

Government of Madras

HOME DEPARTMENT (EDUCATION)

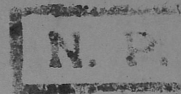
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G.O. No. 1098, 29th August 1918

Duration of school-life in elementary schools

Replying to letter from the Government of India on the subject of reducing the proportion of children in elementary schools who fail to become literate on account of premature withdrawal or other causes.

ORIGINAL.

INDEXED



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G.O. No. 1098, 29th August 1918

Duration of school-life in elementary schools

Replying to letter from the Government of India on the subject of reducing the proportion of children in elementary schools who fail to become literate on account of premature withdrawal or other causes.

READ—the following papers :—

I

Letter—from the Hon'ble Sir E. D. MACLAGAN, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education (Education).

To—the Secretary to the Government of Madras, Home (Education) Department.

Dated—Simla, the 29th May 1918.

No.—437.

It has been frequently alleged in recent years that the greater part of the sums expended by the Government and local bodies on primary education is wasted owing to the fact that a large proportion of the children undergoing primary education do not complete their course and that a large number of those who have completed their course are found after a few years to be unable to read or write. The Government of India have accordingly devoted some attention to the matter and their opinion, after due consideration of the data available, is that, though the statements regarding the extent of the alleged waste are often much exaggerated, there is a sufficient amount of truth in them to justify the serious consideration of the position by local Governments.

2. So far as the alleged waste is due to pupils failing to complete their course, it has hitherto been ordinarily assumed that, if a child has received education for 4 years and has gained promotion annually from one class to the next, he may be considered to be literate; and, although the truth of this assumption has been impugned in certain quarters, the Government of India see no reason why, for practical purposes, it should not be accepted as a fair working hypothesis. The actual average duration of primary school life is a subject which is open to considerable differences of opinion and the calculations upon which conclusions can be based are of a complicated character. The Government of India do not desire to accept or reject any one of the various calculations which have been made by experts on this aspect of the case, but from such data as are available they believe that it may be, on the whole, assumed that a child who enters on primary education remains under primary instruction for an average period of about 4 years. The published statistics indicate that about nine-tenths of the children at primary schools do not pass beyond the lower primary stage and if it is assumed that the lower primary course for the purposes of these statistics represents a four years' education, it may be roughly concluded that about one-tenth of the children under primary education do not complete the full period of four years which is assumed to be necessary for the production of a literate child.

3. With reference to the degree in which pupils in primary schools tend to lose in after years their capacity to read and write, there are no satisfactory data upon which a conclusion may be based. The subject has been discussed in paragraph 324 of the Quinquennial Review of Education in India, 1907-1912, and a provisional conclusion was there put forward that about 39 per cent of those who are taught in

schools lose the benefit of their education after a short period of years. The calculations are, however, attended by difficulties of various kinds and it is impossible to make a fresh calculation of any value until the figures for the census of 1921 are available.

4. The Government of India, as has above been noted, are of opinion that the proportion of persons under primary instruction who fail to become or to remain literate, though not as great as has sometimes been represented, is sufficiently serious and they would be glad if local Governments would in due course take into consideration the possibility of adopting means to combat the defects to which attention has above been drawn. In areas where compulsory education may be introduced it will of course be possible to secure the retention of children in school for four years, though not necessarily their promotion through the four classes; but in tracts where the prevailing voluntary system of education remains in force it will be necessary to try other and less radical measures. Among the various methods which have been suggested for this purpose are the following:—

(a) In the first place, something can be done by introducing more efficient teachers (which in the long run means better-paid teachers) into the schools in order to bring on the infants more rapidly and to inspire confidence in the parents. It is possible that in places a larger number of teachers is also required, but the Government of India do not consider that the number of pupils per teacher is ordinarily insufficient in primary schools in this country.

(b) It has also been suggested that the number of primary classes is unnecessarily large with the result that the teachers concentrate their attention upon the higher classes, leaving the lower classes to be looked after by themselves or to be supervised or neglected by one of the senior pupils. If this suggestion is correct, then it would be advisable to introduce time-tables which should permit the master of a primary school to take a certain amount of work in every class during a week by doubling up his teaching in some of the higher classes in which the numbers are generally small. It might also be advisable to reduce the 4 lower primary classes to 3.

(c) It might also be possible to alter the curriculum in some of the schools by adding utilitarian studies which would induce parents to leave their children longer at school. This could, however, be done in the higher classes only.

