

Government of Madras

HOME DEPARTMENT (EDUCATION).

G.O. No. 826, 20th June 1917

Report

Recording — on the working of the Government College, Kumbakōnam, during 1916-17.

INDEXED

ORIGINAL

Government of Madras

HOME DEPARTMENT (EDUCATION).

G.O. No. 826, 20th June 1917

Report

Recording — on the working of the Government College, Kumbakōnam, during 1916-17.

READ—the following paper :—

Letter—from the Hon'ble Mr. J. H. STONE, M.A., F.R.H.S., C.I.E., Director of Public Instruction.
To—the Secretary to Government, Home (Education) Department.
Dated—Madras, the 9th June 1917.
No.—C. 4592.

I have the honour to submit herewith for the information of Government a copy of my Proceedings Dis. No. 3295, dated 1st June 1917, reviewing the report on the working of the Government College, Kumbakōnam, during the year 1916-17.

ENCLOSURE

Proceedings of the Director of Public Instruction Dis. No. 3295, dated 1st June 1917.

Read—the following paper :—

Letter—from R. M. STATHAM, Esq., Principal, Government College, Kumbakōnam.
To—the Director of Public Instruction.
Dated—the 25th April 1917.
No.—Cur. 214.

I have the honour to submit my report on the working of the college for 1916-17.
2. I was confirmed as Principal during the year.

M.R.Ry. N. K. Venkatesan, Assistant Lecturer, was transferred to the Ceded Districts College, Anantapur, and was relieved by M.R.Ry. N. Venkatasubbayya in the afternoon of 27th October 1916. M.R.Ry. Bhattanathaswamin, Sanskrit pandit, died on 25th September 1916 and M.R.Ry. S. Venkatarama Sastri appointed to act temporarily as Sanskrit pandit continued in the college throughout the year from 11th October 1916. Two temporary demonstrators at Rs. 50 each for the science laboratories and one Tamil tutor at Rs. 30 were appointed. The demonstrators took charge on the 15th November and 18th December 1916. The Tamil tutor joined the college on 3rd January 1917. M.R.Ry. D. Samuel and A. V. Venkatarama Ayyar were confirmed in the college as Assistant Lecturers.

3. *Accommodation and equipment.*—During the year the Government sanctioned the sum of Rs. 24,000 for the construction of the new chemistry laboratory. The work was taken in hand at the beginning of February and considerable progress in construction has been made. It is anticipated that the new building will be ready for use before the end of 1917. The building adjoins the old part of the college on the western side, and the Public Works Department have undertaken to construct the new building as far as possible in keeping with the design and style of the old. New verandahs were added to the gas and electrical rooms and a railed wall placed round the gas plant. The ceilings of the class rooms were repaired throughout.

4. *Strength and attendance.*—The number at the end of the year was 301 and the average daily number on the rolls was 320 and the average daily attendance

302. The following statement gives particulars as to the number of students on the rolls in the first and second terms of 1915-16 and 1916-17 :—

Classes.	1915-16.		1916-17.	
	First term.	Second term.	First term.	Second term.
First-year class	86	86	116	118
Second-year class	130	121	143	112
Third-year class	26	26	39	39
Fourth-year class	40	38	32	32

The number on the rolls at the beginning of the year was the highest ever recorded in the college, and it is gratifying to note that the junior B.A. class started the year with 42 students, the highest number reached during the last decade.

The large increase in the junior Intermediate class was due, in the first place, to the much larger number of applicants well qualified in mathematics, the number of mathematics students who were admitted being nearly double that of the previous year. The increase was secondly due to the fact that the Syndicate thought fit not to trust the Principal in the matter of admissions, but issue its own list of eligible candidates, with the result that whereas I, using my own discretion, admitted 60 students in 1915, in 1916, 120 appeared well fitted for admission according to the list published by the Syndicate, though I rejected many whose names appeared in the list. At any rate it will no longer be possible, if for example the results of the Intermediate Examination for this college are bad in 1918, for the Syndicate to talk about the 'admission scandal.' The increase in the number of students in the third class taking History has been most marked, and is perhaps the most satisfactory indication of the progress of the college, Group V of the junior B.A. is the largest since the year 1897.

5. *Classification of students.*—The distribution under the several heads is shown in appendices A and B. All the students have been either vaccinated or bear marks of small-pox.

6. *Library.*—Four thousand eight hundred and ninety-one (4,891) volumes were issued to the students and the members of the teaching staff from the main library. This figure excludes the number issued from the class libraries by the Lecturers in charge of them. The number of books consulted or taken for study during the library periods by students was 4,570. The number of volumes added to the library was 568. The total number of volumes at the end of the year was 9,063.

