Presidency the proportion of literates varies from 156 in Gujarat to 62 in Sind. Literacy is naturally more prevalent in south Burma which is more highly developed than the northern tracts. Literate


Map Showing
THE NUMBER OF MALES PER MILLE
WHO ARE LITERATE 1921
AFGHANISTAN
BALUCHISTAN
N.W.F. PROVINCE
KASHMIR
PUNJAB
NEPAL
BHUTAN
CHINA
RAJPUTANA
AJMER-MERWARA
UNITED PROVINCES
INDIA
BIHAR
ASSAM
BENGAL
BURMA
SIAM
CENTRAL PROVINCES
ORISSA
BERAR
HYDERABAD
MYSORE
COORG
PONDICHERRY
KARIKAL
COCHIN
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON
GOA
DAMAN
REFERENCES
Below 70 per mille
70-100 ,, ,,
100-175 ,, ,,
175-300 ,, ,,
Above 300 ,, ,,
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

males are most numerous in the Central Division and literate females in the Delta and in several districts in Burma more than half the population is literate. The Nerbudda valley, which contains many good sized towns, has the largest proportion of literate males (131 per mille) in the Central Provinces and the Chota Nagpur States the Smallest (18 per mille). In Madras the West Coast is the most advanced having 119 literates per thosands, the agency division being the most backward. The sub-Himalyas tract in the Punjab, which contains ten cantonments and a large number of troups, has a proportion of 51 literates per mille while the North-West Dry Area, where there is only one cantonment has 37 only. In the United Provinces all the natural divisions, except the sub-Himalayan east which is stationary, have progressed fairly uniformly though the standard is not high, the best educated part of the province being the west Himalayan districts with a proportion of 143 males and 14 females literate in a thousand. The strength of the Christian Church, with its wide educational organisation, has done much to raise the standard of literacy in South India, especially in the States of Cochin and Travancore where as also in Mysore, the progress is also due to the energy of the administrations in furthering educational advancement, a very high proportion of the higher castes in these states being now literate.

Progress of literacy

142. The table on the following page shows the progress of literacy in the population of the main provinces since 1911. The number of literate persons in India has risen during the decade from 18.5 to 22.6 millions, or 22% against an increase in the population of 1.2 per cent. If persons under ten years are excluded the increase of literate males is 16 and that of the literate females is 71 %. The improvement which, as will be seen from the table, results in raising the proportion of literate males from 140 in 1911 to 161 in 1921 in the population and of literate females from 13 to 23, is shared by every province and state though in varying degrees. It is remarkable in Burma where a large proportion of the Buddhist population passes through the monastic schools. The standard of education in these schools is however of an elementary character, and it is probable that, had any higher educational test been applied, Burma would have held a far lower position in comparison with other provinces than that which it now occupies. Of the other British Provinces, Assam, Bengal and Bombay are the only three where there has been a marked improvement in the proportion of literate males ince 1911, while in foreign territory the high progress made in the enterprising states of Baroda, Travancore, Cochin and Mysore is conspicuous. In Baroda compulsory education has been enforced since the year 1906, and the discussion in the Bombay and Baroda reports regarding the effect of the measure on the statistics of literacy as compared with those of

Number of Literate per mille at certain Age Periods

Province, State or Agency	All age 10 & over				15—20				20 and over			
	Males		Females		Males		Females		Males		Females	
	1921	1911	1921	1911	1921	1911	1921	1911	1921	1911	1921	1911
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
INDIA	161	140	23	13	174	144	36	21	171	150	20	12
Assam	144	117	15	8	164	126	23	12	150	121	13	7
Baluchistan	76	56	6	4	301	287	217	164	346	376	166	152
Baroda	277	229	52	25	354	258	105	40	265	216	34	15
Bengal	210	187	23	15	214	189	28	19	225	199	21	13
Bihar and Orissa	114	104	7	5	111	103	10	7	126	114	7	4
Bombay	181	158	30	17	217	171	53	28	184	163	24	15
Burma	576	496	123	79	569	479	156	109	620	544	118	75
Central India & Gwalior	76	64	7	3	78	61	11	5	82	69	7	3
Central Provinces & Berar	103	87	10	4	142	109	18	8	104	87	9	3
Cochin	365	329	127	79	359	303	174	104	397	367	113	73
Hyderabad	65	67	9	5	86	69	14	7	67	72	8	4
Kashmir	54	53	3	2	53	42	4	2	61	62	3	2
Madras	199	183	26	17	204	184	44	29	214	198	22	14
Mysore	163	142	24	15	174	137	43	24	169	152	19	13
North West Frontier Province	95	81	12	8	114	82	20	12	102	91	11	8
Punjab with Delhi	90	84	11	8	98	78	17	12	97	95	10	7
Rajpatana and Ajmer	88	84	6	4	86	74	9	5	97	91	6	4
Travancore	425	329	178	64	437	318	226	97	440	369	160	56
United Provinces	85	78	8	6	92	83	12	9	89	82	7	6

Kathiawar and British Gujarat, will interest students of educational policy. The Baroda State has not yet caught up the lead which British Gujarat had over it in 1901, though in the proportion of literates in the school going ages 10 to 20 the State is now ahead. It is difficult to gauge the effect of the influenza mortality on the comparative statistics of literacy, but the incidence of the death rate must undoubtedly have been heavier in the illterate rural population than among literates, and the high percentage of increase in literacy in the Central Provinces must owe something to this selective factory. On the other hand Mr. Edye, writing of the progress in the United Provinces, remarks : "The advance (since 1911) would certainly have been greater had not the influenza epidemic discriminated so markedly against persons between 2· and 35 years of age ; figures have not been abstracted for this age period, but it must certainly contain a greater proportion of literates than any other of equal length. But it would be dangerous to attribute the want of educational progress to the influenza epidemic as a whole. Literates are concentrated in the well-to-do classes and these cannot but have resisted the disease better than did the poor." In Assam, where the total population increased by over 13%, the high rate of progress has been well distributed over the province and literacy, especially in the Hill tracts, owes much to missionary enterprise, while in the tracts of North-Western India the concentration of military forces is probably the chief factor in determining the trend of the figures.

Literacy among females

143. Though the number of literate women throughout India is still small and their proportion very low among the more backward peoples of the Central Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, Rajputana, Kashmir and Hyderabad, the fact remains that there has been steady advance in the education of the girls in the last twenty years. Literacy is an indication rather of culture than of civilization, and while there is nothing inherent in the Indian tradition that should prevent the development of the education of the male population, the case is, except in Burma, different in regard to women. The spirit both of Brahmanism and of Islam is distinctly opposed to the education of the female sex ; and there is little doubt that the women of India owe the growing facilities offered them for acquiring literacy to the influence on the male section of the community of foreign standards and ideals. That the education of women is unnecessary, unorthodox and dangerous, is still the stand-point of a large section of Indian society. It is still the predominant attitude of the Muhammadans and Jains of the better class, though in the case of their men the ability to read and write is for the former a religious obligation and for the latter a professional necessity. The scheme of life which orthodox tradition imposes on the women of India presents obstacles to education which, if not insuperable, are at least formidable. The cutoms of *purdah* and of early marriage limit the number of

girls in the schools and necessitate the withdrawal of the majority before they have had a fair opportunity to acquire any lasting knowledge of letters, while the orthodox attitude of society towards women who accept any public position accentuates the difficulty of obtaining the necessary supply of professional teachers. It is only, or atleast chiefly, when the general

	Variation per cent of literate females aged 10 and over in the decade		Actual number of literate females in
	1901-911	1911-1921	1921
INDIA	63	71	2,782,213
Assam	58	120	46,002
Baroda	173	119	41,300
Bengal	57	58	407,831
Bihar and Orissa			109,735
Bombay	64	66	300,952
Burma	61	73	625,706
C. I. and Gwalior	19	110	25,203
C. P. and Berar	46	114	52,304
Cochin	51	75	49,320
Hyderabad	33	73	43,340
Kashmir	37	131	4,007
Madras	59	58	456,895
Mysore	69	61	57,023
N. W. F. Province	24	51	8,987
Punjab and Delhi	69	49	92,475
Rajputana & Ajmer	53	49	23,955
Travancore	89	224	296,067
United Provinces	99	19	134,004

advance of male culture has reached well beyond the stage of mere vernacular literacy that the atmosphere becomes favourable to real progress in the instruction of women: and if the extent and progress of literacy among females usually follows closely the statistics for males it is because the higher cultural advance of the latter, which causes the improvement of the condition of women, is built up on the basis of elementary literacy. The percentages in the above table give some indication of the results of local effort in female education, but are dangerous to use without reference to the absolute figures which are therefore given against them.

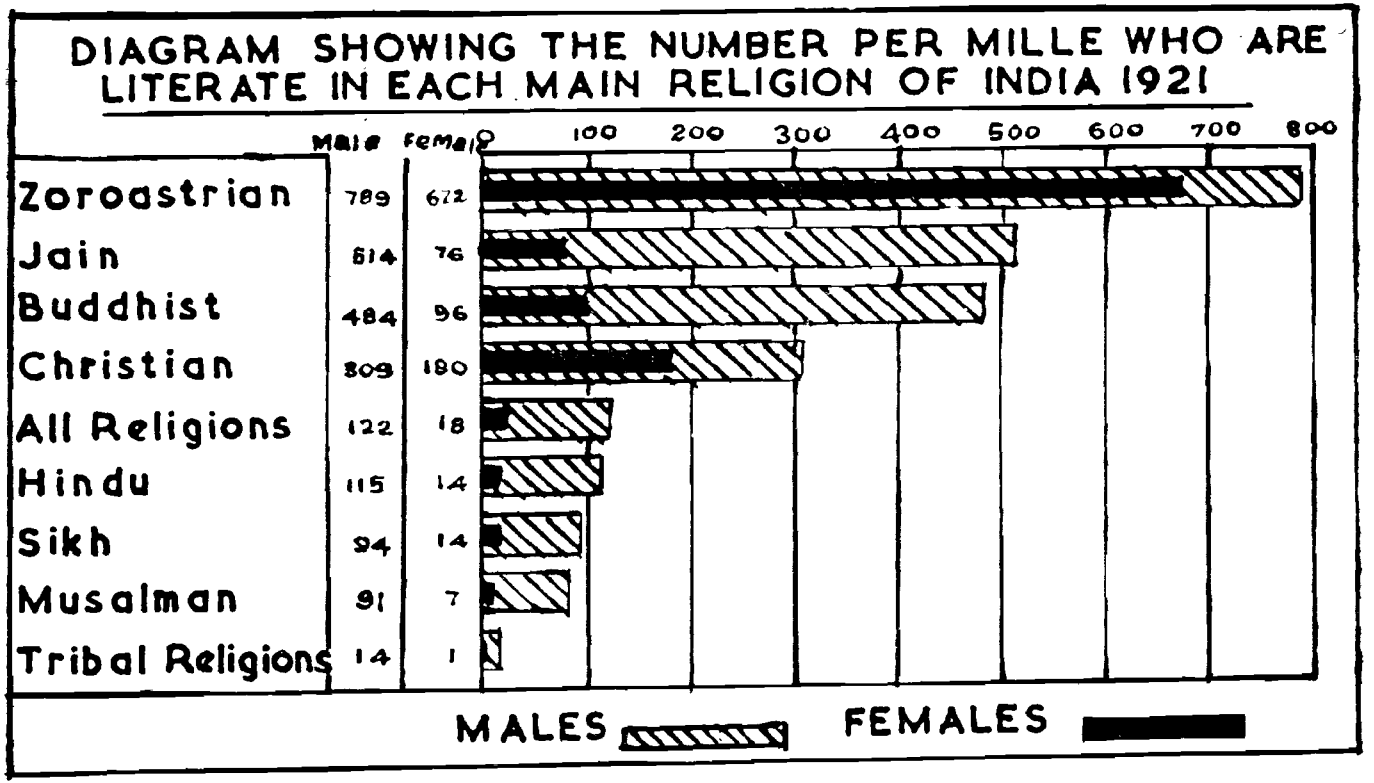
Literacy by religion

144. The statistics of literacy by religion are exhibited in the annexed diagram and, in more local detail, in subsidiary tables I and III. Almost all the Parsis and most of the Jains are traders for whom literacy is essential for business. Of the latter more than half of the males are able to read and write but only 9 per cent of the females; but while Jain male literates have risen slightly there is a more decided increase among literate females. The proportion of Buddhist males who are literate is slightly blow that of the Jains, but their women are considerably more advanced. Of the Christians 285 per mille are literate, but in their case the sex inequality is much smaller, the proportion of literate famales being more than half that of males.

