

Home (1917) Department.
Education

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. 1011

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INDEXED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council Resolution.

Recording papers relating to the resolution proposed to be moved by the Hon'ble Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 22nd May 1917 regarding the appointment of a committee for the reconsideration of the course of studies in the high school department.

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NOTES CONNECTED WITH THE RESOLUTION ON MATTERS OF
GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

[For the meeting of the 22nd May 1917.]

[SUBJECT.—*Appointment of a committee for the reconsideration of the
course of studies in the high school department.*]

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU :—

*XVI. This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that the Government
be pleased to appoint a committee for the reconsideration of the course of studies and the
grouping of subjects taught in the High School department.*

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

By the term "the high school department" the Additional Member apparently refers to the three higher classes, viz., the IV, V and VI forms, of a complete secondary school. The courses of study in these forms and the subjects taught in them

G.O. 427, Educational, 21st July 1909. are regulated by the scheme for the award of secondary school-leaving certificates. Under this scheme the subjects of study are divided into three classes A, B and C, the subjects specified in "A" and "B" being ordinarily compulsory, and those in "C" optional. A public examination is held in the subjects included in the "A" and "C" groups; and as regards the subjects included in the "B" group, the progress made in the school is the only test and beyond that there is no public examination in those subjects. There is a board consisting of the Director as President and of ten members (five officials and five non-officials) for conducting the public examination and for affording advice on matters connected with the scheme.

2. Detailed courses of study are laid down under each of the subjects in the "A" and "C" groups. No such courses of study have however been laid down for the subjects included in the "B" group as it is considered that "each school can best judge of its capacity for efficiently teaching those subjects and frame its syllabus accordingly". The department has also published a pamphlet containing suggestions for teaching the various subjects in secondary schools.

3. The Additional Member desires that a committee should be appointed for the reconsideration of the course of studies and the grouping of subjects. At the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 6th February last the Hon'ble Mr. A. S. Krishna Rao moved a resolution urging that a detailed and non-detailed study of the vernaculars should be made compulsory throughout the school-final course. In that connection the Director of Public Instruction pointed out that certain changes in the secondary school-leaving certificate scheme were under consideration which had as their object the giving of more prominence to the teaching of vernaculars and Sanskrit in the high school classes and the lightening of the courses in other subjects. He then explained that in the revision of these courses he had to take the opinion of experts in each subject. Besides, there is the secondary school-leaving certificate board consisting of representative educationists of the Presidency which can advise the Director in regard to the revision of the courses of study and the grouping of subjects.

4. From the letters published in recent issues of the *Hindu* it appears that the mover of the resolution has addressed a circular letter to the headmasters of several high schools asking for their opinion as to the changes necessary in the secondary school-leaving certificate scheme. It is also observed that the prevalent opinion seems to be that it is too early to begin specialization of subjects from the IV form, that a regrouping of subjects is necessary in the high school course and that the courses of study throw too much strain on the pupils and that a lightening of the course is desirable. It also appears that opinion prevails that the subjects now in the "B" group in which there is no public examination are neglected. One of the reasons which has aroused these criticisms seems to be the restriction placed by the University on the admission of the secondary school-leaving certificate holders to the Intermediate course—please see cutting from the *Hindu* of the 16th March 1917.

5. The file may, it is submitted, be sent to the Director of Public Instruction u.o. for remarks.

S.K.—11-5-17.

N.K.—11-5-17.

A committee seems to be unnecessary. There is enough scope in the existing committee for the representation of the various interests. The whole question of the revision of the course is now under consideration. The suggestions that may be made by the Honourable Additional Member in the course of his speech may be promised careful consideration in connection with the revision under contemplation. Any independent committee that may be appointed will not be able to decide authoritatively on these questions. The interests of the University are also involved in the matter, and they are watched by the four representatives of that body on the committee.

The file may be sent to the Director of Public Instruction u.o.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—12-5-17.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—12-5-17.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

I am not confident that the resolution ought to be simply negatived. The curricula have been revised with a view to lightening them in order to improve work in the vernaculars and Sanskrit and I hope the net result will be at any rate not to increase the strain of the examination. My idea was to bring in the new curricula next term. If a committee were appointed, or the Board strengthened as the Honourable Member suggests to review the whole position, this would not be worth while doing. The suggestions of the Trichinopoly Conference which I have marked with red pencil are very much what I proposed to the board some time ago. They would really involve however having another examination at the end of the V form, or as

There are practically three a year though the certificate divides it into two.

I proposed after five of the present nine terms and chiefly, if I remember right, the board did not favour them for this reason.

The secondary school-leaving certificate scheme has now been working for seven years so there is a *a priori* reason for overhauling it in the light of experience.

I should be inclined to say that if the Council was prepared for things to go on as they are for the coming school year Government or I would appoint the committee.

The Honourable Member is likely to bring up the hard papers in the recent examination. If he does I am prepared to tell the Council that the marks for those papers have been moderated with reference to the average in the subjects for the six previous years. I should also say that the idea that the University members exercise an undue influence in the board is a mistake.

Probably the Honourable Member would consent to this and his resolution about the board being discussed together and would withdraw that.

J. H. STONE—14-5-17.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

The Director of Public Instruction is apparently in favour of the appointment of a committee to revise the secondary school-leaving certificate curriculum. Submitted that he may be asked to form one himself and submit its recommendations to Government. Apparently the resolution is to be accepted.

2. Orders are requested whether the resolution should be discussed in the Executive Council and as to who should be in charge of it.

3. His Excellency's orders have already been obtained on the other resolution relating to the secondary school-leaving certificate board. The Director of Public Instruction is to explain the position to the Additional Member and suggest its withdrawal.

N.K.—15-5-17.

C.R.—15-5-17.

The Director of Public Instruction says the curricula have been revised. There is also some difference of opinion between the Director of Public Instruction and the board. With a definite curriculum for discussion, a committee if appointed will not take much time.

For orders if the resolution is to be accepted.

R.R.R.—15-5-17.

Please ask the D.P.I. to see me about the
(8) P. 16. 3. 17

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 Government House, Ootacamund, at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, the 23rd day of May 1917.

RESOLUTION RE A COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE COURSE OF STUDIES IN THE HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

The following resolution stood in the name of the Hon'ble Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju:—

'VIII. This Council recommends to the Governor in Council that the Government be pleased to appoint a committee for the re-consideration of the course of studies and the grouping of subjects taught in the High School Department.'

