

Edd. (1915) Department.

Mis SERIES.

G.O. No. 664.

DATED 19. 6. 1915

[Despatch Abstract.]

Intermediate examination:

Recording office notes on the
question of the large percentage of failure at the — held in 1915.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Educational DEPARTMENT.

Cuttings from newspapers submitted for perusal.

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1915.

Educational DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *New India*
 2. Published at— *Madras*
 3. Dated— *5-6-15*

NEED FOR A COMMISSION

THE *Madras Times*, in a strongly worded leading article on the recent Intermediate results, remarks: "If ever a Commission was wanted, a Commission would surely be desirable to enquire into the vagaries of the Madras University." We heartily support this view, though so far as popular opinion goes, no Commission is required to explain the cause of the vagaries. They are due, in the first instance, to the power of the so-called experts in the educational system and the university. Time was when many of the Professors of Missionary Colleges, headed by Dr. William Miller, used to join hands with non-official members to keep the experts within certain bounds; but now the Europeans have all joined together, and the Missionaries say ditto to whatever the experts may propose. The Government have been keeping fully aloof, so that the experts, who also are the examiners, are allowed full scope for good or evil; and unfortunately they are now in such a mood that the result of their activities is rarely useful from the popular standpoint. But though the cause of the vagaries is thus fairly clear, we should welcome a Commission, even if it be only for the simple reason of convincing the Government that something is radically rotten in the University, and that it has a notorious craze for keeping down the percentage of successful students. And we believe the Government will admit the strength of the case for the appointment of the Commission. For, they cannot deny the fact that their own efforts to lessen the average number of failures at the examinations of the University have almost completely failed. Seeing mainly that not more than a fourth of the candidates escaped the Matriculation guillotine, they introduced the School Final Scheme, which robbed the examiners of their pleasant annual carnival; but the latter were more than a match for them. They at once took hold of the opportunity afforded by the Intermediate, and if the Government should intervene and act matters right regarding the same, the examiners will, in all probability, transfer their mischief to the B.A. And we should not forget that the experts have also indirect ways of checking the progress of higher education. Have they not succeeded in introducing many inconvenient rules, to gain that end, regarding the estimate by the Principal of a School-Leaving Certificate? They are choking off the supply of College students in the most cruel way.

Have they not thus succeeded in thus lowering the number of admissions into the Junior Intermediate class? That shows that the evil to be nipped lies at the root of the present educational system, and what is needed is a drastic reform, which will lay the axe at the very base of the influence of the misguided "educationists".

If the Government should be pleased to accept the suggestion, we would respectfully draw their attention to the need for appointing an impartial Commission, in which the public will have full confidence. A Commission consisting of a majority of members from the very people whose activities are now criticised is worse than useless. It is, of course, quite possible that, like the majority of members of the Solomon Commission, which terminated Indian controversy in South Africa, the educationists here may keep their personal prejudices in the background; but we are afraid the chances of this happening are very few, too few to run the risk. The second important point regarding the Commission is that it should have a strong Indian element, composed, as far as possible, of people independent of the Educational Department. It will be ludicrous, and perhaps equally harmful, to follow the policy of the Government of India exemplified in its appointment of the Committee to consider the wheat question—a Committee, "usefully" independent of Indians, to which is mainly due the present acute situation in the Panjab. Of course the admission of Indians is troublesome, especially if they happen to be of an independent nature, but it is like a dose of quinine to a malaria patient, bitter at first but highly efficacious in its permanent effects. In fact, considering the nature of the vagaries to be investigated, a Commission without a strong Indian element would be useless, and in view of the annual mischief and misery which the present system has been creating, we hope the Government will seriously consider the advisability of accepting the timely suggestion of the *Madras Times*.

1915.

Educational DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *New India*
 2. Published at— *Madras*
 3. Dated— *4-6-15*

FROM THE FRONT

THERE are two matters on which I desire to carry on war just now, in addition to my normal battles: (1) the sad case of Madras students; (2) the threatened disfranchisement of Municipal voters.