The Hindus have one literate person in every thirteen; for males the ratio is one in eight and for females one in sixty-three, the proportion for males having increased in the decade from 116 to 130 per mille and that for females from 9 to 16. The proportion of Sikh males who are literate is less than that of Hindus. Literacy is valued by the Sikhs for the religious exercise of reading the *Granth* and is said to be easy to attain, as the Gurmukhi script is not difficult to master. But the Sikhs are heavily recruited from the lower illiterate classes and this fact accounts both for their low standard of literacy and for the decline from 121 to 107 per 1,000 in the last decade. The Census Superintendent of the Punjab writes :—

> "The educational stagnation of the Sikhs is possibly due to the real increase in literacy combined with a diminution arising from the conversion of compartively illiterate Mazhabi to the ranks of Sikhism. Another factor in the situation is possibly the fact that a knowledge of Gurumukhi is not a key to any Government appointment in the same way as the Urdu language is, and this may to some extent explain the growing neglect of the national language to the Sikhs."

One Muhammadan male in 11 and one female in 116 can read and write. The low position of Musalmans is partly due to the fact that in Bengal, the Punjab, North West Frontier Province and Sind, where they predominate, they are mostly agricultural. Where they are in the minority, as in the Central Provinces, United Provinces and Madras, they are usually town-dwellers and have a considerably higher proportion of litrates. The Hindu community embraces every stratum of society and the proportion of literacy among Hindus is seriously affected by the inclusion among them of the vast mass of the lower rural classes. It will be found later on that some of the higher Hindu castes have more literate males than the Parsis, while others are on a level with or even below the aboriginal tribes.



NOTE:-The proportions in this diagram are for all ages

Literacy by caste

145. The procedure observed in compiling Imperial Table IX, showing literacy by caste, was to select a sufficient number of caste groups to give an idea of the progress of education in the various strata of society. The main statistics of this table have been reduced to proportional figures for some of the main castes in subsidiary table VI. The castes are arranged there in order of merit in literacy and though speaking generally, literacy is connected with social position, occuption is a strong modifying influence so that, for example, the trading classes to whom literacy is essential not unfrequently, stand higher than castes, above them in the social scale. The low position of the Rajputs exemplifies this point. The extent of literacy of individual castes varies in provinces and states, and it is sometimes the case that high castes in one area are less advanced in respect of literacy than castes of far lower rank elsewhere. Thus in both Assam and Bengal the Baidyas are ahead of the other castes in literates both male and female, more than half of the Baidya women in Assam being able to read and write. In most provinces the Brahmans have a high proportion of literate males, though in the Punjab and N. W. F. Province the Khatris and Aroras lead and in the United Provinces the Kayasthas (523) and Agarwalas (398) are far ahead of the Brahmans (191). In Madars there are marked variations in the various sub-castes of Brahmans, the Tamil Brahmans having the largest proportion (715) of literate males and the Malayalam (219) of literate females. Among Muhammadans the Bohras in Bombay and Labbais and Mappillas in Madras have a comparatively high degree of literacy and in the United Provinces the Saiyids are even more literate than the Brahmans. Literacy among the "depressed classes" and aborigines is naturally rare. The comparatively high proportion of literates among Santal women in Bihar and Orissa is remarkable; but something of the same sort is seen among some of the tribes of the Central Provinces who send their girls freely to the mission schools. It is unnecessary further to recite figures which are shown more clearly in tabular form, and as the local variations are considerable the subject is best studied by reference to the provincial reports.

Literacy in English

146. In the whole of India 2.5 million persons or 160 males and 18 females in every ten thousand persons of each sex aged five and over can read and write English. One in thirty males in Bengal and one in forty-three in Bombay are literate in English. In Madras, Assam and Burma the proportion is 2 per cent while in Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces and the United Provinces it is below 1 per cent. Of the States Cochin and Travancore have between 3 and 4 per cent but in others the proportions are much lower. More than half the number of Parsi males and one-fourth

of their females can read and write English. Of Christians nearly all the Europeans and many of the Anglo-Indians are literate in English; but except on the southern coast English literacy is rare among the Indian Christians and the regional proportions therefore largely follow the racial distribution. Though the proportions in the other communities, taken on the total populations, are small, some of the higher castes have a fairly large number of English knowing members. In Bengal about half of the Baidya males and a quarter of the Brahman and Kayastha males are literate in English, while in Madras more than a quarter of the Tamil Brahmans can claim this accomplishment. Of the Jains in Kathiawar nearly a tenth are literate in English though the Chathurth Jains of Kolhapur who are cultivators are less literate than the average of the Presidency. That substantial progress has been made since last census in the acquisition of English is suggested by the fact that during the decade the number of males knowing English rose by 51 per cent and that of females by 57 per cent; but the figures are too small for percentages of this sort to be anything but misleading, and the variation in the proportions shown in subsidiary table IV or in the actual figures is a safer guide. Among the main provinces the greatest progress has been made by Bengal, Assam and Bombay and in the States by Cochin, Travancore, Mysore and Baroda.

Literacy in cities

147. The proportion of literate in urban is naturally much higher than in rural area. The table given below exhibits the advantage which the

Number of Literate Persons per 1,000 of each Sex (all ages 5 and over)

Province, State or Agency	Total population		Cities	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
INDIA	139	21	373	139
Bengal	181	21	466	211
Bihar and Orissa	96	6	359	82
Bombay	157	27	328	138
Burma	510	112	558	370
C.P. and Berar	87	9	324	84
Madras	173	24	529	171
Punjab	74	9	232	82
United Provinces	73	7	240	62
Hyderabad	57	8	322	7
Kashmir State	46	3	174	7
Mysore State	143	22	449	169
Rajputana (Agency)	68	5	232	25

in habitants of large towns possess as regards literacy over those of rural tracts.The proportion of literate males is three times and that of literate females six times as great in cities as it is in the general population.The reasons for this difference are obvious. Life in cities is clearly more conducive to the diffusion of literacy than life in the villages. The cities are the centres of social, intellectual and commercial life. They contain in the principal law-courts and some of them are the headquarters of Government. They are better provided than the villages with schools and they contain most of the higher educational institutions, at which persons who have already acquired the census standard of literacy in other districts come to pursue their studies. Of the three Presidency towns Calcutta has 53 per cent literate males and 27 per cent females, Madras 50 and 19 and Bombay 31 and 16 per cent respectively. The eight cities and selected towns of the Punjab contain 212 literate males and 62 females in every thousand of either sex as compared with 74 and 9 in the province as a whole.

Acquisition and retention of literacy

148. Of the attitude of the average Indian public towards literary education the Census Suprintendent of Mysore, himself an Indian, writes :-

> "What determines literacy in any community is in the first instance the nature of the occupations it usually follows, that is, whether they are such as require a knowledge of reading and writing, and in the second instance whether there are any special facilities within reach which attract the members of the community to learn, though there be no great need for learning. The pursuit of letters purely as means for intellectual growth is mostly a figment of the theorists."

Mr. Thyagarajaiyar proceeds to trace the dominant influence in education of utility, based on occupation and sometimes modified, as in the Christian community and to a certain extent in towns, by opportunity, through the various social and communal sections of the population. The discussion at least emphasises the fact that, unlike the more advanced centres of Europe where ignorance of letters hides its head, there in India as yet no general tradition of literacy. Mr. Edye (United Provinces) remarks :—

> "Every district officer knows that boys who will leave these (primary) schools before they have learnt to read and write from a big proportion of the total attendance. The parents of such a boy never seriously intend that he should be educated. They send him to school and leave him there so long as he is in the preparatory or even in the lower classes, because this is a cheap way of keeping him occupied and out of mischief: because they are pressed to do so by the school master—or even by his superiors—who want to improve the look of their return;

or perhaps in case he shows a special aptitude for learning. They take him away as soon as the expense increases and he can make himself useful in fields or at pasture.This attitude is natural enough. What has been emphasised in the last two reports is still true of the villagers, if not of the towns man. He does not desire education for his children for its own sake, but only as a means of obtaining employment. There thus no motive for educating the boy who is distined for the plough."

This attitude towards education is perhaps changing in the more advanced areas, but that it is widespread will be admitted by every student of rural mentality in India. The question then how far literacy, imposed on an indifferent if not unwilling people, is retained when no longer needed is one of some interest, and the subject has been studied in various provincial reports on the basis of such figures as are available of the age classification of literate persons at successive censuses. We have already seen that the percentage literate males rises continuously from 29 in the age-period 5-10 to 110 in the group 10-15 and 174 in the group 15-20. So far the progression of the figures is according to expectation and follows the sequence shown in previous enumerations. In the ages of 20 and above there is, however, considerable variation. At the Census of 1911 the number per mille of literates in the ages 20 and over substantially exceeded the proportion in the group 15-20 (150 against 144). Commenting on this somewhat unexpected rise Sir Edward Gait remarked :—

"The steady rise in the proportion upto the age-period 5-20 is readily intelligible, but it is not so clear why there should be a further rise amongst persons aged 20 and over. It will be seen further on that education is steadily spreading; and it would seem, therefore, a priori that the proportion who are literate between the ages of 15 and 20, *i.e.*, amongst persons who have just passed the ordinary school-going age at a time when the opportunities for learning were far smaller than they are now. Three reasons may be adduced to account for this apparent anomaly. The first is that even at the age of 15, a boy's education is sometimes not sufficiently complete to qualify him to be classed as literate in the sense of being able to write a letter and to read manuscript. The second is that, in the case of youths, the enumerators were perhaps apt to be stricter than at the higher ages, when they would more readily accept an affirmative answer to the question "Can you both read and write ?" Thirdly amongst the trading classes, who generally have a large proportion of literate persons, the knowledge is picked up gradually in the course of business and a youth may often be 20 years of age or even older before he is fully competent to read and write."

