

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT 14

G.O. NO 371 dt. 4-4-1916

Extract from the Proceedings of an Adjourned Meeting of the Council of the Governor of Fort St. George assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Act of Parliament, 5 & 6 Geo. V. Ch. 61.

The Council re-assembled at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, the 2nd day of February 1916.

RESOLUTION *RE* MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN GOVERNMENT GIRLS' SCHOOL, TRIPPLICANE.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI :—"Your Excellency, the resolution which I now put before the Council reads—"

'XVIII. This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that, in modification of the system in vogue in the Government girls' school, Triplicane, to which reference was made in question and answer 189 at the last meeting of the Council, instruction in non-language subjects in the third and lower forms be given through the medium of the pupils' vernacular, as required in rule 69 of the Madras Educational Rules.'

“Your Excellency, I owe the Council a word or two of explanation as to why such a small matter, regarding the medium of instruction in a single school, should be brought up for the judgment of this Council. In the first place, I think this is a matter rather typical of the class of cases that might grow up and that the practice in Triplicane, which I consider wrong, might soon, inasmuch as it is conducted under the aegis of Government, extend to other schools as well and thus cause a deterioration in education. Secondly, your Excellency, I am also fortified by the precedent established in the year 1914, when my Hon'ble friend Mr. Sarma moved a resolution requiring that the practice of teaching pupils in their vernacular should, instead of being confined to the third and lower forms, be extended to all the forms in the high schools. On that occasion we sought for an extension of this principle, and I think both the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma and his adherents should be now particularly concerned to find that instead of any advance in that principle, we are confronted with a possibility of its being rejected with the sanction of Government even in the lower standards. The present rule of the department, I must state briefly, is this: That in forms below the third and including the third, all pupils should, in all recognised schools, both Government and other, receive instruction through their own vernacular. This was found necessary about sixteen years ago in conformity with the results of experience gained both here and elsewhere in India. In the beginning

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I suppose in generations which I do not exactly know, the practice had been fairly common of teaching children even from the lowest standard through the medium of English. The results were found everywhere to be unsatisfactory. In Bengal and Bombay and in other parts of India, the system which now prevails in Madras had been adopted some years previously. In Bombay, all instruction below the third form is given only through the vernacular, English being only a second language. I remember till very recently in the Calcutta University even papers in the Matriculation examination could be set and answered by the pupils in Bengalee as well as in English.

"We ourselves found the practice to be disastrous to the efficiency of education in the lower standards. I will not refer to the despatch of 1854 issued by Sir Charles Wood, as it was on the former occasion quoted by the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma; nor will I refer to other old opinions and authorities in favour of the system now in vogue. I will, therefore, before I plunge into the condition of the Triplicane girls' school, refer to two or three opinions which I have taken from authorities which, the Council will acknowledge, are quite modern. The first authority which I will put to you is that of Dr. Mackichan who is Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University, besides being the Principal of one of the largest colleges in that part of the country. He says 'Further, the study of a variety of subjects through a very imperfectly understood foreign tongue is bound to be a slow, laborious and bewildering process.' Mr. Lee-Warner, whose authority in this matter will not be questioned anywhere, says 'But I trace both these defects, among other causes, to the absence of sound vernacular curricula. Under the present system, a boy is taken from the cradle to school, where, before he has an idea of his own which he can adequately express in his native language, he is put upon English.' The next authority is that of the present Viceroy, Lord Hardinge. Speaking at the opening of the Veterinary College in North India, His Excellency said:—

'I have been particularly interested to learn that the main course of study is conducted in the vernacular, while English is the language of the post-graduate course. There is more than one school of thought as to whether the medium of instruction in our higher educational institutions should be English or the vernacular, but I think few will be found to question the wisdom of the policy adopted here, for many of those who are more suited by their home surroundings for a useful veterinary career, have neither the time nor the inclination to become versed in western culture, and it is hardly open to question that it must be far easier for them to imbibe a knowledge of veterinary science when imparted in their own tongue than if it was complicated by the mysteries of a foreign language. On the other hand, post-graduate courses necessitate the study of a wider range of literature, and there are obvious reasons for their being conducted in English.'

"The last authority that I will take is this—I have quoted only those that will go down with members of Government and others who habitually think with them—the last authority I will quote is that of a local gentleman of eminence who delivered the most recent Convocation address in our University, one I take it, who is not unfamiliar in this Council or in this Presidency: 'The wonder to me is not that so many fail but that so many succeed; for the great majority of you have been compelled to receive your education through the medium of a foreign language. This opens up a subject on which men much more competent than I am to form a sound opinion hold divergent views, but it seems to me very difficult to believe that twenty-four million Telugus and eighteen million Tamils can receive all but the elementary stages of education through the medium of English. You cannot change the mother tongue of populations of that magnitude, and progress in the diffusion of education must be very seriously hampered, if all teaching in the higher classes is to be given in a foreign language. So much effort must be expended on trying to understand the language of the teacher that there is little energy left for grasping the substance of the lesson, and such a system of education strikes the lay observer as not only mechanical in method and results, but wasteful of valuable years—years when the youthful mind is most open to impressions and receptive of ideas. English must, of course, always occupy a most prominent place in the curricula of schools and colleges, for it would be an evil day indeed

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for India if her doors ceased to be flung wide open to the glories and shining influences of English literature, rich in noble ideas and glowing with inspiration to noble deeds.'

"Now it would be futile to refer to the opinions of other people in comparison with these. I will, therefore, pass on now to consider what precisely takes place in the Triplicane Girls' school. At the last Council, I put a question regarding the subject, to which I received a somewhat careful answer, but I am afraid that the answer is in places inexact. The answer suggested that, at present in the Triplicane Girls' school, instruction is given in standards lower than the third through the medium of the pupils' vernacular. That I have ascertained is not a fact; from the infant standard upwards, the whole instruction is given in English. In the second place, the assertion was made or suggested in the answer that the parents of the girls or at least a great majority, desire that this system should be followed. I do not assert that there may be no foundation for it whatever, but I have found, I have ascertained, that there are a great many parents of intelligence, who know these matters quite as much as most of us do here, that there are a great many of such parents who do not desire and who have not asked that the present system should be initiated or should be continued. Let us all bear one thing in mind, and that is, that nobody objects to the teaching of English. I will go so far as to say that I would allow in the Triplicane Girls' school, as a sort of concession to existing predilections, I would allow the departmental rule that no English should be taught in standards lower than the third, to be violated. Let English be taught as a language from the lowest standard upwards, we are all anxious that our girls should learn English and as much of it as possible; but we are by no means anxious that this result should be obtained by denying to them the sound education, the sound knowledge, that may be conveyed in such subjects as history, geography and arithmetic, if they were taught on reasonable principles through their own vernacular instead of through a foreign language in which, the many authorities I have quoted are convinced, there are mysteries which the infant mind cannot grasp. Why should this state of things be perpetuated in the Triplicane Girls' school? What is there specially in the Triplicane girls or in their parents that they should desire in that school conditions which elsewhere are emphatically condemned? I am unable to answer this question. I have been enquiring for some days, and I have been unable to find any one who can render me an explanation as to why this peculiar state of things should be set up in Triplicane of all places.

"I have been told, however, that this system has been found to work well in practice. Your Excellency, it is easy to make this assertion, but it is not possible to prove it in the way in which it should be proved if it is to have any force at all. You should prove that the results obtained, namely, the proficiency in English which a little girl acquires when she is ten or eleven in the Triplicane school, cannot be acquired if history, geography and arithmetic were taught through the vernacular instead of through English. I take it that the teachers in that school pay very particular attention to English. I went to the school once, and I am able to say that the construction and organisation and management are all thoroughly desirable; everything is creditable to the authorities that conduct the school. But here is a system which requires to be examined in the light of rational principles of education which have not been hitherto challenged, so far as I know. The desire of parents that their children should learn as much English as possible is natural; everything must be done to encourage it. I have read a story of South Africa where all schools teach both Dutch and English on equal lines; once a Scottish parent rushed into the school in great excitement and demanded why her little girl should have been put to the indignity of wearing a wooden collar round her neck. The answer turned out to be simply this: that in their great anxiety to learn English as quickly as possible both the Dutch and other girls when they went to school had made a little rule—that when they went to the play-ground they should talk only in English as their medium of conversation and if any one broke the rule, the punishment should be the wooden collar. Our girls in Triplicane, I take it, may do that and may go through some discipline like that. But what need is there that they should be taught these non-language subjects, history, geography and arithmetic, which open their minds to the gate-way of knowledge—what need is there, that even these should be taught in

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English? I will tell the Council one or two things to show that this way of dealing with the subjects is productive of harm, and is capable of being carried so far that the result may be very indistinct ideas in the children's minds. I have a note-book of which I have brought a copy here, with which I will not trouble the Council unless my statements are challenged—I have seen two or three note books of these children and I find that these children take down all kinds of things in astronomy, botany, and geometry, in language which it is difficult to make out with all kinds of phonetic and other spellings, with grammatical mistakes which it would be a wonder to see. Why is this? It is because the children have not yet grasped the English language at all, but before they have done so, an attempt is made to convey information to them through that language. The result is, taking a child from a Triplicane Girls' school of the third standard and taking a boy from a boys' school who has had the same instruction, you will find that, while there is great advantage which the girl enjoys in talking English, she is woefully backward in arithmetic, history and geography, she has no accurate ideas on these subjects, while the boy coming from the boys' school is a good deal ahead in these respects. This certainly should not be permitted. After all, the school life of the girl is not very long. If the school life of the girls is carefully economized, I for one would say 'Give the girls during the few brief years that they spend at school as much of this educative knowledge as possible in as clear and in as impressive a way as possible; by all means, combine with it as much facility to talk English as you can, but do not, in the name of sound education, teach them everything through the medium of English.'