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"The Honourable gentleman does not wish to move resolution No. VIII."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU:—"With reference to resolution No. VIII, the Hon'ble Mr. Stone has been kind enough to tell me that he is going to consult the headmasters of schools in order to find out whether any change is necessary in the matter of the grouping of subjects. If that be so, I do not press the resolution because the appointment of a committee would prolong the matter. I want it to be settled at an early stage. An early consultation will be more useful than the appointment of a committee. If this is the view of the Hon'ble Mr. Stone, I do not press the resolution."

His Excellency the PRESIDENT:—"If the Hon'ble Mr. Stone has given the Honourable Member that assurance, I am sure he may be satisfied with that."

The Hon'ble Mr. B. VENKATAPATI RAJU:—"Yes."

With the permission of His Excellency the President, the resolution was withdrawn.

R. A. GRAHAM,
Acting Secretary to Govt., L. & M. (Legislative) Dept.

Nome (Eon) de p^{te}

Please see extract from
Council proceedings on the
previous page. These papers
may be ^{order} _{me} No 10-11 & 4. 8. 17
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(The cuttings from newspapers
to be placed under the (P.O.)

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Home (Ed.) DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper- *The Hindu*
2. Published at- *Madras.*
3. Dated- *26 March 1917*

For perusal

Ed. 3.4.17 *ca 24/17*

The S. S. L. C. Scheme and the University.

THE latest issue of the *Fort St. George Gazette* contains revised rules and directions promulgated by the Syndicate for the admission of S. S. L. C. holders to Colleges in the coming academical year. In certain respects these rules appear to be harder than those in force last year. This is particularly the case in respect of English. Last year it was held that if a candidate's marks in English at the public examination or after moderation were not less than the Presidency average, he would be eligible for admission into a College. This year, however, the candidate's marks should be at least 5 marks above the Presidency average, though it is provided that in case the Presidency average is 40 marks or more, it would be enough that the candidate's mark was 40. As regards C group subjects also, it is ruled that a candidate should get 5 marks above the Presidency average in one at least of the two subjects, though, again as in the case of English, it is provided that if the Presidency average is above 40 marks, it would be enough that the candidate got 40 marks. Other provisions have been made for pupils of special aptitudes in particular subjects but weak in other subjects also being enabled to go up. For instance, if a pupil failed to get the required percentage in any subject or subjects of Group A or C, he might still be considered eligible for admission into a College provided he obtained in the other subject, of group A or C excess marks equal to twice the number of marks by which he was deficient in the subject or subjects failed in. It is said that last year the Committee that sat to determine 'the eligibles' from among the S. S. L. C. holders strictly applied the rule that in order to be declared 'eligible' a candidate should have obtained marks (with or without moderation) equal to the Presidency average in all the subjects of A and C groups and found that only about 15 or 16 per cent. of the total number of S. S. L. C. holders could be declared 'eligible.' Then they seem to have cast about in their minds what could be done to send up another 15 per cent. and arrived at the special provisions described above. In any case, the fact remains that last year when the qualifying minimum in English

and the optional subjects of Group C was only the Presidency average, only 30 per cent. of the total number of pupils went up. This year, however, 5 per cent. more than the Presidency in English and one of the optional subjects is the qualifying minimum, and we should not therefore be surprised if much less than 30 per cent. of the total number of candidates were declared eligible. We have on more than one occasion complained in these columns against the stringency of examinations in this province and the measures adopted, consciously or unconsciously, to keep a large number of pupils from the College classes. It is not denied that High Schools have of late become better equipped than before and that the quality of the teaching in them has also considerably improved. And yet we find year after year more than 70 out of every 100 boys coming up for admission into the University courses of study refused it. This state of things will be tolerated only in India or perhaps only in Madras.

Ed. 3.4.17

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper—

The Hindu

2. Published at—

3. Dated—3-4-17

S. S. L. C. Public Examination.

I

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—Any one who has seen the Elementary Mathematics Examination Paper of this year's S. S. L. C. Public examination must have noted the sudden rise in the standard in that subject as compared with that of last year. The last five questions in the paper containing twelve questions, are on Algebra and Geometry and they require a clear knowledge of the properties of direct tangents, external section of a straight line in a given ratio and rules for the framing of simultaneous equations for problems. It is a well known fact that students who have a special aptitude for Mathematics take up Algebra and Geometry as a C group subject and such students have a decided advantage over their non-mathematics classmates on account of the advanced study of Mathematics in the C group. No doubt elementary mathematics also covers a good deal of practical Geometry and Algebra; yet the course is very crowded and the syllabus given by the S. S. L. C. Board is very brief and hence very vague. The students are generally taken through a great mass of geometrical and algebraical problems mechanically as they cannot clearly understand the rationale by which the methods have been deduced and the processes can be remembered. In addition to the want of a definite and elaborate syllabus and in addition to the crowding of a large number of subjects like Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Graphs and Mensuration into one course and one subject, the fluctuating standard set up by examiners in elementary mathematics year after year create a mystic awe among the young students. In 1915 the Presidency average was 32 while last year it rose to 42. And this year the average must fall considerably from its value last year. The S. S. L. C. Board must see that the same standard is maintained year after year and any sudden change must be preceded by a sufficiently long notice given to the headmasters and assistants. To safeguard the interests of really elementary mathematics students, I suggest that the average of the marks obtained in elementary mathematics by all those students of the Presidency who have not taken up algebra and geometry and r C group, be taken as the minimum for such students. If this method is not feasible in practice, I suggest that 30 per cent or five marks below the presidency average of all students, whichever is lower in any particular year, be taken as the minimum for non-mathematics students while the present minimum may be retained for the special mathematics students.

AN M. A. OF THREE YEARS' EXPERIENCE.

II

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—If the severity of the rules published by the Syndicate of the Madras University re-admission into Colleges, is regarded extremely unjustifiable still more unjustifiable is the severity of some of the S. S. L. C. Examiners and their supreme indifference towards the young candidates. When some of my S. S. L. C. friends complained to me about the airy and sweepingly general nature of the questions in History and requested me to write to the learned, and sympathetic Editor of the "Hindu" asking for redress I thought that all our protests and letters to the press would be of no avail, seeing that there is something radically wrong in the constitution of the S. S. L. C. Board, and that until it is subjected to a thorough overhauling there would be no benefit to the students. Now that Mr. Venka-

ta Subba Rao of Rajahmundry has written to you about the difficulty of the History paper, I hope you will also allow me some little space in your paper.

