

Home (191)) Department.
(*Education*)

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. *1057*

DATED *(5-8-1)*

INDEXED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Conference.

Forwarding to the *g* gentlemen invited to attend the
---- to be held at Simla to consider the question of teaching
English in Secondary Schools copies of the agenda of the----

Simla, the 8th August 1917.

1. In discussing the medium of instruction, there are two widely different points of view. There are some who would wish to see from the very first carried out through the medium of the vernacular, even to a very high standard, and there are others who would introduce the teaching of English in G. Anderson, Esq., M.A., at a very early stage. It is contended that under certain circumstances some instruction in the vernacular is desirable even in the secondary schools. The present purpose, however, is to leave such cases out of consideration as far as possible, and to confine attention to the teaching of English in secondary schools and to the medium of instruction in those schools. The object in view, therefore, is to secure that pupils may (a) obtain a better grasp of the subjects which they are taught, and (b) complete their secondary education with a knowledge of the English language than at present.

2. The first essential, therefore, is to understand the present position which varies in the several provinces. It may be said that a boy in an English-vernacular school is taught all or most subjects through the medium of the vernacular and English and is taught all or most subjects through the medium of the vernacular.

In continuation of this Department letter no. 666, dated the 30th July 1917, I am directed to forward, for information, and for favour of communication to the gentlemen who have been invited to attend the Conference to be held at Simla on the 20th and 21st of August 1917 to consider the questions of teaching English in secondary schools, 10 copies of the agenda of the Conference.

3. (a) At what period in a pupil's career should English be taught as a language? Is it better for him, from the point of view of his mastery over the language, to start its study at an early age or only to receive such instruction after he has been well grounded in the vernacular?

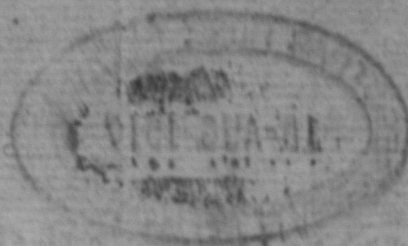
(b) Do the younger pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of English by their instruction through the medium of that language or do they merely gain a smattering of incorrect and unidiomatic English?

(c) What is the general experience of those boys who have passed through the vernacular middle course and then studied English in a high school? How have such boys distinguished themselves in the study of English? How do they compare with those who have studied from an earlier period through the medium of English?

(d) By what methods should the teaching of English be conducted? Does the present system attach too much importance to a knowledge of English literature as against the necessity of learning to speak and write the English language correctly? Should the teaching in the early stages be entirely oral or not?

4. (a) To what extent does instruction through the medium of a foreign language (i) hamper the pupils in the acquisition of knowledge, crushing their independence and originality of thought and instilling in them the necessity of cram as the only means of learning, (ii) impose a burden on the teachers, and (iii) tend to the impoverishment of the vernacular?

(b) Do the pupils in a vernacular middle school, as a rule, acquire a better knowledge and grasp of the ordinary school subjects than those of a similar age who have been instructed through the medium of English?



AGENDA.

1. In discussing the teaching of English and the medium of instruction, there are two widely different points of view. There are some who would wish to see instruction in certain subjects carried out through the medium of the vernacular even to a very high standard ; and there are others who would introduce the teaching of English freely in the primary schools and at a very early stage. It is recognised that under certain circumstances some instruction in the vernacular may be desirable even in university courses, and of English in the early stages of primary schools. The present purpose, however, is to leave such cases out of consideration as far as possible, and to confine attention to the teaching of English in secondary schools and to the medium of instruction in those schools. The object in view, therefore, is to see how far modifications in the present system may be effected so that pupils may (a) obtain a better grasp of the subjects which they are taught, and (b) complete their secondary course with a more competent knowledge of the English language than at present.