"Your Excellency, I have only one or two things more to say. We have found very recently that even in the lower standards, attempts have been made in the case of some of the advanced boys' schools to take the children through a scheme of what is known as 'conversational lessons,' when ordinary subjects of interest are taken up, upon which the boys are likely to have some ideas, and the teacher talks to them for certain hours in the week on such subjects only in English and the boys are made to talk to each other under his guidance in English. The result is a wonderful facility in the talking of English even in the early stages. I daresay that it is quite enough. The fact that our girls know more English and can talk better English than boys is not due to the fact that they are taught history, geography and arithmetic in English, but because English is taught more carefully, because the teachers talk to them in English themselves, because the children talk to each other in English, so far as these conversational lessons are concerned. I understand that the Director of Public Instruction has received during the last few days a petition from a number of influential parents in Triplicane who say that, while they want their girls to learn English as much as possible, they do not want that for this end their instruction in ordinary subjects like history, geography and arithmetic, should be made to suffer.

"Having said so much, I think I ought, in justice to the department, under the protection of which apparently this experiment is carried on in Triplicane, to say that there may be difficulties in changing this at once. One thing is this: that the Triplicane Girls' school has been shot out, as it were, as an off-shoot of the Egmore Training school. It is probably therefore the heritage, which encumbers the operations in Triplicane, a heritage acquired from old associations with Egmore. It may take time to break, it may probably involve a change in the personnel of the teaching staff. Whatever that can be, it can be only temporary. Then the other difficulty I will mention is probably the want of teachers who can talk Tamil and Telugu, in a conversational style with the children. I am not quite aware that it will not be possible to find teachers who can instruct children in English and at the same time in vernacular, in the non-language subjects, wherever it is necessary. But, if that is the difficulty, I should like to know how far it has been felt, how far attempts have been made to overcome it. It is hard that, for the sake of a certain class of teachers who have got to be employed, the needs of the children should be overlooked or even subordinated.

"There is a third difficulty which may be put forward, but which I hope will not be put forward on this occasion. I quite remember that, when I had amongst others to introduce this present plan that Government enjoined upon us all, of instruction through the vernaculars in all forms below the third—I am quite aware that all the managers in Madras were up in arms against the department, especially the

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managers of the biggest and most prosperous schools in Madras. They came forward and said 'If you ask us to teach history, geography and arithmetic through the vernacular, we should be driven to employ teachers who could teach both Tamil and Telugu. At present we do not care to know what the second language of the master is. Hereafter, we should have a Tamil section of the boys and a Telugu section of the boys, in the first form, into which boys will be put according to their vernaculars.' It had to be done by all managers, because the department said 'This is a reform which we want to effect. We will allow no considerations of economy to stand in the way of efficiency of instruction.' All managers had to follow that reform introduced by the department and they had to open a section for the Tamil boys and another for the Telugu boys. Can Government plead that they are unable to find funds for opening a Tamil and Telugu section in Triplicane? If there are not enough children to go into the Telugu section, it would not be very difficult to find other means for that. My honourable friend Mr. Ramachandra Rao has got certain figures which, perhaps he will place before this Council and, it would appear from them that in certain classes there is a sufficient strength in Telugu to form a class by itself, while Canarese or Malayalam can scarcely form a class by itself. But that is a difficulty which all managers have to overcome. What do we do in a place like Tanjore where there are Canarese people? There are children there of the Canarese officers of Government who go to settle there and who cannot allow their children to be left behind; and what happens in Madura and Trichinopoly where there are always a few boys whose vernacular is different from that of the locality? These difficulties should not really stand in the way of a sound system of instruction being inaugurated. These exceptional cases should not be made to confuse the issue. If hard cases make bad law in the realm of legislation, let it not extend to education, let us not, for the sake of a few girls, spoil the education of the whole lot. At any rate, the Canarese girls will find it convenient to learn everything through Telugu and the Malayalam girls through Tamil, and it is surely better than that all the girls should be forced to learn things through English even in the lowest standard.

"There is only one thing more that I would say before I recommend this resolution to the judgment of the Council and that is, I specially beseech the Council not to repeat the charge which is usually made that we do not want English to be learnt, or that we do not want our girls to learn English in the lower classes, or to talk English freely. What we want is another thing, besides, for which provision is not at present made."

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur M. RAMACHANDRA RAO :—"My Lord, I second this resolution. In doing so, I cannot usefully add anything to the admirable and lucid speech which my honourable friend has made both as to the underlying principles which he wishes to raise in regard to this matter and also in regard to the general policy of adopting the vernacular as a medium of instruction. Having heard a great deal of complaint on this matter, I thought the best thing I could do was to arrange to visit this institution a few days ago. I must say, from all that I have seen and heard from the Inspectress, and from the Superintendent who kindly showed me over the institution, having spent two hours in the institution, I must endorse, everything that my honourable friend said as regards the earnestness, the efficiency, and the zeal of the staff that are running the institution. But the point that I was very much puzzled about was that some rules of the department which have been enforced upon aided institutions have been neglected in this institution. In the first place, my honourable friend has referred to some facts and figures. I have here a statement which the Superintendent has been good enough to furnish me with and I find that as usual in Madras, which is a bi-lingual district, there is the difficulty in the composition of classes. Honourable Members will find that, in this institution, in the infant standard there are girls over two hundred in number whose vernacular is Tamil and fifty-eight Telugu girls; there are also girls who have Mahratti and Canarese as their vernacular. This is the state of things so far as the infant standard is concerned; and yet it is a feature of the institution that there are no separate classes organised even at this stage of their education, and the medium of instruction is the language of the teacher which is either Tamil or Telugu, and my surprise was that these children are getting on as well as they are doing. Of course, in this stage of their instruction, there is only one period of English and the rest of the instruction is imparted in the

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vernacular; that depends very much upon the vernacular of the teacher and all these girls who talk Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Canarese pick up what they can. I do not desire to bring a charge against the department, but that is the state of things to be found in this institution. Then again, my Lord, in the other three forms, first, second and third, it has been stated to me that it is desired that the knowledge of English of the girls requires strengthening during the short period of their stay at school and that is one of the main considerations which induced the institution to adopt English as the medium of instruction in non-language subjects to which my honourable friend has referred. But there has been some just criticism and complaint that this policy has resulted in the girls themselves not being able to pick up such subjects as are taught on account of the language difficulty, and even there it is impossible to consider the arrangements satisfactory, because, even if this system of media of instruction through vernaculars be adopted, it is impossible in the existing state of things unless classes are reorganized and separate teachers who know the separate vernaculars are employed—it is impossible to carry on this idea, as the institution is now organized. In the first form, there are girls who talked all these four vernaculars; in the second also, similarly there were girls who talked Tamil, Telugu, Mahratti and Canarese, so that, your Excellency, if the ideal of the department which has been set up for adoption for all the aided institutions is to be adopted, I should think the Triplicane Girls' School would have to be reorganised in order to carry out those ideas. There is also another complication and that is there are training classes where the language of the pupil teachers who are to be trained has added much to the difficulties of the situation. We find, on going into the facts, that there are teachers whose vernacular is Tamil, and teachers whose vernacular is Telugu having come from the various parts of the country for training. So that I am only wishing to bring these facts to the notice of the Honourable Members to show that these are the facts which I have been able to ascertain for myself by an inspection of the school. I trust that this resolution would focus the attention of the Government with reference to the exact position of the institution and would lead to the results which my honourable friend so much desires. As I have said, and as he himself said, this resolution need not at all be taken as a reflection on the management. Miss Lynch, the Inspectress, informed me that, so far as she herself was concerned, she did not see why the vernaculars should not be tried to some extent in the first and second and third forms of this institution. Whether that expression of opinion is one which the Hon'ble Mr. Stone would endorse or not I do not know.