In 1911, when the new notorious S. S. L. C. system was launched into being as an antidote against the Matriculation, a similar complaint was raised regarding the History paper. If I remember right it was the Plan-tagenet period that was prescribed as the special portion and curiously enough almost all the questions were from outside the special portion. It was rumoured that Mr. J. A. Yates M.A.—then Principal of the Kumbakonam College—had set the paper and when a History teacher approached him with the complaint, he denied having any hand in it. This year also it is rumoured that the professor who has set the History paper was lecturer in the Honour's class, and evidently as he appears to have been under the impression that the S. S. L. C. examination is a preliminary for entrance into the Intermediate class from which candidates leap into the Honours course he has probably purposely set a stiff paper. All this evil is due to appointing examiners who are not in touch with the S. S. L. C. class and who consequently fail to appreciate the difficulty of the students. They have almost made it a rule that no outsider is made an Honours Examiner. Almost all the Honours examiners are lecturers in the Honours class. Otherwise the candidates will feel great difficulty. When this is the case with Honours students, it is still more imperative to see that no one who is not in touch with the S. S. L. C. class is made an examiner. We are at a loss to know how the Board allowed this year's History paper to pass so quietly!! Surely when such unnecessarily stiff papers are set, and when such provokingly absurd publications as the precious "Life, Light and Cleanliness" are prescribed as S. S. L. C. text-books, one is left to surmise if the authorities are not experimenting at the cost of innocent students. What remedy is there for us?

In this country, the value of agitation is well-known, and the best that one can do is to write a few letters to the press by way of protest. We may request the examiners to be lenient in valuing the papers, but they have to take instruction from their 'chiefs' and who knows what the 'chiefs' will do? The whole thing amounts simply to this, namely that a few people lord it over innocent candidates. Heaven alone knows when we will be rid of such a ridiculous and provoking state of affairs.

A FRIEND OF THE S. S. L. C. STUDENTS.
TRIPPLICANE, APRIL, 1.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper—

The Hindu

2. Published at—

3. Dated—17-4-17

S. S. L. C. Scheme.

I

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—At a Special Meeting of the Secondary School Headmasters and Senior Assistant of the Godavari District, held at Cocanada on Saturday last, it was unanimously resolved that a memorial be submitted to the S. S. L. C. Board about the exceptionally high standard of the English History paper of this year. It was further decided to request the University Committee to mitigate the harshness and stringency of the recently issued rules regarding the admission of students to University courses of study. It is gratifying to note that the heads of the educational institutions in this district have taken a step in the right direction and I hope that the Headmasters and assistants of the other districts will follow suit. If memorials are submitted from all districts in the Presidency, the voice of the teachers must be heard against the S. S. L. C. Scheme where under the interests and aspirations of the students are sacrificed and crushed and it will be hard for the powers that be to refuse to listen to their united demand.

In this connection I should like to draw the attention of the teachers to the imperative necessity of suggesting constructive measures in order to avoid a recurrence of this year's unhappy and unpleasant state of affairs. Unless certain radical and substantial changes are made in the S. S. L. C. Scheme as regards History of England complaints will surely crop up year after year. I shall briefly indicate some of them. Text books for detailed and non-detailed study, source books and books for extra reading must be prescribed. The History syllabus which is vague must be modified so that it may be definite, clear, and certain. What topics require correlation with Indian History should be clearly and specifically stated. The chief examiner must be one who is thoroughly conversant with the needs and requirements of the School Final Class. One who is actually handling the subject in the class is highly preferable. In the question paper which must be discussed in and passed by the Board, the difference between detailed and non-detailed portions should be appreciable and visible. Questions which involve the exercise of some special skill or talent in answering should never be made compulsory.

All the changes above indicated can be done easily if the present personnel of the Board is changed. Rightly or wrongly opinion prevails among all large section of responsible educationists of light and leading that the S. S. L. C. Board is dominated and domineered over by the apostle of Beowulf and the Gothic Bible. We want in the Board men of independent and studied views who flinch and falter not to express the same boldly and fearlessly. Only sustained and strenuous agitation conducted on business lines and in a business way can give us what we desire.

PALEPU VENKATASUBBARAO, B.A. L.T.
RAJAHMUNDY, April 11.

II.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—A comparative study of the question papers in Physics and Chemistry of the previous years with those of the current year, will show a marked change in the standard aimed at—a state of things not at all to be desired in the interests of good education. The examiner especially in Physics, in the previous years set papers which were thoroughly practical and formed a useful guide in the fitting up of the laboratory. He gave definiteness to the subject, suggested simple and useful pieces of apparatus to illustrate simple fundamental laws and helped

the science-masters, by his instructions, in equipping their laboratory. He kept steadily in view the aims:—to train students to solve problems by simple experiments, to work accurately and with a clearly defined purpose and to reason from observation. Experiments which required more than a single hand were not given. Such a state of things seems to have come to an end.

In the present year's paper (Physics theory) there is neither direction nor forethought. The questions are either too difficult or too easy. Question X on Electricity—"Given a battery, a metre-bridge, a Tangent Galvanometer, a resistance box, how would you measure the length of a coil of insulated wire without unwinding it?"—involves a knowledge not only of the use of the metre-bridge, but also of the number of the wire, of the material of the wire and of the resistance of the wire. The latter particulars, an electrician alone is expected to know. Probably a science-master who has himself prepared a resistance box for class demonstration, may know them. Further comment is needless.

Question XI—the action of an electric bell—may probably find a place in some elementary science question paper. This is too trivial to have a place in an advanced Physics paper. What the object of the examiner in framing the question is, passes one's understanding as it does not cultivate any spirit of inquiry on the part of the boys.

I do not know whether the examiner will be satisfied with this answer to question IX (a) covering the bar-magnet with iron-filings and noting the depth to which iron-filings, cling. If so, the answer is not accurate and does not promote sound reasoning from observation. If a purely scientific method based on oscillation, or on Law of inverse squares, is expected of a student, then the standard expected is very high.

In question VI, would it not be a great convenience to have mathematical example in type? Will not a sum enable one to find out the true merits of a boy? The method of questioning upon a principle and giving a rider underneath, seems to me to be a correct and sensible one; why then should there be a novel departure from the timehonoured past?