The stock-taking of books in the library took place during March; the result shows 46 general works and 27 Tamil works missing as compared with the registers and the catalogue. Of these the Tamil books are mostly small paper backed books easily destroyed or lost, and many others have evidently been missing for a long time—such as "Hall's International Law" for which there has been no request for several years past. The total unaccounted for is not very large out of a library of nine thousand volumes. But it must be admitted that the stock-taking has revealed several defects in the check kept over the issue and return of books. Every effort will be made in the ensuing year to prevent further loss. I have pleasure in reporting in this connection that the present librarian has shown great zeal in the discharge of his duties connected with the stock-taking and care of the library.

7. The tutorial system has worked fairly well during the year. The tutors were requested to submit as detailed reports as possible, and to keep in touch with their wards, but the system will never be really effective until the students show greater readiness to make use of their tutors. The hostel has been much fuller this year as was anticipated in my last report. This year a new grouping was made in the tutorial system by which as far as possible the Lecturers had as their wards students whom they met in the class rooms so as to keep in more constant touch with them.

8. *Discipline and work of the college.*—The discipline of the college has been exceptionally good, but work has gone on along its old not very satisfactory lines. From my former reports you will have seen that, in spite of constant trials, I have

not been satisfied with the system of library and study hours. This year I am forced to admit that on the whole it has not only not worked well, but has been almost useless. The causes for this are, I think, as follows: The majority of students think that they cannot do any useful reading work in a library hour. They say they are disturbed by the number of students present, by the fact that they only have one hour in which to select a book from the library, read and return it, which means only scrappy and ineffective reading, and that they have not yet acquired that facility of selection and assimilation which is essential for short-period reading. To overcome these difficulties, constant personal supervision in the library hours is necessary. With classes at their present strength this is almost impossible. Though during this year Lecturers have had regular library duty, even then the staff has not been nearly sufficient to make the work a reality. I believe that in some colleges where there is a larger staff the classes are divided into groups for the purpose of study and library hours, and a tutor placed in charge of each group. Under such a system there is some hope of success, but as it is both Lecturers and students frankly admit that the minimum amount of useful work is turned out in study and library hours. Most Lecturers of the college are already doing 13 or 14 hours a week work in the class rooms and in order to fully supervise divided classes in study hours it would entail all the staff having an extra 3 or 4 hours' work a week each, which would greatly interfere with the efficiency of their ordinary work. The study hours of the B.A. classes under the direct supervision of a Lecturer have proved moderately successful, but I am now certain that general library hours for the other classes, even when a Lecturer is present, in addition to the Librarian, are useless, and more conducive to neglect than productive work.

Next year an effort will be made to subdivide the Intermediate classes for study work and place a lecturer in charge of each group. Even if this is done it remains to be seen whether the work done under such a scheme is sufficient return for the very heavy additional burden thrown on the staff.

The work of the college has suffered, I suppose in common with other colleges, by the traditional methods of work still prevailing. The majority of students instead of working regularly and surmounting difficulties as they arise prefer to leave everything, except mere note copying, to the last part of the year, and then either dog the footsteps of the supposed examiner, exert enormous energy in collecting rumoured questions and writing stereotyped answers or attempt to cram in two months what could have been done in nine. Throughout the whole process there is an entire absence of "thought" and self-reliance. Excellent students, who with proper methods could succeed by their own honest work, fail owing to the disastrous system prevailing. These methods are demoralising to the students and to the Lecturers. The teacher becomes disheartened and does less good and enthusiastic work year after year. Before these defects can be remedied, we must have a radical change in methods of study, and an alteration of the present system of "rumoured questions" and less diffuse and heavy courses, with a truer understanding of the relative importance of the examination in the career of the student.

We have learnt that it is dangerous to prophesy about the results of the examinations, but we think that the senior B.A. class will do well this year in all groups. And we are confident that the junior B.A. class shows quite exceptional promise.

9. *University and promotion examinations.*—The results of the University examinations are shown in statements C and D appended.

The results of the Intermediate Examination were bad in common with all other colleges, but in the mathematics division we secured ten distinctions amongst twelve successful candidates. With the exception of mathematics and philosophy the B.A. results were very poor. There is no explanation to offer except that the class cannot have been up to standard. Of 118 students in the first year class four were detained, eleven were required to sit for re-examination in July and the remainder were promoted. In the junior B.A. class of 39 thirty-two were promoted and seven required to sit for re-examination. On the whole the results were better than in previous year, but the English of the first year class is weak.