"Another factor which has contributed somewhat to the misapprehension of the question is the fact that there is no visitorial committee for this institution, a committee of parents residing in the locality who need not interfere with the internal management of the institution but who would place their views as to courses of study and instruction before the proper authorities. I think, my Lord, that a visitorial committee would be of great help in solving this question. As Miss Lynch herself stated to me, the curricula are more or less tentative and the institution is on its trial. Therefore, I am particularly anxious to remove any impression that we are trying to pull down this institution by offering adverse criticism—we do not want to question its efficiency or reputation—but at the same time, this is a matter which must be attended to, and I am particularly impressed with the necessity of a visitorial committee of parents to help the growth of this really useful and most interesting institution."

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"Your Excellency, I would ask the Council to turn for one moment to the last sentence of the resolution proposed which is, 'as required in rule 69 of the Madras Educational Rules.' I wish to point out that rule 69 of the Madras Educational Rules refers back to the rule 68, at any rate, that rule which says that, except with the permission of the inspector, vernacular should be used up to the third form for the teaching of what are called non-language subjects. What is being done now in the Triplicane Girls' School with the exception which I shall mention shortly, is precisely what is enjoined in these rules, that is to say, the permission of the Inspectress has been obtained for teaching these subjects in English. I mention this rather to emphasise the point because I think it is very desirable that it should not be publicly supposed that in this school, the departmental rules are being violated. I regret to say, however, that in the answer that was given in the

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Council the other day which was of course, simply based upon what the Inspectress had told me, there has been a mis-statement which has been pointed out, that children in standards below the third were being taught in English. The Inspectress tells me that that was due to the misconception on the part of teachers, to the misunderstanding of her orders or to the practical difficulties in the way of carrying out her orders, but she has assured me that that particular defect in the working of the school shall not be allowed to continue.

"Now, Sir, with regard to the main points at issue, the Honourable Member who moved this resolution began by discussing the general question as to the language in which it is desirable that boys and girls at school should be taught. He laid down the proposition that, in the earlier stages of instruction, the vernacular ought to be used. I am not going to controvert that, but I should just like to remark as he has instanced Bombay, that my opinion is, judged by the results, the Bombay system gives no better results than our own. There is no question that so far as the knowledge of English goes and the facility in speaking English goes, Bombay is a good deal behind this Presidency, and if you take the standards of their University examinations and college work, I do not see that there is the smallest evidence that, as regards the knowledge of what are called school and university subjects, they are in the smallest degree in advance of us. I do not think that anything I have seen in Bombay really proves that their system of very carefully confining instruction in subjects to the vernacular till the third form or, what is equivalent to the third form, is so very much better than ours.

"Now, Sir, coming to the special case in point, the case of the Triplicane girls' school, the Honourable Members who have spoken, both of them have acknowledged that they consider this to be a well-organised, well-taught school, and I would go a good deal further, I have recently visited the school and I have come to the conclusion that it is a very exceptionally well-organised and well-taught school. Girls' schools, for some reason or another, are always in a general way better than boys' schools, and I think this Triplicane school is pre-eminent amongst girls' school, so far as my knowledge of them goes. I particularly of course enquired into this matter of English, and the first thing I have to say is that the English in that school is extraordinarily good. I went into the fourth standard, consisting of girls just promoted from the third standard and so it would be really the third standard,—I found in that third standard they really understood me quite well. They were asked questions by the teacher about history stories, they were asked questions and they answered the teacher's questions, they also conversed with me with quite a degree of facility. I went into the first form which is next above the fourth standard, and there I had practical conversation with the girls in which all of them joined on quite a variety of subjects ranging from the connection between per cent and per annum and Anno Domini and extending up to motor-cars and submarines. They could understand me perfectly, they could also answer me freely. I went to the third form and in that form they were writing essays of an extraordinarily poetic quality. One was particularly poetic. It was about the sea. They said that the girl who wrote it was almost a poet. I venture to say that these essays are quite as good as are those of boys of the sixth form generally. It is only occasionally you find a boy in the sixth form who could write such an essay as that one which I was referring to as the one of poetic talent. Therefore, so far as the knowledge of English goes, the proof of the pudding is certainly in the Triplicane school, they manage to get the girls to a real knowledge of English in quite an extraordinary manner. Now, as regards their general knowledge, as I said before, as regards the first form where I had this conversation, I cannot for a moment admit that the general knowledge of these girls was at all behind what you find in the boys of the first form in boys' schools. I did take the trouble to compare it with the English of a boys' school, because I went the next day or shortly after, to the Teachers' College. I took the first form in English and I certainly can say with great positiveness that the knowledge of the first form boys in the Teachers' College is certainly below that of the first form in the girls' school in English. I did not make any specific attempt to find out the difference, but, as regards the general knowledge possessed by these pupils, I may say that we did have some conversation in the first form in Saidapet about the organisation of the army. The subject was 'The Charge of the Light Brigade.'

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The boys began to talk of the General's orders to the Light Brigade to march. Some of them were in doubt whether they were on horseback or not. But so far as the grasp of the underlying realities of that poem went, I must say it was not particularly good. My opinion, therefore, is that, judged by results, the girls of the Triplicane school are learning English particularly well, and their progress in general subjects is not suffering much. In fact it is impossible to suppose that it cannot suffer at all. On *a priori* grounds it must suffer; but it suffers very much less than one would judge on *a priori* grounds that it would. I account for that fact in this way: the amount of actual knowledge which has to be taught to very young children is after all extremely small; they are dealing with simple things. Take so simple a thing as arithmetic; language does not come much into arithmetic, and the arithmetic of the lower classes is very simple. Take the other things they study; if there is less language they study better and the more there is realistic and direct teaching of things, the better. If they are going to learn new names it is just as well to learn new names in English. Take geography, they have to learn from maps and not from talking. It is not impossible that they try in this school so to teach English and also teach the things themselves as to avoid that confusion of mind which is supposed to result from the study of things in a language which is not your own. The real difficulty about this language to my mind comes in, in the boys' schools in the fourth form. There you have boys being taught decidedly difficult things in a language which they very imperfectly understand. That, I admit, is a serious difficulty and I am perfectly certain that the work of these forms in secondary schools is largely interfered with and hindered by the very imperfect knowledge of English of the boys that come into them. I do not say that I advocate their being taught English from the very beginning, because we have not got, from the practical point of view, enough competent teachers.

"That brings me to the question of teachers in the Triplicane school. It seems to be thought that girls are taught in English, because they cannot be taught in vernacular. I am quite willing to admit that we are not supplied with teachers whose knowledge of the vernacular covers a sufficiently wide range; we shall only be glad to note it as a reform that is necessary. But it is not that the teachers do not know any vernacular at all and that that is the reason why they teach in English. The teachers in the lower classes are not Europeans and those who are Europeans know enough of the vernacular to teach in it.

"Then, as to the diversity of languages spoken by the girls, that does constitute a practical difficulty and that has got to be largely overcome by teaching them in English. When you go to the first form as the Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao said, where there are girls who speak different vernaculars, what are you going to do? There are ten girls and they are speaking four different vernaculars! in what language are you going to teach then? Surely, it is better to teach in English, which as a matter of fact, they understand, than to divide them up and make an attempt to teach them in the vernaculars.

"I have had a petition from parents, twenty-five parents out of those of the two hundred and ninety girls in that school, so that not very many parents were represented in that petition, and as regards the extent to which the signatories of that petition understood the real working of the school, I am not prepared to speak, but I think it is highly possible that they knew extremely little about it.

"I think I have now probably said enough and I must apologise to the Council for having gone rather into detail as regards the teaching in the schools, but I would say, in conclusion, that I do not regard the system of instruction pursued in the Triplicane girls' school as having reached anything like finality. We are quite willing to consider all these points, we are quite willing to modify the system so as to make it still more effective, but I certainly am not prepared to issue orders to the Inspector which apparently is what Honourable Members would like to see, that she is no longer to exercise the discretion given in the Educational rules as to the language which should be employed for the teaching in that school."