In practical Physics in the morning paper, the directions given to special superintendents were neither exact nor complete. Again there is want of fore-sight in the question paper. The exercises were not of the same difficulty though most of them were verbatim copied out from the old question papers with strange groupings. 2 metres of German silver wire or Platinum wire less than 1m. m. thick, I know, most of the laboratories had not. But will not a copper wire of the same dimensions that can be had locally, serve the purpose? to find the length of the wire without unwinding it?

Again a student is asked to find the resistance of given four pieces of wire in 3 hours with a 5ohm. coil. What is the length of the wires? What is the diameter of the wires? What must be their resistances? No instructions were given to the special superintendents on these points. Evidently the examiner has totally ignored the conditions for obtaining the best result—the equipotential point being near the centre of the scale. That if the ratio of the two parts is greater than 3:2 no good result can be obtained, has not been borne in mind. Are the science masters expected to give wires of such lengths, diameters etc. as will give each a resistance of about 5 ohms. Those who have shown the metre-bridge experiment, will agree with me in thinking that the question would take more than 4 hours. Questions bearing on the pendulum, etc, do not require so much time.

In the present year's practical paper, has economy been aimed at? If so, why was it deemed necessary to dissolve 50 grms. 75 grms and 100 grms of Nitre in half-a-litre of solutions respectively to compare the

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper--

2. Published at--

3. Dated--

relative densities of liquids? Will not pure sodium chloride be a fit substitute for nitre—a very costly chemical.

The Chemistry theory paper is no doubt a model for the guidance of science-masters. The practical paper is exactly the very opposite. Most of the exercises involved two kinds of operations—first a separation of mixture, and then identification of some gases etc. The Chemical operations such as solution filtration, evaporation, took up a greater portion of the time of the boys, so much so, no time was left for them in most cases to go through satisfactorily the second half of the exercises. So they had to indulge in wild conjectures and guesses. Some experiments given required more than one hand—passing dry hydrogen over the heated residue in a hard glass tube—the second question in the two batches. The whole experiments would take more than 24 hours including the time required for putting the apparatus away. It might be a lecture table experiment. So it had to be omitted by boys.

It is hoped that in the valuation of the science papers due weight would be attached to the points raised above and that in the drawing up of practical paper hereafter, the examiners would take into consideration the limited scope of the High School laboratory, the range of knowledge of the boys, and above all, the standard expected of them by the syllabus.

TANJORE. P. K. V.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *The Hindu*
 2. Published at—
 3. Dated— *12/4/17*

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE.
 AT TRICHINOPOLY.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
 TRICHINOPOLY, April 18.—The above Conference was held in the Lawley Hall, St. Joseph's College on the 18th April under the presidency of Mr. S. Arpudassamy Udayar B.A., L.T., Professor of English. There was a very fair attendance of the teaching staff from the different parts of the District. The Headmasters of the S. P. G. High School, National High School, Lalgudi High School, and a good number of assistant teachers in schools of different grades were also present as also a number of non-officials. The number of teachers present was more than 150.

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

The President, in opening the proceedings of the morning sessions, divided the problems relating to education into 3 heads:—Those relating to educational ideals and those that come under educational context and educational processes. In dealing with the 1st he concurred with the views of Sir Harold Stuart, that enlightenment and culture must reach the masses from the intellectual few, that the education of the masses depended on an efficient system of higher education. He further explained that without a sense of the value and utility of knowledge, without any taste or experience of intellectual exercise there could be no hearty response, no disposition to accept and assimilate knowledge filtering down from the cultured few. He then referred to the spread of free and compulsory primary education which was the watchword and cry of the Great Indian Patriot as being indispensable for national progress. He was of opinion that this could be achieved only if the status and prospects of the primary teachers were bettered. Better pay would make for greater efficiency, greater enthusiasm for work, and if to these be added certain external helps in the form of good buildings, clean surroundings with open spaces for exercise and recreation, primary education will soon become a real boon to the nation.

As for the extension of Collegiate and University education he said that it were high time that effect should be given to the recommendations of the Honorable Mr. Sivasamy Iyer and the wish expressed by Sir Harold Stuart in his convocation address that Trichinopoly should soon become the seat of a University.

He advocated the need of such changes and improvements in the secondary school course as would enable the vast majority of the students to be well-equipped either for a University course or for a good career, technical, industrial, commercial, or professional at the end of the school courses as in England and America. As the development of the personality of the pupil was closely bound up with the right solution of this problem, he said that more attention should be paid to the improvement of the physical and moral surroundings of the pupils: their supervision out of class hours, the nature of their hostel accommodation, the sanitary condition of the locality in which they reside, the company they keep, temperance, regularity or otherwise of their habits.

In taking up the second factor or the context of education he said that it concerned itself with the mental possessions which education ought to convey. He insisted on Vernaculars being the media of instruction even in the higher forms of secondary schools. He then pointed out the need for imparting ethical or religious teaching in or out of the school hours.

As regards this 3rd point, he observed that the resolutions which would be moved at this Conference on the courses of study, their re-grouping, were the outcome of a whole year's study, discussions and deliberations. There had been a consensus of opinion that changes should be introduced with a view to remove all evils of too early specialization and over specialization, all evils arising from sacrificing quality to quantity, from neglecting the formation of habits of exact thinking and correct and direct expression, in the hurry to stuff the students' mind with odds and ends of undigested and ill-assimilated information. He was of opinion that such a change would tend to the eradication of all the evils in the system, but to aim at efficiency the services of the teacher best fitted to handle the different subjects should be procured by the head-masters by holding out inducements such as liberal scale of pay, pension, provident fund etc. They should create such an atmosphere of trust and confidence as would relieve the teacher of all anxieties regarding his future. The status of the teacher should be raised if he is to develop his personality and awaken enthusiasm or work with a sense of the element of personality in the pupil. The failures arise mostly from a neglect of this all important factor. The very best teachers and the most highly paid among the staff ought to be given work in the IV form. Pupils who neglect their opportunities in the IV Form will seldom pass through the S. S. L. C., just as those who are not given a good start in English and the groups in the First University Class will hardly ever proceed to the degree.

The Secretary then read out a letter from the Inspector of schools regretting his inability to attend the Conference.

RESOLUTIONS.

HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION.

The following resolution were then adopted:—
 "That this Conference views with alarm the growing number of students left adrift in this big city in private hotels without proper supervision for lack of sufficient hostel accommodation for them in schools and colleges. It is therefore proposed that (1) An appeal be made to schools and colleges for extending their hostel accommodation. (2) An appeal be made to the public for the establishment of healthy students homes and a committee of the following gentlemen games (omitted) be appointed to make the appeal and submit a report to the Association (as early as possible) (3) The number of students obliged to live at present in private hostels for want of hostel accommodation be formed into groups each group being placed under the supervision of a member of the staff of any school or college in the locality.