Let us consider first the sad case of the students. Many of these boys belong to very poor families, and the parents pinch themselves and their children to keep a lad at College. In this country learning and wealth have not gone together, and custom and tradition have implanted in all Brahmanas the longing for learning, while they are generally very ill supplied with the rupees necessary to satisfy the longing. Many of them come from country villages and have been brought up in the old idea. They, somehow or other, by walking, begging, lifts in country carts, and the like, find their way to a big town, and then: "Please educate me," they say, pathetically sure that education is their right—as indeed it is. They come in scores, in hundreds, in thousands. What can be done with them? Often, by incredible efforts, their parents have managed to send them to school, efforts supplemented by begging on their own part. Then they want to go to College. And many of the lads are very bright; they do credit to their teachers, though their poor stomachs are often but half-filled; a post-card has just come from one I have been helping: "I am glad to tell you I have passed the Intermediate in the first class." Yes. But there are 2,800 who have failed. 2,800 grieving, disappointed boys; 2,800 homes with weeping mothers and despairing fathers. After two years of work and effort and semi-starvation—failure.

What are they to do? Where are they to go? The class-rooms are over-crowded; the Colleges too few. And it is not just. Madras boys are as clever as Bengal and Bombay boys, but only 27½ per cent. are allowed to pass by the Madras University, while Calcutta lets through more than 65 per cent. of the candidates, and Bombay, last year, letting through 48 per cent. there was serious trouble. Is Madras cruelly hard, or Calcutta shamelessly lax? I know the boys of both Presidencies, and the boys of the south are certainly as brightly intelligent as those of Bengal. Are the Colleges ineffective in their teaching, the professors unfit for their work? Where lies the evil which works such widespread misery, and works it on those who are at the most sensitive time of their lives, youths budding into manhood? If the University is resolved to carry on its present policy, Government should enquire into the causes of the examination results, and correct those causes.

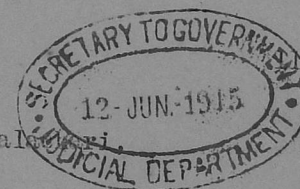
Annie Besant

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
OOTACAMUND.



12th June 1915.

Dear Mr. Rajagopalachari,

I am to ask you to bring the enclosed cuttings from 'New India' about the recent Intermediate results, for discussion with His Excellency when you come to see him on Tuesday next.

Yours sincerely,

H. H. H.

The Hon'ble Diwan Bahadur

P. Rajagopalachariar Ayl., C.I.E.,

Secretary to Government, Educational
Dept.,
Stonehouse Hill, Ootacamund.

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Educational DEPARTMENT.

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Cuttings from newspapers submitted for perusal.

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1915.

Education DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *New India*
2. Published at— *Madras*
3. Dated— *8. 6. 1915*

INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

WE TAKE THE FOLLOWING FIGURES FROM the reports of the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, except those for 1915, which were compiled from the recently published list of successful students in the Intermediate Examination:

	No. of Examinees	No. Passed	Percentage of passes
1915	3,863	1,063	27.5
1913-14	3,969	1,159	29.0
1911-13	3,427	812	23.3
1911-12	3,575	686	19.2
1910-11	3,575	592	16.6
1909-10	2,610	850	32.6
1908-9	2,687	1,069	39.8
1907-8	2,469	1,087	43.8

Thus the percentage of passes this year is the lowest on record and there is no evenness at all about the figures for the different years. One wonders why the proportion should oscillate so largely between 43 and 27, and rarely be steady for even two years. It is also of importance to note that only once for two consecutive years has the percentage exceeded 40.

