

EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETIES IN CEYLON DURING THE EARLY YEARS OF BRITISH RULE

IV. THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

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The American missionaries arrived in Ceylon two years after the arrival of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission,¹ and consisted of the representatives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,² an organisation which at the time was "one of the most remarkable associations for the dissemination of Christianity" in the non-Christian world.³ The Society had its headquarters at Boston in the State of Massachusetts. The Board was founded in 1812 and immediately after its foundation six missionaries headed by the Rev. Samuel Newell embarked on their maiden mission to Asia on February 19th, 1812.⁴ They arrived in India at a time the British East India Company was hostile to the Christian missions, and the missionaries on their arrival had a very cold reception. The missionaries were "ordered by the Governor General to leave Calcutta by the same vessel they have arrived",⁵ but later however, this order was withdrawn, and they were asked "to depart to any place not within the jurisdiction of the East India Company".⁶

It was after this event that the American missionaries directed their interest to Ceylon, which was under the British Crown. "Seeing no door open or likely to be opened in countries eastward of British India",⁷ and taking advantage of the opportunities in Ceylon, Newell embarked for Ceylon on 24th February, 1813, and arrived at Galle a few weeks later. On his arrival in Ceylon

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1. For an account of educational work of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission see *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1961.
 2. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was founded in 1812 by the general association of Massachusetts for the purpose of converting 'Heathens' to Christianity, particularly in Asia. The Board included Congregationalists as well as Presbyterians.
 3. Sir Emerson Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon* (London 1850), p. 109.
 4. *Missionary Register*, 1815, p. 137.
 5. Tennent, *op. cit.*, p. 111.
 6. *Missionary Register*, 1815, p. 137.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

Newell was "warmly welcomed by Governor Brownrigg", and in course of time found the country most "peculiarly inviting" for missionary work.⁸ Encouraged and "greatly impressed" by the "distinguished courtesy and kindness"⁹ shewn to Newell by the government of the day, the American Board of Commissioners sent a second batch of missionaries in 1816, with the desire that "the people of the Island might receive the benefits of Christian Instructions". This lot of missionaries included the Rev. Dannel Poor, the Rev. James Richards and their wives, together with the Rev. Edward Warren, and Horatio Bordwell. Together with Newell who was already in the country, the mission totalled six.

Under Brownrigg, the American Mission received every support and protection from the government. With the Governor's approval the American missionaries "entered upon permanent residence in the district of Jaffna".¹⁰ They were permitted "to reside in any part of the district and establish schools".¹¹ Not being English missionaries they were not granted land, but, were authorised to occupy an old Dutch church-house in Tillippallay.¹² After being established in the Jaffna district for some time, the mission was increased by the addition of three other missionaries in 1819.¹³ They were Messrs. M. Winslow, L. Spaulding, and I. Senden.

Missionary work started with the opening of two missionary stations "in the parishes of Tillippallay and Batticotta",¹⁴ but the number was increased to four in 1820 with the addition of Uduvil and Pandeteruppu stations.¹⁵ There were seven ministers in charge of the four stations.¹⁶ Up to this stage the relationship of the government with the American Mission was very cordial but in course of time conditions became unfavourable to the Mission and these will be pointed out below. Despite such difficulties the American Mission was able to do a considerable amount of educational work in the Jaffna peninsular, and by about 1834 the Mission had expanded to seven stations, namely Batticotta (Vaddukodai), Tillippallay, Uduvil, Pandeteruppu, Manipay, Tennerachen, and Vadamarachi, all in Jaffna.

Whatever co-operation the American Mission received from Governor Brownrigg came as usual in consequence of the hearty support he gave to all Christian missions in the country. As pointed out elsewhere,¹⁷ Brownrigg was

8. Arnold Wright, Ed., *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, 1907, p. 281.

9. C.O. 54/69, Enclosure in letter of Brownrigg sent to Sec. of State, 10 March, 1816.

10. C.O. 54/59, American Board to Brownrigg, enclosure in letter of Brownrigg to Sec. of State, 3 Feb., 1816.

11, 12. C.O. 54/74, Letter of Brownrigg to Sec. of State, 31 December, 1819.

13. Ibid.

14, 15. C.O. 54/77, Enclosure in letter of Barnes to Sec. of State, 10 October, 1820.