At the present census the proportion of those of 20 and above drops to 171, but the decrease is not by any means shared by all provinces and communities as will be seen by the figures in the statement below :

	Units having a larger proportion of literate males over 20 than between 15 and 20			Units having a smaller proportion of literate males over 20 than between 15 and 20	
	15-20	Over 20		15-20	Over 20
			PROVINCES		
Bengal	214	225	Assam	164	150
Bihar & Orissa	111	126	Bombay	217	184
Burma	569	620	C. P. & Berar	142	104
Madras	204	214	N. W. F. Province	114	102
Central India	78	81	Punjab	96	94
Cochin	359	397	United Provinces	92	89
Gwalior	78	83	Baroda	354	265
Kashmir	53	61	Hyderabad	86	67
Travancore	437	440	Mysore	174	169
Rajputana	80	90			
			RELIGIONS		
Sikh	128	135	Hindu	164	158
Buddhist	615	692	Jain	682	660
Parsi	880	918	Christian	422	415
Muhammadan	113	122	Tribal Religions	21	22

Even if we presume that the three factors described above have not been sufficiently influential to over ride the natural trend of the figures the difficulty in explaining the local and communal variations is not overcome.

149. Further difficulties appear when we attempt any comparison between the numbers who were literate in the age-groups 10-20 in 1911 with those returned as literate who are 20 and over at this census and must therefore include the survivors of the former group. This comparison has been the subject of study in various provinces. In Bengal, Mr. Thompson to obtain greater accuracy graduated the literates returned in each of the ages from 10 to 20 so as to eliminate, as far as possible, the vagories of the age returns. He writes :—

> "The apparent conclusion is that the proportion literate steadily increases from the age of 10 right upto the age of 27. It is possible that mortality is greater among the illiterate than among the literate and that a certain number teach themselves to read after they have

reached maturity, but the result is an unexpected one and must, I think, be taken as pointing to the conclusion that whether there has been lapse from literacy to any great extent or not, it has not been admitted in filling up the census schedules."

Mr. Lloyd (Assam) arrives at much the same conclusion. He compares the actual figures of literates returned in age-grou › 20-30 in the two districts of Kamrup and Cachar with the literates returned in the age-group 10-20 in 1911 and finds a very large excess in the former group in each district. The results of similar calculations in the figures of Madras, Bihar and Orissa, Travancore and Baroda are much the same, and all that we are in a position to say is that if there is, as may be expected on general considerations, any lapse from literacy in the higher age-periods at any rate it does not appear in the census statistics.

Comparison with the return of Education Department

150. It will be of interest to compare the progress of institution according to the statistics issued by the Education Department. The comparative figures of the numbers of institutions and scholars in the last year

Kind of Institution	Number of Institution		Percentage increase + decrease—	Number of Scholars		Percentage increase+ decrease—
	1911	1921		1911	1921	
Total	170,322	205,003	+20	6,281,865	8,316,865	+32
Arts Colleges	144	254	+7	25,050	46,737	+87
Professional Colleges	49	66	+35	6,397	12,903	+102
Secondary Schools	6.442	8,816	+37	890,061	1,237,656	+39
Primary Schools	118,413	158,792	+34	4,575,465	6,299,836	+38
Training and other Special Schools	5,783	3,946	—30	164,544	126,758	—23
Private Institutions	39,491	33,229	—16	620,438	592,975	—4

of each of the two decades are shown in the above statement. The total number of scholars is now 8.3 millions, the proportion of female scholars being barely one-fifth of that of the male. In every hundred scholars 63 are Hindus, 24 Musalmans, 4 Christians and 9 others. Of the 63 Hindus, again, 11 are Brahmans and the rest non-Brahmans, while of the latter 6 per cent belong to the "Depressed Classes."

The majority of the pupils, viz., 76 per cent are in the primary schools and of these nearly half were at the most rudimentary stage. Only a limited number of these primary students proceed further with their studies and of the remainder probably the greater portion relapses into illiteracy after leaving school. The shortness of time passed at school by the average pupil who enters a primary institution, the imperfect nature of the instruction and the irregularity of the attendance undoubtedly account for the fact that the figures of literacy are less than would be expected from the figures of school attendance. The comparative figures of literates (census) and pupils (departmental) are given in the following table. Except in Burma, where

Province		Number of total scholars per mille of the population (British Territory)	Number of literate persons per mille of the population (British Territoty) All ages	
			5 and over	0-20
1		2	3	4
INDIA	...	34	86	45
Assam	...	30	74	40
Bengal	...	43	105	54
Bihar and Orissa	...	24	53	26
Bombay	...	49	97	55
Burma	...	43	316	159
C. P. and Berar	...	35	52	30
Madras	...	44	98	51
N. W. F. Province	...	22	45	21
Punjab	...	27	47	22
United Provinces	...	23	42	23

condition are exceptional, there is some resemblance between the proportions in columns 2 and 4, the latter column representing roughly the student ages. It has to be remembered that the figures in column 2 exclude those who are studying in their homes or in indigenous institutions outside the jurisdiction of Government. If, however, the figures in columns 2 and 4 represented the outturn at the age of youths who had a fair knowledge of reading and writing the proportions in column 3 should clearly be considerably higher

than they are. The subject has been dealt with in some of the provincial reports in greater statistical detail. Mr. Jacob (Punjab) points out that literacy among boys and girls at school is only of potential importance and that "effective literacy" begins at about 20 years of age judged from this point of view there has been practically no progress in the Punjab during the decade. After collating the statistics of the educational department with those of the census Mr. Jacob observes :—

"Thus while extra-scholastic literates below 20 have decreased by 19,000 persons, consequent on the closing down of many private educational institutions during the decade, there has been a very slight increase in the numbers of extra-scholastic literates of all ages. The results suggest that the efforts of the Department of Education to increase the literacy of the

Literate Males over 20 for the Punjab and Delhi

		1911	1921
Punjab	.....	665,453	670,000
Delhi	.....	—	35,683
	Total	665,453	705,683

Total Males over 20 for the Punjab and Delhi

Punjab	.....	7,038,795	7,144,124
Delhi	.....	—	164,668
	Total	7,038,795	7,308,792

Province have been almost completely nullified by the diminution in private educational enterprise. It is not surprising therefore to find that "effective" male literacy, which we may regard as a touch-stone of the utilitarian value of education, has advanced only from 9.45 to 9.65 per cent for the whole of the Punjab and Delhi. The relevant figures are noted in the above table."

Basing his calculation on the number males who enter on their twentieth year every year and the proportion of literates among them according to the census Mr. Jacob estimates that 22,000 literate males of the age of twenty will have to be turned out to maintain the present standard of 9.7 per cent literates over that age; while in order to work up and maintain a standard of 20 per cent literate males, it would be necessary for the Education Department to turn out 45,000 literate males every year. The actual outurn is 47,000 at present and the Department hope to increase it to 60,000 during the next decade. But considerable allowance has to be

made for lapse from literacy which is common among boys even after four years of schooling. Assuming a lapse of 10,000 per annum, leaving 50,000 stable literates males, Mr. Jacob calculates that the number of literates males, in 1931 would be 814,808 giving with a rise of 5.5 in the total population in the decade, a percentage of 13.2 of literate males as compared with 9.7 at present.

CHAPTER IX

Literacy

Reference to statistics

135. For the purposes of census literacy was defined as the ability to write a letter and to read the answer to it and the figures and therefore strictly comparable with those from 1901 onwards. They exclude those who can read but not write, of whom there is a considerable number, mostly Muslims able to read the Quran in Arabic. Particulars of this latter class have been recorded In Baroda State where they form 50 per mille of the population over 5 years old (males 32 females 18), but in the rest of India the population has been divided into literate and illiterate, alleged literates under the age of 5 being reckoned illiterate. The vernacular script of literacy was not generally recorded, and a reference to this point with such details as are available will be found in the following chapter on Language. Literacy in English was, as hitherto recorded in a separate column. The general figures of literacy will be found in Table XIII of part II of this volume, Table XIV containing figures by literacy for selected castes, while the main aspects of literacy will be found more conveniently exhibited by proportional figures at the end of this chapter.

136. The actual number of literates has increased since 1921 by 5,515,205 persons, that is by 24.4 per cent, as compared to the increase in the total population of 10.6 per cent, and of 10.9 per cent in the population enumerated by literacy. The literates in 1921 numbered 22,623,651, that is 7.1 per cent of the total population; the actual increase of literates has been 16.3 per cent of the actual increase of population, so that there has been an increase of literacy relative to the total population in 1931 as compared to 1921 but seeing that the total increase of population since then has been 33,895,298, although literacy has increased appreciably faster than the population, the percentage correspondingly literate now is still not more than 8.0. The following table shows the percentage of increase in each province taking its number of literates in 1921 as 100, and including in the provincial figures the figures of the states in political relations with each. The second table shows in the same way the states which formed separate census units. Excluding the Andamans and Nicobar, where the decrease is due to the abandonment of the penal settlement the only unit showing a decrease is Aden. The provinces in order of extent of literacy in

1921 were Burma, Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Assam, Bihar and Orissa, North West Province, Central Provinces, Punjab and the United Provinces.

	Increase % in Provinces (No. of literates 1921=100)
Delhi	+70.6
Punjab	+46.9
Assam	+41.0
Central Provinces and Berar	+38.1
United Provinces	+34.4
Burma	+27.2
INDIA	+24·4
Coorg	+22.7
Bombay	+20.9
North-West Frontier Province	+19.3
Madras	+19.1
Ajmer-Merwara	+19.1
Bengal	+ 9.7
Baluchistan	+ 9.1
Bihar and Orissa	+ 8.9
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	—13.4
Aden	—18.1
	Increase % in States and Agencies (No. of literates 1921=100).
Cochin	+87.0
Jommu and Kashmir	+71.5
Hyderabad	+63.1
Baroda	+59.6
Central India	+55.3
Mysore	+34.2
Gwalior	+28.1
Travancore	+25.8
Rajputana	+22.4
Western India States	—20.7
Sikkim	+ 1.0

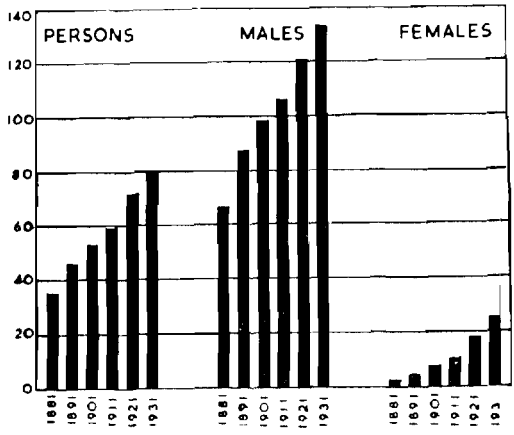
To some extent therefore, but by no means consistently, most progress has been made where there was most room for it. Bihar and Orissa proves an exception, while Burma and to a less extent Assam have increased more

rapidly than some provinces with more room for expansion. The order of literacy in the States and Agencies in 1921 was Travancore, Cochin, Baroda, Mysore, Sikkim, Gwalior, Rajputana, Central India. Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, so that the same principle of an increase in literacy being most usual where there is most need of it is still at work, though Cochin and to a less extent Baroda are exceptional in a direction the reverse of Bihar and Orissa's. If the increases in states are noticeably higher on the whole than in British India, this is merely another instance of the same thing, as the states as a whole were behind British India in literacy in 1921, though Travancore, Cochin and Baroda were ahead of all units but Burma. In considering the proportion of literacy to the population, however, it is usual to exclude at least that part of the population aged 0-5 years, and also that part of the population (3,078,460) not enumerated by literacy. The total population figure to be considered therefore with reference to the figure of literacy is 296,294,029 (males 153,770,850 and females 142,523,179) and subsequent calculations will be based on that figure. The figures above represent the actual variation of literate since 1921 in each of the units named, but the real variation of literacy can only be accurately estimated by the variation of the ratio of literates to the population as a whole. A small increase in literates, such as that of 1 per cent in Sikkim may, and in that case does, represent an actual decrease of literacy, which has failed to keep pace with a growth in population. The following table shows the numbers literate per mille of the total population aged 5 and over, and of the corresponding male and female population separately, in 1931 as compared to 1921. Subsidiary Table V shows the growth per mille since 1901. Before that the classification

