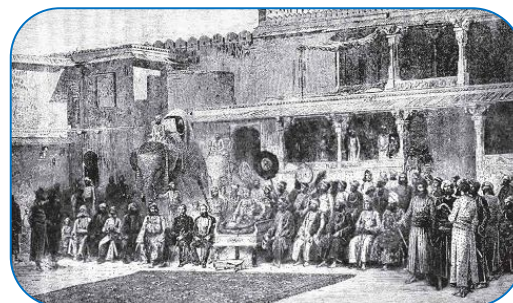




ADMINISTRATIVE COLLEGES FOR COMPANY SERVANTS IN COLONIAL DAYS

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ABSTRACT:

The modern civil service system gradually developed along with the establishment of the college of Fort William and the college of Fort St. George for providing training facilities to the civil servants. These colleges fulfilled the needs of the British Government in India. The company administrative servants were trained well in these colleges and they were properly instructed to deal the Company affairs in India. In the beginning no qualification was fixed and in later days were only qualified candidates were selected for the administrative purpose and accordingly they were trained. All the basic subjects were taught catering to the need of the civil servants. Indeed these colleges served models for the emergence of the many administrative and management colleges in the colonial and post colonial period.

KEYWORDS: Civil Service, Fort. William, Fort. St. George, College, Company, British

INTRODUCTION:

Civil Service is a body of paid officials who are entrusted the work to manage the daily affairs of a Government. Being a permanent establishment of a Government, it is considered as the central as well as the backbone of the administrative machinery. The colonial rule in India contributed to the emergence of modern civil service system which had been brought to India by the East India Company which was established on 31st December 1600 by Queen Elizabeth I. The heart of the civil service system originated from the early European settlements particularly the British who established factories on both the western and eastern coasts. Their early settlements gradually developed into Presidency towns and commercial establishments. In these settlements the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London sent writers to look after the daily accounts and other commercial transactions.

In the beginning, the Court of Directors of the East India Company selected the needful writers to the settlements. No qualification was fixed for the candidate to the post of writership except good handwriting. After 1682, a knowledge of commercial accounts was insisted as a necessary qualification. Thereafter in 1714, it was laid down that the candidate for a post in the company's service must get a nomination from a Director and submit the application. After appointment the candidate was required to furnish the sureties for an amount worth of 1500 and to sign a covenant of loyalty in service to the Company.¹ There were four ranks among the writers such as Apprentice, writer, Junior factor and Senior factor. During the year 1674, their salaries were fixed.

Sl.No	Rank	First Five Years	Next Two Years	Next Three years
1	Apprentice	f 5	f 10	f 20
2	Writer	f 10	-	f 20
3	Junior Factor	f 10	-	f 30
4	Senior Factor	f 30	-	f 40

With this limited salary, they could manage and develop their lives by means of private trade and by taking corruptive means and lived a royal life.

The age limit for their recruitment was between 17 and 20 years. But the British administration changed the age limit during succeeding years. Further the British Parliament passed a series of Acts aiming at regulating the affairs of the civil service system in India.²

In the beginning, the company's servants were not allowed to take their wives to India. In due course, the rule was relaxed. Many of the Company writers began to bring their wives. In addition to that, the company used to send unmarried and divorced women to India for marriage. European women had a great demand in the settlements or factories. For instance, in 1681 three young women were sent to Madras by the company, of whom two women married company's servants. In 1700 out of nineteen company's servants in Fort St. George, ten got married, five of them married English women.³ Thereafter marriages had taken place among the European settlers in India. When the writers and other higher officials got European women, the European soldiers could not get their women due to their poor salary and low position. In order to pacify them, the company administration in Madras and other parts of India encouraged them to have sexual connections with the native women. This resulted the emergence of a new caste-the Eurasians or the Anglo Indians.⁴ The new comers were brought under the Senior writers as apprentice because they knew the vernacular language and the administrative system of the company. Such a situation aggravated to establish training centre to train the recruited civil servants of the company in the art of colonial administration.

