

CHAPTER I

EVOLUTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
INSPECTION SYSTEM IN BRITISH INDIA
(1854 - 1947)

The school inspection system in India began with the Education Despatch of 1854 which sought for the first time to provide a comprehensive scheme of national education in India. It aimed at showing how a national scheme could be brought within the financial capacity of the country and proposed an educational organisation to afford unity with elasticity and control with freedom. The policy formulated by the Despatch of 1854 gave the precise principles on which future development in the education system was to be planned. It was this foundation that gave both

vitality and co-herence to the Indian education system. And even to-day the basic principles of the Despatch -- control of schools by inspection -- has remained largely unchanged. This background must be kept in view in any survey of the history of school inspection in India during the period of 1854 - 1947. Historians of Indian education have followed different schemes of survey for the period and have divided the given duration into several stages according to their objectives. The investigator intends to give only a brief perspective and precise context in which the system of school inspection evolved in India. Hence this period is divided into two major stages of evolution as under:

1. Origin and Establishment of the Secondary School Inspection System (1854 - 1900).
2. Working of School Inspectorates in Provinces. (1901 - 1947).

Each stage comprises the period of about half a century. The main features of each period are described in the following pages.

Origin and Establishment of the Secondary School
Inspection System (1854 - 1900)

It was the Despatch of 1854 which created the inspectorate of schools in the Provinces of British India. The authors of the Despatch of 1854 remarked:

An adequate system of inspection will also, for future, become an essential part of educational system; and we desire that a sufficient number of qualified inspectors be appointed, who will periodically report upon the state of those colleges and schools which are now supported and managed by Government. They will conduct or assist at the examination of the scholars at these institutions, and generally, by their advice, aid the managers and school masters in conducting colleges and schools of every description throughout the country. They will necessarily be of different classes, and may possess different degrees of requirements, according to the higher or lower character of the institutions which they will be employed to visit; but we need hardly say that, even for the proper inspection of the lower schools, and with a view to their effectual improvement, the greatest care will be necessary to select persons of high

character and fitting judgement for such employment.¹

The above statement indicates that the appointment of inspectors originated with the creation of Education Departments in the provinces which were made solely responsible for aiding schools financially and academically. The idea behind the establishment of the school inspection system was to evaluate the progress of secondary education every year and to assure adequate returns for the public money spent on education. Besides, these officers were enjoined to regulate the growth of secondary schools and improve the standard of quality of education in them. Hence it was suggested by the Despatch that inspectors should be the persons who possessed sufficient academic qualifications and required calibre. Selection of inspectors, therefore, became an important feature of the whole scheme.

Selection of Inspectors.- The Despatch laid down the scheme of selection for the directors and

¹ Wood's Education Despatch, 1854, para 18.

inspectors of schools in the following words:

In the selection of the heads of the Educational Departments, the inspectors and other officers, it will be of the greatest importance to secure the services of persons who are not only best able, from their character, position and acquirements, to carry our objects into effect but who may command the confidence of the natives of India. It may perhaps be advisable that the first heads of the Educational Departments as well as some of the inspectors should be members of our Civil Service, as such appointments in the instance would tend to raise the estimation in which these officers will be held, and to show the importance we attach to the subject of education, and also as amongst them you will probably find the persons best qualified for the performance of the duty. But we desire that neither these officers, nor any others connected with education, shall be considered as necessarily to be filled by members of that service to the exclusion of others, Europeans or Natives, who may be better fitted for them; and that in any case, the scale of their remuneration shall be so fixed as publicly to recognise the important duties they will have to perform.²

² Ibid.

It is apparent that much significance was attached to the proper selection and appointment of the inspectors of schools so that the quality of secondary education could be controlled and improved. It was rightly considered that such officers should enjoy the necessary status and command sufficient respect to perform their duties satisfactorily. Hence, the suggestion was made in the despatch to appoint them from among the members of the Civil Service and to offer them a suitable scale of remuneration.

It is also seen from the above statements that the Court of Directors attached a considerable importance to the subject of education; and within two years the new system of inspection was fairly at work. With the increase in territories new Provinces were created in India from time to time, and it became a rule to create a new education department as soon as a new Province was formed. The Department of Education was required, among its other duties and functions, to supervise and inspect the working of schools, both the Government and the private ones which applied to the Department of Education for grants-in-aid

or recognition. The Department was also required to take through school inspectors, all such steps as were necessary to improve and expand education. Therefore, an inspection code was drawn up by the Director of Public Instruction (D.P.I.) in each Province to establish a sound system of school inspection.