CURRICULUM OF STUDIES.

That, (a) in the IV and V Forms, the following five subjects be taught according to the outlines of a syllabus drawn up by the S.S.L.C. Board to be worked in detail by the Headmasters of High Schools to suit local conditions and requirements:—(1) English (2) A Second Language—Vernacular or Classical, (3) Elementary Mathematics, (4) History (England and India) and Geography, (5) Elementary Science.

(b) That, in the VI Form, subjects 3, 4 and 5 be dropped and in their place, any one of the following groups of optional subjects be studied along with English and a Second Language:—(1) (a) Algebra and Geometry, (b) Physics and Chemistry, (2) (a) Botany, (b) Physics and Chemistry, (3) (a) History of England, (b) History of India.

4. Any two of the following groups of Commercial subjects, i. e., a and b or a and c, and so on. (a) Book-keeping and Commercial Arithmetic, (b) Commercial Practice and Geography, (c) Typewriting and Shorthand, (d) Indexing and Precise-writing.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper—

2. Published at—

3. Dated—

1. The above arrangement of optional groups is intended to suit the grouping of subjects in the Intermediate and it is excepted that there should be a considerable reduction in the extent and intensity of the present syllabus so that students in the Intermediate course may begin where they had stopped in the Sixth Form. 2. It also provides for a student who wants to enter life after the school course is over. 3. It also allows specialisation to begin in the VI Form which may in a way be regarded as a preparatory class for the Junior Intermediate. 4. It of course implies that satisfactory progress in subjects 3, 4 and 5 in the IV and V Forms is insisted on before granting promotions to boys.

That a public examination be held only in the following subjects once a year at the end of the VI Form course:—(1) English. (2) Second Language (Text, Translation and Composition.)

(3) Subjects in any one of the Groups mentioned in I (b.)

S. S. L. C. BOARD.

III. (a) That the strength of the S. S. L. C. Board be increased to twelve and (b) that not less than a third of the strength of the Board be chosen from among experienced Headmasters of the High Schools in the Presidency. (c) That the selection of Assistant Examiners be confined only to those that are actually engaged in teaching High School Classes.

DATE OF EXAMINATIONS.

That the Public Examination be held not in March as at present, which is most unsuitable by reason of its heat, but in the month of November beginning on the last Monday of that month.

TEACHERS' PROSPECTS.

This conference respectfully recommends that, with a view to make education really efficient in this country, provision be made for raising the status of the teaching profession by adopting the following recommendations among other means:—(a) provision for a Pension Provident and Insurance Funds managed or controlled by Government for the benefit of teachers in all recognized institutions (b) increase of the teachers pay on fixed and ear-marked salary grant systems and by the introduction of a fixed scale of salary in all recognised schools; (c) special privileges be conferred on teachers such as exemption from profession tax, formation of electorates composed of teachers within the respective areas to return a member to a Municipal council, to the District and Taluk Boards; and nomination as honorary magistrates (d) conferring by Government of titles of honour and distinctions on teachers or grant of jagirs to the same for long and meritorious services. (e) granting by Managers of free magistrates, education to the sons of the teachers employed by them.

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION.

That in the opinion of this Conference, the results of the Ootacamund conference convened by Government to fix the maximum of salary for clerks in the different branches of Public Service should be extended to the Urban and Rural Primary Teachers.

This Conference requests the Director of Public Instruction and the University of Madras to allow *bona fide* teachers to apply in private for all the University Examinations as in Bengal, The United Provinces, The Punjab and other provinces and thus gradually to increase their general educational qualifications.

This conference is of opinion that the use of English as the medium of imparting instruction in Indian schools is a great disadvantage in the matter of the acquisition of real and useful knowledge and retards the diffusion of the same among the people at large; and that therefore the Vernaculars should be gradually made the media of instruction in non-language subjects in

Secondary Schools, English continuing to be taught as a compulsory subject. That this resolution be communicated to the Director of Public Instruction and also to the Headmasters and Managers of all Secondary Schools.

MEDICAL INSPECTION.

That in the opinion of this Conference it is high time for Government to appoint Medical Inspectors who will periodically visit schools with a view to examine the sanitary and hygienic conditions of school and to advise as to how the children receiving instruction be made physically fit to do so.

DEPUTATION TO PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE.

At this stage Mr. S. K. Devasikamani suggested that a deputation consisting of 3 or 4 members should be appointed to wait on the educational authorities as also on the Provincial Conference at Cuddalore with a view to press the necessary changes to be introduced when the S. S. L. Scheme is undergoing revision. This found favour with the opinion of the majority and was unanimously passed and the Resolution runs thus:— "That a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen with power to add to the number be formed to place before the coming Provincial Educational Conference at Cuddalore the urgent need for the reform of S. S. L. C. Scheme on the lines suggested by the Resolutions passed at the Conference of April 1915, and if need be, to form an independent deputation to wait upon the Educational authorities and press the need for such reform upon them:—Messrs. S. Arpudasan, Odayar, S. K. Devasikamani, M. M. Balakrishna Iyer, Vyasa Row, E. N. Vembu Iyer, P. A. Ganesa Iyer and L. S. Nataraja Sarma.

COMMERCIAL EDUCATION.

With a view to give a wide scope for the diffusion of the Commercial Education in Southern India this Conference resolves that while thanking the Government and the framers of the S. S. L. C. scheme of this Presidency for the inclusion of Commercial subjects in the S. S. L. C. syllabus it prays that the Government and the University would give greater facility for the expansion of Commercial Education by introducing certain Commercial subjects in certain groups of the Intermediate and B. A. Pass courses, thus providing for graduation in Arts with specialisation in Commerce to a limited extent at least.

DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARDS.

This Conference recommends that a central District Educational Board consisting of Headmasters and Assistant masters nominated and elected with the District Asst. Inspector of Schools as Ex-officio member thereof, should be formed to institute and conduct a comparative public Examination at the end of the III Form course to keep up a standard and uniformity, to issue certificates with the entry of marks.

SCHOOL COUNCILS.