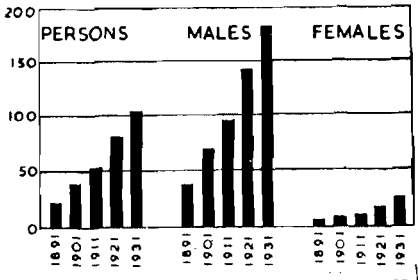
	Literates per mille aged 5 and over	
	1921	1931
Persons	82	95
Males	139	156
Females	21	29

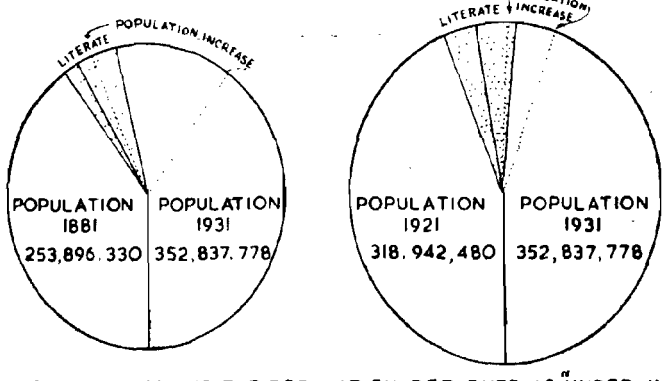
of literacy was into illiterate, learning and literate, and in the accompanying diagram showing the growth of literacy since 1881 those shown as "under instruction" in 1881 and as "learning" in 1891 have been excluded from the total taken as literate, the loss of those who were under instruction but would in 1901 and after have been returned as 'literate' is perhaps balanced at any rate in 1881 by the exclusion of the very large number whose literacy or illiteracy was unspecified in the return and most of whom were probably illiterate; since 1901 the return has been 'literate' or 'illiterate' simply. The diagram is also based on the figures per mille of the total population, not on that aged 5 and over only. For the purpose of demonstrating

GROWTH OF LITERACY PER MILLE OF TOTAL POPULATION 1881–1931



LITERACY IN ENGLISH PER 10,000, 1891 TO 1931





IN THE TWO TOP DIAGRAMS THE POPULATION RETURNED AS "UNDER INSTRUCTION" "LEARNING" OR "UNSPECIFIED" HAS BEEN OMITTED. IN THE LEFT HAND BOTTOM DIAGRAM THOSE RETURNED IN 1881 AS "UNDER INSTRUCTION" HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AS LITERATE.

growth the standard taken is immaterial and age groups are lacking in the literacy table of 1881.

Distribution of literacy

137. The literacy of different provinces is given by ratio per mille in Subsidiary Table II at the end of this chapter, and its progress is illustrated in Subsidiary Table V. It is also illustrated graphically in the accompanying diagram* based on the figures of provinces (British territory) and of major states. A warning must here be given against certain figures in thd Subsidiary Tables. The exceptionally high figures for Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province Agencies and Tribal Areas are entirely misleading, as they are calculated on a very small proportion of the population consisting principally of troops and persons living in cantonments or frontier posts and having no reference at all to the real inhabitants of the area to which they refer. In the following table the North West Frontier Province agencies are omitted and the Baluchistan figures, British territory and States together, are calculated roughly on the whole population aged 5 and over instead of only on those enumerated by literacy; as however there are no figures for the whole population of Baluchistan by age, the figure for those aged 5 and over is only an estimate, and Baluchistan is given credit in the accompany map for a somewhat higher rate. In comparing these figures with those of 1921 some difficulty is experienc d in the 1921 India Report gives no separate figures for province and states, whereas on this occasion the figures for British India have been separated from those of the states in political relation with various provinces. The following table shows the present position of literacy calculated per mille of the population aged 5 and over for all provinces and states, taking the sexes together. This probably gives the truest impression of the real distribution of literacy, as a literacy which is confined to males is apt to be of rather a special nature, and, except in those castes or classes in which male literacy and learning is a natural heritage or a religious necessity, is apt to be a mere economic implement necessary to business, a means of livelihood, a political weapon, or useful for intercourse with the external world, but of little value for its own sake. It is not perhaps until literacy becomes a domestic acquisition taken for granted among members of both sexes, that it will cease to be regarded as a mere doorway into government or other service and principally valued for its potentiality to that entry. The Census Superintendent of Cochin State ascribes a definite falling off in the number both of institutions and of pupils in the lower secondary and in the primary classes less to the general economic depression than to a growing realisation that literacy is losing its economic value as a qualification for a career. He points out that graduates of Madras University join the Police Department on a salary of

*Not reproduced.

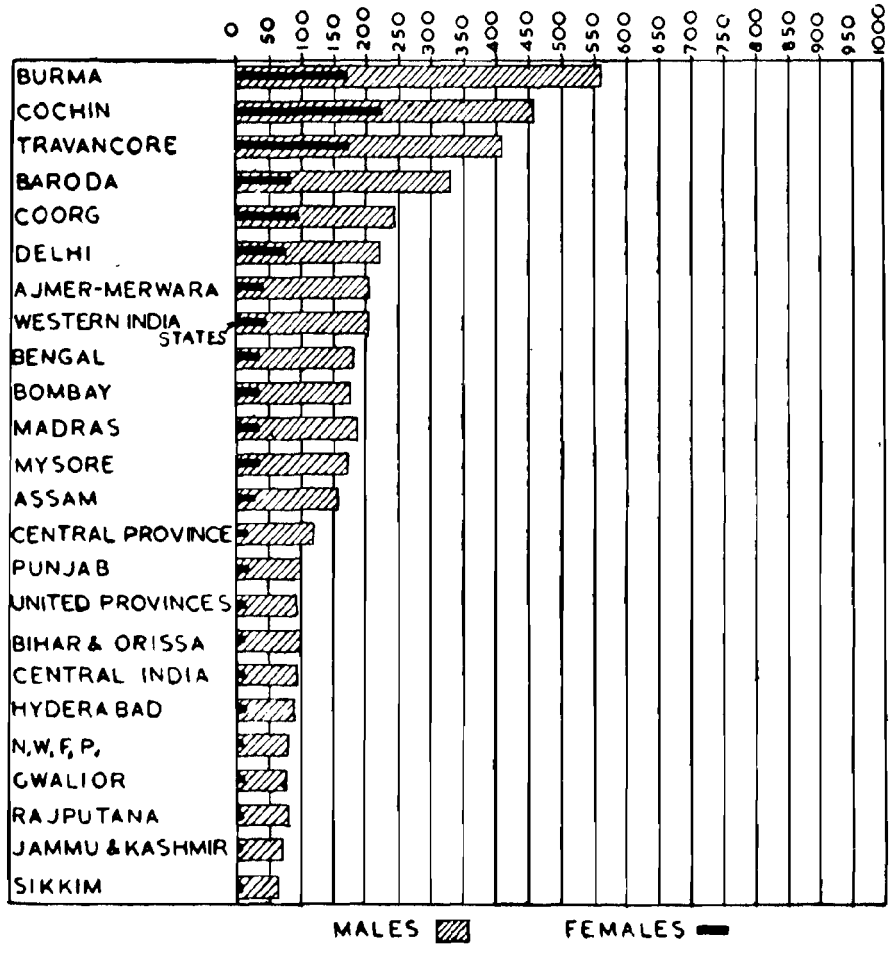
Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 per month and are held fortunate in getting employment at all. On the other hand there is no falling off in the higher secondary classes but a continued increase, which he ascribes to such pupils having

Province, State, Etc.			Literate per mille aged 5 and over
Burma	...	...	368
Cochin	...	...	337
Travancore	...	...	289
Baroda	...	...	209
Aden	...	...	182
Coorg	...	...	176
Andamans and Nicobars	...	...	170
Delhi	...	...	163
Ajmer-Merwara	...	...	125
Western India States	...	...	125
Madras States*	...	...	121
Bengal	...	...	111
Bombay**	...	...	108
Madras	...	...	108
Mysore	...	...	106
Assam	...	...	93
Bombay States	...	...	71
Central Provinces	...	...	66
Punjab	...	...	63
Assam States	...	...	61
Bengal States	...	...	61
United Provinces	...	...	55
Baluchistan	...	...	54
Bihar and Orissa	...	...	53
Central India	...	...	52
Hyderabad	...	...	50
North-West Frontier Province	...	...	49
United Provinces States	...	...	49
Gwalior	...	...	47
Rajputana	...	...	43
Punjab States	...	...	42
Punjab States Agency	...	...	42
Jammu and Kashmir	...	...	40
Bihar and Orissa States	...	...	39
Sikkim	...	...	35
Central Provinces States	...	...	23

* Excluding Cochin and Travancore.

** Including Aden.

NUMBER OF LITERATE PER MILLE AGED 5 YEARS & OVER



gone too far to withdraw. The falling off in primary education he rightly regards as a bad sign, and he argues the necessity of completely recasting the educational system. However that may be, the distribution of male literacy shows some divergence from that of general literacy, as may be seen in the accompanying diagram in which provinces and states are arrange in order of general literacy but in which male and female literacy are taken separately for graphic representation.

In the relative position of provinces and states in order of literacy. there is little change during the dacade. Cochin state, in spite of a very rapid growth in population, has been able to do more than keep pace with that growth, in spite of having started with a very high ratio. Burma easily maintains her lead, for there literacy even if not of a very high order, is a habit, traditional in both sexes and all classes, both boys and girls being taught in the monasteries of which almost every Burman village has at least one. No need perhaps for compulsory education here. In India however it had been introduced by 1930 in 133 urban areas and in 3,137 rural areas of which 2,303 are in the Punjab, though apparently with no very marked success.

Literacy in cities

138. It is a common place that literacy is much more prevalent in towns than in the country, as both the need for it and the opportunities of acquiring it are greater. Thus an examination of the 34 cities tabulated in Table XIII shows that of the total population the proportion literate per 1,000 is 348 males and 149 females as compared to 133 and 25 respectively in India as a whole. A reference may also be made in this respect to the table in paragraph 41 of Chapter II. There is naturally still greater contrast in literacy in English, the figures for the same 34 cities being 1,473 males literate in English per 10,000 of the total population and 434 females, as compared to 181 and 23 respectively for the whole of India.