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. NARASIMHESWARA SARMA:—"Your Excellency, we are thankful to the Government, we are thankful to the Hon'ble Mr. Stone for the half promise that he has made in the last portion of his speech that the points urged by the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and the Hon'ble Mr. Ramachandra Rao

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would be considered and given effect to as far as may be. But, while thanking him for the small concession, I must admit that the whole tenor of the speech from a general policy point of view is rather unsatisfactory. It seems in effect to say that the Hon'ble Mr. Stone thinks that after all, provided we can find competent teachers in English who can express their ideas to boys or girls in English, it might not be so much a disadvantage to convey information in the first forms in English and that, therefore, there is not any very great reason or urgency for effecting a reform or modification of the system that is at present prevailing in the Triplicane Girls' school. The Hon'ble Mr. Stone said that he did not quarrel with the policy underlying the rules; he said that an exception was allowable in certain cases and that the rules themselves provided for the permission of the Inspector or Inspector and that, in this particular case, permission was accorded and consequently that there was no breach of the rules in the matter of this particular school. But what the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and some of us on this side feel is not that any particular technical rule has been violated. If it is violated, it is open to the Government to alter it and then there will be no more violation. We are not standing upon any technical violation of the rule which could be modified by the Government in an instant but what we say is that the spirit of the rule which is actuating the general policy of Government and which we should like to see extended considerably, that principle of the rule has been violated and this would constitute a very dangerous precedent, and we are not convinced by the reasons given that it does not constitute a dangerous precedent and that there are not disadvantages appertaining to the present system. One point seems to have been overlooked and that is this: The love of the mother tongue that we should see implanted, especially in the case of girls who have the future of the homes in their hands—that love of the mother tongue would be to a considerable extent discouraged if the student is taught to think in English and is taught to look upon English as the language to be learnt and is made to despise, in a way, the vernacular as a language that need not be troubled much about. From that point of view, I would most respectfully submit that the Government must look at this particular question. These two hundred and fifty or two hundred and ninety girls, whatever may be the strength of the particular school, are intended to be trained, I do not think, so much for any particular profession as to be the mothers of the future generation, and from the national point of view is it desirable that these young children should not begin to learn and think in their vernacular, to love their vernacular and to think in their vernacular rather than in English? Which would be better from the country's stand-point? Then again it is said that these children are able to follow simple lessons in the English language and that any real difficulty would arise only from the fourth form upwards. But what an immense strain upon the young mind! That is a point which seems to have been entirely overlooked. The health of the children may be impaired and perceptibly affected, especially in the case of girls whose frame is supposed to be more weak than that of boys and consequently, by reason of the extra pressure which parents or teachers may put upon them, because they love these children and desire that these children should learn as much of English as possible because, unfortunately, according to the customs of the country, circumstances would not permit them to utilize their after years in the acquisition of this language, because of the extra pressure, these girls may be over-studious and consequently may be made to follow courses which would be an enormous strain on the brain and may be made to work at enormous pressure and, I think, it is decidedly an undesirable state of things.

"Then the question would be when these girls go up to the sixth form, what would they do? The Hon'ble Mr. Stone says that from the fourth form upwards, actually difficult subjects have to be taught and that there is some difficulty felt. He was not quite sure as to whether the subjects might not be conveniently taught in the vernacular."

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"May I point out to the Honourable Member that I was speaking of boys' schools and not of girls' schools?"

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur B. NARASIMHESWARA SARMA:—"I knew that the Hon'ble Mr. Stone's observations referred to boys' schools, but I respectfully submit that, in the case of any girls' school also, if these girls or boys in particular, have to go up to the sixth form, they would experience very nearly the same difficulty—though they might be sensibly superior to the boys of the same age—they would

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realise the same difficulty when they have to grapple with larger problems and more intricate subjects, when they go to the sixth form. The present state of things must continue for their benefit even in the fourth, fifth, and sixth forms. That is a question which requires considerable examination. I do not say that there are not difficulties in the way of the Triplicane school suddenly changing its system. I quite concede, as my honourable friends did, the difficulties of a change in the curricula especially, new classes having to be formed and new teachers having to be entertained, and the additional expenditure on new classes. I also appreciate the position of the department which tries to meet the wishes of the parents as much as possible. Our point of view is this: Would the efficiency of that school, would the knowledge imparted in that school, be sensibly impaired by these subjects being taught in the vernacular and the school being put upon exactly the same basis and in the same position as other schools in other parts of the Presidency? On the other hand, would it not be beneficial that the premier girls' school in the Presidency should set an example to other schools in the matter of following any particular curricula or in the matter of framing courses of studies? I respectfully submit that I hope therefore, that Government would see their way—there was a glimmer of hope in the last words of the Hon'ble Mr. Stone—to gradually introduce into this school exactly the same system; because it is understood that it is the policy of this Government and the Government of India and the authorities who have been consulted on the subject. The various reasons for that need not be discussed.

"Then, as regards the petition, a copy of the petition was sent by very highly educated gentlemen who are in a position to think on the subject and I received one, it may be exactly the same one that was circulated to others, and amongst the signatories to that petition, there were gentlemen who are professors of Colleges who are in a position to know, High Court Vakils, Government pensioners, men belonging to various callings and professions, and I should think that though their number might not be large—if they had taken the trouble to agitate and obtain the signature of more gentlemen, it would not have been difficult for them to do so—yet it does not mean that it is a small minority of parents that want the change; but it is a representative petition and I hope attention would be given to that, particular attention would be paid to the petition by the department."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"May we adjourn?"

The Hon'ble the Rev. G. PITTENDRIGH:—"I have only to say a few words. All that I wish to say is that, if the Hon'ble Mr. Stone saw his way to agree to an offer to consider the introduction of the new system which is now proposed by the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma, I would respectfully urge upon my Hon'ble friend Mr. Srinivasa Sastri to withdraw his resolution. I think there is the greatest possible danger of exaggeration in this matter. When the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma talks of the excessive strain, I do not believe there is excessive strain at all, and when the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri quoted a large number of authorities, he omitted one great authority—the authority referred to by the Hon'ble Mr. Stone—that is, the authority of facts. The facts of the situation show that the Madras system of education has really done more to improve the quality of education than that of Bombay and the north. I was talking to a Brahman gentleman in the educational service who had just visited the north a few days ago, before I knew anything of this resolution, and he assured me that the thing which struck him most in wandering in the north and visiting educational institutions was the backward character of education, as compared with the education in Madras. If that is the case, all the theoretical and *a priori* arguments fall to the ground. Facts show us that, in spite of all that may be said against our education, the education of Madras is by no means in backward condition and it may be that, if we tamper with it too much, we will damage it. I wondered when the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri brought forward this resolution; it seemed to me that he had lost his sense of proportion in referring to a comparatively small school and requiring the discussion of this matter in the Council. I saw, when I heard his speech, the meaning of it. He was introducing the whole subject and taking advantage of this opportunity to do so. That I think is hardly fair to the Council. I consider that this is a matter for discussion between the parents and the Department rather than for the Council to take up.

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"If the Hon'ble Mr. Stone would undertake to endeavour to accommodate matters so as to meet the wishes of parents, it seems to me that the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri might withdraw his resolution."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"Is the Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri going to reply?"

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI:—"There are others who wish to speak on this resolution."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"Nobody rose to speak, and, therefore, I called upon the Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri."

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO:—"As soon as the Hon'ble Mr. Pittendrigh rose, your Excellency suggested an adjournment for lunch. I found it was 2 o'clock; otherwise I should have risen."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"I should like to know who is going to speak, so that we may know who is going on with the debate."

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO:—"I am prepared to begin."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"The Hon'ble Mr. Krishna Rao will begin the debate after lunch."

At this stage the Council adjourned for a short interval and re-assembled at 3 p.m.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. S. KRISHNA RAO:—"It has given me great pleasure to follow the Hon'ble Mr. Stone while speaking on this resolution. He has given us an account of the work done in the Triplicane girls' school and of the way in which the pupils there are trained and given instruction. We rather feel proud that our young sisters in that institution have shown much better progress in the matter of education than pupils in the corresponding boys' schools; and some of us may even feel flattered when eminent educationists like the Hon'ble Mr. Stone and the Hon'ble Mr. Pittendrigh assure us that the system of education in this province, as judged by the results, is better than that in other provinces like Bombay, as already mentioned. The resolution now before the Council just seeks for the solution of a very important problem, the soundness of imparting instruction in the third and the lower forms in non-language subjects through the medium of a foreign tongue. If you all feel that the system is fraught with evils in the case of boys in boys' schools, how much more must it be in the case of girls who are to be the mothers of the future citizens of this empire? I have not been able to deduce from the statement of the Hon'ble Mr. Stone any promise or even half-promise that the question will be considered, because he merely stated that what had been done in the Triplicane girls' school did not mean the final action taken in the matter.

"It is pointed out that this question is a very simple one and that it can be easily settled by an arrangement between the school authorities and the parents of the girls concerned. I do not really know if the system of instruction to be imparted in an educational institution can be tested or judged by such a standard as has been suggested. Parents may have their own views; parents in particular cases may even like to give to their girls instruction in English. Some may like that the instruction should be in a foreign language. But the question for consideration always is, what is the best form of instruction to be given to the pupils in their own interests and in the interests of the country at large? If we judge it by that test, I have no doubt whatever that we will come to the conclusion that they ought not to be given instruction in non-language subjects in any other language than their mother tongue.