16. D. Poor, J. Richards, M. Winslow, H. Woodward, I. Senden, L. Spaulding, and B. Meigs.

17. See the account of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission in the *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1961.

happy to see all missionaries, irrespective of their denomination or nationality working in the country for the common aim of propagating Christianity. But, with the change of government after his retirement, and the arrival of Sir Edward Barnes,¹⁸ the attitude changed. From the commencement of his government Barnes was prejudiced against the American Mission in the country, chiefly because it was not a missionary society of England, but a foreign one. In his own words, he felt extremely adverse to the admission of foreign missionaries into the Island. Neither did he see the necessity, nor did he conceive himself as justified in encouraging foreign missions to promote Christianity or education in the colony.¹⁹ This view he expressed on several occasions in his correspondence with the American Missionaries in Jaffna. On one occasion he wrote, "the means we possess in our own country for the conversion of our heathen subjects to Christianity are . . . fully adequate to all purposes".²⁰ The same view is reflected in a letter sent to the American missionaries by the Secretary to Governor Barnes when it was stated: "If the present establishment of Church missionaries (and such are the only missionaries he would wish to see employed in the Island) are proved to be insufficient, in point of number, the Lieutenant Governor is persuaded that time will have the salutary effect of removing the difficulty, especially as the Wesleyan missionaries are readily increasing".²¹

This attitude of Barnes disheartened the American missionaries considerably, and in the absence of any official support to the mission, the progress of its work was curtailed. There is no indication that the attitude of Barnes ever improved. Rather, it worsened and, at a later date he became more or less hostile to the American Mission by refusing admission to the country a lay member of the mission. The lay member was James Garrett, who was sent to the mission as a printer for the printing press the mission was contemplating to establish in Jaffna. When the missionaries sought permission from the Governor for Garrett to stay in Jaffna, it was refused. Furthermore Garrett was ordered to leave the country immediately.

According to the comments of the Secretary of State quoted below, the Home-Government too disliked foreign missions in Ceylon. "Had the question indeed been now to be decided" observed the Secretary of State, "whether an Establishment of foreign missionaries should be formed in the Island, I should have had no difficulty in withholding my consent. But . . . the permission to these gentlemen to reside has originally been given without the previous sanc-

18. Sir Edward Barnes was governor from 1820 to 1831.

19, 20. C.M.S. Archives, Letter of Deputy Secretary to Governor sent to the Secretary, American Mission, 22 September, 1820.

21. *Ibid.*

tion of His Majesty's Government".²² It seems that, Brownrigg sanctioned permission without consulting the Home-Government. On hearing the restrictions and objections placed on the American missionaries by Barnes, the Secretary of State approved such action in the following manner. "I am far from being surprised that you should view with extreme jealousy any establishment calculated under any pretence to give to the subjects of a foreign state an influence over the reputation of a British colony".²³ With regard to the application of Garrett to stay in Jaffna the Secretary of State ordered that permission could be given, but on two conditions. First, the American Mission was to be told that there were to be "no further additions to the mission". Secondly, "vigilant control over the press under Garrett's directions" was to be maintained by the Governor.²⁴ This attitude continued until the relationship was improved on the recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission.

When the motives of the Home-Government for placing restrictions on the American Mission are examined it becomes clear that they were largely political. They feared that foreign missionaries would "foster political objects",²⁵ while engaged in missionary work. The following remarks of the Secretary of State will testify this: "... as it is most desirable not to admit the subjects of a foreign state, to situations in the British colonies in which they must necessarily acquire considerable authority and influence over the inhabitants ... Lord Barthurst²⁶ does not consider it either necessary or expedient to encourage or admit missionaries proceeding from foreign states".²⁷ The same view was expressed when the Home-Government placed restrictions on the admission of new members to the American Mission on a later date. "There are however such serious objections to the unlimited admission of Foreign Missionaries to a residence in the British possessions (and it is difficult to make an exception in favour of any particular nation), that I consider it most desirable for you, to communicate to the American Mission the objections".²⁸

The fact that it was for political reasons that the Home-Government did not allow the American Mission to strengthen its hold in the country is further supported by some observations of the Secretary of State. "As the Government retains the power of dismissing them", wrote the Secretary of State, "from the Island at any moment when they have justly suspected of favouring political objects, I see no objection to their continuing to discharge the important and useful duties".²⁹ Thus this foreign mission, as long as their influence was limited

22, 23. C.O. 55/66, Letter of Sec. of State to Barnes, 25 August, 1821.