Female literacy

139. The distribution of literacy among females has already been indicated when dealing with the distribution of literacy generally, and a reference to the diagram above will show that the extent of literacy among women is not necessarily determined by its extent among men, but is generally correlative though much less in extent. It will also show the comparative absence of female literacy throughout India proper except in Kerala. In the Bihar and Orissa States, to take an extreme case, there is only one literate female to every fifteen literate males, and in Sikkim less than one to every twenty two; even in Burma there are 3.5 literate males to every literate famale. In Kerala and Baroda alone is the situation other than in the rest of India, for Cochin State has more than one literate female to

every two literate males and Travancore only a little less, while Malabar has nearly one to every three, Coorg a little less than one to every three, Baroda a little fewer and Mysore one to every five. Cochin now leads

	Total number of literate females in	
	1921	1931
INDIA	2,782,213	4,169,105
Assam	46,002	81,133
Bengal	407,831	664,507
Bihar and Orissa	109,735	139,083
Bombay and Western India States	300,952	372,154
Burma	625,706	1,010,298
Central Provinces	52,304	79,949
Madras	456,895	616,247
North-West Frontier Province	8,987	11,412
Punjab and Punjab States Agency	78,339	163,200
United Provinces	134,004	218,299
Baroda	41,300	79,667
Central India	15,514	25,572
Cochin	49,320	113,789
Gwalior	9,689	15,195
Hyderabad	43,340	68,039
Kashmir	4,007	9,078
Mysore	57,023	90,086
Rajputana	18,851	25,248
Sikkim	118	150
Travancore	296,067	351,611

India in female literacy with Travancore a fair second and Burma a very close third. The above table gives the crude numbers for the larger provinces and states for 1921 and 1931, the figures of provinces being in this case inclusive of the states in political relation with them. It show an increase of almost 50 per cent against an increase of 11.4 per cent in the female population enumerated by literacy, but the figures of female literacy are still absurdly low. Besides the difficulty, still felt very strongly in most provinces, of getting good women teachers, one of the most serious obstacles to the spread of female education is the early age of marriage, which causes girls to be taken from school before they have reached even the standard of the primary school leaving certificate. The report on Education in India in 1929-30 gives a table, reproduced on the next page showing that of 1.3 million girls in class I only 26 per cent went on to class II, of 311 thousand in class II only, 63 per cent went on to class III and of 183 thousand in class III only 58 per cent went on to class IV. The total wastage involved is about 90 per cent. Here we are found in a vicious circle, since the early

Class		1928-29	1929-30	Wastage
I	...	1,317,575	...	...
II	...	311,281	340,221	977,354
III	...	183,143	197,231	113,960
IV	...	93,234	105,665	77,478

age of marriages prevents the growth of female literacy, while the absence of female literacy seems largely responsible for the absence of any general change in the early age of marriage. Burma and the Malabar Coast are the two exceptions and in Cochin State an increasing tendency is reported for women to seek careers of their own in preference to marriage at all. For the extent of female literacy in different communities and in different castes, a reference may be made to the tables given in paragraphs 140 and 141 below.

Literacy by community

140. Taking the figures as a whole, the greatest progress has been made by Sikhs, Jains, Muslims, and Hindus in that order, while Tribal, Parsis and Christians have all declined in their proportion of literacy since 1921. The unexpected decline among Parsis is confined to males and it is just possible that it can be ascribed to the economic depression. The decline among both Christians and Tribal is to be put down if not wholly at any rate in part, to the exclusion of Burma figures, though it is also possible that the figures of Christians have suffered by the inclusion of illiterate converts and those of tribal by the return of literate tribesmen as Hindus. The following table shows the variations in the descending order of total increase, but it will be noticed that this order is not always retained if the sexes are taken separately. Thus both Parsis and Tribal show a slight increase in feminine literacy in spite of the fall of literacy on their whole population. Again

Variation of Literacy per mille, 1921-1931

Community	Total	Male	Female
Sikh	+23	+31	+13
Jain	+12	+7	+19
Muslim	+11	+14	+6
Hindu	+9	+14	+5
Tribal	—2	—3	+1
Parsi	—3	—9	+3
Christian	—6	—3	—7

Jains although only second in the rate of growth of general literacy come first in growth in literacy among females, but are behind both Hindus and Muslims in growth among males. The growth in Sikh literacy is noticeable

as they showed hardly any increase at all in the preceding decade and the Census Superintendent of the Punjab in 1921 wrote of their educational stagnation. This time they easily lead in rate of increase except among women, where they are second to the Jains. It is hardly necessary to point out that the high standard of literacy among Parsis, Jews, and Jains is partly due to the fact that they are mainly composed of trading classes for whom literacy is essential, and that where literacy is so general as it is among the Parsis, for instance, the rate of growth per mille is not strictly comparable to the rate of growth in a comparatively illiterate community. At the same time it is noteworthy that in Burma where the prevalence of literacy is much greater than in any Indian communities except Parsis and Jains the rate of increase should be as high as 51 per mille for the total population and 50 and 53 for males and females respectively.

If considering literacy among the different communities it will perhaps be useful to examine briefly their respective position with regard to literacy

Community	Literate per mille	
	aged 5 and over	aged 20 and over
Parsi ...	791	851
Jewish ...	416	482
Jain ...	353	389
Christian ...	279	305
Sikh ...	91	107
Hindu ...	84	96
Muslim ...	64	77
Minor and Unspecified	19	23
Tribal ...	7	8
Burma ...	368	427
Community	Literate females per mille	
	aged 5 and over	aged 20 and over
Parsi ...	734	780
Jewish ...	338	368
Christian ...	203	200
Jain ...	106	90
Sikh ...	29	29
Hindu ...	21	19
Muslim ...	15	14
Minor and Unspecified ...	5	5
Tribal ...	2	1
Burma ...	165	171

of 20 years and over, since much figures might affect any franchise based on literacy. The following table gives the figures of literates per mille aged 20 and over by communities for adults only of both sexes as compared to the figure when the whole population over 5 years is considered. If females alone be considered the difference between the comparative figures is more marked and the order they appear in is in one case different, as Christians have a higher proportion of literate females than Jains have. The table on page 93 shows the number literate in British territory in each province in each main community per mille (1) of adults of the community concerned, (2) of all adults in the province.

It will be seen that under each community the left-hand column read downwards shows the relative literacy of that community in the different provinces, while the right hand columns read across show the proportions per 1,000 adults in each province who are literate in each of the four communities. Tribal figures are shown in this table as, numerically at any rate, they are the fourth most important community in India excluding Burma, while in literacy they are acceptionally backward. In certain provinces however there are other communities of much local importance. Thus in Bombay Parsis, aged 20 and over have 853 literates per 1,000 of their own community and 4 per 1,000 of the adults in the province. In the same province Jains have 391 literate of every 1,000 adults and very nearly 4 literate of every 1,000 adults in the province. Of every 1,000 literates in Bombay Province 30 are Jains and 32 are Parsis. In the Punjab Sikhs have 110 literate of every 1,000 adult, 15 literate in every 1,000 adults of the province, and 1.0 literate in every 1,000 adults in India proper; of literate adults in the Punjab 200 in every 1,000 are Sikhs. Literacy in Burma has been tabulated by race, qualified in the case of Indians by the differenciation of Hindus and Muslims. The following table shows the figures corresponding to those given in the table on page 93 for India. The difference in literacy between Burma and India is very marked.

		Literacy per mille aged 20 and over in Burma	
		of own race	of all races
Burmans	...	530	307
Other indigenous	...	257	79
Indo-Burmans	...	346	4
Indian Hindus	...	314	15
Indian Muslims	...	349	10
Other Indians	...	514	2
Chinese	...	414	6
Others	...	961	3

Province etc.	Hindu Literates per mille aged 20 and over		Muslim Literates per mille aged 20 and over		Christian Lilerates per mille aged 20 and over		Tribal Literates per mille aged 20 and over	
	of own community	of all communities	of own community	of all communities	of own community	of all communities	of own community	of all communities
India (excluding Burma)	96	69	77	17	305	5	8	.2
Ajmer-Merwara	113	87	143	24	887	11	3	.01
Assam*	127	74	83	23	232	6	21	2
Bengal	180	83	85	44	496	2	11	.1
Bihar and Orissa	64	53	Separate details not available				8	.4
Bombay (excluding Aden)	118	90	86	18	420	6	5	.03
Central Provinces and Berar	71	61	180	8	595	2	7	.6
Coorg	195	172	173	16	387	9	0	0
Delhi	170	107	177	56	581	17	0	0
Madras	120	106	154	10	229	8	3	.002
North-West Frontier Province	335	21	28	25	834	6	0	0
Punjab	123	34	39	22	123	2	0	0
United Provinces Agra and Oudh	59	50	68	10	317	1	0	0

The use of O implies the absence of any of that community in the province.

*Assam includes the States, elsewhere excluded, except for India as a whole.

Literacy by caste

141. The two dozen castes and tribes shown in the following table arranged in order of total literacy per mille indicate the extreme variation of literacy among different social or racial groups. It is not possible to give

Caste or Tribe		Literate per mille	
		Males	Females
Baidhya	...	782	486
Nayar	...	603	276
Kayastha	...	607	191
Khatri	...	451	126
Brahman	...	437	96
Lushei	...	260	31
Viswabrahman	...	197	21
Rajput	...	153	13
Kurmi	...	126	12
Teli	...	114	6
Mali	...	80	4
Momin	...	59	8
Parayan	...	56	6
Jat	...	53	6
Mahar	...	44	4
Oraon	...	35	11
Yadava	...	39	2
Kumhar	...	35	4
Bhangi	...	19	2
Baloch	...	19	1
Dom	...	16	2
Gond	...	16	1
Bhil	...	11	1
Chamar	...	10	1

more than a sample here, and even the much larger number appearing in Table XIV, where castes are shown by literacy and by province, is merely a brief selection by way of illustrating the great divergence between the literacy of different castes in India and between the same castes in different provinces. Those with a high social status are not by any means always so high in order of literacy, though of necessity the trading classes are always high in male literacy, while the figures of feminine literacy do not necessarily correspond at all to those of masculine, except that they are naturally always less than the latter in the

same group; only among the Baidyas of Bengal and Assam do they reach 50 per cent of the male figure. The primitive tribes generally are very low in the list except in Assam, where the Lushei show how literate an isolated hill tribe may become when given the opportunity. The high literacy of the Malabar Coast is exemplified in this list by the Nayars, but the high literacy of that coast, and of Travancore and Cochin States, in particular, has influenced the figures of some other castes including even those of the Parayans. As regards literacy among exterior castes the proportion per mille literate in each province and the total per mille literate in British provinces and in the States shown in the following table; in India as a whole the exterior castes of Hinduism are a little better equipped than the primitive tribes, but not very much. The details of the castes contributing to the following figures are different in different provinces and are detailed in the appendix on the Exterior

Literacy among the Exterior Castes

Province	Literate per mille	Province	Literate per mille
Baluchistan	65	Total Provinces	16
Bengal	50	Central ,,	15
North-West Frontier Province	36	Coorg	15
Assam	31	Madras	15
Total States	31	Delhi	14
Bombay	28	Punjab	8
Ajmer-Merwara	22	Bihar and Orissa	6
India	19	United Provinces	5

Castes at the end of this volume. The primitive tribes are very many of them greatly handicapped in the acquisition of literacy by the fact that they are so often given their primary education in the language which is not their own. This is not the case in Assam, where the local vernacular is usually used in primary schools in hill districts, a policy the results of which are reflected in the literacy of the Lusheis and Khasis; if the Nagas are backward it is to be put down largely to the incredibly polygbt nature of their habitat where there are as many vernaculars in a small area as will be found in the rest of India outside Assam and Burma. Generally however the policy seems to be to use the vernacular of the adjecent plains for the primary instruction of hill tribes, and the backwardness of the Santals, for instance, in literacy is attributed by Mr. P.O. Bodding, the best authority on that tribes, to that policy. As regards the difficulties in the way of acquisition of literacy by the depressed classes reference may be made to Appendix I to this volume, on the Exterior Castes.

