

**RAJKUMAR COLLEGE,
RAIPUR, CENTRAL
PROVINCES. A SKETCH**

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Rajkumar College, Raipur, Central Provinces. A sketch by G. D. Oswell

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G. D. OSWELL

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA
Rajkumar College,

RAIPUR,
CENTRAL PROVINCES.



A SKETCH

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UNIVERSITY OF
CALCUTTA

RAJKUMAR COLLEGE,

RAIPUR,

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

A SKETCH of the history of the Rajkumar College at Raipur would not be complete without some account of the old institution which existed for some twelve years at Jubbulpore, and which was known as the Rajkumar School.

This institution was a mere appanage of the Government high school, and it was practically nothing more than a hostel or a boarding-house. Even as it was its buildings could not be described as altogether suitable for the use they were put to, nor was their close proximity to the city an advantage. The Government high school, moreover, being at the extreme limit of the city, necessitated the pupils of the institution passing right through the city to get to their school.

The maximum number of pupils on the rolls at one time was twenty-two, but this number had dwindled down to five during the last year of its existence at Jubbulpore. A variety of reasons were in operation demanding its removal from Jubbulpore to a more suitable locality: the most important of these were its failure to carry out the objects of its founders and its distance from the feudatory States of Chhattisgarh, from which the bulk of its pupils were drawn. In the strictures passed on the institution in its later years by Sir A. P. MacDonnell and in the remarks made by Mr. Fraser may be found some of the reasons which were assigned for its failure. Writing of the institution as far back as 1892, Mr. MacDonnell, as he then was, says: "The teaching is poor, the discipline bad, and the tone of the place below par:" and he added: "We do not want our young chiefs and zamindars to be educated out of native ways into a poor

copy of second or third-rate English ways." Mr. Fraser, in writing to the then Chief Commissioner at the close of the year 1891, laid special stress on the importance of an improvement in mental training, moral training, and dress : and he attributed the failure of the institution in Jubbulpore to the following, amongst other, causes : to the pupils having their meals in their own separate rooms with no one near them except servants : to their spending their holidays, and Sundays in loafing about aimlessly or sleeping in their own rooms : and to their sleeping in separate rooms in the company of servants.

The only alternative that seemed to present itself to the authorities of that time was to abolish the institution altogether, and to send the young chiefs to Ajmere, to the Mayo College there. However, other counsels prevailed, and negotiations were commenced for its removal to another place more central and therefore more convenient for the chiefs.

Before coming to this, however, I have a few remarks to make on what I consider to have been the principal defect of the old institution apart from those already given : I have had an opportunity of meeting from time to time several of the alumni of the old institution after its removal ; five of them, indeed, became my own pupils in the new institution, one I travelled with for some weeks as his guardian, and another used to pay me occasional visits : of one and all of these I have a very pleasing recollection : they were to all outward appearance gentlemen, and the majority of them manly withal, but there I must say their good points ended : what they were lacking in was *morale*, and on looking back I am bound to come to the conclusion that one if not the chief and only cause of this was their association with boys of a lower social order at the Government high school. It has been my experience gained in three Provinces that the *morale* of the average Government high school has not hitherto been of a high standard. And, parenthetically, I may here remark, that I have nothing but praise for the new regulations now being introduced by the Director of Public Instruction of these provinces, with the view of improving that *morale*. To return : it was early in 1892 that the decision was come to to remove the old institution to a more central position, and Raipur was decided on as the most

central and the most suitable in many ways, more especially in its proximity to the feudatory States of Chhattisgarh and to the more important zamindaris of that division.

Certain preliminary difficulties had to be overcome, the most important of all being that ever-present one of the provision of the necessary funds, and another, almost of equal importance, the selection of a suitable head. It was at first estimated that 1½ lakhs would be required, of which Rs.75,000 would be required for the necessary buildings, and Rs.75,000 for an endowment. The monthly upkeep of the institution was estimated at Rs.13,000, the calculation being based upon the supposition that the numbers would not exceed 12 at any rate at first: the fear being expressed at the time that to enlarge the numbers to even 30 would necessitate going to a low stratum of malguzars, whereby the tone of the new institution would be endangered, as the school would take its tone from the majority of its inmates.

The new scheme having been finally decided on, Mr. Fraser was entrusted with the task of finding the funds and locating a site. An excellent site was secured at the west end at Raipur: no better choice could have been made, and the experience of some years has fully justified the wisdom displayed in its selection. There were already existing on the site excellent buildings, which only required certain alterations and additions to adapt them for the purpose they were required for.

The provision of the necessary funds presented graver difficulties. Mr. Fraser first propounded the view that the Government should itself contribute something towards the upkeep of the college, and that a considerable portion of the revenues of each State should be put aside for the education of the young chiefs, and he made the further suggestion that the sons of wealthy native gentlemen of position, who might desire to bring their sons under the influence of a good European teacher, might have the opportunity of doing so by being allowed facilities to send their sons to the college.

Before commencing his campaign for the collection of funds, Mr. Fraser wrote as follows to the Chief Commissioner: "I have personally seen and talked to a large number of such of the owners of contributing States or zamindaris as

have come to years of discretion : they thoroughly approve of the contributions proposed in their cases. The feeling is strong in this division in favour of having the college at Raipur."