24. C.O. 55/66, Instructions of Sec. of State to Barnes, 25 August, 1821.

25. C.O. 54/59, Reply of Sec. of State to letter of Brownrigg, 27 March, 1816.

26. Lord Barthurst was Secretary of State.

27. C.O. 54/59, Letter of Sec. of State to Brownrigg, 27 March, 1816.

28. C.O. 55/63, Letter of Sec. of State to Barnes, 18 June, 1820.

29. C.O. 55/66, Letter of Sec. of State to Barnes, 25 August, 1821.

to the religious welfare of the people, it did not matter. Yet, as a safety measure the Home-Government restricted the unlimited increase in personnel of the American Mission.

In sum, it can be mentioned that the American Mission since the departure of Brownrigg had a difficult time. Both the Ceylon government as well as the British government did not approve the existence of this mission in the country. They worked on the conviction that "the religious wants of Ceylon should be supplied by ministers of the Established Church",³⁰ and not by foreign missions. Despite these obstacles, the American Mission attempted to establish a school system in the Jaffna peninsular and the attainments they made in such work remain outstandingly noteworthy.

As any other Christian missionary society, the American Mission also considered conversion and the spread of Christian instruction as primary aims. The methods adopted for such purposes were similar. Familiarising with the Tamil language and popularising it was considered by the American Mission as a step in the right direction for conversion and disseminating Christian instruction among the inhabitants. Establishing a large number of "free vernacular schools in different villages" of Jaffna, was for the purpose of "raising up a reading population" in Tamil.³¹ There being no provision for printing, the mission had to request other missions like the Wesleyan and the Baptist to provide them with "Tamil Scriptures, Tracts, and school books",³² when they were needed in their schools. What is interesting to note is that amidst such shortcomings too, the American Mission paid interest to the learning of Tamil. Taking interest in native languages, was a feature common to all missionaries of the time.

One aspect in which the American Mission differed from other missions in the country was the interest the American Mission paid to the spreading of the English language among the people with whom they worked. Not that the other missions considered this as less important, but the American missionaries started to teach English on a large scale from the very inception of the mission in Jaffna. The result was that by the time the commissioners of the Colebrooke Commission arrived, they were impressed by the Mission's achievements in this work. This is evident in the remarks of the Commission "... the American Missionaries are fully impressed with the importance of rendering the English language the general medium of instruction and of the inestimable value of this acquirement in itself to the people".³³ According to the views of this mission, by emphasising the teaching of English they aimed at providing

30. C.O. 54/59, Observations of Sec. of State, 27 March, 1816.

31. C.O. 416/6, American Missionaries to the Colebrooke Commission, 2 December, 1833.

32. C.M.S. Archives, Letter of the Rev. Poor to C.M.S. mission, 23 August, 1822.

33. Colebrooke Commission Report, 24 December, 1831, p. 32.

"young natives . . . a literary and scientific education". It was believed that only by an English education could "the treasures of European sciences and literature" be made available to the people. Furthermore, by raising "a large number of English scholars" in the country, the people "could be enlightened" by making it possible to translate into Tamil the important works of English.³⁴

Making use of schools to propagate Christianity was evident in the schools of the American Mission. In all these schools, attempts were made for "teaching the truth of Christianity by means of suitable catechisms, and compends of Scripture". The Bible was "daily read as a class book", and teachers were summoned once a week "to report the state of their schools and be better instructed in what they teach; particularly Christianity". The teachers were also "required to attend church on Sabbath, with all the elder pupils".³⁵ All these indicate the extent to which the religious tone prevailed in the schools of this mission.