Literacy by age

142. In any comparsion between literacy in 1931 and in 1921 there is one factor that has to be borne in mind which has already been examined in Chapter VI, and that is the method of sorting by age. The number of literates at any given year will not necessarily be proportional to the total number of that year living, and when the years are grouped the upper limit of any group will contain a higher proportion of literates than the lower until majority is reached. The method of sorting therefore will exclude from the group 5 to 10 be a certain number who have appeared in that group in 1921. Some of these will be correctly excluded owing to the preference for the digit 5 which then depleted in some degree the 4 year group in favour of the higher age, but probably more than the correct number will be excluded. This matters little enough as far as real literacy is concerned, as literacy at the age of 5 is only nominal, but the comparative values will suffer a little, the actual position as compared to 1921, being really a little better than the bare figures indicate. The comparable value of the other figures of literacy by age will similarly be slightly impaired in regard to 1921, but the total figure of literacy of course only loses by the small number unduly excluded from the group 5-10 to the group 0-5, and this number can probably be ignored for practical purposes. Subject to this caution we may proceed to compare the figures of literacy at different ages. The following table contains the figures per mille for the different age groups in 1921 and 1931. Except for males aged 10-15 there has in all groups been a marked

Aged	Literacy per mille			
	1921		1931	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
5-10	29	10	59	20
10-15	110	28	109	34
15-20	174	36	195	44
20 and over	171	20	185	28

increase particularly in the proportion of literate females. In the lowest age group the numbers literate have doubled, and the loss in the 10-15 group is only 1 per mille in males, females gaining by 6 per mille. In 1921 also it was this group which showed the lowest ratio of increase over 1911. After group 5-10, group 15-20 shows the next highest increase. It is this group which is usually regarded as most indicative of the growth of literacy, and the lower ratio of the subsequent group is in accordance with normal expectations. Obviously however this need not be necessarily or parmanently the case, since once literacy becomes general the reduction in literacy aged 20 and over will depend on the relative proportion of literate to illiterate deaths and on the extent to which literacy is lost. Generally

speaking it seems likely that the average literate leads a life less exposed to casual dangers than the average illiterate does, while there is less tendency to lose literacy if its use is involved in the calling pursued. It is perhaps natural therefore that among Parsis, the most longlived community in India, and also one which is mostly engaged in trade and unlikely to suffer from loss of literacy, ratio of literacy should be even higher above the age of 20 than it is from 15 to 20, and the same considerations may explain the same phenomenon among male Jews. It is also to be seen however among Burmese and among Indian Buddhists, and the explanations suggested in the India Report 1911 do not seem to account for this satisfactorily. Possibly the case of Burma is met by the fact that literacy is general enough among males to prevent any excess in the ratio literate from 15 to 20, but this explanation cannot be applied to Indian Buddhists.

Literacy in English

143. Literacy in English has increased, that is in ratio to the numbers of the community, among all communities except Christians, where it has failed to keep pace with the growth in numbers. Sikhs have shown the most rapid increase, having very nearly doubled their ratio during the decade, the next highest proportional increase being among Muslims. The proportional figures are too small to show conveniently per 1,000, so figures of literacy in English are given per 10,000 of the population aged 5 and over. The Parsis have 5,041, Jews 2,636, Christians 919, Jains 306, Sikhs 151, Indian Buddhists 119, Hindus 113, Muslims 92 and Tribal 4 persons literate in English in every 10,000 of their population. As regards the provinces the figures are again deceptive unless read with caution. The figures for Baluchistan are fictitious for the reasons given in paragraph 137 above; Delhi and Ajmer-Merwara show high figures on account of the very high proportion of urban population. As pointed out in paragraph 138 above, literacy in English is particularly high in cities on account of the greater opportunities for its acquisition and its greater economic value in use. The high figures of the Andamans and Nicobars are also more or less artificial. Cochin State really leads in literacy in English with 307 so literate per 10,000 of her population aged 5 and over. Coorg follows with 238, Bengal being third with 211. The next is Travancore State with 158. The figures of literacy in English by caste are interesting, as these figures show some divergence from those for vernacular literacy, and the following table may be compared with that given in paragraph 141 above.

Caste	Literate in English per 10,000 of population	
	Males	Females
Baidhya	5,279	1,373
Kayastha	2,418	293
Khatri	1,320	109
Brahman	1,073	86
Nayar	693	137
Lushei	160	9
Rajput	135	5
Viswabrahman	86	4
Jat	70	3
Kunbi	69	2
Mali	53	2
Oraon	46	9
Teli	48	0.5
Momin	43	6
Parayan	25	3
Yadava	23	1
Mahar	15	0.8
Kumhar	16	0.5
Baloch	17	0.4
Dom	9	0.9
Bhangi	6	2
Gond	4	0.4
Chamar	3	0.3
Bhil	1	...

Literacy for franchise

144. It was suggested when the advent of the Franchise Committee was at hand in 1931 that figures should be obtained at the census of all persons who had reached the leaving standard of primary schools, since such statistics would be useful if any decision were made to base the franchise on some such qualification. It was however found impossible to devise any uniform definition of the necessary standard which could be applied to all provinces. Apart from this it is obvious that the possession of a school leaving certificate, or another of a similar description, applied as a test of literacy would leave unqualified a large number of persons who are literate but possess no such certificate. Some will have left school before such certificates were given at all; others will have neglected to sit for the examination; others again will have acquired literacy by private tuition, at a

private institution, or in the course of business. It is very doubtful therefore if such a test could conveniently be made use of as determining the qualification for franchise. Many provinces and states however did undertake an enquiry of this kind and the results are referred to in the provincial reports.

It is perhaps worthwhile in this connection to reproduce here an interesting paragraph from the Central Provinces Report. The Census Superintendent writes :—

> "It seems proper, at a time when franchise problems are claiming much attention, to place on record some figures to show to what extent the various tribes, castes and communities of the province are represented in the local Legislative Council. The table on the next page gives those figures.
>
> The figures tell their own story. The note below recorded after the third Council explains the tendencies, further rapid development of which is evident from the statistics of 1931. The growth of the strength of the non-Brahmin party is obvious. The inadequate representation of the aboriginal tribes is most striking.
>
> The strongest elements purely from the point of view of caste are the Brahmins, Banias and Marathas and Kunbis. Of these, the Maratha Brahmins and the Marathas and Kunbis each represent communities closely bound by castes, customs and geographical distribution, whilst "Other Brahmins" and "Banias" comprise a number of widely differing castes, in origin mostly foreign to the province, and possessing no such common characteristic as would constitute either of them distinct political entities. It will be noticed that Brahmins were most strongly represented in the second Council when the Swarajists decided to participate in the elections for the first time. Solidity of the Maratha Brahmin element will be realised when it is stated that they then held 14 out of the 24 non-Muhammadan seats in the Berar and Nagpur divisions. This number is now reduced to 8. The total number of Brahmins shows a heavy fall from 29 in the second Council tl 17 in the present Council, justifying the inference that a politica consciousness is being evoked in other communities. Even now, however, the higher castes account for over two-thirds of the members elected from general constitutencies, and the only challenge, slight though it is, to their predominance, comes from the Maratha Kunbis who have succeeded in increasing their numbers in the Council and reproduce a powerful element in the electorate. Only one member of the depressed classes has been

Name of caste	Number of elected members in				Number of nominated members in			
	First Council	Second Council	Third Council	Council of 1931	First Council	Second Council	Third Council	Council of 1931
Maratha Brahmin	10	19	11	3	1	...	1	3
Other Brahmins	11	10	6	7	...	1	...	...
Prabhu	2	1	3	...	...	1	...	2
Rajput	1	2	2	...	...	...	...	1
Bania	6	5	9	2	...	...	...	...
Kayastha	2	2	1	2	1	...	...	...
Maratha and Kunbi	7	6	9	2	...	...	...	6
Madrasi non-Brahmin	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
Vidur	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Kalar	1	...	2	2	...	...	...	...
Gond	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Mahar	...	...	...	...	2	2	3	...
Chamar	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Jaiswara	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Barber	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Gwala	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
Other Hindus	3	...	1	4	1	1	...	2
Christian	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	...
Parsee	1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...
Muslim	6	7	7	4	1	1	...	3

elected, and that in the first Council when owing to the boycott there was little competition. The number of members nominated from the depressed classes has been raised from two to four in the third Council, and is made up of three Mahars and one Chamar."

Mr. Shoobert has drawn attention to the inadequate representation of the aboriginal tribes. It should be explained that these tribes number over four million in the Central Provinces and attached states, and form between a fifth and a quarter of the total population, 1,969,214 being adherents of tribal religions while the remainders were returned as Hindus or Christians, but mainly as Hindus.

Comparison with returns of the Education Department

145. Some comparison is necessary between the figures of literacy returned at the census and the figures compiled by the Education Department showing the number of schools, colleges and other educational institutions, the pupils under instruction, and their proposition in different provinces and communities in British India. The departmental figures are taken from

Community	No. of pupils 1931 (Education Department's)	No. per mille of community (1931 census)
Parsis	19,790	205
Europeans and Anglo-Indians	50,084	185
Indian Christians	418,934	120
Sikhs	195,814	61
Buddhists	653,071	52
Muslims	3,357,593	50
Hindus	7,821,007	44
Others	171,915	25
Total	12,688,308	46

Education in India, 1930-31. The first above table therefore shows the number of pupils in 1931 distributed between the different communities and their ratio per mille on the figures of the same communities as obtained by the census returns. These ratios may be compared with the ratio of literacy in the same communities given above in paragraph 140. For calculating the ratio of Buddhists, Burmese have been taken as equivalent to 'Buddhists'

in Burma. The exact ratio is uncertain as there are many literate Shans and other Buddhists in Burma who are not included under the term Burmese, and probably many illiterate also. In any case the number of the Department's pupils in Burma bears little relation to vernacular literacy in that province.