It was firmly believed by some of the earlier administrative authorities of the Education Departments that the inspection of schools was inevitable and important for a sound educational system in India. The prevailing conditions in India then necessitated the office of inspector of schools to supervise, control and guide the schools of the country. In the absence of such an officer, it seemed schools were not able to fulfil the purpose of education envisaged by the Board of Directors in India. In this connection the remarks of Mr. Erskine, the D.P.I. of the Bombay Province, on the significance of inspecting officers in this country are worth noting.

Here whatever is not done by the servants of the Government, is done badly or rather not done at all. School committees, as a rule, are utterly inefficient, and apathetic school masters without the dread of the inspector

would continue to be what they were in old times. We have nothing corresponding to the Parish Clergyman, the Squire, the vestry or the well-to-do unoccupied people, who in England are always ready to busy themselves on behalf of public improvement, nor have we here the religious impulse which leads private societies in England to accumulate large funds and maintain vast educational establishments. The Government Inspector, therefore, with his subordinate staff becomes of vital importance to education and constitutes the essential condition of such improvement as is now being effected in the efficiency of our local schools.³

Growth of the Inspection System.- The Despatch of 1854 ushered in a new era in Indian education. The period 1854 to 1882 witnessed a great expansion of education in the country. And as there was no separate system of inspection of secondary schools and primary schools, the same inspectors were to inspect both primary and secondary schools. Hence, they had heavy duties. Besides, the Department of Education also

³ D.P.I.'s Report for the year 1857-58, Bombay Province, 1859, p.6.

controlled through the inspectors private schools by means of grant-in-aid. The number of such schools was growing. The position of such schools in 1882 is shown in Table I.

The Despatch emphasised the point that Indians were, in general, incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts. The Court of Directors, therefore, sanctioned a considerable sum of money to meet the growing need of the education of the people. The provision of grant-in-aid led to the establishment of a large number of secondary schools in all Provinces; and they were under the efficient system of inspection, for schools would be eligible for grants-in-aid only if they were to follow and were willing to be governed by the regulations prescribed for secondary schools by the Department of Education. In other words, the inspector would recommend grants-in-aid for those schools which:

- (i) gave a good secular education;
- (ii) possessed good local management;
- (iii) agreed to submit to inspection by the Department of Education and abide

TABLE I
PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS PROVINCEWISE IN 1882*

Serial Number	Province	Private Secondary schools
1	Assam	70
2	Bengal	605
3	Bombay	53
4	Central Provinces	13
5	Madras	1,116
6	N.W.Province and Oudh	121
7	Punjab	120
Total		2,098

*Indian Education Commission's Report, 1883.

by such other conditions as were prescribed by the Department of Education; and (v) charged a fee, however small, from the pupils.

Inspectors were required to submit to the Director of Public Instruction their reports of the proceedings periodically. Such reports were to be embodied in the annual reports of the heads of the Education Department, which were to be transmitted to the Board of Directors of the East India Company, together with statistical returns to be prepared in similar forms in all the parts of India.

Appointment of Indians as school Inspectors.-

Generally, European members of the Civil Service were chosen for the appointment to the post of inspectors. The Indian Education Commission of 1882 recommended that " it be distinctly laid down that native gentlemen of approved qualifications be eligible for the post of Inspector of Schools and that they be employed in that capacity more frequently than has been the case hitherto."⁴ This recommendation was paid attention to by the Provincial Governments. In Madras a new appointment

⁴ Review of Education in India, 1886, p.5

of inspectorship was conferred upon an Indian; and during the year 1885 to 1886, on three occasions temporary vacancies were filled by Indian deputy inspectors. In Bombay, the Government expressed its readiness to appoint competent Indians as opportunity occurred and in 1885 two out of five inspectorships were held by Indians. On this point, Mr. Lee-Warner the D.P.I. of Bombay wrote in his report for 1884-85 the following remarks:

We require longer experience before we can decide on the advantages of increasing their number (Indian Inspectors). The work of an average inspector requires the full confidence of all educational agencies, some of which are very sensitive, and a genuine sympathy with private effort. I have been much disappointed at the attitude taken up towards aided schools by many of our native inspectors. It is perhaps hard to require from a Hindu gentleman, proudly conscious of the superiority of his own caste and deeply attached to the Government system, a real interest either in the efforts of the lower orders of Hindu society or in the Mohammedan schools; while in the later developments of educational progress he

lacks that personal acquaintance with the technical or special schools of Europe which helps an inspector to encourage and guide education in new channels; at the same time the experiment is widely being made; and if the difficulties of native inspectors (Indian inspectors) are sympathetically appreciated, I trust that it will ~~be~~ in the end be successful.⁵

During 1882-1886, in Bombay, two Indians were appointed ^{as} inspectors of schools and promoted to the superior graded service. In Bengal, again, joint inspectorships were created, one for each of its nine divisions, the duties of which closely resembled those performed by district inspectors; and these were held in every case by Indian Officers. In the North Western Provinces and Oudh, it was proposed that four of the inspectorships held by European officers in the superior grades should be replaced by ten Indian inspectors on lower salaries. Some Indians were also appointed as inspectors in many other Provinces in place of European officers.

⁵Review of Education in India, 1886, p.113.

With regard to the subordinate inspecting staff, the Indian Education Commission of 1882 recommended that all native and other local energy should be relied upon to foster and manage all education as far as possible, but that the results must be tested by departmental officers and therefore the inspecting staff should be increased so as to be adequate to the requirements of each Province and that the remunerations of the subordinate inspecting officers should be reconsidered in each Province, with due regard to their enhanced duties and responsibilities.⁶ But it was also emphasised that as the Department withdrew from pushing its own institutions, its machinery for inspection would require strengthening, since a grant-in-aid system postulated a thorough inspection of all institutions brought under it.⁷

Inspection Codes. - The Hunter Commission recommended that in every Province a code should be drawn up for the guidance of inspecting officers. It is seen in Government Reports that miscellaneous instructions on the subject of inspection had been from

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

time to time issued by Provincial Governments and the D.P.I.'s, but it was felt by the Commission that inspection would be rendered much more thorough and efficient, if these scattered orders and traditional practices were embodied in a code. Such a code, it was recommended, should prescribe in detail the routine which an officer should follow in visiting a school, the manner in which his inspection should be conducted; the points to which the inspector's attention should be directed, apart from the examination of pupils and the form in which his inspection report should be drawn up.

Fortunately, these recommendations of the Commission were, in general, readily accepted by the Provincial Governments, and therefore the Provincial Departments of Education began to carry out this project. A close study of the Education reports reveals that by the end of the nineteenth century almost all Provinces had their new revised codes. The presence of codes systematised the inspection system in India. Besides this, some other changes were also made during this period.

Further Changes in the School Inspectorate.- In respect of school inspectorates further changes were made following the recommendation of the Public Service Commission of 1886. This was effected by a resolution of the Government of India, dated 23rd July, 1895. The inspecting officers were divided into two categories: "(a) the Indian Educational Service, including all posts to be filled by persons appointed in England, and (b) the Indian Provincial Service, including all posts to be filled by recruitment in India."⁸

However, it was felt by the Public Service Commission that a good number of European inspectors of schools should be maintained till Indian inspectors having sufficient experience were available.⁹ Such an experience was essential in the case of inspectors in view of the transfer of control of education to Provincial Governments, and of the extension of the grant-in-aid system, so they wished to maintain such a European element in the inspecting staff as would enable them to test and examine from time to

⁸ Progress of Education in India, (1892-1897)

pp. 53-56

⁹ Ibid.

time how teaching was being conducted in each part of the country. They accordingly recommend that a certain proportion of the inspecting staff of each Province should continue to be recruited in England, the minimum being fixed according to local circumstances.

Organisation of Provincial School Inspectorates.-

The development of school inspectorates in the provinces was a gradual process since the Despatch of 1854. At the close of the 19th century some provinces had established fairly efficient inspectorates and others were still in the process, for example the separation of the North West Frontier Province necessitated in 1900 the re-organisation of Circles which were the educational units of the Punjab. Each Province had either a district or a division or a circle as its units, and the heads of the educational units were either divisional inspectors or district inspectors or district education officers. As the need arose, these units were reorganised into either larger or shorter ones. The inspectorate consisted of inspectors, inspectresses and other officers. The

head of the educational unit was responsible for the efficient organisation of his inspectorate. The same inspector had duties concerning secondary and primary education and primary teachers' training colleges. In some provinces notably in Assam the Director himself inspected primary teachers' training colleges, high schools, training schools and technical schools.