Before commencing to discuss the educational establishments of the American Mission, some reference should be made to the contributions this mission made towards the promotion of female education, a field in which the other missions were also actively engaged. The start was made by the American Mission as early as 1817 when girls were "gathered in to the missionaries' families to be taught", by the ladies of the mission.³⁶ Much progress was made in course of time, and by 1823, the mission was in a position to start a free boarding school in Uduvil exclusively for girls.³⁷ Girls were admitted to this school when young, and were instructed in reading and writing Tamil, Arithmetic, Geography and Christianity. English was taught to a few, but all were trained in sewing. The girls were retained in the school until they were "suitably married". By educating girls, the American Mission hoped "to form Christian house-holds in the midst of Heathen".³⁸

The interest of the mission in education becomes clear when it is stated by the mission that the missionaries concentrated "in all their numbers and force" to establish schools in the areas they worked.³⁹ Because it was restricted to Jaffna alone, the American Mission was in a more advantageous position than the other missionaries elsewhere in the country. It is true that a few schools were founded by other missions in Jaffna, but when compared with the schools of the American Mission they were an insignificant number. The success of this mission in forming a school system in Jaffna is indicated in the remarks of

34. C.O. 54/96, Statement concerning a Mission College for Tamul Youth in Jaffna.

35. *Colombo Journal*, 1833, p. 82.

36. Arnold Wright, ed. *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, p. 28.

37. *loc. cit.*

38. *Colombo Journal*, 1833, p. 83.

39. Tennent *op. cit.*, p. 103.

the Colebrooke Commission inserted below ". . . the northern districts of the Island are chiefly indebted to these missionaries⁴⁰ for the progress of education the benefits of which are already experienced. It is but just to recommend that they should receive all the encouragement from the Government to which their exertions, exemplary conduct have entitled them".⁴¹

The educational establishments of the American Mission included several kinds of schools and an institution of higher education. The institution of higher education was referred to as the Seminary of the College. Schools of this mission fell in to three categories which were described as (a) Village or Native Schools, (b) Central Day Schools, and (c) Free or Charity Boarding Schools.

Of these schools, the Village or Native Schools were the most widely distributed. They being schools "always connected with the missionary stations" were generally located "at no great distance"⁴² from the stations. The chart below indicates the stations in which the schools were situated, their number and the number of children attended them.⁴²

Station	No. of Schools	No. of Children
Vaddukodai	18	{ 643 Boys 100 Girls
Tellipallai	19	{ 743 Boys 103 Girls
Uduvil	19	{ 644 Boys 108 Girls
Panderteruppu	12	{ 392 Boys 42 Girls
Manipay	10	{ 190 Boys 130 Girls
Total	78	3095 { 2612 Boys 483 Girls

The Distribution of Native or Village Schools at the year 1833.

The Native Schools of the American Mission were free schools where besides free instruction, even books were provided free.⁴³ These schools were for "raising up a reading population" which could later be "addressed and instructed through the Press".⁴⁴ As such instruction imparted in these Native

40. i.e., the American Missionaries.

41. Colebrooke Commission Report, 24 December, 1831, p. 31.

42. *Colombo Journal*, 1833.

43. C.O. 416/6, Petition of American Missionaries to the Colebrooke Commission, 2 December, 1830.

44. *Ibid.*

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43. C.O. 416/6, Petition of American Missionaries to the Colebrooke Commission, 2 December, 1830.

44. *Ibid.*

Schools was of an elementary nature carried out mainly through Tamil. The following quotation explains clearly the kind of teaching done in them:

The children are instructed in reading and writing Tamul (i.e. Tamil) and in some cases in native arithmetic. Also in the leading truth of Christianity, by means of suitable catechisms, and compends of Scripture. The Bible is daily read as a class book. All the more forward children are formed in to Bible classes and brought together once or twice a week for more particular instructions . . . Three or four hundred leave the schools each year, able to read the principal books put in to their hands.⁴⁵

The success of the Native Schools can be attributed to the efficiency of their administration. They were very closely connected with the mission stations and were always "under the immediate care of a missionary".⁴⁶ They were also frequently examined personally by the chief missionary of the station or by a well qualified assistant. Teachers were required to report to the mission every week on the progress of the schools. The fact that teachers were paid according to the number of children taught, and the attainment they made also contributed to the success of these schools. From the work done in these schools it can be concluded that the primary aim of establishing these schools was a religious one; namely, to make the people able to read in Tamil and make them fit to understand the word of God.⁴⁷

The second category of schools which belonged to the American Mission were the Central Day Schools. There were three such Day Schools in the stations of Vaddukodai, Uduvil, and Manipey. The number of students who attended the Central Day Schools in the year 1832 was seventy five,⁴⁸ comprised of "the most forward lads from other schools".⁴⁹ Thus the students in the Central Day Schools were really those who were selected from the Native Schools on the basis of merit. The mission's aim was to prepare them "to become teachers".⁵⁰ The education imparted in the Central Day Schools was of an advance kind than what was imparted in the Village Schools, and the curriculum included subjects such as Tamil grammar, Arithmetic, and Geography in addition to English which was taught to all children.⁵¹ The Central Day Schools of the American Mission imparted an education which can be regarded as 'secondary': an education which could pave way for employment. Though these schools were in a position to perform a useful function the fact that they were limited in number, and that admission was restricted to children who were selected from the Native Schools circumscribed their service.