The second table below shows the number of institutions and the number of pupils in them in 1921 and in 1931 and the percentage of variation :—

Institutions	Number in 1921	Number in 1931	Increase in percent
Universities	13	16	
Arts Colleges	154	244	58
Professional Colleges	66	73	11
Secondary Schools	8,816	13,581	54
Primary Schools	158,792	204,384	29
Special Schools	3,946	8,891	125
Unrecognised institutions	33,229	34,879	5
Total	205,016	262,068	28

(Contd.)	Number of pupils 1921	Number of pupils 1931	Increase in per cent
	—	8,189	
	46,737	66,837	43
	12,903	17,002	32
	1,237,656	2,286,411	85
	6,299,836	9,362,784	49
	126,758	315,650	149
	592,975	632.249	7
	8,316,865	12,689,086	53

It is to be noticed that 74 per cent of the pupils are in primary schools, a decline of 2 per cent in the proportion of primary pupils during the decade, so that the already unduly low proportion of primary to secondary education appeared to be falling instead of rising. This aspect of the relation between the two is indicated by the comparative rates of growth. While since 1901 the number of primary schools has increased by 110 %, those of secondary schools have increased by 151% and those of colleges by 71%; again since 1921 the growth in the number of primary schools has

been 28% only, whereas secondary schools and colleges have increased by 51% and 44% respectively. This point is further emphasised by the statement of expenditure. About half the money spent on education is contributed by Government, and of the whole amount, after the exclusion of Direction, Inspection, Buildings, Universities, Boards, Special Schools and Miscellaneous, we find that Rs. 6,82,07,867 are spent on primary education as compared to Rs. 9,15,23,607 on secondary. Admittedly primary education cannot be extended without spending money on secondary education, but the sums spent on the latter and the number of pupils under secondary instruction appear disproportionately high in view the large illiterate population. It has been estimated that about two-thirds of the villages in India have no schools, and for the 500,000 census villages in British territory the Education Department figures show little over 200,000 recognised schools, while the addition of all unrecognised rural schools fails to bring the total to 230,000. The average cost per pupil in all recognised institutions worked out at just over Rs. 23 for 1930, but a separate analysis of the cost of primary and secondary pupils respectively gave Rs. 8-5-6 and Rs 170-4-3 as the cost of each primary and each secondary male pupil for that year, and Rs. 10-3-6 and Rs. 467-3-2 respectively as the corresponding costs of each female pupil (vide Education in India, 1929-1930). The high cost of girl pupils is no doubt due in a great degree to their comparative paucity, and is to that extent unavoidable, but the figures do suggest that the amount spent on secondary education is disproportionate to that spent on primary. The reason is simple enough. As a result of the caste system there is an insistent demand for education on the part of those castes who have been accustomed to look to literacy to provide them with a livelihood, and their tendency under competition is to demand higher education. On the other hand there is no widespread demand among other castes for education at all, and this is illustrated by the tremendous wastage in primary schools. This amounts to two-thirds of the total in the case of boys and a great deal more than that in the case of girls, who are apt to leave school when they are married.

This wastage again explains the inordinate excess of pupils shown by the Education Department as under instruction over the numbers returned as literate aged 5-20 by the census, which might have been expected to show some relation to the number of pupils. The comparative figures are shown in the third following table, which shows also for comparison the number return at the census as literate, 20 years and over. These figures may be regarded perhaps as those of effective literacy, which really only begins at about 20 years, and if they appear unduly low when compared to the figures of pupils under instruction, this must be put down to the wastage

Province	No. of pupils, 1931, per 1,000 of population aged 5 and over	Numbers returned as literate at census per 1,000 of population aged 5 and over	
		Aged 5-20	Aged 20 and over
Ajmer-Merwara	40	38	87
Assam*	44	29	62
Baluchistan**	12	14	40
Bengal	63	34	77
Bihar and Orissa	32	15	38
Bombay	67	33	75
Burma	43	106	262
Central Provinces	33	21	45
Coorg	69	53	123
Delhi	73	46	117
Madras	72	32	76
North West Frontier Province	40	14	35
Punjab	63	20	43
United Provinces	35	17	38

*The figures on which the Assam ratios are calculated include those of Assam States.

**The figures, in which States are again included, are calculated on an estimated figure for the population aged 5 and over, as returns by age and literacy apply only to a small portion of the population.

already mentioned which involves a discard of at least two-thirds of the primary pupils, that is of a half of the total number of pupils. Burma is of course exceptional as most of her literacy is obtained in village monasteries and not through the Education Department. The high figure of Delhi is no doubt due in part to its being mainly an urban area and in part to the concentration thereof ministerial officers of Government and their families.

The Education Department consider that four years at school is required to give permanent literacy, and that the number of literates turned out in any year can therefore be gauged by the number of pupils reading in Class IV in that year. The following figures give their numbers annually for the past decade, making a total of 7,660,419. Of these persons it is considered that at least 20% and possibly as much as 25% would be found

Year			No. of Class IV pupils in British India
1922		...	635,604
1923		...	646,962
1924		...	672,412
1925		...	668,345
1926		...	710,895
1927		...	767,921
1928		...	803,155
1929		...	857,409
1930		...	899,619
1931		...	998,097
	Total	...	7,660,419

unfit for promotion, that is to say they have not been rendered permanently literate, so that almost that portion of them may be regarded as having already relapsed into illiteracy by 1931, resulting in a minimum estimate of 5,750,000 persons rendered literate in British India during the decade. Now the actual increase in the number of literates in British India since 1921 is 4,073,030 a figure which is fairly comparable with the Education Department's estimate when allowance has been made both for the decrease to be replaced among previous literates on account of their normal mortality during the decade and for casualties among the the new literates themselves.

		Total number of literates in India in	
		1921	1931
INDIA	...	22,623,651	28,131,315
Provinces	...	18,654,541	22,727,571
States	...	3,969,110	5,403,744

The next following table, for comparison with the number of pupils per mille of population shown in the third, shows the number of pupils of the Exterior Castes and the ratio of literacy returned by members of these castes at the census. It should be explained that the departmental figures of depressed class pupils have been taken and the ratio per mille at school calculated on the census figures of the Exterior Castes for the various provinces shown. It is possible that the actual castes treated as depressed or exterior do not entirely correspond, and although the difference is likely to be small, except perhaps in Bengal, where the figures include all, "education-

Province	Depressed class pupils (Education Department)	Exterior castes literate at census	Number per mille of exterior castes	
			at school	literate
Bengal	433,686	230,206	54	50
Bihar and Orissa	24,187	32,150	4	6
Bombay	62,903	49,012	36	28
Central Provinces	43,008	43,886	15	15
Madras	352,162	107,817	48	15
Punjab	36,279	10,384	30	8
United Provinces	125,383	42,858	11	5

ally backward" classes, the ratios must be treated with caution on this account. It should be added that the census figures for literacy in exterior castes are not quite complete as literacy figures were not available for about 8 per cent of those treated as exterior. The ratio however has been calculated on the remaining 92 per cent, so that the small deficiency affects only the third column of the table.

The final table on page 107 shows the number of schools for defectives and the number of pupils attending them according to the Education Department's returns, together with the ratio of those under instruction to the total number of blind and deaf-mute aged 0-20 as returned at the census from each province possessing schools of this nature. In addition to the school shown in the statement there is a mission school for the blind at Rajpur, Dehra Dun, for which statistics are not available. The totals in the fourth and seventh columns include certain figures for institutions or for pupils whose precise classification as blind or deaf-mute is unknown. The percentage in the last three columns suggest that the instruction provided by these schools for the defective is virtually irrelevant.

Educated unemployed

146. In response to requests from several quarters it was decided to attempt at the 1931 census to obtain figures of the educated unemployed generally believed to be exceedingly high. The general schedule was already inconveniently crowded, and as the return was intended to touch only those who were fully literate a separate schedule was prepared to be filled in by the enumerated himself and not by the enumerator. The instructions on the form employed stated that the information was required in the interest of the public, of the state and of the unemployed themselves, and it might have been anticipated that a general response would have been made to this effort to obtain information.

Province	Number of schools			Number of pupils			Number aged 0-20 at census			Percentage under instruction		
	Deaf-mute	Blind	Total	Deaf-mute	Blind	Total	Deaf-mute	Blind	Total	Deaf-mute	Blind	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Bengal	5	1	6	237	80	317	17,429	6,332	23,761	1.4	1.3	1.34
Bihar and Orissa	0	2	2	0	79	79	11,068	9,712	20,780	0	.8	.0
Bombay	4	3	7	169	125	294	6,491	5,749	12,240	2.6	2.2	2.4
Burma	1	2	3	24	48	72	3,778	2,753	8,531	.4	1.7	.8
Central Provinces	1	1	2	20	18	38	3,884	5,156	9,040	.5	.3	.4
Madras	3	4	6*	115	198	370	15,869	7,130	22,999	.7	2.8	1.6
Punjab	...	1	2	...	26	62	7,215	6,986	14,201	...	.4	.4
United Provinces	...	1	1	0	12	12	10,424	19,399	29,823	0	.006	.004

*One institution is combined.

The attempt was however a failure, as though many forms were issued very few were filled in and returned to the enumerators, and although some province and states obtained figures which they considered were worth incorporating in their statistical tables, the results for India as a whole were so unsatisfactory that the figures must have been misleading if credited, and it was decided to omit them from part II of the India volume. Such as they are, they are included in this chapter, but the degree of their probable understatement may be inferred by a comparison of the figures with those obtainable from the Education Department. The latter showed that there were, in 1930, 25,716 candidates who passed for matriculation, 13,633 who passed the Intermediate Arts or Science examination, 9,300 who passed examinations for their B. A. or B. Sc., and 1,426 who passed examinations for their M. A or M. Sc., a total of over 50,000 of whom over 10,000 were graduates, and the number of graduates turned out annually in India from 1921 onwards has not been less than 7,000 and has at least twice been over 10,000, making over 55,000 graduates alone between 1921 and 1930, apart from those who have failed to graduate; in compari on with this the 15,000 odd returned as unemployed, most of whom were only matriculates, can hardly be regarded as affording a satisfactory explanation of the outcry there is about the lack of employment for the educated or the vast number of applications that are received for any vacancy for which some educational qualification is necessary.

The reasons given for the failure of the return were various. In Burma the educated but unemployed are largely Indians and mostly to be found in Rangoon. The reason given for their failure to make the return was that they feared use would be made of it to repatriate to India those who were without employment. In Bengal the reason alleged was a fear on the part of the unemployed bhadralok that all that was wanted was a list of them for the police as political suspects while another rumour accused the government of trying to win over the unemployed from the Congress party by false hopes of employment. In Madras the attitude of the recipient of the unemployment schedule was described as "You will not give me employment, why should I fill up your schedule ?" and it seems likely that this feeling, together with a dislike of admitting failure to have found employment and general apathy towards the census is to be taken as the most common cause of the schedule's failure. This failure is not only indicative of the uselessness of expecting to obtain a voluntary return of information failure to comply with which involves no penalty, but a warning against attempts to collect special information on separate schedules returned by the individual as distinct from information collected by an enumerator who retains the schedule himself throughout the proceedings.

Educated Unemployed (i) By Class

Serial No.	Class	Total unemployed	Aged 20-24		Aged 25-29		Aged 30-34		Aged 35-39	
			Unemployed for less than one year	Unemployed for one year or more	Unemployed for less than one year	Unemployed for one year or more	Unemployed for less than one year	Unemployed for one year or more	Unemployed for less than one year	Unemployed for one year or more
1.	Brahmans	4,245	668	1,938	168	903	47	341	14	166
2.	Depressed Hindus	303	21	117	12	90	11	39	3	10
3.	Other Hindus	6,860	1,001	3,082	278	1,597	77	585	23	217
4.	Muslims	2,580	318	1,081	107	683	30	265	14	82
5.	Anglo-Indians	80	13	28	7	9	4	9	2	8
6.	Burmans	37	12	11	2	4	...	2	3	3
7.	All Other Classes*	1,204	195	540	79	258	7	90	9	26
	Total Unemployed	15,309	2,228	6,797	653	3,544	176	1,331	68	512

* Includes 51 Indians (class unspecified) in Burma.