2. The first essential, therefore, is to understand the present position which varies in the several provinces. It may be said that a boy in an English-vernacular secondary school begins to learn English as a language between the ages of eight and ten and is taught all or most subjects through the medium of the English language from about the age of 13, some three or four years before the university course begins (see the diagram opposite page 71 of the last Quinquennial Review of Education in India). Those actively engaged with the administration and work of teaching, therefore, will be invited to explain the working of the system obtaining in their provinces and to point out :—

The present system.

- (a) The stage when a pupil begins to learn English as a language.
- (b) The stage when a pupil begins to receive instruction through the medium of English.
- (c) To what extent is the medium of English introduced gradually or not ?

3. (a) At what period in a pupil's career should English be taught as a language ? Is it better for him, from the point of view of his ultimate mastery over the language, to start its study at an early age or only to receive such instruction after he has been well grounded in a vernacular ?

The teaching of English.

the language, to start its study at an early age or only to receive such instruction after he has been well grounded in a vernacular ?

(b) Do the younger pupils gain a satisfactory knowledge of English by their instruction through the medium of that language or do they merely gain a smattering of incorrect and unidiomatic English ?

(c) What is the general experience of those boys who have passed through the vernacular middle course and then studied English at a high school ? How have such boys distinguished themselves in the matter of English in competition with those who have studied from an earlier period through the medium of English ?

(d) By what methods should the teaching of English be conducted ? Does the present system attach too much importance to a knowledge of English literature as against the necessity of learning to speak and write the English language correctly ? Should the teaching in the early stages be entirely oral or not ?

4. (a) To what extent does instruction through the medium of a foreign language

The medium of instruction.

(i) hamper the pupils in the acquisition of knowledge, crushing their independence and originality of thought and instilling in them the necessity of cram as the only means of learning, (ii) impose a burden on the teachers, and (iii) tend to the impoverishment of the vernaculars ?

(b) Do the pupils in a vernacular middle school, as a rule, acquire a better knowledge and grasp of the ordinary school subjects than those of a similar age who have been instructed through the medium of English ?

(23) work

(c) Are the comparative paucity of suitable text-books in the vernacular, the deficiency of the vernaculars in technical nomenclature, and the multiplicity of the vernaculars insuperable objections to extending the use of the vernaculars as a medium of instruction?

(d) Should English be introduced as a medium of instruction gradually or not? If so, at what period and in what degree should it be introduced?

(e) To what extent is it advisable to examine students in certain subjects at the end of their school career in the vernaculars? Have any experiments been made in this direction and, if so, to what extent have they been successful?

Conference.

Forwarding to the gentlemen invited to attend the — to be held at Simla to consider the question of teaching English in Secondary Schools copies of the agenda of the —.

READ AGAIN G.O. No. 10324 dated 10.8.1917.

READ ALSO:-

C. No. 2663A From the Govt of India, No. 695, dated 8.8.1917.

ORDER.

No. 1057, dated 15/8/17.

I am afraid
I will not meet
the absence at their
usual address.

Educational Conference, Simla
C/o Govt of India, Secy Dept
15/8/17

A copy of the agenda of the conference to be held at Simla on the 20th & 21st August 1917 to consider the question of teaching English in Secondary School is forwarded to the gentlemen who have been invited to attend the conference.

To The Secy, Govt of India, Secy Dept
Mr. Divakumar Sastri
Lecturer, Teachers' Coll. Calcutta
The Rev. W. Weston, Prof. Madras Univ.
Mr. R. Bahadur K. Saha, Headmaster, High School, Nagpur

Good evening

1032 (Hawley) 8 10. 8. 7

ACB 8
For + of course p2-8.8 ✓

The conference
was invited to attend
gentlemen
is forwarded to the
in Scarborough
of teaching English
to consider the grounds
the 1st & 2nd August 1897
be held in Dublin on
of the conference to
A copy of the agenda

[Faint handwritten notes, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.]

191

DATE:

CURRENT No.

ENCLOSURE TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DETTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DISPATCH
IN ORIGINAL.

N.B.-

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