The above figures are important in one other respect. They show how just before the introduction of the School Final scheme, the first year University classes were almost empty, and not more than 1,427 appeared for the Intermediate examination in 1910-11, though only in the previous years there were more than 2,600 candidates. And the low figure persisted for one more year, until the School Final scheme came into operation. The fall for two years was due, almost wholly, to the slaughter in the Matric. In that terrible examination, the percentage of passes fell down to 17.4 and even the Government was alarmed. But as was pointed out the other day, the Examiners have proved more than a match for them. The guillotine has only been transferred to a later period, the Intermediate. Does it not show that the School Final scheme has been made a complete failure, so far as it was aimed at checking the vagaries of the Examiners? For, under the old Matriculation system, with its heavy rate of failures, more students could enter the B.A. classes than under the School Final scheme, which the Government introduced to increase their number.

The above figures also draw attention to one other feature of the Intermediate result—the overcrowding in the senior class. Even with the cruel rule that no student should appear more than thrice for the examination, the strength of the class increased by 160 per cent. in five years, and, on a fair estimate, of the 3,863 candidates for the examination this year, about 1,800 must have come from those who failed once or twice. And in a year, the number of those unfortunate young men has been increased by fully one thousand or 55 per cent. Will the Colleges be able to provide the necessary extra space at one stretch for so large a number of boys? That is now the question of the moment.

1915.

Educational DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper—

New India

2. Published at—

Madras

3. Dated—

8 - 6 - 1915.

FROM THE FRONT

THE fate of our students is still pressing much upon my mind, and now has come another blow, the disastrous results of the School Leaving Certificate examination. It is said that the failures are somewhere about 90 per cent. of the candidates. The figures available are not yet sufficient for a general statement, but let us take two as typical: in Travancore, 60 boys have passed out of 1022; in a school I know, whose Headmaster is one most highly approved by the Department, not one boy has passed.

Has some cloud of stupidity suddenly descended upon the youths of the Presidency of Madras? Or is the University of Madras bent on strangling education? One of these alternatives must be true, and the first is unlikely. Many of us know these students by the score; we lecture to them, and note their bright intelligence, their alert faces, their quick understanding. The fault does not lie with the boys. It lies with the University. The examinations have been made unduly difficult; the papers set are not reasonable. Consequently the boys fail literally by the thousand.

What is to become of them? If the University is determined not to have them they certainly ought not to be turned loose into the world, so slenderly equipped. They might well pass on into some kind of continuation school, if higher education is to be closed to them; a commercial school, where book-keeping, short-hand, type-writing, precis-writing might be taught. They might be taught applied chemistry and trained for use in factories. Men are wanted for industries of all kinds, and our boys are going to waste.

Is the University to be allowed by Government to check higher education? Have the wicked statements of Sir Valentine Chirol and the *Times*, falling into the eager ears of our Anglo-Indians, made them determine to regard education as the cause of sedition and so to crush the cockatrice-egg? If so, it would be fairer to close their schools openly, as sources of mischief, instead of turning these half-educated lads loose on the world, knowing nothing by which they are able to earn an honest living, walking the streets in ever-growing despair.

All who have to do with schools and colleges are dreading the beginning of next month, dreading the crowds of sad young faces, the pitiful appeals for help, impossible to meet. There are thousands of these coming to Madras. What are we to do with them? What are we to say to them? How we are to save them from the gulf into which the examiners ruthlessly push them? The demand for a Commission of Enquiry, voiced by the *Madras Times*, echoed by ourselves, ought to be granted, but it will not help us for the moment, while the Commission is enquiring, the boys are perishing.

Something fundamentally wrong there must be when after so many years of work, so many years of professedly good teaching, with "efficient schools" and "trained teachers," the boys are left so lamentably ignorant that they are not fit to go on into a college. To God and to the Nation we elders have to answer for these boys. How are we to meet our responsibilities?

ANNIE BESANT

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10-6-15

Educational Department.