Middle schools were left to the deputy inspectors and primary schools to sub-inspectors. But a rapid expansion of secondary education during the last quarter of the nineteenth century necessitated strengthening of the inspectorate in Assam.

In Bengal, the duties and methods of work were clearly defined. The inspector had jurisdiction of a division, the deputy inspector over a district, the sub-inspector over a certain area of a district etc. The inspector, while he had jurisdiction and supervision over the whole division, took under his special ^{care} the government and other secondary schools, and the first grade primary training colleges. The special feature of the inspectorate of Bengal was that the assistant inspectors were allowed to devote a certain part of their time on tour to the inspection of high schools, for it was considered

advisable that they should be acquainted with the condition of post-primary education, and also because inspectors in Bengal were frequently recruited from their ranks.

In Bombay, secondary schools were inspected by the divisional inspectors themselves and were obviously saddled with vast responsibilities as there was no class of officers in Bombay corresponding to the assistant inspectors maintained in other major provinces. The following extract of the Bombay Report on education for the quinquennial period 1912-17 gives a very good review of how the inspection system worked in India in general, and in Bombay in particular:

The educational inspector inspects high schools, Government middle schools and primary training colleges and visits as many institutions of other classes in his division as possible. The deputy inspectors, with the help of assistant deputy inspectors, arrange for the examination or inspection of most middle schools, of all public primary schools and certain other minor industrial and technical schools in their districts, as well as in the scholarship examinations.

The examination of normal classes in the districts is also held by the district inspecting staff. They visit private secondary schools and in deserving cases, advise managers to get them registered. They hold conferences of teachers, explain the methods to be followed in the teaching of different subjects, which model lessons being given by teachers, criticise these lessons and give model lessons themselves. In the schools inspected or visited by them, they direct and guide the work of teachers and leave notes in the log books for their guidance. They revisit these schools to see how far the instructions previously given have been followed. One of their most important duties during inspection tours is to increase the number of pupils in the schools by advice to the villagers.

Another important part of their work is to pay surprise visits to schools to ascertain whether the teachers are at their posts and to gain an insight into the normal working of these institutions. They study the educational needs of their areas, visit villages that are likely to support schools and make enquiries as to whether special facilities should be afforded to backward

communities. The inspecting staff of each district is provided with lanterns and lectures illustrated by lantern slides are frequently given. They are expected to keep in touch with the higher revenue officers and other district officers, for discussing educational questions with them and to invite their co-operation in any important educational question that may be under consideration at that time. The inspector of European schools, the special inspectors of science teaching and drawing, the inspectresses of girls' schools, the special Mohammadan inspectresses of Urdu girls' schools, the special Muslim deputy inspectors of Urdu schools are not administrative officers in the same way as that the divisional educational inspectors and the district deputy inspectors are: they are purely inspecting officers, whose duty it is to go round and inspect the schools in their charge and to report on them with such recommendations for their improvement as they think necessary.¹⁰

In respect of the multifarious duties that the inspecting officers were called upon to perform,

¹⁰Progress of Education in India, 1912-1917
pp. 39-41.

another major Province, Madras, provides a closer study. Inspectors in Madras were required not only to inspect secondary schools in their areas but also to examine primary teachers' colleges, technical, industrial and art schools and schools for Europeans. The tour programmes of inspectors must provide also for occasional inspection, the regular inspection of schools assigned to subordinate inspecting officers. Inspectors were ordinarily required to be out on tour for eight months in a year. The Department of Education, Madras had issued the 'General Instructions' for the guidance of inspectors, from which the following extract is of interest:

Inspectors are the chief executive officers of the Department and shall, as such, acquaint themselves with the conditions and requirements of education in all its stages within their respective local jurisdictions. They shall make it a part of their duty to confer with officials and non-officials interested in education, on matters of general interest, and to give advice and assistance to all who may address them. They shall encourage all bonafide private enterprise in education by their support and by promises of liberal treatment.