With a view to secure greater freedom in the internal work of schools in all purely educational matters, to promote greater co-operation and participation in actual school work and to cultivate a spirit of healthy union among matters this Conference recommends the formation of School Councils comprised of elected members from among the staff and the Headmaster as President Ex-officio, that such councils be recognised as adjuncts to every institution and that the functions of these councils be purely deliberative and advisory in character.

The morning session being the Conference rose for luncheon.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper—

The Hindu

2. Published at—

3. Dated—24-4-17

The S. S. L. C. Modification.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—The columns of your valuable Daily are full of pressing educational problems of the day—particularly of the Madras S. S. L. C. scheme. On this occasion the re-affirmation and the re-adoption of the resolution of the Trichinopoly Educational Conference on the modification of the scheme as a whole, is significant. Their resolve to press their proposals once again before the Provincial Educational Conference at Cuddalore and to wait in a deputation on His Excellency the Governor and the Director of Public Instruction, marks a step forward and the beginning of a vigorous propaganda to focus educational public opinion on this much-talked-of question. My motion, as the humble representative of the Trichinopoly District Teachers' Conference in the Nellore Session of the South India Teachers' Union, for the consideration of the recommendations of the scheme as a whole, failed, and this year, we propose to bring them up again at Cuddalore. The said recommendations have been re-printed in the 'Hindu' of the 19th instant under the proceedings of the Trichinopoly Conference held on the previous day, and we respectfully invite the thoughtful consideration and attention of our brother teachers elsewhere, so as to arrive at a definite conclusion at least this year, and to present our proposals before the constituted authorities, with the united voice of the South India teachers. The time is most opportune for modifications of the scheme in many particulars.

We believe in wholesale reconstruction but not in piecemeal legislation. This will be evident in the re-grouping of subjects and in making adequate provision for a scheme of general culture and partial specialisation preparatory to the University and to public life. What are the recommendations made piecemeal till now? (1) Vernacular is not in the compulsory group; Sanskrit or a classical language should be treated as a vernacular; Translation and Composition is not a substitute for formal and serious study of one's own mother tongue; (2) English History is not compulsory and a large body of pupils go up without an elementary knowledge thereof; the knowledge of historical background is a "sine quonon" to the study of set books in English Literature; Indian History is in the neglected group; the two histories should be united and correlated (3) Elementary Science is in the neglected group; it is not definite; it includes all sciences under the sun; (4) Physics and chemistry should be combined as one group; great difficulty is felt in the intermediate. (5) Elementary Mathematics should be given a separate average for Mathematics and non-mathematical students. (6) Specialisation is too early at the end of the IV Form course; but regrouping of the subjects into four or five and making them compulsory in the VI Form will be only the restoration of the rigid old Eatriculation with the complete elimination of pupils personal tastes and preferences and aptitudes. (7) The S.S.L.C. is primarily intended to benefit the large body of pupils who stop away with the Secondary course, and hence the "School course should not be subordinated to the relatively few students seeking a University career" (8) The S.S.L.C. aims at School-freedom and should not be dominated by University Examination. (9) Two Examinations for a general course and for a specialised one are unthinkable (10) Marking and specialisation should be postponed to the VI Course.

These are some of the recommendations made piecemeal by responsible educationists and organs of public opinion from time to time. It is also admitted that the dual character of

the Secondary course and Examination, so well recognised by the people and the Department by the introduction of technical subjects in the School course, should not be disturbed. It is again admitted on all hands, by teachers and even by the Department that the strain on the Secondary school pupils is already great, that it will be greater but for the saving situation of the B group subjects, and that the inclusion of any subject as compulsory additional subject in any group cannot be done without adding to the strain and without a rearrangement. The Trichinopoly Teachers' Conference recommend general education till the end of the V Form and a partly specialised education in the VI Form with two languages and a simplified optional group consisting of either technical or University optional subjects. There is to be no public examination at the end of the V Form course and the teachers are given the much-desired freedom. General culture is secured to a sufficient stage without the omission of important subjects of general knowledge. The arrangement of optional groups is intended to suit the grouping of subjects in the Intermediate and it is expected that there should be a considerable reduction in the extent and intensity of the present syllabus so that students in the Intermediate course may begin where they had stopped in the VI Form; it also provides for a student who wants to enter life after the school course is over; it also allows specialisation to begin in the VI Form which may, in a way, be regarded as a preparatory class to the Junior Intermediate; if, of course, implies that satisfactory progress in all subjects in the IV, and V Forms is insisted on before granting promotions to boys. These recommendations are clear, and with only one consolidated entry of marks at the end of the V Form course in the School, and term entries in the VI Form the school marking and the S.S.L.C. record of 21 pages will be considerably minimised and simplified.

The above recommendations represent only the sum total and the co-ordination of piecemeal recommendations made by different shades of public opinion. The Mysore University reduced one year's study in the Intermediate and tacked it on to special preparatory classes in High Schools. Our recommendation aims at cutting down one year of the High School course—the last year of the course and keeping it as the preparatory class. Formerly the High School course was only two years. We may keep up to it and devote the additional year for special study without lengthening the High School course or reducing the University course. The printed memorandum of the Trichinopoly Conference has been before the public; it represents the united opinion of several Headmasters of very big High Schools and the large body of teachers in the District. They expect serious consideration of their recommendations and either support or criticism at the hands of other Educationists Teachers' Associations and the public of this Presidency. It will not do to fight shy of the magnitude of the scheme as a whole; but the question must be threshed out either in the Committee stage or in open conference at Cuddalore and a perfect unanimity of settlement must be reached to submit the united representation of educational public opinion to the authorities in time and to secure suitable modifications in the Secondary School Course.

M. M. BALAKISHNIER.

KUDITALAI, April 21.

DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *The Hindu*
2. Published at—
3. Dated— *28-4-17*

The S. S. L. C. Modifications.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—In connection with the communication under the above title published in the "Hindu" of the 24th instant, we have to offer the following suggestions, which in our opinion, would go a great deal in modifying the present S. S. L. C. system so as to lessen the burden on the student population. These suggestions, we are sure, would also enable the teacher to do proper justice to the subjects entrusted to him, by giving him ample time to deal with them in the best way he can, since they would relieve him of much of the extraneous work now thrust upon him.