"I have been trying to find out whether any insurmountable difficulties have been pointed out to induce the educational authorities not to adopt that course in the case of the Triplicane girls' school; and I have not been able to find out any such difficulties. The Hon'ble Mr. Stone stated that there were teachers in that school who were acquainted with other languages. If necessary there may be a multiplication of the teachers, but there cannot be any insurmountable objection in giving effect to the scheme. I only hope the importance of this question will be considered and that the Triplicane girls' school will not be made an exception. It is admitted that this principle is the principle to be adopted; it is stated that the inspectress has been given

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discretion under rule 64 to introduce a change and she has done so in the case of the Triplicane girls' school. But as there are no circumstances to justify that change, I hope your Excellency's Government will reconsider the position and see that the system adopted in that school is modified."

The Hon'ble Dr. T. M. NAYAR :—" I must ask the indulgence of the Council if I make a few remarks on this subject. The subject may be considered worthy of being handled by experts. But there are also opinions of the man in the street, and his opinion has also to be taken to account on such a subject of great national importance. I do not know very much about the theoretical aspects of the subject that have been spoken to and discussed, as to whether the instruction in non-language subjects should be imparted through vernaculars or English. That is more or less a theoretical question. I quite agree with the Hon'ble Mr. Stone in thinking that, from a practical point of view, where instruction has been given through the medium of English, it has been found that students possess a much better knowledge of English than in the other case. Well, Sir, till recently, till a few years ago, all instruction was imparted in English even in the primary schools in this Presidency, and I believe that it was, in the time of Sir Alfred Bourne, that a change was made. When I was a student, I remember that all instruction in elementary schools was imparted in English."

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI (*interrupting*) :—" No."

The Hon'ble Dr. T. M. NAYAR (*continuing*) :—" The Hon'ble Mr. Stone may correct me if I am wrong ; but my impression is that no instruction was given except in English ; and if it was not done in English, it was done in that *esperanto* sort of language, which has become common among the educated classes in this country, which is a mixture of English and vernaculars in various proportions. Even if you say that the instruction was supposed to be imparted in vernaculars, I know that the schoolmaster actually used that sort of *esperanto* language ; and I therefore endorse the view of the Hon'ble Mr. Stone that, from a practical point of view, we find students having a much better knowledge of English, having a much better command of English, if they are taught in English."

" I had occasion to meet a gentleman the other day who came from the mufassal. He said ' I want to make arrangements to put my young daughter into a school in Madras ; ' ' Why do you want to make arrangements in Madras ? You have got schools in your part of the country ', I said. He replied ' Oh yes, in a mufassal school, students don't learn sufficient English ; and I think that the young girls, educated in Madras schools, are much better in English than those who are educated in the mufassal. ' This gentleman was going into the expense of providing for the accommodation of his young daughter for her being educated in Madras. But there is another practical experience to teach us—that a greater fluency in the use of the English language can be acquired where instruction is given in English. There are a few English schools for girls in Madras where only a small percentage of Indian girls are admitted. If you make a reference to these schools as to how many applications are received for the admission of Indian girls, you will find that there are ten times as many applications as they can admit girls. These schools charge very high fees, and yet the Indian parents like to take their children there and get them admitted there. I know the parent of a child studying there, an Indian gentleman holding a very eminent position in the city ; I asked him why he was anxious about sending his children to that school. He replied ' they learn English better in that school than in any other school and therefore I send them there. I had to wait for some time to get admission and I preferred to wait and send my girl to that school ' That is my practical experience. As far as my experience goes, I have found that the girls sent to these schools speak English much better. I have also seen girls sent to the school where instruction is given in the vernacular. They get to a fairly high standard, but they cannot speak English well. Perhaps they may have considerable amount of knowledge bottled up, but I have no means of finding what the extent of their knowledge is."

" The Hon'ble the Rev. Pittendrigh said that our progress in education is much greater than in other provinces. I am able to corroborate him from practical

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experience. You have only to travel to Bengal and Bombay and carry on conversation with the people in English—not with a few eminent men there—you will at once be able to compare the way in which the ordinary educated man there speaks English with the way in which the average man here speaks English. Honourable Members, who have attended so many sessions of the Indian National Congress, must have noticed the different way in which the ordinary man from Bengal or Bombay speaks English and the way in which the ordinary man from Madras speaks English ; and this difference in the ability to speak English must strike any European visitor at all events very forcibly. The Hon'ble the Rev. Pittendrigh has also said that if we interfere too much with our education, it might produce disastrous results. I am afraid that we have interfered already too much and the disastrous results of such interference have commenced. I believe that the changes which have been made in the educational system within the last few years have had the effect of creating a generation of men whose knowledge of English is infinitely less than that of their predecessors. I have heard complaints from the Madras Medical College that the students there who have passed their Intermediate examination are not as able to follow the lectures delivered in English as the old Matriculation students, not to speak of the old F.A. students. I heard the same complaint from the Royapuram Medical School, where the present-day school-final men, who get admission, are not able to follow the lectures in English. I asked the Hon'ble Mr. Stone the other day why this should be so, although the standard of examination in English was very high, considerably higher than what it had been ; and the Hon'ble Mr. Stone said that perhaps it might be that in the old days they had to study several other subjects through the medium of English—history, logic and several other subjects in addition to the English books they had to read—but that nowadays, if a man took up a subject, like mathematics and English, he had to read very few English books. That might account for it. Whatever may be the explanation, the fact remains that the present-day men have less command of the English language, because you have interfered with the system of education too much. But if you go on interfering in the way that some energetic men want you to do, you may produce a generation of men who may be very very learned, but who will not be able to express their ideas either in English or in the vernacular. I hope the Hon'ble Mr. Stone will not accept the invitation to introduce the change in the school which the honourable member wants. If he wants to introduce a change at all, I would suggest that he should ascertain the wishes of the parents. It is said that there are 293 pupils, but the parents of only twenty-five of them have expressed their wish in a certain manner and the remaining parents have a right to be heard. If he takes a plebiscite of the parents, he will probably find an overwhelming majority in favour of the continuance of the present condition and a very small minority in favour of the change advocated by the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri. I hope that, whatever changes in education may be made, they will not be at the invitation of theorists and faddists. The practical experience of the oldest educationists in this Presidency ought to be a much better guide than any amount of theory in these days."

The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur P. KESAVA PILLAI :—" I have listened with very great interest to the speech of the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar, and I am wondering whether all the remarks he has been making are quite relevant in regard to the resolution now before the Council. The learned doctor will excuse my saying that the knowledge or ability to speak English is not everything for a man or a woman. I would appeal to the English members in this Council to say how they would like, if we began to teach the English children in Tamil when they are in the third or the fourth form. Naturally they would object, and as we find in every country, they would want their mother-tongue to be taught. We, the people of this country want instruction to be given to our little ones in our own mother-tongue. As it is—I do not know if Honourable Members can contradict me—we cannot think and speak purely in English or in the vernacular. We do talk at home and perhaps in this Council also always in a mixed language. At home there is the danger of many of our English-educated people not being able to talk their own tongue even to their own mothers, but in a hybrid language. That may be the language of the future of the country. We are aware that by taking to English education our eyes have been opened to the larger

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influences at work in the world ; and we get a stream of ideas which would uplift this country and which would make us feel and think furiously over many things. But, at the same time, we do not want our girls and children to be taught, while so young, only in English. As I have said talking English very well is not everything for a man or a woman. I believe—and it may be that some of our English-educated men are afraid—that before they get their rights of equality, rights, political and otherwise, from the Government their women might claim the rights of equality with them like the suffragettes in England. It may be that with English education our women may not be obedient, and patient, long suffering people as they are. It may be that the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar may have very good experience of English-educated ladies. But we are afraid of giving a knowledge of English to our young girls before we ourselves have obtained our natural rights.

“The Hon'ble Dr. Nayar seems to be very proud that Madras people are better able to express their thoughts in English than the people in Bengal, and elsewhere. I could also join with the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar in bearing testimony to the excellent knowledge of English which our people possess and every one of us has got his share in the credit, that we, the people of Madras, can talk better English than the people of Bengal and Bombay. But I do not know if that is everything—speaking in English fluently. There is no doubt that there is more diffusion of the English language in this Presidency than in other places. Here a jutkawalla or a hackney driver is able to speak English, whereas there a ticket collector or a booking clerk is not able to do it so well. I used to wonder why Englishmen, whenever you met them in Northern India, would not speak to you in English but in Hindustani. But we Madrasis cannot speak any other language except English outside our Presidency. When we go to Bombay, Bengal, or other Provinces, we, being ignorant of the Hindi or the Hindustani language, must necessarily speak in English. We find therefore that we are more educated than these people, if education means only ability to talk English. I believe, Sir, that our girls ought to be taught when they are young in their own mother-tongue, so that their love for their mother-tongue might not be uprooted from their hearts. Our literature is very grand, and it is a very old literature. I do not know whether the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar thinks that he is able to speak in Malayalam so well as he does in English, and I do not know whether he is as conversant with his own mother-tongue as he is with English ; but I know this much that most of our English-educated gentlemen are ignorant of their own literature. I think I may challenge some of our Honourable Members if they could correctly interpret some of the stanzas in Kural for the benefit of any of us. If they do not study their own vernacular it is better that their children, at least, should have some knowledge of it.

