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BUREAU OF EDUCATION
INDIA

Pamphlet No. 10

Visual Instruction in Baroda

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1921 No. 10

BY

D. S. SAWARKAR, L.C.E.,

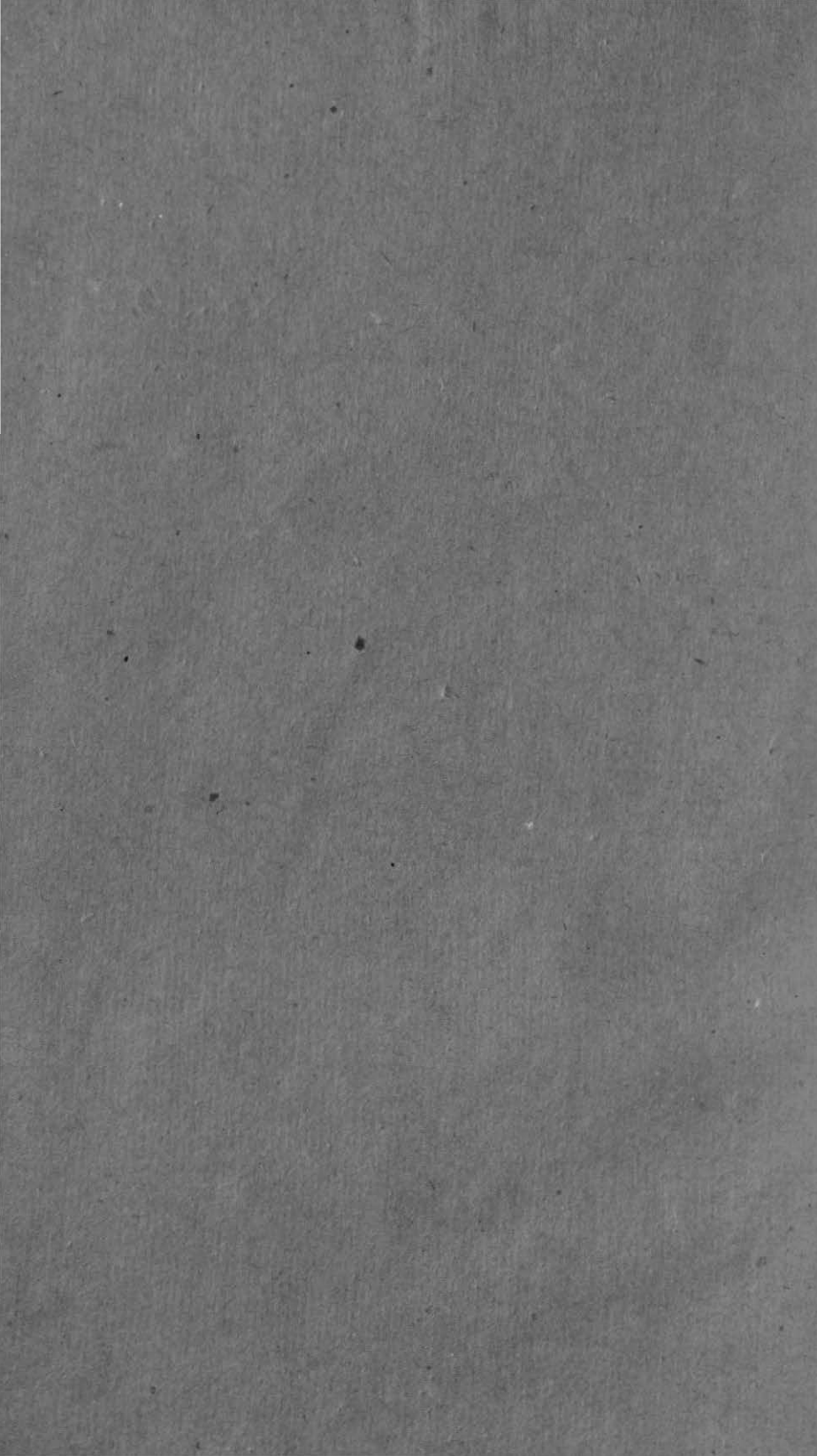
Indian Educational Service.

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PREFACE.

This small pamphlet consists of extracts from a report by Mr. Sawarkar, Inspector of Schools, Bombay. It describes in a practical manner an interesting experiment in adult education.

J. A. RICHEY,

*Educational Commissioner
with the Government of India.*

DELHI;

The 20th November 1920.

VISUAL INSTRUCTION IN BARODA.

It seems necessary to state clearly at the beginning that there does not exist in Baroda State any special organisation or a separate department whose sole business is to send out peripatetic cinemas wholly for the benefit of school children. Whatever work is done is generally meant for the education and the intellectual betterment of the people living in small towns and villages and is not specially meant for schools. The State authorities, however, intend to put the working of the cinemas wholly under the Inspectors of Schools so that the schools might also derive the fullest possible benefit from the system. In the following paragraphs the system of visual instruction, consisting of exhibiting still or animated pictures, will be described as it is at present worked in the State and so far as it relates to village schools.