Being the ordinary channels of communication with the Department, they shall, subject to the approval of the Director, be the enforcers and the interpreters of its regulations and the exponents of the educational policy of the Government.¹¹

Furthermore, inspecting officers were directed to hold conferences among themselves to pay special attention to physical, manual, and moral training, and to the text-books in use. They were to encourage educational associations, art and industrial exhibitions. Inspectors were ex-officio members of the Board of Examiners for teachers' certificates. Inspecting officers were also sometimes required to give model lessons, etc. to help to improve teaching in the school. They were to bear in mind that the mode of inspection of teachers' work in the class should be varied from year to year so that it might not have a tendency to become mechanical and so that it would bring out the strong and weak points in the organisation and discipline and methods of instruction. The inspecting officers were to see carefully that the teaching and discipline were such as to exert the right influences on the manner, the

¹¹Progress of Education in India, 1897-1902, pp. 20-28

conduct and the character of the pupils. In case they found laxity in discipline, they were to repress it with firmness and would warn the managers of the schools concerned that state aid might be withdrawn or reduced in amount and state-recognition might be suspended or withdrawn for a low level of discipline and moral tone. Amidst other things the inspecting officers checked the results of the examinations and school records, the state of the school building, furniture and teaching aids.

Working of School Inspectorates in the Provinces

(1901 - 1947)

At the beginning of the present century, one of the handicaps that the inspection system had begun to face was the inadequacy of the inspecting staff. This is evidenced in the following figures: In 1902 there were 5,124 secondary schools in India with the enrolment of 590,129 pupils. The total number of inspectors and their Assistants was 67 only.¹² These figures indicate that on an average one inspecting officer had over 75 secondary schools to inspect annually. It must be

¹² Progress of Education in India, 1897-1902,

noted that these inspectors were not exclusively meant for secondary education but quite a number of duties they had to perform regarding primary training colleges, primary schools, examinations, scholarships, etc. besides they had their own responsibilities concerning secondary education.

The review of the education reports of the early part of the period reveals that this inadequacy of inspecting staff in provinces in thirties of the present century was a frequent cause of complaint. On the one hand the number of secondary schools, particularly those of private management was increasing very fast, on the other hand, financial difficulties (coupled with the view that large overhead expenditure on inspection was unnecessary) was preventing a corresponding increase in inspecting establishment. This often resulted in educational inefficiency.¹³ On this subject the Hartog Committee of 1929 wrote very strongly in these words:

If the system of public education in India is to be made efficient the inspecting staff in the provinces must be both enlarged and improved. We have referred to the contrary

¹³Syed Nurullah and J.P.Naik, A History of Education in India, (Bombay:Macmillan & Co.,1951), p.706.

opinion that inspection is an unnecessary luxury. We regard it as no more unnecessary than the regular inspection of a railroad, without which the inevitable flaws constantly occurring in the permanent way would lead to accidents and loss of life. Everyone acquainted with the educational system in India is aware of the flaws in schools which are rarely inspected.....
 Accident of this kind do not like railways accidents, involve physical injury or death, but they involve not only waste of public money but, what is more serious, waste of children's lives and of their opportunities. It is not only for the making of plans and policy for the future but for the efficiency of the daily work in the schools that a good inspectorate is essential.¹⁴

During the course of their review on school inspection, the Committee referred emphatically to the absence of an adequate number of well qualified and experienced inspecting officers and to the waste and ineffectiveness in the system of education which they believed to be due in a large part to the inadequacy of the school inspectorate.

¹⁴Review of the Growth of Education in British India. Auxiliary Committee, 1929, pp. 305-6.

This opinion was based, the Committee pointed out, not only on the evidence they had taken, but also on the provincial reviews and memoranda. In Bengal, it would seem that the Legislative Council and the Government had not always appreciated the fact that an adequate inspectorate was necessary for an efficient system of education. Between 1922 and 1926 the Government of Bengal abolished 35 inspecting posts. When the inspecting staff is inadequate, the result is obvious: "... the inspecting officers," says the Quinquennial Review of Education in Bengal, "merely investigate statistics and do not criticise or help in the teaching work which, after all, is the real part of the inspection of schools. In so far as this is true, it is partly to be explained by the pressure of duties, but partly also no doubt by the lack of proper training and qualification. It is by no means easy to get the right type of man for an inspecting appointment."¹⁵ The same complaint was noticeable in the most other provinces in India. Another defect that the Hartog Committee observed in the course of

¹⁵ Bengal Quinquennial Review. 1922-27, pp. 13-19

their review, was a disquieting fact that most Provinces had their inspectors, in a large number, untrained. It must, therefore, be mentioned that men with inadequate qualifications and with no training cannot be expected to help in the work of improving schools and the teachers.