The following Statement shows the number of examinees and that of successful candidates at the Intermediate Examination (formerly First Examination in Arts) during the last ten years:—

Year	No. examined	No. passed	Percentage
1905-06	2236	680	30.4
1906-07	2448	771	31.4
1907-08	2479	1087	43.8
1908-09	2687	1069	39.8
1909-10	2610	850	32.6
1910-11	1427	592	41.4
1911-12	1575	686	43.5
1912-13	2427	812	33.4
1913-14	2969	1159	39.0
1914-15	3863	1063	27.5

From the above it would appear that the percentage of passes is generally in inverse proportion to the number of candidates ^{admitted} ~~appearing~~ for the examination. This would seem to show that the students are being admitted into the classes ^{in recent years} ~~without regard~~ rather indiscriminately without due regard to their abilities. It is also observed that the students who appeared for the intermediate examination in 1915 mainly consisted of those who completed their secondary school leaving certificates in ^{March 1913} 1913.

para. 6. pages of
Public Instruction Report
for 1913-14.

$$\begin{array}{r} 4379 \\ - 2241 \\ \hline 2138 \\ + 2447 \\ \hline 4585 \end{array}$$

* please see annex to L.C. 94 no
171 (ii) on p. 11 of no 112450
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$$\begin{array}{r} 4585 \quad 3166 \quad 00 \quad (69) \\ \quad 27510 \\ \hline \quad 41500 \\ \quad 41265 \end{array}$$

The number of certificates issued in that year for the first time was 4379. Of these however, 2241 candidates were undergoing a supplementary course in 1913-14 in order to improve their certificates. Leaving out these, but including the number of candidates of the previous years who took a supplementary course in 1912-13 (2447) the total number of candidates who completed and improved their certificates on March 1913 was 4585.

The ^{total number of} admissions into the junior intermediate classes of the various colleges in 1913 of students with S.S.L. Certificates was 3166 ^{or} 69 per cent. of the total number of certificates finally issued in that year. It is however, probable that some of the 3166 students may be those who had ~~completed~~ their certificates in previous years. Even making allowance for this, the number admitted in 1913 from ~~the~~ among the S.S.L.C. candidates of that year appears to be ^{rather} large. This, it is submitted, may partly account for the large failure of candidates at the recent examination.

2. In order to reduce the number of admissions to the University course which had till now been earned without any regard to any ^{uniform} recognized principle the Syndicate

of the University have recently laid down certain rules to be observed in regard to admissions to colleges. These are as follows:

I.P.

his father's meteoric career. How proud that father would have been if he could have lived to have seen his son First Lord of the Admiralty! Introducing Winston as a schoolboy to a friend, Lord Randolph said, "He's not much yet, you know, but he's a good 'un'." Shall we endorse the father's verdict and say of Winston Churchill, "He's a good 'un'?"

University of Madras.

RULES FOR ADMISSION INTO THE INTERMEDIATE CLASS.

The following are the Resolutions of the Syndicate passed at its meeting held on February 9, 1915, on the question of issuing rules and directions in connection with the admission of students to affiliated Colleges, under Regulation 106 (a):—

1. That the recommendation of the Senate that no holder of a completed Secondary Schools Leaving Certificate be admitted to a University Course of Study, or registered as a Matriculate, unless he has obtained a minimum percentage of marks in such subjects as may be specified by the Syndicate, be accepted.
2. That the marks obtained by a holder of a Secondary School Leaving Certificate should, before being made the basis of admission to an affiliated College, be moderated as follows:—
The individual mark gained by him for the last year at school in each subject of Groups A and C of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Scheme should be multiplied by the average mark for the school at the Public Examination and the result divided by the average mark of his class for the last year at school. The figure thus obtained should be added to the individual mark gained by him at the Public Examination at the total should then be divided by two.
3. (a) That admission to University Courses should be restricted to those holders of completed Secondary School-Leaving Certificates, whose final marks as moderated above are above the Presidency or State average in the Final Examination.
(i) by 15 marks (of which 5 marks shall be English) in the subjects of Group A taken together.
(ii) by 5 marks in each of any two of the subjects in Group C.
(b) That any students who has failed to qualify for admission to a University Course of Study by reason of deficiency in any subject or subjects should be required to undergo a supplementary course at school in all subjects and to appear again at the Public Examination in the subject or subjects in which he failed to qualify, and his eligibility for admission should then be determined by the marks gained by him after moderation as follows:—
(i) in the case of the subjects in which he failed to qualify for admission, as in para 2 above, his latest School and Public Examination marks being taken.
(ii) in the case of the subjects in which he previously qualified for admission, by multiplying the individual mark obtained by him at school during the supplementary year by the average mark of the school at the Public Examination of that year and dividing the result by the average mark of his class for the same year at school.
4. That the selection of candidates for admission to University Courses of Study should be made by the Principals of affiliated Colleges from among those eligible under the rules 2 and 3 and that for the guidance of Principals the Registrar be directed to issue a circular or recommendations similar to those of previous years, in which there