“My honourable friend referred to the fact that the elementary education was given to him and others at school in English. It is true that English was taught : but the master who taught it spoke in Tamil. The boys spoke in Tamil and the English words were introduced gradually and put into the heads of pupils. I do not know if this can be called teaching in English. Unless the master who went on teaching boys up to the fourth or fifth form was able to express his ideas in the vernacular, the students would not be able to catch the real meaning of anything that was taught to them. That was my experience, and that must have been the experience of many other gentlemen. Of course, a much-travelled gentleman like the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar with larger ideas would like to see that our people are able to talk English much better and also our girls are able to do so. But, at the same time, we have other duties, and more important duties in life. We should like to implant in the hearts of our children, especially of our womankind a love of their mother-tongue ; and that ought not to be discarded. Our language is pliable and elastic enough and may be used to impart ideas, very good ideas, to the children. To impart such ideas to our girls through the English language in their tender age is to put such a strain on them which is involved in learning a very difficult language, like English, and thus to impair their capacity and to do an injury to their proper development. We find that in other countries, they are fighting for their own mother-tongue to be taught. We find that the Boers wanted their own language and the Poles wanted their own language. Why should our children not have the benefit

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of understanding things in their own vernacular ? The Government are bound to teach our children in our own language and to make us love our own country. Of course, it is inevitable that English should be learnt : it is not only inevitable but necessary for most of us to become,—it is rather the idea of the people—as civilized as the people of the West, so that most of our prejudices and injurious orthodoxy might disappear. But we do not want our children to be taught English to the neglect of their own mother-tongue, at that very early age as their minds will become injured with the strain of learning a foreign language. After all we do think, we are bound to think, in our own language, our mother-tongue, as we began it almost with our birth and as we are bound to die with a prayer in our mother-tongue. I ask the Government whether they can be justified in imparting instructions to our children in any language other than their own and putting a strain upon their young minds. I cordially support the resolution of my Hon'ble friend Mr. Srinivasa Sastri on these grounds. Sentimental they may perhaps be ; but sentiment rules the world. I do think that the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar, who thinks much of the power of sentiment to rule the people of this country, seems to set aside all sentiments in this connection by setting a great value on the power of speaking English fluently. I cordially support the arguments of the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and disagree with the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar.”

The Hon'ble Mr. K. CHIDAMBARANATHA MUDALIYAR :—“I wish to say a word on this matter. I have some connection with an educational institution and as far as I can see, I believe I can heartily support the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri's resolution. There is no doubt considerable truth in the statement made by the Hon'ble Mr. Stone with regard to the advance of education in this province—the results of education as compared with those of other provinces. In fact, I may say that I was myself struck by the gulf of difference in the power of conversation which I found during the recent tour that I made to the Bombay Presidency. However I have considerable misgivings as to the cause of that disparity in the results of education in this Presidency and there. I do not know whether so much of it is due to this policy or system followed in the Triplicane school, in imparting education down to the infant standard in the English language. If I can honestly give my opinion on the matter, I say that if they had been taught through the vernaculars, the results ought to and should really have been better. I confess I find great difficulty in reconciling myself with the situation which is supported by the Hon'ble Mr. Stone and which is now in vogue in the Triplicane girls' school. I do think that education, through the medium of vernaculars, particularly in the lower classes, should give greater facilities and should greatly help the ease with which children learn things : and if sentiment counts for anything at all, as I believe it must, it should count for a good deal with a sympathetic and civilised administration like our British administration. I do really think that a greater knowledge of vernaculars and the acquiring of knowledge through the medium of vernaculars, which by the way gives them greater knowledge of the mother tongue, should certainly be preferred to the present methods followed in the Triplicane girls' school of the teaching down to the infant standard of non-language subjects through the medium of English.”

The Hon'ble Mr. K. R. V. KRISHNA RAO :—“My Lord, I moved a resolution at the last meeting of this Council to the effect that the curricula of studies in girls' schools required revision and that the education imparted to girls must not be on the same lines as those on which education was imparted to boys, inasmuch as girls were not expected to compete with boys. Now the education which a girl receives is only up to her 13th or 14th year ; and during that time it is necessary that she should be taught as much information on useful subjects as can be done ; and if all the subjects, taught merely for information, are to be taught in English—that is a language which it is not easy for girls to learn—it will greatly handicap them and necessarily all that can be taught during the few years they are kept at school will not be taught at all. It is, therefore, necessary that all the subjects taught for information merely should be taught in the vernaculars so that these girls may be enabled to pursue their studies after leaving the school. It is no doubt true that some parents may require that their girls should learn English ; but the English they

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may learn at the school during the few years they are kept at school will not enable them to study or read further at home, after leaving the school, in English and acquire any appreciable amount of knowledge in any such subject that might have been taught to them. I am afraid that if this principle of trying to make these girls talk English much better by making all the subjects taught to them from their infancy in English alone is to be enforced, then many subjects which are desirable for these girls to learn and which should be taught in schools cannot be taught, and they will not be enabled to follow their studies and acquire knowledge after leaving their school. They may be able to talk English, but mere speaking English will not enable them to acquire further knowledge in any useful subject which it may be desirable for them to acquire.

"Again, sir, there is much feeling in the country; and at several conferences, held in the districts, the consensus of opinion was to the effect that education should be mainly imparted in the vernacular in the lower standards or the forms. Well, that is the opinion of the people with regard to education—that the imparting of education in the lower forms in English must not be insisted upon. After all, if the parents so desire, they should send them to schools where there are facilities for instruction being given in English. But generally that ought not to be made the principle, for fear that the same methods may be followed in other important girls' schools as are now being followed in the Triplicane school. I should very much like to endorse what my Hon'ble friend Mr. Srinivasa Sastri said, and I desire that the whole question may be reconsidered; and unless parents specially so desire, subjects taught merely for information, non-language subjects, should not be insisted upon being taught in English. With these words, I heartily support the resolution of my honourable friend, Mr. Srinivasa Sastri."

The Hon'ble Mr. K. RAMA AYYANGAR :—"I beg to submit that the discussion has taken a very wide turn. For the purpose of this proposition I should think that one of the points that may be considered will be the question as to how the parents of girls in the Triplicane school are inclined towards this matter. The Hon'ble Mr. Stone has referred to the fact that only 25 parents had petitioned. But the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri who has investigated this matter and placed this proposition before this Council is of opinion that a large majority would be of the same opinion, and that the few who have signed the petition are men of light and leading who may be expected to be followed in their own opinion by others. Apart from that question the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar introduced the larger question of expressing our ideas in English. I do not think that has any bearing on the subject, nor is that part of education a subject which is now under discussion before this Council. Expressing ourselves in English may be one of the items that may be considered, but whether it is a question for this Council to take up or for the Department of Education to take up for its own sake, need not now be raised.

"I have been also a teacher myself for some years; and I know how in the fourth, fifth and sixth forms boys have had to be communicated with in matters connected with science and mathematics more in Tamil, if the information was to be inculcated into their minds properly. I quite well remember that in the earlier classes I had to express myself in a way which will make them catch the subjects that they had to be taught. When you impress them like that, the impression that is created is much better.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Stone said that he went to the several classes and on inspection found out that these girls were doing very well, much better than the boys in similar forms did in boys' schools. My Lord, that is a point that may be taken in this way. The girls, according to our ancient rishis and shastras, are ordinarily four times as intelligent as boys when placed under similar circumstances. That is the general assumption. If the girls are taught by the people who would not talk to them in any other language than English, it is just likely that they are able to talk English very well. But the point is: given all the circumstances, what would they have done and how would they have improved?—whether, as the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri pointed out, they would have been bad in the other subjects or well up in all the subjects, if they were taught in their vernacular. The question that was raised that at this particular institution these children were found to do very well is not a

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point that arises, because the amount of difficulty that the girls should have undergone to master the subjects and to place themselves in the position in which they presented themselves before the Hon'ble Mr. Stone is the point which we have now to consider; and there is only one answer that is possible. If the same ideas had been communicated to them in the vernacular would they not in a given time have digested the same matter that was given to them in English or even more? I do not think that there can be two opinions on this matter. The natural law must solve this question. The only question that arises is that particular parents may like that speaking in English is all in all and that they should have mates of that kind with whom correspondence should go on in that language. If that is the sole object of their parents, there may be a separate school for these girls. But if the Government and the Educational department are maintaining a general school for the general education of girls, the question for this Council to consider is what they should do. If, as the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri pointed out, a large number of parents are also of this opinion, I submit that it will only be proper to meet the desires of non-official members—that education should be given through the medium of vernaculars and an all round improvement and progress has to be aimed at: and certainly if the girls are to be proper mothers for all practical purposes and to be of advantage to the country, mere language speaking would not do, but much more is needed. And that is what we want."