45. *Colombo Journal*, 1833.

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*

48. Petition of American missionaries sent to the Colebrooke Commission, 2 December, 1830.

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

The Charity Boarding Schools constituted the third category of schools of the American Mission. All schools where children taken from parents were "fed, clothed, and educated at the expense of the Mission"⁵² came under this category. This explains why even the College or the Seminary which was an institution of higher education was also described by the mission as a Charity Boarding School. In this discussion, however, the College will be treated as an institution of higher education, irrespective of the fact that it was also a Charity institution.

The mission maintained two Charity Boarding Schools in the stations of Tellipallai and Uduvil. The one at Tellipallai was for boys and in the year 1829 eighty five boys were in residence. The one at Uduvil was for girls and in the year 1833 there were fifty girls in residence.⁵³ There is evidence to show that the Charity Boarding School at Uduvil was at a later date converted into a Preparatory School to prepare candidates for admission to the Mission College.⁵⁴ The aim of the American Mission in establishing these Charity Boarding Schools can best be indicated by including a quotation taken from a letter addressed by the mission to the Colebrooke Commission. The letter states, "These establishments containing as they do more than 180 lads and youths who are supported as well as educated, certainly afford some advantages for the cultivation of English, and by giving an impulse to learning and raising up suitable teachers they are preparing the way for the more general instruction of the people".⁵⁵ Besides the teaching of English the curriculum included subjects such as Tamil, Arithmetic, Geography and Christianity. The girls were taught the same subjects but in addition they were trained in needlework.⁵⁶ There is no indication to show that the curriculum of the Charity Boarding Schools differed much from the Day Boarding Schools described above. Moreover they also served as places where teachers of the mission were prepared.

With the provision of such facilities for education on a wider scale than any other mission of the time, the American Mission felt the need to make provision for higher education of the children who were being educated by its schools. This need according to the Mission was enhanced "by the establishment somewhat extensively of free Native Schools and more specially that of Charity Schools".⁵⁷ In order to meet the requirements for higher education the American Mission considered the feasibility of establishing a Mission College or Semi-

52. C.O. 54/77, Memorial of American Missionaries to the Sec. of State, 10 October, 1830.

53. C.O. 416/6, Petition of American missionaries to the Colebrooke Commission, 2 December, 1833.

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Colombo Journal*, 1833.

57. C.O. 416/6, Report on the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827, p. 28.

nary in Jaffna and as a preliminary measure a prospectus of the proposed College was published in the year 1827. This is a valuable document which gives some information about the views this mission had on higher education. Some extracts which have been taken from this publication, and inserted below will give an indication to the aims and objectives of the proposed College:

A leading object will be to give native youth of good promise a thorough knowledge of the English language . . . it will open to them the treasures of European science and literature and bring fully before the mind the evidence of Christianity . . . the learnings of the West should as fast as possible be brought in to the language of the East. The most important works of English must be translated . . . To accomplish all a large number of English scholars must be raised up from among the natives.

Another object will be the cultivation of Tamul (i.e. Tamil) literature . . . in order to maintain any good degree of respect among the native inhabitants it is necessary to understand their literature . . . it is particularly desirable that some at least if not all of those who are set for the defence or employed for the propagation of the Gospel should be able to read and understand them . . . Sanskrit. The language which is the repository of Eastern literature, science and religion may be of much use to a selected few of established principles and piety. Hebrew . . . It will also be an objective to give to a several number a knowledge of Hebrew, the Latin, and Greek may be added . . . In addition to these languages, it is desirable to teach . . . the sciences usually started in Europe and America. The course at present contemplated will embrace more or less extensive Geography, Chronology, History (civil and ecclesiastical), Mathematics, Christianity, Principles of the mind, and natural and Revealed Religions.⁵⁸

By establishing a College or Seminary on these lines, the American Mission hoped "to give a new tone to the whole system of education in the district, and exert an influence which would be felt in every school and village".⁵⁹ There were also spiritual advantages, for it was presumed that, through such an institution "light could be thrown on the evidence of Christianity" by teaching children "to understand the nature of the proof to be derived from prophecy and miracles". At the same time, the Mission College could train Christian teachers "from among the people",⁶⁰ and overcome the difficulty of getting teachers from America. This in fact was very important, particularly due to the restrictions which had already been imposed by government on the admission of new members of the mission into the country.