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The modifications in the regulations have been approved by the Govt.

2. These rules have been criticised in "The Hindu" and "New India" cuttings from which are placed below.

3. Attention is also solicited to the "Educational notes" in the Madras Times of the 9th inst., in which it is suggested that a list of percentages each year for different subjects may be examined.

14.6.15.

His Excellency..

There is nothing to be done just now and

I beg to recommend that the papers be recorded.

The rules for admission into the Intermediate

class, issued by the University some time ago,

and referred to at page 10 ante will improve matters.

When greater discrimination is exercised in making

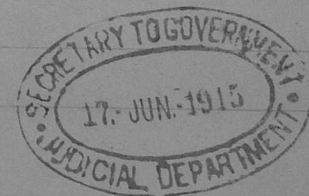
admissions into the Intermediate class, the result

is bound to be an improvement in the percentage of

passes in the Intermediate examination.

16.5.15

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NOTES.

The papers may now be
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"Recorded"

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CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *The Hindu*
 2. Published at— *Madras*
 3. Dated— *W. 6. 15*

THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1915.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS.

THE DISASTROUS RESULTS IN THE LAST Intermediate examination and the issue of the Secondary School-leaving certificates according to the recent instructions issued by the Syndicate of the University of Madras, have once more revived the familiar expressions of deep resentment against the University which used to be heard five years ago. During this period, a fair percentage of students who sat for the Intermediate examination have been coming out successful, and the institution of the Secondary School-leaving certificate system with its elasticity and the discretion given to Principals of Colleges in regard to the admission of students have had despite many complaints of arbitrary action, the effect of bringing some sorely needed relief to the student-population. But the events of this year have proved that the public have been under a false sense of security, and that, even if we had a perfect system which the ingenuity of men might evolve, it could be wrecked by the reactionary forces in the University. Our readers may recollect that the objects aimed at by the institution of the S. S. L. C. system in 1910 were to remove the Matriculation examination—which was honeycombed with abuses amounting to a scandal—from the dominating position it occupied and provide each pupil with a carefully prepared certificate showing his progress in school during the High School course and the marks obtained by him at the final examination held under the auspices of Government. It was chiefly because the public had become thoroughly disgusted with the perversity of the Matriculation examiners, who would not pass more than about 20 per cent. of the candidates appearing for the Matriculation examination, that the new scheme was received with some amount of public support. In other parts of India, in Bombay, and Bengal for instance, and quite recently in the Punjab, the introduction of a similar scheme is being vigorously opposed for the very satisfactory reason that the Universities of these Provinces have been able to control the Matriculation examination the results of which have not been quite as bad as they had been in Madras. It is worthy of remark that the Madras University very readily acquiesced in the proposal of Government and consented to recognise holders of these certificates who were admitted into Colleges as matriculates of the University.