Total English-knowing Unemployed under 20 years				...	2,666
Ditto	ditto	over 40 years		...	488
Total number of Educated Unemployed whose fathers were Soldiers				...	82
Ditto	ditto	ditto	Cultivators	...	6,428
Ditto	ditto	ditto	Artizans	...	340
Ditto	ditto	ditto	Menials or servants	...	983
Total number of Educated Unemployed passed Matric or S. L. C. who thought not totally unemployed failed to obtained employment with which they are satisfied				...	3,123

Educated Unemployed (ii) By Degree

	Degrees	Total unemployed	Aged 20—24	Aged 25—29	Aged 30—34	Aged 35—39
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	British Degrees	30	4	9	11	6
2.	Continental Degrees	3	...	2	...	1
3.	American Degrees	8	2	1	...	5
4.	Other Foreign Degrees	5	...	1	1	3
5.	Indian Degrees					
	Medical	154	20	68	53	13
	Legal	149	14	59	52	24
	Agricultural	21	15	4	2	...
	Commerce	111	55	42	8	6
	M.A.	113	31	44	28	10
	M.Sc.	41	10	18	9	4
	B.A.	1,370	708	474	133	55
	B.Sc.	169	76	72	19	2
	B. Eng. or L.C.E.	42	13	20	7	2
	B.T. or L.T.	35	10	22	3	...
	Intermediate	284	145	80	37	22
	School L.C. or Matric	11,317	7,150	2,902	951	314
	Non-qualified	1,457*	772	379	193	113
	Total Unemployed	15,309	9,025	4,197	1,507	580

* From Bombay, the United Provinces, Baroda and the Western India States.

In connection with educated unemployment and in explanation of what he aptly labels the *cacoethes matriculandi* the Census Superintendent for Assam quotes the following passage from a note written by Mr. Cunningham (many years Director of Public Instruction in A sam) for the Calcutta University Commission in 1917, and it is still true today :—

> "There is a constant conflict in educational policy between the Government and people— the one desiring to improve the standard of education, the other crying on behalf of the hungry who are not fed, for the relaxation of standards and the wider spread of education, good or bad .....The privileged classes do not take to commerce of industry, the unprivileged follow the lead of the privileged. It has been said that in these parts the social order is a despotism of caste tempered by matriculation. It is only by matriculating and taking the part in the after-life which has been reserved for those who have matriculated that the lower castes can raise themselves to consideration. It is only so that they can raise a representation strong enough to fight for their social and political interests; and it is only by education that the privileged classes can qualify themselves to oppose effectively the conservatism of Government On both hands this literary education is what every man desires. And if new ways are opened which lead to profit, the best amongst the lower classes will still press forward, undiverted, to the university unless the new employment is socially esteemed, and certificated by the fact that the bhadralok compete for it."

The Census Superintendent himself sums up the position as follows :—

> "Matriculation has in fact assumed much the same importance in the social sphere as a public school education has done in England. The ambition to 'make a gentleman' of their son is not confined to the parents of the lower classes of any one country and in Assam this takes the form of matriculation and a job which does not involve manual labour. The respectability of a community in Assam, can, in fact, be generally measured by the number of persons belonging to that community who are in Government service."

CENSUS OF INDIA—1941

V—Literacy

Literacy is one of the census results which attracts general attention and interest, since here there is room for development and progress is anxiously watched. Matters like mother tongue, birthplace etc., are more or less set in their proportions and the census could dispense with them altogether as a regular feature. Even means of livelihood which it also in course of development, is in its broad lines more settled.

Literacy is a concept by no means as simple as its one word title would imply and all that a census can do is to indicate very generally the position. It cannot and never could throw any light on quality. No blunt instrument, can, nor should it be expected to. Our census question is the ability to read a letter and write the answer. Clearly within this runs the whole gamut from the finest intellects of the country to the artisan who can sign his name and with difficulty put large characters on a postcard. From the census point of view the former are not really of great interest. It is the latter and still more those who cannot even reach this degree who form the real administrative concern. Had the operations gone the full course I mean to do some sample sorting of literacy against means of livelihood, for I imagine that this would yield information of considerable interest. This can be done for Delhi at any time if Government care to put up the money; for it is only a matter of sending the punched cards through a machine. And one of the great merits of mechanical tabulation is that these cross-enquiries can be done at any time whereas the hand-sorting system is inevitably rigid in the sense that no extensions are possible except by fresh sorting of the original material. That however is by the way.

The answer to this census question as to every other depends on the attitude of the citizen. It is not the Census Commissioner's return but the citizen's and there have been suggestions that a desire to claim a non-existent literacy has had some effect. Within limits the enumerator can apply some check, particularly in rural areas; for there he is acquainted with the people in question. He has no time to conduct examinations however and as stated this is a citizen's return but the broad dimensions are not likely to be seriously out. The direction of any error is undoubted : if the figure needs modification it is downwards.

For British India we have only the totalling by the enumerator of returns for his block. These have not been sorted or checked and all that we have therefore is purely provisional record. We should not have had ven this had we not foreseen contracted tabulation and made the departure of providing for a provisional record of literacy also.

The question was expanded this time to provide for a record of partial literacy, i.e. ability to read only. This was done on a Baroda suggestion and the point is of some interest, for the number of people in India who can read but cannot write is more than is generally realised. The dimensions of this feature of course we cannot give for British India. One Superintendent doubted whether enumerators in reaching their provisional total had always distinguished between the two kinds of literacy, although the instructions were clear enough and it is possible therefore, that these literacy figures may include returns only of partial literacy and to that extent be in excess. Sorting of course would have cleared up this point but until it is done the doubt must remain for British India. The record of States however which have sorted the literacy table does not except in Rajputana indicate any pronounced difference on this account, final literacy running less than one per cent below the provisional figure. The Rajputana variation is much wider, over 8 per cent, and reflects a general lower standard of performance there, apparent in other directions also.

The general table is of pronounced increase, amounting in the case of India as a whole to 70 per cent over 1931 for the whole population. Of this the male increase is 60 and the female 150. There was of course an enormous field for improvement of female literacy. For the provinces the increase is 80 and for the States 70, with the sex components more or less the same. The most remarkable figures are returned by the Punjab which professes a 140 per cent increase to a present literacy of 13. This figure covers 110 increase for males and no less than 390 per cent for females. One would prefer to wait for a definite sorting based on examination of the slips before further discussion of such phenomenal figures. The record for the U. P. seems prima facie more in keeping with general observation and experience. Here the literacy figure is below that of other areas and all major provinces and is still only 8 per cent for the whole population but the decade increase is 80 per cent all over, 70 for men and 170 for women. Even now however the percentage of literacy among women is only 2. Bombay leads the provinces, as it did in 1931 and shows also an increase of over 100 per cent to produce a 30 per cent literacy for males and 9 per cent for females. Bengal follows with 16 per cent all over, representing 25 for males and 7 for females. I have referred only to total figures and percentages on the total population. These of course are not what we should go on since children from 0-5 should be excluded in any effective discussion of literacy.

They can contribute nothing to it and ratios should be based on a net figure which omits them. The contracted tabulation on this occasion has defeated such a purpose.

These figures are left far behind by Travancore and Cochin. These I have grouped together, largely on account of social connection the result is a literacy figure over the whole population of 45 per cent representing 56 for men and 34 for women. The latter figure is four times the highest from any province of British India. It is true the area is much smaller and that more comparable figures could be produced from representative sections of the provinces but there it remains as a tribute to the people and to the administration and culture of that characteristic part of India.

Mr. Narayanan Thampi in Travancore feels that the 1931 record of his State gave too low a figure for literacy and I commend to all interested a study of his excellent synoptic essay. His main argument, with which I agree, is that the 1931 Travancore tabulation proceed on the basis of a definition of literacy (completion of the 4th standard) which altered the general comparison basis. Quite apart from the fact that a substantial number of literates may have acquired their literacy not through a school course at all and the obvious danger that these would be apt to escape the record; or the disturbance of previous practice and that obtaining not only in the State; the conditions of the west coast show this criterion as too severe a test and in fact it illustrates to some extent the danger of trying to use the blunt instrument which is a census for closer elements of subdivision to which it is unsuited. What we ask in the census is the minimum which establishes betweer men a contact not dependent on the spoken word. We cannot in our census question enter into niceties of detail.

This 1931 criterion was not present in any other determination and Mr. Tampi has therefore, graduated the figures on an examination of the whole series and produced a revised literacy element for 1931. Thus the 1931-41 increase for the State becomes instead of 97%, 49% and represents more truly the events of the decade.

Quit apart from the value of the litercy figures as indicating any particular quality of educational development or standard, there is no doubt about the pronounced extension of literacy and the development must be welcomed. It has several causes and the most spectacular one, the recent anti-illiteracy drive as it was called which was a feature mainly of the Ganges valley was not the most powerful. The real origin goes back to the previous decade and it is one of the features of every census that although it deals in ten years, the decade is not the real unit of social development. What we are seeing in 1941 is really the results of the steps taken between 1920

and 1930 to develop schools, recruit teachers and in general strengthen the whole primary education side. The fruits of all this development came in the next decade and have shown themselves now. Had we had the age tables it would have been possible to illustrate this effectively from the figures. So far as the anti-illiteracy drive among adults was concerned the quality of literacy attained was probably very low, whereas the changes consquent on the post-1940 developments go much deeper and affect a different layer of the population.

CENSUS OF INDIA—1961

Literacy

Extract from the Gazetteer of India—1965

Progress of literacy

The progress of general literacy presents a paradox. While the absolute increase over 1951 may, on any showing, be regarded as gratifying, the proportionate increase during the decade has been sluggish throught out the country having increased at an average of 0.8 per cent per year for the general population, 1.0 per cent for males and 0.5 for females. Not excluding Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan among the States which show an appreciable rise, none has even doubled its 1951 rates except perhaps Himachal Pradesh and Manipur where this achievement was possible because of the low population base and the inordinately low rates prevailing in 1951. The statement at Appendix XIII (p. 363) ranks the States in literacy rates for 1961 and 1951.

The more distressing has been low progress of female literacy. Although for the whole of India the female litercy rate is slightly more than half of the general rate, yet there are large regions in the map where it is less than a quarter of the general literacy rate, i.e., less than 60 per 1,000 females. When we remember that even this low rate would have been still lower but for a higher rate in towns and cities situated in these areas, the state of literacy can be properly comprehended. A high order of waste still occurs in the first few years of the primary stage of education, since boys and girls are drawn away to help in cultivation and shepherding in the the middle of term. Vacations in many places are not synchronized with the heavy agricultural seasons of sowing and harvesting. School hours fail to accommodate the rush hours in cultivating household. The persistently large number of single-teacher schools makes school going dull and often unprofitable, while the tardiness in enforcing in compulsory primary educaton and a minimum school leaving age in most areas fails to inject urgency into the community and militates against family limitation, children being regarded as a reserve pool of cheap manpower.

How concentrated literacy is in urban areas, which still further reduces the rural rates, will appear from Table VIII. The figures will also make it clear how even urban literacy tends to concentrate in bigger and still bigger cities.

TABLE VIII

All-India Literacy rates for Cities, Towns and Rural areas in 1961 (excluding NEFA, Goa, Daman and Diu)

Description	Rate per cent		
	Persons	Males	Females
Literacy rates in :			
1. Cities over 1 million	56.40	63.85	46.36
2. Cities of 0.5 to 1 million	49.60	58.38	38.43
3. Cities of 0.1 to 0.5 ,,	48.52	58.51	36.78
4. Cities above 100,000	51.81	60.74	40.65
5. Non-city urban population	42.99*	54.79*	29.73*
6. Urban India	46.94*	57.46*	34.48*
7. Rural India	19.00	29.07	8.54
8. All-India	24.02	34.44	12.95

*Excludes Union Territories except Delhi.