10. *Scholarships and prizes.*—The following students received during the year the scholarships noted against them:—

T. Raghavan Nayar	first class	...	Junior Subrahmanyan's scholarship for 1916-17.
S. Krishnaswami	second "	...	"
R. Duraiswami	third "	...	Senior Subrahmanyan's scholarship for 1916-17.
S. Sundaresan	fourth "	...	"
S. Anantayanan	"	...	Edward Bird's scholarship for 1915-16.
K. Sambandham	"	...	"
S. Ponnuswami	"	...	These were in receipt of Government scholarships throughout the year.
S. Srinivasaraghavan	"	...	"
S. Raghunathan	second "	...	"
A. Kodandaraman	first "	...	These were in receipt of Government scholarships from July 1916.
L. Kuppu Rao	"	...	"
Baqir Hussain	"	...	K. Ranganatha Rao's scholarship for 1916-17.
P. Narasimham	fourth "	...	"

11. *Games and athletics.*—The past year has been a very successful one. Not only have all the college teams played a large number of matches, but the number of college students taking part in games has very largely increased since last year. We cannot pretend that the system of compulsory games for all new students worked perfectly, but at any rate during the long term it resulted in a very wholesome increased activity in every department of sport. During the short term the proper organization of games naturally weakens, but during the long term about 77 per cent of the students of the college were taking active regular part in games—a figure of which I think we have legitimate right to be proud. Every athletic club more than doubled its numbers as compared with last year, and the new gymnastic class worked regularly. Great credit is due to the captains of games for their successful encouragement of sport. The total expenditure on games during the year reached the very high figure of Rs. 2,000 as compared with Rs. 1,460 last year. Out of this the Government grant is only Rs. 300. It would very greatly help the college if Government could see its way to increase the annual grant now that so many more students are playing games. I cannot omit to mention here that the enthusiasm of M.R.Ry. S. Balakrishna Ayyar, the Athletic Secretary, was largely responsible for the success of the year.

The tennis team played fifteen matches and won them all. It toured to Trichinopoly, Madura, Rāmnād, Tinnevely, Trivandrum and Madras and also entered for the Hardinge Tennis Doubles Tournament, Tanjore, and secured the cup.

The hockey team played ten matches visiting Madras, Madura, Vellore, Chingleput and Cuddalore.

The foot-ball team played seven matches visiting Madura, Madras, Vellore and Tanjore. The team has also entered for the Māyavaram tournament.

The badminton club played fourteen matches and entered for two district tournaments.

The five courts were fully used throughout the year but we can find no teams to compete with.

The college in addition to its annual sports organised local inter-school and college sports, which were successfully conducted in September.

12. *Finance.*—The total receipts and charges for the year were Rs. 30,211-4-6 and Rs. 64,626-5-1 respectively. The net expenditure to Government was Rs. 34,415-0-7 against Rs. 30,313 in the year 1915-16. The net cost per student was Rs. 107 against Rs. 111 in the previous year.

13. *Hostel.*—A detailed report will be submitted in June as usual.

14. *College societies.*—All the societies completed large programmes of lectures and debates, which included three lantern lectures and two lectures from the University Professors. The members of the Literary Society staged the "Merchant of Venice" most successfully before a record audience. The Literary Society's journal is now in its second year of issue and is, I believe, much appreciated.

15. *General.*—The death of M.R.Ry. Bhattanathaswamin, Sanskrit pandit of the college, was a great loss to the college. The college was closed for a day to mark our respect for his ability and character.

Members of the Old Boys' Association have made two permanent endowments during the year and have been giving as many as 31 scholarships to poor students every month. I venture to think the college owes a great debt of gratitude to the association whose work is, I believe, quite unrivalled.

There has been great activity in the social side of college life throughout the year. Amongst many functions may be mentioned the tour of the Historical Society to the historic Avadayār Kōil and the combined moonlight gathering of all college societies. Some students of the college have organized a night school in the town and it has been working uninterruptedly during the year. A war fête was held in the college grounds during February and the students of the college contributed largely to its success. I take this opportunity to thank the members of the staff for their very effective co-operation in all departments of college work.

The work of the college office is becoming increasingly difficult. With a larger number of students, new buildings to the extent of two laboratories and two classrooms, and a large increase in departmental correspondence and reports, we still have the same office staff as many years ago—one writer and an attender. The work is more than two men can properly manage, especially as the attender is only paid Rs. 12 per mensem and therefore cannot be expected to do very responsible work. Fee collection and the finance work together with ordinary correspondence is one man's work alone, and another responsible clerk is needed for the maintenance of attendance registers, stock book of forms and stationery articles, etc.