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI :—"Your Excellency, there are so many points that have been touched upon that I fear that I may exceed the time that I am allotted by a couple of minutes, and I hope that I shall have the indulgence of the Council, though I would try not to avail myself of this indulgence. In the first place, I will deal with one or two remarks of the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar. It is now 40 years ago that I was in the primary school—and 40 years ago I think quite long enough time to look back upon—and I learnt these subjects only through the vernacular; and it was only when I came to the first form, i.e., the fifth standard, a transition was made from Tamil to English text-books. Then a change has been established during the last 20 years—that is to say, the vernaculars as the media of instruction in forms even from the first to the third. So that, really Bombay and Madras have, during the last 20 or 25 years, been in complete agreement on this subject. Therefore, the people who compare Bombay education with Madras education ought to take the whole facts into consideration. If, having the same conditions, as to the media of instruction, Bombay education is found inferior and Madras education superior so far as the knowledge of English is concerned, it cannot, certainly, lie in this circumstance that, in the Triplicane school, an experiment has been recently started of teaching non-language subjects in English in lower standards as well. That certainly is the issue. This could not have affected the results, which, the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar avers, have been observed by everybody during the last 20 or 25 years. A comparison of the educational system of one Province with that of another involves so many considerations that I am astonished at the rashness with which some of us have come to a conclusion one way or another. Many things have to be taken into consideration, not the least of them being the racial differences and the quality of the teaching staff; so many different things have to be taken into consideration that I take it rather rash in people to come to the conclusion that the superiority they allege is due to the circumstance that the medium of instruction in the lowest standard in a girls' school in the Madras Presidency is English.

"The Hon'ble Dr. Nayar, following the Hon'ble Mr. Pittendrigh, affirmed that we were interfering too much and that it was me, a poor innocent person, who introduced this resolution, who had been interfering. I merely ask that the system which has been in vogue during the last 20 years should be continued and that no new experiment be tried which is against the verdict both of theory and practice. It is not we who are interfering but it is the experiment in the Triplicane school which is an interference.

"Then it is asserted that the parents in Triplicane desire that this system should continue; but that is not what was stated to me in answer to my question at the last meeting. This is an improvement—what we have heard today. What is said there is they wanted the students to learn as much English as possible and they found that this was the best system. I take it that it is just possible that what they mean

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by Triplicane parents is the mothers and the elder sisters of the girls or their female guardians. It is quite possible that in that sense there is still a large survival of Herbert Spencer's charge that there is a preference for the ornamental over the useful. It is quite possible that the mothers of girls desire that their girls should learn everything through English. I come to this conclusion, because I had myself a talk with my wife over this matter. My wife told me 'I hear you are going to disturb the system of education in the Triplicane school. Why should not our girls learn English as they are now doing, as that seems all right?' I explained the matter to her and after hearing her with the greatest patience, I did not think it was possible for me to defer to her judgment in the matter, chivalrous husband though I fancy myself to be.

"Then, sir, I am not at all afraid of appealing to the testimony of facts which, the Hon'ble Mr. Pittendrigh states, is the highest authority in this matter. I have, no doubt, that, if facts be appealed to, they will be entirely in consonance with the position that I have advanced today. What are the facts? It is quite easy to bring forward a number of show children. There is no system so bad, but there are boys and girls who would produce the most excellent results under it. It is not enough that a few girls, the pick of a class, should talk in English with intelligence on subjects on which they have had a conversation with the teacher. But what are the facts? Most of us live in Triplicane. We are not entire theorists as the Hon'ble Dr. Nayar assumes. We have in the same house boys and girls going to school, boys going to the boys' school and girls going to the girls' school; and when the boys and girls come home, we find that, standard for standard, while English in the girls' school is higher, the general knowledge is woefully behind; and we think that this is due to the system which unnecessarily perpetuates this difficulty. We think that English can be kept up to the standard, without sacrificing general knowledge.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Stone began by saying that the Inspectress permitted this experiment to be tried in the Triplicane school. That is a perfectly correct thing; and I never challenged that. I did not say that it was an unauthorised procedure. I did not want the Director of Public Instruction to take the Inspectress to task. If I had asked for disciplinary action, I could understand the relevancy of it. I did not say that it was not authorised; it was perfectly authorised. All that I said was that it was against the theory advocated during the last 20 years and forced upon other schools.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Stone further said that out of 230 girls only parents of 25 girls had written this petition. It is necessary, in order to understand this point, that I should tell you exactly the genesis of this document. It was asserted, in answer to my question at the last meeting of the Council, that it was the general desire of the parents at Triplicane that English should be the medium of instruction. It is in answer to such a statement that this document has come up; and we thought it quite enough to send up a petition with 25 authenticated signatures of respectable parents to show that this statement was without warrant. Here are the names of a few that I take now for your consideration. Mr. K. B. Ramanatha Ayyar of Pachayyappa's College cannot be said to be a mere theorist, nor can Mr. G. S. Ramaswami Ayyar, lecturer in the Wesley College. Then we have Mr. P. V. Seshu Ayyar, Mathematics Professor of the Presidency College, Mr. T. K. Venkatrama Ayyar, Acting Professor of Mathematics, besides several B.A., B.L.s and others who send their children to the girls' school. I thought it was rather cheap criticism to say they did not understand the point or that they did not pay attention to the point on which they addressed the Director of Public Instruction.

"There is only one other thing that I would mention. The Hon'ble Mr. Stone said 'I have seen it.' I have also seen, but have observed exactly the opposite of what he has observed. I wish to know, your Excellency, whether in this wide world there is any place where such an unnatural thing prevails—that boys and girls from the infant standard onwards should be taught information-giving subjects through languages which are not their mother tongue. How would you like it, if your children in England who will have to use French far more than our girls will have to use English specially considering that they get married in their twelfth year and go away to villages—how would you like your children all over England having to learn everything in French, from the beginning for the reason that most of them may have

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to go to France and correspond with French people and use French, as I said, infinitely more than our girls will have to use English? How would you like that? Take the girls here. There are European schools and Convent schools in this place. I take it that the girls in these schools will have to use Tamil and Telugu a good deal more than our girls will have to use English. They live amongst the Tamil and Telugu speaking population and they will certainly have to learn Tamil and Telugu. Will you, sir, authorise the experiment of teaching everything through Tamil in these Convent schools? They can learn Tamil all right, but they cannot learn arithmetic, history and geography. Nobody on earth will try this experiment. It is because anything is permitted here, that an experiment is conducted on these abnormal lines—I beg your Excellency's pardon—I must not have used that expression.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Pittendrigh said that this was a small subject with which the Council ought not to have been troubled. I began with making an explanation myself. I feel that this is comparatively a small matter which in itself did not deserve to be brought before the Council. But, as I explained, I see in it a large principle. If an experiment were started under the authority of Government in their own school, it seems to me that there is great danger and great risk of this system spreading until the whole body of elementary schools might be infected with the mania to teach all non-language subjects in English. Therefore, I thought it necessary to raise an early protest against this in this Council.

"It is within the experience of everybody here, officials and non-officials, that grievances and complaints which are quietly taken to the heads of departments are not attended to in the same way as they would be if there was some fuss made of them. I do not blame either the departments or the heads of departments that there is so much inertia; for I think an officer will be perfectly justified in not attending to an appeal unless he were sure that there was a large mass of opinion behind it. The department must know that there is a considerable body of opinion behind this request of mine when I bring this matter before the Council. This was a matter about which, in the Imperial Legislature, a resolution was brought forward with considerable cogency and force by the Hon'ble Mr. Ramarayaningar and I may inform this Council that on that occasion Sir Harcourt Butler, whose authority on matters of education cannot be disputed, spoke of that resolution in terms of far greater sympathy and far greater consideration for the future of India than have been exhibited here today."