The principle was thus accepted that the funds were to be provided by contributions from the Chhattisgarh feudatory States and the zamindaris.

The status of the new institution had then to be decided on, and it was practically resolved that its status should be that of a high school and that it should be affiliated to the Allahabad University : the staff to be competent to teach up to the Entrance examination. In the light of recent reforms in the curriculum that have been proposed it is interesting to note that the original scheme contemplated such subjects as riding, music, drawing, farming, land surveying, and the management of an estate being included in the curriculum ; only it was contemplated as a part of the scheme for finding funds towards meeting the requirements of such a practical curriculum, that such subjects as riding, music, and drawing should be provided for by charging extra fees, while for the other subjects all surplus fees were to be utilised in providing the instruction required.

The liberal scale, moreover, on which the original scheme was devised may be gauged from the fact that it contemplated a billiard-room, a swimming bath, and a racquet court, and I may add what I have often considered a desideratum, a guest-house for the reception of relatives and friends of the boys on occasional visits. The religious requirements of the wards were not forgotten ; full scope was to be given to what the wards conscientiously believed to be the requirements of their religion. Such then was the scheme in embryo. I now come to its actual inauguration, with the necessary limitations involved by paucity of funds preventing the scheme being carried out in its entirety, as originally so liberally and so practically devised :—

I have already mentioned how Mr. Fraser undertook to collect the funds. As the result of his vigorous prosecution of this self-imposed duty, nearly two lakhs of rupees were actually collected. A list is here given of the principal contributions.

To take the feudatory States first:—

			Rs.
Khairagarh	..	..	.. 30,000
Bestar	..	..	.. 25,000
Kalahandi	..	..	.. 15,000
Patna	..	..	.. 12,500
Kawardha	..	..	.. 9,000
Nandgaon	..	..	.. 10,000
Raigarh	..	..	.. 10,000
Kanker	..	..	.. 7,000
Sonpur	..	..	.. 5,000
Sarangarh	..	..	.. 5,000
Sakti	..	..	.. 2,000
Bamra	..	..	.. 1,000
Chhuikhadan	..	..	.. 1,000
Rairahkol	..	..	.. 500

The principal zamindaris contributed:—

Pandaria	..	..	.. 25,000
Bindra-Nawagarh	..	..	.. 15,000
Borasamar	..	..	.. 6,000
Phuljhar	..	..	.. 5,000
Pendra	..	..	.. 5,000
Khariar	..	..	.. 1,000
Dondi-Lohara	..	..	.. 1,000
Gandai	..	..	.. 3,000
Sahaspur-Lohara	..	..	.. 500
Zamindars in different States	..	..	.. 7,500

It was wisely determined that at least half of this total sum should be invested to serve as an endowment: this endowment now stands at Rs.1,12,200 at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The old rate being 4 per cent., the rate having been reduced in 1895 led to a corresponding loss of income by the college. The actual income now derived from this source of endowment falls a little short of Rs.4,000 annually.

As regards the buildings, a residence for the principal already existed in the bungalow occupied by the commissioner, which was purchased from the firm of R. B. Bunsillal for Rs.15,000. The nucleus of the main college building already existed in the handsome cutcherry building, which had at one time done duty as the official residence of the Resident: this was purchased for a sum of Rs.25,000. A new story was added to it, and various ranges of kitchens and dining-rooms were provided at a cost of some Rs.60,000. The later acquisition of the old circuit-house, which stood in front of the old cutchery, as a residence for the principal, has added greatly to the efficiency of the college arrangements.

The old residence of the principal is now let as a residence for the Political Agent, and is a permanent source of income to the college.

Arrangements are now in progress for an alteration in the present system of cook-rooms and dining-rooms, the present arrangement of which has at no times commended itself to the principal, nor, I may add, to those of the chiefs and zamindars who have inspected them. Since the original buildings were secured, other blocks have from time to time been built by certain States wishing to provide something better for the accommodation of their wards than that provided by the college: these blocks are the Gangpur block, now in the occupation of the young chief of Udaipur, from Chhota Nagpur, the Bhopalpatnam block, and the Bastar block, now in the occupation of the Chhuikhadan wards. A bungalow has also been purchased in the immediate vicinity of the college as a residence for the members of the resident staff. A porter's lodge has also been added, and the grounds completely fenced in, thereby also adding very materially to the efficiency of the disciplinary arrangements of the college. Not the least important of the recent additions have been the excellent covered-in gymnasium, towards which the Education Department liberally contributed Rs.1,000, and the riding-school. There is also a building which does duty as a cricket pavilion.

The grounds allotted to cricket, tennis, and football are all spacious and level: trees have been planted at regular intervals all round them, and every effort has been made to beautify the grounds, which are already beginning to present a very different appearance from their former bare aspect. Water and soil have been the great difficulties to contend with in making a garden. Every atom of soil has to be imported from outside, and water as a rule can only be obtained at very high rates from the local pipe supply. However, what could be done in this respect has been done, and more will be done as funds permit of it.

The next thing to be done, after the question of funds and buildings had been more or less satisfactorily disposed of, was to provide a constitution for the college, and to issue a prospectus. In drawing up a constitution for the college