Although the mission was keen on establishing the College as early as possible objections from government prevented such action. This is indicated in a letter sent by the mission to the Colebrooke Commission in the following manner ". . . when the plan was laid, it was in the hope that the local government would afford such a degree of patronage as would considerably facilitate its accomplishments; we soon learnt it is time that this hope would not probably

58. C.O. 54/96, Statement concerning the Mission College for Tamul and other youth in Jaffna, 1823.

59. *Ibid.*

60. *Ibid.*

be realised".⁶¹ It would be interesting to discuss the objections made by the government in greater detail.

On the fourth of March 1823, the American Mission made an application to Governor Barnes seeking government approval and the extension of financial support to the proposed Mission College. Governor Barnes while refusing such permission pointed out to the mission the objections of his government to the establishment of the College in the following manner:

1. In the first place much inclined as the Government of the Island is, to adopt and patronise any measure tending to the religious and moral improvements of its subjects, its pecuniary resources are really too limited to an undertaking the expenses of which appear likely to be of very considerable amount.

2. . . . more particularly does it behove this government to abstain from any such undertaking in the Island from the circumstances of the establishment of the Bishop's College at Calcutta, to the benefits of which the natives and the descendants of Europeans in the Island . . . are admissible in any number.

3. There is another topic . . . to bring to your consideration as affecting the probable permanency of your College, should it be established. The instructions of His Majesty's Secretary of State you are aware limit the number of your mission to the gentlemen now comprising it, and there appears no reason to suppose that the restrictions will be removed.⁶²

There is evidence to show that even the Home-Government was against the establishment of a College by the American Mission in Ceylon. In reply to an appeal made by the American Mission to the Secretary of State so as "to obtain the consent of the British Government on the establishment of a Mission College in Ceylon"⁶³ the latter raised objections in the following manner:

The establishment of the American Mission in Ceylon appears to have arisen from their having being refused an establishment by the East India Company . . . and upon that refusal they proceeded to Ceylon when Sir Robert Brownrigg at that time governor, allowed them to remain.

His Majesty's government approved of Sir Brownrigg's conduct, but it was afterwards given to be understood that no increase of the number was to be permitted to the general principle that the Education of His Majesty's subjects in Ceylon ought to be conducted by British teachers . . . The formation of a Seminary of a higher description, has been recommended by the Governor of Ceylon, and is under consideration, but it is essential that such an establishment ought to be British and placed under the special care and protection of the Governor . . . Under these circumstances you will, I hope excuse my declining to give encouragement to the Establishment which you propose.⁶⁴

Thus Governor Barnes as well as the Secretary of State did not approve the proposal of the American Mission. No further explanation is necessary to show that such objection came as a result of prejudice the authorities had on the American Mission, and were primarily due to political reasons. As pointed out earlier, although this mission was fortunate to establish itself in Ceylon

61. Letter of American missionaries to the Colebrooke Commission, 17 September, 1823.

62. C.O. 416/6, Letter of Chief Secretary to Governor sent to the American Mission in Jaffna, 26 March, 1823.

63. C.O. 55/70, Letter of American Mission to Sec. of State, 2 Feb., 1826.

64. C.O. 55/70, Letter of Sec. of State to the American Board of Commissioners, 20 May, 1826,

by arriving during the tenure of Governor Brownrigg, it faced difficulties later, and the government laid every obstruction possible to curtail the activities in which the missionaries were engaged. The proposal for the establishment of a College of higher learning also received same treatment.