For five successive years, the new system has been working fairly well, though complaints were often heard of the hardships to which pupils, especially of schools not attached to Colleges, had to undergo in getting admitted to the University course. It was a grievance for which a proper solution was to be found in the increase in the number of Colleges under a system of liberal State grants. But, the spectacle of Colleges admitting a large number of students than under the old system could not fail to excite the suspicions of a body of men who were all for efficiency and rigour and for restricting the output of graduates. The first batch of holders of S. S. L. Certificates appeared for the Intermediate examination in March 1913 and out of 2,450 candidates that appeared, 820 were declared successful, which works out at a percentage of 33.4. In the subsequent years, in 1914, and 1915, the number appearing for this examination rose to 3,000 and 3,803 respectively, the number of successful candidates being 1,160 and 1,063 and the percentage of passes being 39 and 27.5 per cent. respectively. It will be seen, therefore, that until this year, the percentage of passes and the total number of those successful

have not been unsatisfactory, when compared with the pre-S. S. L. C. system days. It may be that the exercise of a sounder, more discriminating judgment in regard to admissions into Colleges might have raised this percentage; but such evils as arise from the exercise of discretion should be left to be eradicated by the increasing good sense of Principals and the reputation of each College as judged by the results at the Intermediate examination. But, the adherents of the school we have adverted to, were dissatisfied with the state of things under which a very large number—quite unprecedented in fact—studied in Colleges, and the Syndicate proposed last year, to restrict this tendency by, among other methods, visiting the erring Principals with punishment—the punishment taking the form of the removal of their names from a list, published by the Syndicate, of those who were authorised to admit pupils to Colleges.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. *Name of Paper—*2. *Published at—*3. *Dated—*

This proposal, which emanated from the Syndicate was objected to and finally, the Senate decided to take away the discretion of the heads of Colleges altogether and said that holders of these certificates should not be admitted to a University course unless they had obtained a minimum percentage of marks in certain subjects, to be prescribed by the Syndicate from time to time, the above minimum to be fixed on the basis of the public examination marks as well as the school marks, the latter being moderated in all cases with reference to the school average in the public examination. As we pointed out at the time, this proposal departed from the object of the S. S. L. C. scheme in a most important respect. But the principle of moderation would, it was thought, provide a corrective to the whims of examiners and the over liberality of school masters. But the rules now issued by the Syndicate, in virtue of the power granted to it by the Senate, make it abundantly clear that the counsels of the restriction school have obtained the upper hand. From the rules, which are published elsewhere, it will be seen that, apart from moderation, there is imposed another disability on candidates who have to obtain, in order to become qualified for admission into Colleges, a certain number of marks above the presidency average in certain subjects. We are assured—the large number of communications we have published on this subject add strength to that fear—that the working of these rules will very appreciably reduce the number of students eligible to get admission into the Intermediate class, a result which was not even thought of as a possibility five years ago, and which would tend to revive all the horrors of the old Matriculation examination with that name left out. It is stated that in a few schools in the mofussil, there is not even one candidate who satisfies the conditions imposed by the Syndicate and that something like consternation exists in the minds of parents and boys. The University of Madras accepted the new scheme five years ago without any reservation. Into the defects of the system itself, which a few years' working has brought to light, we shall not now enter.

The frequency of school examinations, the neglect of certain subjects, the vagaries of examiners, the absence, on the Board for the award of S. S. L. Certificates, of persons having experience of High School teaching, are some of the defects which need to be looked into. There would appear also to be a great deal of confusion in the minds of the Board, the teachers and the parents as regards the principles underlying the scheme, and there is evidence that, on account of these causes, the system is not worked as it ought to be, all of which seem to us indicate that the Department will be well advised to call for a representative conference to deliberate upon the question of the improvement of the scheme at an early date. But for the University to go back upon its decision and defeat the very object of the new system is to take up a responsibility which it cannot satisfactorily discharge, and in the exercise of which it cannot avoid the charge of a tendency to restrict higher education made against it. The University, by prescribing the new rules, does not merely run a coach-and-four through

the scheme which it fully approved of and for the loss incurred from which it receives a compensation. By adopting this course, it virtually takes back the power it once wielded, and tells the Government that, so far as admission to a University course is concerned, it was not prepared to recognise their arrangements as in any way binding upon it. To add force, as it were, to this contention of the University, the examiners of the recent Intermediate Examination have mercilessly plucked as many as 72.5 per cent. of the candidates who are the products of the new scheme. It is a terrible slaughter which it behoves the authorities to carefully inquire into. It serves to show that—try as the public may, with the assistance of Government, to avoid the obstinacy and wrong-headedness of the University—the latter could devise methods to obstruct their path and prevent smooth progress. It is a matter, no doubt, for regret that the Government should be appealed to to correct the mistakes of a body like the University, but its past career and its recent acts make it absolutely necessary for the Government to interfere and protect the interests of the public.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *New India*
 2. Published at— *Madras*
 3. Dated— *10.6.15*