To start with, the grouping of the subjects and the specialisation based upon these groups are after all unsatisfactory. Some of the subjects which by their very nature must occupy a prominent position in the system of our education are relegated to a secondary position and thus fail to receive the attention they deserve; while others which may safely be assigned a subordinate position occupy a prominent place and thus receive an undue attention. Again, the practice of specialisation in a subject when the student is not in a position to think for himself mostly ends in disappointment and that when it is too late to think of a change. Last but not least is the variety of subjects crowding the curriculum only to increase the strain on the young brains, from year end to year end. Added to this is the marking system which does more harm than good both to the teacher and the taught. It interferes too much with the teacher's legitimate work and thus forces him to have recourse to methods calculated to reduce such interference to a minimum. To this end, the teacher hits upon "Test papers" of about a period's duration. Though this may, in a way, satisfy the object of the teacher, it has also a darker side whose effects are felt most by the taught. From the point of view of the student there is no day without a "test paper" on some subject or other. While trying to drive out a major devil, the system has thus brought in a number of minor devils.

The first thing we propose to suggest is therefore the remodelling of the whole system on the following basis. There must be three groups:—

Group A:—English and Vernacular or Sanskrit.

Group B:—Elementary Mathematics, Indian History and Geography, and Elementary Science.

Group C:—Algebra, & Geometry, Physics and Chemistry, or Physics, Chemistry, Physiology & Botany, or Indian History, English History and the Geography of the world (detailed) or Book-keeping and Commercial Arithmetic, Commercial Correspondence and Geography, and Shorthand and Type-writing,

and so on, there being not less than three subjects of the kindred nature under one sub-division. Deserving no special treatment under a system of general education, Drawing is not to be treated as a separate subject, but must be brought in as a secondary subject aiding everyone of the subjects under Group B.

Again Group A is to continue in all the three higher forms, Group B in the fourth and the fifth forms, and Group C only in the sixth form, with of course the present syllabus a little brought down.

The languages under Group A deserve equal treatment, there being text books in prose and poetry, detailed and non-detailed. Under Elementary Mathematics, certain algebraic manipulations and some theoretical geometry may be expected; under Indian History, a somewhat detailed study of the pre-Musalmán and the Musalmán periods are expected in forms four and five respectively, there being a cursory glance of other periods

—a detailed knowledge of all the periods may be safely expected in the sixth form; and under Elementary science a little of Physics, Botany, Physiology and popular Astronomy may be expected. The standard of knowledge in Elementary Mathematics may be put down as somewhat approximating to what is found in the text book on the subject by Messrs. Seshu Iyer and Venkatasubbayya; and that in the subjects under Elementary Science may be only such as will enable an ordinary average Graduate to handle them all, without any help from the respective special Assistants.

All the subjects under Group B need not be handled throughout the year. The School year being conveniently divided into three quarters: (1) July to September, (2) October to December, and (3) January to April, the three subjects may be assigned each to a quarter.

This will lessen the unnecessary burden on the young brains. There must be periodical examinations, written as well as oral, at the end of each quarter. For the purposes of promotion to a higher class the students must be required to have scored not less than the average marks (if the average falls below 35 per cent) or not less than 35 per cent (if the average is higher) in all the subjects under Group A and in at least one subject under Group B, there being not less than half the minimum in the remaining subjects.

There need not be marking system in all three forms. The three results of the periodical examinations may be entered in the S.S.L.C. certificates—the average of the first two quarters for the first term and the percentages of third quarter for the second term. If necessary, the marking system may be safely brought in the sixth form, where there will be ample scope for it.

The working hours of the school may also be modified with advantage, there being 5 periods of one hour each on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 2 periods of the same duration on Wednesday and Saturday. In the fourth and fifth forms, English and Vernacular (or Sanskrit) may each be allotted 9 hours a week and the subject under Group B, only 6 hours. In the sixth form we may see that the subjects under Group A, claim between them 16 hours and those under group C, 8 hours, remembering that all the subjects in this class are to be handled throughout the year.

These are some of the suggestions we have ventured to put forth, with a hope that others in the line may come forward with their own, so that we can arrive at a somewhat definite system comprising of the best from each source.

K. KRISHNAMACHARYA.

TIRUPATI, APRIL 26.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper--

The Hindu

2. Published at--

3. Dated-- 1-5-17

The S. S. L. C.

I

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR.—The following are the answers to certain questions sent to several Headmasters of High Schools by the Honorable Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju B. A., B. L., High Court Vakil, Vizagapatam, regarding the S. S. L. C. scheme of studies:—

Resolved that the following answers to his questions, and suggestions be sent to the Hon'ble Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju, B. A., B. L., High Court Vakil, Vizagapatam.

Q. 1. The present grouping is not satisfactory. The grouping may be as follows, so as to be in harmony with that in the Intermediate Course.

A. GROUP.

English and a Second Language (Telugu, Tamil, Kanarese, Sanskrit, &c., &c.).

N. B. Two papers in the second language as in English. 1. Test proper; 2. Composition and Translation; or, Translation alone, from and to Sanskrit, in the case of Sanskrit Students.

B. GROUP.

1. Elementary Mathematics; 2. Elementary Science; 3. Geography; 4. Drawing; 5. Physical Training.

C. GROUP.

History Group:—English History and Indian History. (Examinations to be confined to special portions.)

Other subjects may be grouped as at present.

Q. 2. Syllabus in Mathematics and Science may be lightened.

Q. 3. There are too many text-books in English and Vernacular at present. A few text-books may be done in detail.

Q. 4. Grammar to be taught as a separate subject. Only as much grammar as is necessary to avoid faulty language may be taught.

Q. 5. Vide answer to Q. 1.

Q. 6. The system of determining the results by the Presidency average is more desirable than that of fixed minimum. In case a candidate fails to obtain the Presidency average in any subject, he may be declared to be eligible for College Study, provided half the sum, of his class marks and his Public Examination marks, comes up to the Presidency average.

Q. 7. The standard of Examination papers varies from year to year. The examiners ought to be only those who are engaged in the actual teaching of the subject in the High School Classes.

Copies of Instructions given by the chief examiners to the assistant examiners in each subject ought to be sent to all schools along with the S.S.L.C. Report.

Q. 8. A Commission to be appointed to enquire into the defects of the present S.S.L.C. System. The Teaching Profession should be largely represented in the Commission.

Q. 9. The present rates of Fees are very high. Reduction is highly desirable. Percentage of scholarships to be raised.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The Compartment System must be introduced here.