This discouragement could not however destroy the enthusiasm of the mission to start a College for higher education of the inhabitants. Amidst all difficulties the mission endeavoured to found the College on a less ambitious scale than had originally been proposed. A College was started by bringing together "the most forward lads" who "were selected from the Boarding Schools" of the mission.⁶⁵ It was established in Vaddukodai and came to be known as the Vaddukodai Seminary.⁶⁶ The founding of the Seminary or the College has been described in the following manner. "This was established at Batticotta (at Vaddukodai) in the district of Jaffna . . . The Rev. Daniel Poor A.M., was constituted the Principal and Gabriel Tissera, a well qualified native was made English and Tamil Tutor. Assistant teachers were also appointed. A visiting Committee was appointed for the school".⁶⁷

According to the American Mission, the Seminary established at Vaddukodai provided "for further education of the most promising youths who have made considerable progress in the higher branches of education",⁶⁸ and was the only institution of the mission which gave some kind of higher education. As such, the teaching of English was considered an important task of the College. Mode of teaching in the Seminary was the system described by the mission as "a system of instructions by monitors", which apparently was Dr. Bell's system. Thus in addition to the teachers of the College there were in the year 1832 ten monitors helping in teaching.⁶⁹ On foundation, the Seminary had "48 Tamil lads of good caste",⁷⁰ who were selected on the results of an admission test in English and Tamil.⁷¹ By 1832 the number of students in the Seminary went up to 148 of whom 140 students free tuition, board and lodging.⁷² The Seminary was a Charity institution where everything was provided free of charge.

The curriculum of the Seminary was one which the mission described as "a Literary and Scientific Course".⁷³ It included Tamil, English, Geography,

65. C.O. 416/6, Report of the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827.

66. The Batticotta Seminary so founded was closed in June, 1855. On November 9th the same year a college under the name the Jaffna College was started in the same premises and possibly in the same buildings.

67. Report of the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827.

68. C.O. 54/104, Letter of Barnes to Sec. of State, 11 March, 1829.

69. Report of the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827.

70. *Ibid.*

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Colombo Journal*, 1833.

73. Report of the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827.

Chronology, History, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Mechanics, Optics, Astronomy and "most useful branches of Native Philosophy".⁷⁴ The literary course included the languages, and, the scientific course the other subjects. The latter was "prosecuted mostly in English under the immediate direction of Mr. Poor".⁷⁵ With the expansion of the Seminary a Theology class was started. With such a curriculum, the education given at the Seminary became broad and liberal, than it would have been with a curriculum more religious as it was the case with some higher educational institutions of the other missions in the country at the time.⁷⁶

A Preparatory school to coach children who were to be admitted to the Seminary was started at Tellipallai in June 1827. What really happened was, that, the Charity Boarding School at Tellipallai was converted into a preparatory school, by the addition of twenty students to the eighty who were already there. It is recorded that these twenty students were "selected from more than one hundred brought on an appointed day by the parents".⁷⁷

In the light of the above observations it is possible to come to certain conclusions about the views the American Mission had on higher education. The fact that despite all difficulties and obstructions from government, the American Mission endeavoured to establish a College show the interest they had in the importance of providing higher education. The curriculum of the Seminary was a broad one which took into its sphere a wide variety of subjects including sciences, mathematics and philosophy. They were democratic in the manner in which admission to the Seminary was made. In contrast to the Wesleyan Mission, and even the Church Mission who restricted facilities of higher education to a privileged few, the American Mission admitted to the Seminary all those who were able to profit by such an education.

Before concluding this account of the educational activities of the American Mission in Ceylon during the early years of British rule, some reference should be made to the development of a favourable attitude towards the American Mission by the Government during the later years. It was this change in the Government's attitude which resulted in the achievements this mission made in the later years. The Colebrooke Commission which introduced some reforms to the system of education, paid special attention to the removal of the obstacles which had been placed on the American Mission hitherto. It was recommended that the American Mission "should receive all encouragement from the Government".⁷⁸ Since this date the attitude of the government to the American Mission changed for good, and the mission was in a better position to work without any restriction, and thereby establish a school system of their own in the Jaffna peninsula.

74. *Colombo Journal*, 1833.

75. *Ibid.*

76. This point becomes clear when the provision for higher education by the Wesleyan Methodist and the Church Missionary Society are compared with that of the American Mission.

77. C.O. 416/6, Report of the American Mission Seminary in Jaffna, 1827.

78. Colebrooke Commission Report, 31 December, 1831.