5. The Government of India would be glad if local Governments would give due consideration to the above suggestions and they would also invite attention to the fact that the difficulty of keeping young children at school is alleged to be to a large extent an economic difficulty, child labour being largely employed in India in agricultural and industrial pursuits. Attempts have been made to get over this difficulty by the half-time system which has worked well in certain areas but not in others. It is, however, by no means certain that the difficulty is entirely of an economic character and there are reasons to suppose that a certain number of those who prematurely leave school merely idle their time away. It is impossible without careful local inquiry to decide how far the alleged economic difficulty is sufficiently serious to prevent our looking for a substantial improvement in the attendance of children at primary schools by any means short of compulsion but the Government of India invite the attention of local Governments to this aspect of the case in view of the possibility of local inquiries being instituted in selected areas with a view to ascertaining the degree to which the premature withdrawal of children from education is, in fact, due to their employment on agricultural or other economic duties.

6. I am in conclusion to say that the Government of India desire merely to invite the attention of local Governments to the points which have been raised with a view to the possibility of the introduction by local Governments and local bodies of measures which may tend to correct the defects to which reference has been made in this letter and to secure a more effectual employment of the provincial and local money expended on primary education. They do not ask for a reply to this letter but if steps are taken to meet the object in view they would be glad to be informed in due time of the nature of the action taken.

II

Endorsement No. 1514/A-1, Home (Education), dated 26th June 1918.

Referred to the Director of Public Instruction for remarks on the suggestions contained in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the letter.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

To the Director of Public Instruction.

III

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—the 13th July 1918.

No.—R.C. 5616.

With reference to Endorsement No. 1514/A-1, dated 26th June 1918, referring for remarks letter from the Government of India, Department of Education (Education), No. 437, dated 29th May 1918, I have the honour to invite the attention of Government to paragraph 74 of the quinquennial report on public instruction and to state that the assumptions made and the conclusions arrived at in paragraph 2 of the Government of India's letter seem to me unduly optimistic. I regard it as conclusively proved that the average duration of school life in elementary schools in this Presidency is little more than two years and that many children spend these two years in the lowest class and many more in the two lower classes. As I have stated in the report, the evil to be combated is the premature withdrawal of children and I have expressed the belief that, for the eradication of this evil, legislation will be as necessary in this country as it has proved to be in England. The concurrence of the Government of Madras in this belief is evidenced by the attention which is at present being bestowed on the preparation of an Education Bill. Pending legislation, palliatives have been administered and I am now requested to offer my remarks on those suggested by the Government of India in paragraph 4 of their letter.

2. There is nothing novel in these suggestions. It is a common-place that ill-educated teachers mean ill-taught pupils and Government have of recent years taken steps, so far as funds have permitted, to improve the pay and prospects of the teachers in elementary schools. I may in this connexion invite attention to paragraph 77 of the quinquennial report, wherein the improvements effected during the period under review are detailed. Subsequently in 1917-18 subsidies amounting to Rs. 1,22,881 were allotted for further improvements in the pay of teachers in schools under public management, additional increases in the scale of teaching grants admissible under rule 15 of the Grant-in-Aid Code being at the same time effected. The Imperial grant of 5.5 lakhs will, it is hoped, be partly utilized for similar purposes. Moreover a further means of promoting the efficiency of elementary school teachers, viz., training has not been lost sight of and apart from the detailed programme of requirements which has been made out (vide this office R.C. No. 7828/16, dated 9th January 1917), every effort is being made to increase the output of trained teachers.

3. As regards paragraph 4 (b) of India's letter, it may be noted that the timetable of every elementary school has to be approved by the Inspecting officer and he is expected to see that the distribution of work as between the teachers is suitable (rule 20 of the Madras Educational Rules). There is some truth in the remark that there is a tendency to neglect the lower classes, but I do not see the connexion between this and the number of classes nor how a reduction in the number of classes, which is governed by the number on rolls and the distribution of the pupils, would be beneficial.

4. Paragraph (c) of the letter raises the whole question of vocational training and while little has been done in this regard in the past, the importance of reconciling the claims of education proper with those of utility and of giving a practical turn to elementary instruction is now generally recognized, and in particular both in the training schools and in the schools themselves the claims of rural science are

being emphasized. There are also part or whole-time schools where provision is made for manual training or weaving or some industry suitable to the locality. It may be hoped that the proposed district educational authorities with the co-operation of local bodies and private enterprise will be able to give greater impetus to the vocational side of elementary education.

5. My remarks are also desired regarding paragraph 5 of India's letter. It is impossible to say with any degree of precision to what extent the premature withdrawal of pupils is due to economic reasons, but that they operate strongly is widely believed. Inquiries such as those suggested by India are just those which the proposed district educational authorities could most usefully institute.

6. The letter from the Government of India is herewith returned.

Order—No. 1098, Home (Education), dated 29th August 1918.

The following reply will be despatched to the Government of India.