2. The course of studies of the Intermediate to be modified so as to suit the scheme of studies in the S.S.L.C. Course.

A. RANGANATH ROW,
Secretary.

D. H. H. SCHOOL TEACHERS'
ASSOCIATION,
TIRUPATI, APRIL 26.

II

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR.—The following resolutions were passed by the Vizianagaram Teachers' Association under the presidency of Mr. M. Venkatarangayya M.A., chiefly, in response to a circular letter from the Honorable Mr. B. H. Venkatapathi Raju.

This Association recommends

I. That there be only two groups in the S. S. L. C. scheme, the compulsory and the optional and there be taught no subjects in which there is to be no public examination. Further under group A (compulsory) be taught (i) English; (ii) Elementary Mathematics (iii) Vernacular text and grammar, (iv) Elementary science, Geography and Indian History and under optionals, History of India and Civics be added to the present subject.

II. The syllabuses being proportionally lightened, physics and chemistry be combined into one subject.

III. The courses of study be considerably lightened and be made very definite.

IV. Only two essay books in good modern English be prescribed for non-detailed study in English and grammar be taught chiefly in connection with books prescribed for detailed study and be systematised; vernacular being made use of whenever necessary.

V. That the questions on the non-detailed text book be included in second paper (those in the first paper being confined to the detailed text books and language).

VI. The syllabus in elementary mathematics be lightened. A committee of six mathematics graduates was appointed to draw up the syllabus.

VII. The result in each of the subjects, separately be determined by a consideration of the boys getting either fixed minimum or the presidency average in that subject, whichever may be the lower in that subject for the year.

VIII. The following minima be accepted:—Under compulsory subjects (i) English 35 percent. (ii) Elementary mathematics 30 percent. (iii) Vernacular text and grammar 30 percent. (iv) General knowledge subjects (i.e.) Indian History, Geography and Elementary Science 30 percent. under optional subjects.

(i) One subject 35 per cent. (ii) the other subject 30 per cent.

IX. The rule of getting five marks above the Presidency averages in English and a subject of the "C" group be abandoned and equality of treatment with regard to deficiencies being made good, be accorded alike to all the subjects in a group. Further the actual deficit alone be required to be made good.

X. That there be two presidency averages struck in Elementary Mathematics, one for the boys that take up Algebra and Geometry under optionals and the other for the rest.

XI. The present system of moderating the marks be discontinued at once.

XII. That the question papers be strictly confined to the syllabuses, instructions issued by the board and the department and be fairly set with a view to ascertain whether the extinctions of a subject have been understood or not.

XIII. That the chief examiners in each subject shall be selected from those that are directly connected with the actual teaching of the subject in Secondary Schools and that the question papers be finally passed by a board composed of college lecturers and Secondary Schoolmasters in the ratio of one to three; and that the assistant examiners shall be invariably selected from among the teachers in the Secondary schools and that the claims of each institution be considered in making the selection. No

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CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

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2. Published at--

3. Dated--

teacher is to be given a second chance before the claims of other eligible teachers are satisfied.

XIV. That the S.S.L.C. board be enlarged so as to consist of the president ex-officio, four official members and a representative from each circle elected by the staffs of the High Schools in the circle.

XV. That a thorough enquiry be instituted by a committee of ten persons of whom these are to be officials two Indian non-official members of Legislative Council and five, Headmasters.

XVI. That the system of passing by compartments or groups be adopted.

XVII. That school fees be lowered and that the deficit exactly be made good by grant-in-aid from provincial funds.

D. V. JAGANNADHAN,
Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT.

CUTTINGS FROM NEWSPAPERS.

1. Name of Paper— *The Hindu*
 2. Published at—
 3. Dated— *3-5-17*

S. S. L. C. Scheme.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HINDU."

SIR,—Many of the evils that form matter for complaint against the present School Final system are, in my opinion, directly traceable to the fact that from the old Matriculation to the new School Leaving Certificate was no development, but a sudden and vital change.

In the Matriculation days, English Grammar was taught in the High School classes as a separate subject, and there was a good deal of sheer memory work. This might not be a blessing pure and simple; but it served to secure a certain degree of average efficiency in respect of knowledge of English. In those days, we could be sure a student would not fall below a certain level of absurdity. Now no such surety can possibly exist; and the cause, as it seems to me, is partly the doing of grammar only in connection with the texts prescribed; but mostly the scope of the new method gives room for a great neglect of grammar especially in the lower forms. As teacher of English myself under the new rules for the IV Form, I have come across such mistakes as "to brought," "He going to that place," "After Rama ate the mango gave to Krishna," in compositions which, if only matter were to be taken into consideration, must certainly be ranked as eminently good. The present system encourages general studies in English; but I am afraid that, amid the pressure of subjects and of tests daily, weekly, monthly terminal, annual, and what not, the average student fails to do anything in the way of such studies. It must not be denied that some students, even at some risk in respect of other subjects, take enthusiastically after general studies in English. Thus they take special advantage of the encouragement given by the present system to such studies. Hence it happens that the inequalities in the work of compositions written by students of the same class are sometimes very great. Not only that, the knowledge of English an average School Final student possesses is very low indeed. I suggest that English Grammar be made a compulsory subject, and that teachers of all forms be directed to do it as of old even apart from the texts; and I have no doubt that then would be secured a higher degree of average efficiency than it is now possible to obtain.

Again, it is a notorious fact that in many Schools there is neglect and gross neglect of the B-group subjects. When even great scholars of the European countries are growing more and more enthusiastic about studies in subjects like Geography, the average Indian student and the average Indian teacher have a like tendency to consider them as beneath their notice. That is because in India examinations are the end, not the beginning of culture; anyhow, there is the fact. Would it not be advisable, under such circumstances, for the Public Examination Board to examine the school final students in the B Group subjects also, just for the purpose of raising those subjects to a higher dignity in the eyes of students and teachers if with no other motive in view? The examination standard ought not to be rigid; it ought to be by far lower than in the case of the A and the C Group subjects; and ample margin should as at present be allowed in the case of students that intend to take a College course.

Again I think with my friend Mr. K. Krishnamacharya that Elementary Mathematics may very well be removed from the A Group and included in the B Group. I also think with him that specialisation ought to begin only in the

sixth form. Now, as it obtains in most of the schools, specialisation begins in the fifth form; but that, I am afraid, is very early; and early specialisation, like early puberty in the case of girls, tends to early decay and ruin. Specialisation in the sixth form is also early; but seeing there can at present be no other go, we shall be wise of two evils to choose the lesser.

C. P. KRISHNAMURTHY, B. A.
 A Mathematics Teacher.

COIMBATORE, APRIL, 30.

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