The inadequacy of inspecting staff could be emphasised better by comparing the provision made for inspection in India with that in England. The area of England and Wales was 58,000 square miles; their population was 36 million; and there were 34,000 primary and secondary schools with about 6 million pupils in 1926. Whereas the area of British India was about 1,100,000 square miles; the population was 247 million and there were 200,000 primary and secondary schools with about 10 million pupils. It should also be borne in mind that, in England and Wales, the Local Educational Authorities usually employed large and competent staff who relieved the Government staff of a great deal of administrative work. In India, the staff of local bodies were usually very scanty and a great deal

of work of administration and accounting of these bodies had to be done by the staff of the provincial inspecting officers. In the year 1926, it was calculated that in England and Wales the higher inspecting staff consisted of 241 (172 men and 69 women inspecting officers) while in the whole of British India, the number of inspectors who belonged either to the Indian Educational Service (I.E.S.) or the Provincial Educational Service (P.E.S.) was only 282 (225 men and 57 women).¹⁶

Equally unfortunate was the fact that in India doubts were expressed in the Legislative Councils of the Provinces and elsewhere as to the necessity for a large and well-qualified inspectorate. Criticisms were constantly made against what had been assumed to be a high expenditure of public funds on inspection. In this connection the Hartog Committee's Report says, " we cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that so long as the Provincial Governments are responsible for educational policy, and contribute so

¹⁶Review of the Growth of Education in British India, Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission, 1929, p.305.

largely to the financing of education, an adequate inspecting staff is not only essential, but actually economical."¹⁷

Finally Sir John Sargent, the last British Educational Adviser to the Government of India emphasized in his decennial report on education (1937-47) not only the choice of capable men and women for the posts of inspectors, but also the need for strengthening the inspecting staff.¹⁸ This significant recommendation was made by the distinguished educationist on the eve of Indian independence; and it was for the new government to give weight to this recommendation.

Conclusion

From the above study of the growth of the organisation of school inspectorates in British India, it can be noticed that all provinces had more or less the same regulations that governed the duties and functions, of the inspecting officers, and that the new school inspection system set up in the beginning of the latter half of the nineteenth century worked well. A closer study of the system of inspection in the

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Progress of Education in India, 1937-47 (Decennial Review), p.22.

provinces reveals that the inspecting officers during their inspection of schools, took into account mainly the following points:

- (i) School buildings and equipments;
- (ii) registers and returns;
- (iii) methods of teaching and attainments of pupils;
- (iv) discipline, moral and physical training;
- (v) class promotion;
- (vi) observance of the rules of recognition and grants-in-aid; and
- (vii) Observance of inter-school rules and tuition fees.

Though the provincial codes and manuals of school inspection warned the inspectors against a mechanical method of inspection, it seems that the deterioration in the system began when the adequacy of inspecting staff was overlooked. The Hartog Committee, 1929, in its report drew attention of the Provincial Governments to the urgency of strengthening the school inspectorates; but it is regretted that the inspectorates were not sufficiently strengthened, and so one of the major problems that confronted the inspection system even in 1947 when India became independent, was inadequacy of the inspecting staff.

This can be seen in the following statistics:

In 1882 there were 45 inspecting officers and 3916 high and middle schools; moreover middle schools were generally inspected by the deputy or assistant inspectors. By 1901 inadequacy increased to some extent: there were 67 inspecting officers in charge of the inspection of 5124 secondary schools though by 1901 the number of inspecting officers increased. It did not keep pace with the increase in number of pupils; that is, the number of pupils increased from 214 thousand in 1882 to 590 thousand in 1901. Again in 1947 the position was as follows: 45 inspectors and 83 assistant inspectors had to carry out the inspection of 5086 high schools and 9889 middle schools. The number of pupils in these schools was over two and a half million.¹⁹

Thus the inadequacy of inspecting staff remained one of the main drawbacks of the inspection system in India when it achieved its independence. Besides, school inspectors in British India had a different role which called for serious criticism from

¹⁹Data collected from various Quinquennial and Decennial Reports on Progress of Education in India (1881 to 1947).

educationists, teachers and public after the country's independence. In view of such criticisms as well as the recommendations of expert bodies, the inspection system has been undergoing a gradual reorientation in the country, since 1947. The State Inspectorates had gained sufficient experience, and insight in the inspection work during the evolution stage, at least in the latter part of it. Consciousness and sensitivity to the inspectional problems had increased on the part of inspecting officers. Independence has brought both a challenge and opportunity for them to reconsider their roles in the reorganisation process of secondary education in India.