The maximum pay for the clerk of this office is only Rs. 40 which seems small for such a responsible post. The gymnastic instructor has given valuable assistance in the office, but now that a special gymnastic class has been opened his time is fully occupied. Under the present system the attender has to be considered as a kind of second clerk whereas he should be only an assistant. Last year's experience, when the college attender resigned after the discovery of certain irregularities, shows the difficulties with which I am faced in the office. The maintenance of attendance registers is most important and unless placed in the hands of a responsible clerk is open to grave irregularities. But at present the clerk of the college cannot possibly find the time to maintain the registers himself. During the past year I have almost every week inspected the consolidated attendance register and know the work involved. From my own point of view the responsibility of the Principal is very much increased when there are such large money transactions and important registers to maintain and only one clerk to control the whole work. I have, however, to report that the present clerk and the attender have given great satisfaction during the year and have done much to improve the working of the office in spite of overwork.

APPENDIX A.

I. DISTRIBUTION of students according to caste or race.	
Muhammadians	5
Indian Christian	1
Brahmans	266
Non-Brahman caste Hindus	29
Total	301

II. DISTRIBUTION of students according to occupation of parents or guardians.	
Officials	108
Petty officials	20
Landholders	144
Traders	15
Others	11
Total	301

III. DISTRIBUTION of students according to wealth.	
Richer classes	9
Middle "	276
Poorer "	16
Total	301

APPENDIX B.

DISTRIBUTION of students according to the districts to which they belong.

Districts.	B.A. classes.		Intermediate classes.		Total.
	Junior.	Senior.	Junior.	Senior.	
Tanjore	22	31	112	104	279
Trichinopoly	..	1	2	3	6
Madura	1	..	..	1	2
South Arcot	3	..	1	2	6
North Arcot	1	..	..	..	1
Coimbatore	1	..	1	..	2
Kistna	..	..	..	1	1
Malabar	..	..	..	..	2
Tinnevely	1	..	1	..	1
Hamnad	..	..	..	1	1
Total ..	39	32	118	112	301

APPENDIX C.

RESULTS of the Intermediate Examination in Arts and B.A. Degree Examination Pass Course, 1915-16.

Examination and group.	Examined.	Number passed.			Percentage of passes for		
		First class.	Second class.	Total.	1913-14.	1914-15.	1915-16.
Intermediate Examination.							
Group I.	38	4	8	33	23	23	27.9
Group III.	80	12	91				
B.A. Degree Examination.							
1. English Language division	30	..	6	6	33	52.6	20
2. Science division—							
Mathematics	10	..	7	7	60	28.6	70
History	9	..	1	1	13	66.7	11
Philosophy	10	..	10	10	80	80	100

APPENDIX D.

NUMBER of students examined, passed and failed in the general subjects of the Intermediate Examination held in 1916.

Subjects.	Examined.	Passed.	Gained distinction.	Failed.
English	118	43	..	75
Tamil composition	81	29	..	19
Sanskrit translation	37	31	..	6
Mathematics	38	33	6	5
Physics	38	29	4	9
Chemistry	38	19	..	19
Ancient History	25	48	..	25
Modern History	79	52	..	27
Logic	58	47	1	11
Tamil	17	14	..	3
Sanskrit	13	13	..	..

Dis. No. 3295, dated 1st June 1917.

Recorded.

2. During the year the staff underwent very few changes worth noticing.

3. The increase in strength in the B.A. classes is noted with satisfaction. The Director trusts that the more numerous admissions to the first-year class will be justified by results.

4. The results of the University examinations were on the whole poor but exhibit curious inequalities. The Director has reason to know that the Principal's strictures on students' methods of work and attitude towards examinations are only too well-founded. While these remain what they are, consistent success in examinations is hardly to be expected.

5. The college was affiliated during the year in Group II-A—Physical Science—of the B.A. degree courses. The Principal should have referred to this point in his report.

6. The Director trusts that the Principal and staff will do their utmost to create a healthier intellectual tone in the college and suggests that the tutorial system should be a useful means to this end.

(True Extract)

J. H. STONE,
Director of Public Instruction.

To the Principal, Government College, Kumbakonam.
,, the Principals of other Government Colleges.
,, the Inspector of Schools, Sixth Circle.
,, the Assistant Inspector of Schools, Tanjore District.
Copy to the Collector of Tanjore, for information.
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Order—No. 826, Home (Education), dated the 20th June 1917.

Recorded.

(True Extract)

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

To the Director of Public Instruction.
Editors' Table.

Sectb. II- 10 (a)—12-1-15. *Refd 206*

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