Due to the strenuous efforts of Lord Wellesley, Governor- General of India (1798-1805), a training college for civil servants was established at Fort William in 1800. He himself formulated the regulations of the college. He attended important functions of the college and distributed prizes to the students. Besides he addressed the students - frequently by his eloquent oratory. The institution was a residential one and the duration of the course was for three years. The curriculum prescribed was Indian History, Law, Religion, Ethnology, Oriental languages, Ethics, Civil, Jurisprudence, International Law and General History. The Court of Directors considered the college as unnecessary and expensive and hence refused to approve it. Wellesley was able to keep the college functioning till 31st December 1803.⁵ In 1804 it was changed into a School of Oriental Languages and admitted the Bengal civilians alone. Since 1835 it ceased to be residential one and finally it was abolished in 1854.⁶

Wellesley's efforts for the necessity for training civil servants and providing them with higher education bore fruit in 1806 when the Court of Directors founded a college in England which was first functioned in Hertford Castle and in 1809 it moved to Holleyburg where new building was erected. The objective of the new college was to provide the supply of qualified civil servants to execute the various important duties of the company administration in India.

The age for admission was originally fixed as fifteen years but it was raised to minimum of seventeen in 1833 and a maximum of twenty years. The curriculum consisted of oriental languages and Literature, Mathematics, Natural History, Classical and General Literature, Law, History and Political Economy. The course lasted for two years. This college also did not last long and was abolished on 31st January 1858.⁷

The establishment of Fort St. George in 1639 by Francis Day paved the way for the foundation of British rule in India. Fort St. George was popularly called 'white town' because it was inhabited by Europeans. The early settlers of Fort St. George consisted of merchants, sailors, writers, clergy, surgeon and soldiers who were all Europeans who had little knowledge about native language and culture. After the formation of the Board of Revenue in 1788 and Madras Presidency in 1801⁸, the volume of

administrative works increased, which resulted in the increasing number of civil servants. The company administration in Madras began to appoint natives in certain revenue works because they were ignorant of native languages and customs. During the beginning of the company days the European traders carried out their commercial transactions through *Dubashes* - i.e. persons knowing two languages. When the natives began to study English, they were inducted into civil services. For instance in 1805, Lord William Bentinck, the Governor of Madras appointed one native Muttiah as the keeper of records in the Fort St. George.⁹

The establishment of the College of Fort William goaded the company administration in Fort St. George to establish civil service training college at Fort St. George. A precursor to the College of Fort St. George had been an earlier institution, also located at the Fort, the 'Writers' College' or, as it is often referred to in the literature of the time, the 'Company Madrissah'. It was set up in the early eighteenth century to provide language training for young British servants. It was founded in 1717 during the governorship of Joseph Collet.¹⁰

Accordingly the College of Fort St. George was founded on the Fort premises in 1812, after the model of the college of Fort William. Francis Whyte Ellis (1777-1819), collector of Madras and senior member of the College of Fort St. George, which was his brainchild and which brought together the scholars and the different scholarly skills needed to formulate the curriculum of the Dravidian languages.¹¹ Those responsible for its curriculum determined to give priority to the teaching and production of knowledge about those languages most widely spoken in the Madras Presidency, principally Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. They thought the main purpose of the new institution should be to ensure that incoming junior civil servants destined for administrative positions in the countryside would be able to communicate easily with the local populace.¹² In the Tamil sources and in Tamil scholarly works, the college is enshrined as 'Chennai kalvi Sangam'. It was reiterated by the Tamil headmasters of the College, especially Tandavaraya Mudaliar, in the title pages of many contemporary books.¹³

Subsequently the Board of Examiners was constituted in June 1872. The Board maintained a depot and library for the sale and loan of oriental works. Regular rules for observance by the Board of College were framed in 1820. Besides imparting training to the civil servants, it supervised the instruction of munshis and of persons who were to be appointed as low officials and pleaders in the provincial courts. The college taught the civil servants the vernacular languages - Tamil and Telugu, Local Systems, History, Law, Accountancy and so on. Since 1813, it started admitting native students also. For the imparting of vernacular languages, the college board appointed *pandits* as teachers.¹⁴

Till 1827, the College of Fort St. George was functioned on the premises of the Fort and in 1827, the company purchased a house and land at Nungambakkam from Edward Samuel Moor and transferred the college to the new site.¹⁵ It is due to the existence of the College of Fort St. George the road adjoining it was called 'College Road'. The College of Fort St. George produced eminent civil servants, but it was abolished in 1854 by the company administration.¹⁶

To conclude, the establishment of Colleges for civilians at Fort William and the Fort St. George strengthened the British administration in India. These Colleges pioneered the cause of training civil servants to produce eminent civil servants for the better administration of the British and for looking for the company's affairs. These colleges became the pioneers of Administrative Colleges and Management Institutions during post-independent India.

END NOTES

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