The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE:—"Your Excellency, there are a good many points that might be touched upon, but I cannot pretend to take them all up now. I think that I should like to try and explain exactly my point as to the facts in the Triplicane Girls' school. My point is that they certainly do learn English in that school in what I consider a remarkable manner and that the children do talk English remarkably well at different stages of instruction. My opinion is also that they are receiving what can be called in the best sense of the term 'Education.' I would not attempt to trouble the Council with a disquisition on what education consists in. I do not think it consists in talking any one language or another, it consists to a certain extent in the cultivation of the mind, and it is my deliberate opinion that in that Triplicane school, the girls' minds are being cultivated and they are being as truly educated as in any other school in the Presidency. I do not think you can judge of the degree of education that they are receiving by asking exactly how much they happen to know of arithmetic, or of history or of elementary science or what not. It is, however, possible that when they are confronted with boys, they may show some little deficiency in the number of facts that they are able to produce relating to the various subjects. But that they receive a thoroughly sound education I am quite convinced. I am very much surprised that no Honourable Member has called me to account, not for attending so much to English in the school, but for not attending enough to the vernacular languages. I called for a report as to the amount of time spent by the girls on the vernacular languages, and I am bound to say that I do not think the time taken in that respect is satisfactory; they ought to spend more time over their vernaculars, spending more time reading vernacular books and writing vernacular composition; that is certainly a matter which, I shall see, is reformed and improved.

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"Another point. As is frequently the case, a very great deal is made of the time spent in school; the time spent out of school is forgotten. But the time spent out of school is really all-important. These girls spend five hours a day for five days in a week, or twenty-five hours in a week in school; the rest of their time is spent outside the school. I cannot believe that whatever they may do in school, they are going to lose the knowledge of their mother-tongue during these twenty-five hours in a week in school. If their parents are so much interested in the mother-tongue, as we are told they are, surely their parents can see to it that they shall not forget or lose interest in the mother-tongue. We tried to explain the object of this excessive attention to English and that is, I think, that they may know more English when they leave school, taking it for granted that most of them leave school decidedly early. Supposing a girl leaves the school with a really working knowledge of English, ability not only to talk but to read English, surely that girl is in a position after she leaves school and after she has married,—I am sure she must marry an educated man who will be glad, I am quite certain, to be able to converse with her on topics of interest—is it not a fact that a girl so situated, the married woman so situated, is likely in the remainder of her life to improve anything that can be called 'education' to a degree that would have been impossible if she had not left school with this practical working knowledge of English? She will have, at any rate, twice the possibility of mental improvement that the girl has who has not got this practical working knowledge of English. I am told by the Inspectress and I believe it is true that unless this system or something very like it is pursued in the Triplicane school of giving a great deal of attention to English during these twenty-five hours per week in which the children are at school, they will not leave school with anything that can be called a working knowledge of English. We have this much provided; that they do leave the school, with a working knowledge of English even when they leave with the third form. The opinion of the Inspectress is that they would not leave that school with this working knowledge of the language under any other system than that which is now pursued.

"Another point. I have been twitted by a statement that I have been deceived by show-children. I have considerable experience of school children and school inspection and school visiting and I honestly do not think that at my time of life I can be taken in by show-children. I have spoken already about the first form in that school and I say the first form did remarkably well. So many children joined in the conversation, it was not one or two of show-children, but it was the form as a whole. The Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri sought to pose me by saying, suppose we propose that in English schools we ought to teach in French. I do not think it would be a bad thing, assuming that it was necessary that pupils should acquire a thorough knowledge of French; and, as a matter of fact, quite a number of English parents do send their children to French schools and German schools in order that they may learn the languages. An eminent member of the civil service has told me that he was at a school at Naples where French, German, English, and Italian were used indifferently without the smallest trouble. When children are young, language comes easy, very easy; early youth is the time for acquiring a foreign language and I do not believe that acquisition of English by these girls makes so much difference, as *a priori* one might suppose it would even as regards their acquisition of facts.

"About the strain. I do not think anybody who goes to the Triplicane school will think that the girls are subject to any strain. Honourable Members can go and see the children for themselves and I think they will not find the slightest symptom in their demeanour or in their spirits to show that they are subject to undue strain.

"I have already said what I am prepared to do, and I have already said that I do not by any means consider the system of instruction in the school is a cast-iron one from which there is to be no departure. I hope we shall learn by experience and we shall improve it. That we shall improve precisely in the way in which the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri advises us, I do not think, is very likely; but I hope we shall go on from what has already been accomplished to something better."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"Before I put the resolution, I would say if the Council will allow me to do so, that the Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri made some apology for bringing forward this resolution; I feel after the course which the debate has taken, I too should offer some apology for having admitted this resolution.

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Had I thought that it was likely to raise the very large and wide issues which it has raised, I should certainly have been disposed to reconsider my decision to allow this resolution to appear on the paper. After all, we must have some regard to order in our proceedings; it must be evident to you all that considering that the discussion is based on the foundation of the proceedings in the Hindu Girls' school in Triplicane, that foundation is hardly wide or substantial enough to be a foundation for the very wide and far-reaching discussion which the Council has listened to this afternoon. The Honourable gentleman who moved the motion apologised and explained his intention. But I must say that he added fuel to fire, when he quoted the opinions of His Excellency Lord Hardinge, of Sir Harcourt Butler and various eminent authorities which could have no regard to proceedings of the Girls' High school in Triplicane. He then proceeded in reply to the debate to refer to his forty years' experience; that is hardly comparable to the proceedings of the last two years in the Triplicane school. Altogether I think it is unfortunate, because I think it is very difficult for the Council to come to a true vote or decision on an issue which is so presented. There is something in the rules, and the object of the rules for the Council is that the discussion should be focussed on the real points which are put before them, and I think those who are taking part in the vote this afternoon will find it very difficult to know, if they examine themselves, upon what they are really voting. The issue is further complicated by this fact, that there is quite a reasonable difference as to the facts. The Honourable gentleman who moved the motion gives it as his opinion that a majority of the parents of the girls in the school hold certain views as to the education that is imparted; the Hon'ble Mr. Stone, the Director of Public Instruction, I think quite reasonably—certainly it is within his discretion to do so—doubts the validity of that statement. These doubts might have been, to some extent, cleared up if the ordinary procedure had been followed, that is to say, if the parents of the girls in the school made whatever representation they chose to make to the proper authorities and the proper authorities had an opportunity of examining the real facts of the case. I think much of the vagueness and indistinctness would have been removed from this debate if the authorities had had an opportunity of going into the real facts of the case. After all I do not think that there is any doubt in the mind of any Honourable gentleman that there has been no deliberate attempt on the part of the Department of Public Instruction to vitiate or weaken the virtue of education in that school. We had universal testimony from every side of the Council that the school is a most excellent school and has produced most excellent results. I have lived long enough among educationists to know that there are any number of such determined and bitter controversialists as these, who take one side or the other on theories of education. Every one thinks he knows a great deal about education. He has been at school himself, he watches other people at school and then he holds very strong views. It is very good and I do not complain of it, but I do say this about education, if you look into the history of education, into the world's history of education, do let us beware of allowing our ideas about education to ossify and become hardened. If there is one department of public administration in which a variety of experiments should be allowed or, at any rate, tolerated, it should be education. I am not saying this in support of one view or the other,—the view which has been taken this afternoon in this Council. I do think that we can be sure, all of us can be sure, that there is no serious purpose of denationalising in this particular school and that the only desire is to serve the best interests of the children. We should also take into consideration the very great difficulties under which girls' education is labouring in this country and especially the girls' secondary education. It is all well to talk about dividing classes into four sections according to the four principal languages in the Presidency, but where are you to get your teachers from? It is obvious to any one who studies girls' education in this Presidency that we are still only in the very initial stages, and that we are doing our best to find facilities for the training and encouragement of girls and teachers. All these difficulties it would not have been proper for the Hon'ble Mr. Stone to put before the Council, because it would have opened a much larger field than he would have been entitled to do under the terms of this resolution. But really, we find, I submit to the Council, we have not really or fully surveyed the whole question in the debate that has taken place just now. For myself I should regret very greatly, whatever may be the result, whatever may be the decision of the Council on this question—I should regret

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GIRLS' SCHOOL, TRIPPLICANE.

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its being taken or understood outside to be an expression of the deliberate view of the Council on the issues presented. My own view is that it would be much better to leave this matter which is after all in its initial stages. I cannot really believe with my Honourable friend that this is a bacillus from which the epidemic would spread very rapidly all over the Presidency. I cannot, again, really believe that he is seriously entertaining such fears on the question; I know that he has strong, conscientious and undoubtedly most well informed views, as the result of long years' study, on the subject of education, but I cannot help thinking that he can entertain no real fears that this epidemic would spread rapidly. Therefore, I think he might possibly feel disposed to accept the position which the Hon'ble Mr. Stone takes up—that he is alive to the question, that he will watch it, and if any changes are possible, he will make them. After all it is not a serious matter if the system cannot be changed for a few months. The debate has shown perfectly the feeling of the Honourable gentlemen, but I say, in a distorted manner as we have not been able to focus it on any of the many far-reaching and important issues which have been mentioned in the debate. Having said so much, I am perfectly willing to leave the Council to its own wishes on the matter. I now put the resolution."

The motion was then put and lost.

C. G. TODHUNTER,

Ag. Secretary to Government, Legislative Dept.

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on pages 3-24. No action is required with reference
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