Introduction

The Visual Instruction Branch of the Free Public Library Scheme was started in the year 1911-12. The system consists of exhibiting (1) picture postcards, (2) stereographs, (3) magic lantern slides, and (4) cinematograph films. As stated above the system of imparting visual instruction has been organised not for village schools or school children but for the public including all children, whether school-going or otherwise; and the illustrated lectures that are given are mainly intended for the benefit of villagers and only secondarily for school children. The Educational Department have supplied their schools with picture postcards and stereoscopes with stereographic pictures independently of the Visual Instruction Branch, and these pictures are not, as a rule, circulated from school to school except over limited areas.

The Visual Instruction Branch.

The Visual Instruction Branch possesses two large cinema machines, one worked with lime-light and the other with electric light, three KOK "parlour cinema" machines, three old type electric machines, one magic lantern worked with acetyline gas and another with electric light, one Radiopticon, 50 stereoscopes with 5,400 stereographic pictures, 65 standard and 33 KOK films and about 800 lantern slides. With these materials this branch has been doing its work and giving illustrated lectures throughout the state area. It was reported that during the year 1918-19 about 152,000 persons got the benefit of the shows given by this Branch.

Equipment.

Of the two large cinema machines the best one is the "Pathe's Self-contained Cinema Group" machine, its cost being Rs. 2,000. The

engine of this machine is worked by petrol, and develops 2 to 3 horse power. It works a small dynamo for providing electric power. It is mounted on a four-wheeled carriage which can be drawn by men over metalled roads. Its weight being about four Bengal maunds, it is fairly portable. Sixty five standard films are shown by means of this machine. They are classified as follows:—Agricultural 4, Industrial 14, Scientific and Semi-industrial 2, Educational 2 (Leaves from the books of Charles Dickens and Life of George Washington), Social 3, Scenic 19, War 13, and Comic 8. The length of the films vary from about 250 ft. to 850 ft.

The "Parlour Cinema" machine called the KOK is manufactured by Pathé Frères of Paris, and costs Rs. 275 (pre-war price). It is a very handy, portable and useful machine. It produces its own electric light and moves the film by the mere turning of a handle and can be worked by any person of ordinary intelligence. The Bombay address of the agents of this machine is "Esplanade, Fort." The weight of the machine is only about 20 to 36 lbs. The machine throws a picture of 3' x 3' on a screen placed at a distance of about 12 ft. from it, which is the focal length of its lense; and the picture is large enough for being clearly seen by an audience of about 50. There are 45 special KOK films with the three machines, classified according to subject matter as follows:—Agricultural 4, Industrial 12, Scenic 9, Scientific 3, Hygienic 6, War 3, Comic 6 and General 3.

The last kind of machine used in giving visual instruction is also a very interesting one. It is called the "Radiopticon". It projects ordinary picture post-cards or any picture not highly glazed, on the screen. It is about 2 lbs. in weight and is very useful and economical; but its only drawback is that it needs acetyline gas for working it, and a sufficient stock of carbide of lime has to be carried with the machine when touring through villages. The acetyline apparatus is also liable to go out of order frequently and it is impossible to have it set right in villages. On this account the visual instruction authorities do not usually send this machine out of Baroda City. The cost of the machine is Rs. 75 (pre-war price), and it can be ordered from Sethna & Co., Kalbadevi, Bombay.

There are two peripatetic lecturers, called Inspectors of Village Libraries and Visual Instructors, under the Central Library Authorities, their pay being Rs. 30—50 and Rs. 60—100 respectively. These men, who also inspect village libraries and travelling library boxes sent to villages, go round with the KOK machines and deliver lectures to villagers—men, women and children—on the subject matter of the films. Synopses of the films in Gujarati have been prepared and published in book form which are generally the

basis of the illustrated lectures. Three films last for an hour and constitute a "show" or lecture. The lecturers stated that these exhibitions were very popular, and when the villagers heard of the arrival of a lecturer at a centre they went there in crowds from even distant places to see the pictures. Special lectures for school children in villages are arranged only on rare occasions, but in cities and towns like Baroda, Petlad and Dabhoi special lectures for women and children are given.

General
Remarks.

The films now in use in Baroda are such as could be obtained in European and American markets and have not been specially prepared to suit Indian conditions and needs. Consequently such films as, for example, Rose Garden in Brittany, Ice Industry in Sweden, Lumbering in Hungary, Recreation Board in Connecticut, Cascades of Normandy, Vintage in Burgundy, etc., are not of much use for the instruction of grown up persons or school children in Indian villages. Special films will need to be got made and used if any real benefit is to be derived by the people from visual instruction. Special films are also needed for school children. The visual instruction authorities are alive to this need and hope to be able to do what is required in this direction when funds permit.

The KOK machine appeared to be very well adapted for use in connection with the work of visual instruction in British districts owing to its portability, simplicity in construction, durability and economy in working. A KOK film, if carefully handled, could be used for more than 200 lectures, and with repairs which can be effected with the materials supplied with the machine, it would be used for perhaps 100 more lectures. One or two turns of the handle of the machine with one hand suffice to light the electric lamp and with that movement the film also begins to wind off automatically. The electro-magnet which produces the electric current requires practically no attention. The Radiopticon also deserves consideration on account of its simple construction and low price; but as stated above the working of the machine is often liable to be hampered when the acetylene gas apparatus gets out of order or when a supply of carbide cannot be obtained; but it can be used successfully in large towns and cities where carbide can generally be had.

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