"MODERATION"

TO UNDERSTAND FULLY HOW THE SCHOOL Final Scheme has failed to fulfil the hopes created in its early days regarding the percentage of students which it will permit to be admitted into the junior Intermediate class, a knowledge of the system of moderating the marks obtained by the student in the public examination is essential. The moderation process is based on an algebraical formula, which may be thus expressed. The marks which the student obtains in the class are multiplied by the "school average" in the public examination. The product is divided by the "class average". To the dividend are added the marks obtained by the student in the public examination and the sum divided by two. The fate of the student is judged by the resultant number, which should exceed the Presidency average by five. The effect of moderation is both ways, to raise or decrease the marks of the student in the public examination, but strangely enough, the net result is almost always disastrous. If a student is to benefit by the system of moderation based on the current formula, the following conditions should be satisfied: (1) The percentage of marks obtained by other schools should be kept low, so that the resulting Presidency average may be low. (2) The marks obtained by his own classmates in the school should be low, so that the class average is kept as low as possible while his own marks are high. (3) At the same time the marks his classmates obtain in the public examination should be high. No student can satisfy these conditions, because they are plainly self-contradictory or beyond his powers. How can the students keep the class average low by trying to raise their own individual marks high? Secondly, how can the class average in the public examination be kept high when in the school every student should keep it low? Thirdly, every school being interested to raise its own average in the public examination, how can an effort be made to keep down the average of other schools? The whole system seems so absurd that one wonders how the Syndicate recommended its adoption, and the Government consented to it.

We have said that the net effect of the system of moderation is disastrous on the whole. That is so, because in the case of all able students its tendency is to decrease the number of marks obtained in the public examination. The process works thus: It is essential for minimising the havoc of the system of moderation that the "class average," i.e., the average marks obtained by all students in any particular subject, has to be kept low and to do that, the teachers are forced to give as few marks to the students as is humanly possible. This check being removed in the public examination, the more intelligent students obtain high marks therein, but at once they are moderated on the basis of their marks in the school, which, as we have just seen, are kept as low as possible. Thus the net result is to decrease the number of marks obtained by the student in the final examination. Of course, "moderation" works the other way also. It raises the marks of some students, but the raising is, almost always, up to a level below the effective line which is five marks above the Presidency average.

We are aware of the utility of a system of moderation, specially where not much reliance can be placed on the regularity of the methods of marking employed in the different schools. But the system should not be absurd, and should not put the schools or the students into an impossible position. We can give a few instances to show how the present system works. A student obtained marks in English in the public examination; the system of moderation steps in and the figure is reduced to 34. The Presidency average is 31 and therefore the minimum number of marks for admission is 36. Consequently the student's high record in the public examination becomes useless. The same student got a low number of marks in Physics and it has been doubled, but to no avail for the purposes of admission in College. That is how the system of moderation has worked in numerous cases. It is a fact that we have examined in fact no other result is possible.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

Name of Paper—

Published at—

Dated—

It is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that the formula now recommended by the Senate is intended to keep down the percentage of students who, by their merit, may have obtained pass marks in the public examination. We do not see what necessity there is to stick to it. The College Principal, in admitting the student, should be allowed a certain limit of discretion, the only check being that he should not admit students below a certain standard without explaining his breach of rule to the satisfaction of the Syndicate. The Principal can easily estimate the worth of any student by comparing his marks in the public examination with those obtained in the class as well as with the Presidency

average, and also by comparing the last with the school average, to know how lenient or strict the school authorities have been. And all these records are supplied by the certificate with which the student is furnished. There is no need for the Syndicate to step in except where its instructions are violated. And these instructions should be based on more generous conditions, and not be so disastrous as the formula they have sanctioned.

1915

Edt.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

Name of Paper—

The Madras Times

Published at—

Madras

Dated—

9-6-15

Educational Notes.

[By "BUSHBY."]

The agitation about this year's results at the University examination is no senseless outcry. It is an agitation about a crying evil, namely the demoralising way in which the University examinations are conducted.

I cull from *New India* the following figures regarding examinations for the past eight years:—

	No. of Examinees	No. passed	Percentage of passes
1915	3,863	1,083	27.5
1913-14	2,969	1,169	39.0
1912-13	2,437	812	33.3
1911-12	1,575	686	43.5
1910-11	1,427	592	41.4
1909-10	2,610	850	32.6
1908-9	2,687	1,062	39.5
1907-8	2,469	1,087	43.9

On this your contemporary comments: "Thus the percentage of passes this year is the lowest on record and there is no evenness at all about the figures for the different years. One wonders why the proportion should oscillate so largely between 43 and 27, and rarely be steady for even two years."

This is reasonable criticism, but at the same time it is well to give the devil his due. The number of examinees ought to be taken into account as well as the percentage of passes. The percentage of passes this year was by far the smallest on record, but at the same time the number of examinees was by far the largest. And looking over the list, one finds that they are in more or less regular inverse proportion throughout.

It may be logically believed that there is a cause for this relationship. A large number of candidates suggests large classes; and it is a fact that at least in certain subjects a large class can't be taught so efficiently as a small one. With a small class, it is possible to hold frequent examinations, to correct essays thoroughly, to examine note books carefully, and to get students to take a more frequent part in demonstrations. In an unwieldy class a Professor, can do but little for the individual student.

In the year 1911 the number of examinees was 1,575, and the percentage of passes was 43.5. This year the number of candidates was more than double the number, namely 3,863, and the percentage of passes was down to 27.5. If, for the sake of taking in less or out of pity for students clamouring for admission, a Principal admits more students into his College than the Professors can deal with efficiently, he cannot be surprised if a number fail.

I have said thus much, so as not to be unfair to the University. But this is by no means the whole of the matter. The figures are strangely variant all the same. For example in 1907 and 1911 the percentage in each case was 43, but in 1911 there were only 1,575 examinees against 2,439 in 1907. Anyone who has taught in intermediate classes for, say, the last ten years must know for a fact that teaching has improved very greatly, and that if 43 per cent. of 2,439 candidates passed in 1907, it is absurd to think that only 27.5 per cent. of 3,863 candidates have deserved to pass in 1915.

What I should like to see would be a list of percentages each year for different subjects. It is there, I believe for a certainty, that the variations would be truly astonishing. One year a large number of candidates get through in a certain examination. The next year a new examiner is appointed—sometimes a young man without any experience; and he plucks right and left.

It is unfortunate that examinations should be so unreliable as they are. A school or college sometimes figures very badly on a pass-list, whereas in reality its success has been great. I can give an example. At a certain matriculation examination in the Madras University some time ago, a certain school sent up about twenty candidates. The English marks came in first, and nearly every candidate secured brilliant marks. In the second language it was the same thing. Perhaps mathematics would floor them; but no, they were brilliant mathematicians also. In history the success was equally remarkable. The school

1915.

E.T.C. DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

Name of Paper— *The Madison Times*
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 Dated— *9. 6. 15*

was going to top the list. Then came a heterogeneous conglomeration of petty science and geography, and the conglomeration floored every candidate except one by one or two marks. The school passed one candidate. The school must have appeared in the eyes of the public as a monstrosity of inefficiency. As a matter of fact, the teaching must have been brilliant. It is only a system of reasonable moderation that would get rid of such conditions.

I have much more to say, but I have no more room, *in reply.*

1912
CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS
The London Times
9.6.12

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OF GOVERNMENT.

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