(True extract)

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

To the Director of Public Instruction with a copy of the letter to the Government of India.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT

No. 1099

From

THE HON'BLE DIWAN BAHADUR

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO AVARGAL,

Secretary to the Government of Madras,

Home (Education) Department,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Dated Ootacamund, the 29th August 1918.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 437, dated the 29th May 1918, conveying the views of the Government of India on the subject of the premature withdrawal of children from elementary schools and the consequent lapse into illiteracy of the students after a few years.

2. In reply, I am to state that the average duration of school life in elementary schools in the Madras Presidency is only a little more than two years and that the assumptions made in paragraph 2 of your letter are considerably more favourable than the facts in this Presidency justify. A bill to provide better facilities for elementary education in the Madras Presidency is now under preparation and the Governor in Council hopes to forward a copy of the bill shortly to the Government of India. This Government mainly look to the impetus that will be given to primary education when the bill becomes law, for the gradual reduction of the wastage among primary school pupils which at present undoubtedly occurs.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. Nos. 1098-99, HOME (EDUCATION),
DATED 29TH AUGUST 1918

[SUBJECT.—Duration of school-life in elementary schools.]

From the Government of India, dated 29th May 1918, No. 437.

Please see paragraphs 18 and 19 on pages 9-12 of G.O. No. 178, Educational, dated 17th February 1916, in which the duration of school-life is discussed. The Director of Public Instruction then remarked as follows :—

"That in the absence of compulsion the duration of school-life should be comparatively short is due to causes outside the control of the department but it is remarkable that the increase in the general well-being in the country has not, as it might reasonably be expected to do, increased duration of school-life and for this I believe our educational system is partly responsible. It results largely from an increasingly disproportionate size of the infant standards and from the diminution in the amount of the promotion from them to first standards. This I think is the necessary result of giving a capitation grant or allowance for each child irrespective of anything but its attendance at school. This makes it the teachers' interest to show as many children in attendance as possible and since in the great majority of schools the levy of fees is left entirely to him it pays him to admit children free for the sake of capitation grant or allowance."

2. To meet these evils the Director in his recommendations on the proceedings of the Educational Conference held in March 1916, proposed the adoption of a *graduated scale* of capitation grant. This proposal is separately under consideration. Attention is also solicited to paragraph 74 of the report on Public Instruction for 1916-17.

3. The three suggestions made in paragraph 1 of the current letter from the Government of India may, in the first instance, be referred to the Director of Public Instruction for remarks.

4. A draft endorsement is submitted for approval.

A.S.—19-6-18.

N.K.—24-6-18.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—25-6-18.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—26-6-18.

[Endorsement No. 1514/A-1, Home (Education), dated 26th June 1918.]

From the Director of Public Instruction, dated 13th July 1918, R.C. No. 5616.

In paragraph 4 of their letter, the Government of India suggest three different remedies to obviate the premature withdrawal from schools of children attending elementary schools. The Director of Public Instruction's remarks thereon are examined below.

2. *Suggestion (i).*—India think that the introduction of more efficient teachers in schools will bring on larger number of children to schools and finally induce their parents to keep them there longer. The Director agrees with India as to the value of this suggestion. This Government have also recognized that ill-educated teachers means ill-taught pupils and with a view to increase the efficiency of teachers employed in elementary schools, steps have been taken, so far as funds permitted, by offering qualified hands sufficient attraction by way of increased pay and better prospects. Please see G.Os. No. 33, Home (Education), dated 11th January 1918, No. 170, Home (Education), dated 12th February 1918 and No. 361, Home (Education), dated 18th March 1918. It is hoped that further attempts in the same direction will be made when proposals for the utilization of the Imperial grant of 5-5 lakhs are being considered.

3. *Suggestion (ii).*—The Government of India suggest the introduction in schools of time-tables which should permit the teacher to take a certain amount of work in every class during a week. They also suggest the advisability of reducing the four lower classes to three. As regards the introduction of suitable time-tables, the Director of Public Instruction observes that India's suggestion is already in practice in the elementary schools of the Presidency in as much as under rule 20 of the Educational Rules time-tables of all elementary schools have to be approved by the inspecting officer who generally looks to the proper distribution of work between the teachers. The Director admits that there is a tendency on the part of teachers to neglect the lower classes but does not think that a reduction in the number of classes will in any way secure the object in view. Moreover it may not always be possible to bring up two or more classes together as under rule 81 of the Educational Rules the maximum permissible strength of a class has been fixed at 30.

4. *Suggestion (iii).*—The introduction of vocational training in the curriculum of studies will in the opinion of the Government of India induce parents to keep their children longer at school. The Director also agrees as to the value of utilitarian studies and remarks that though very little has been done in the past the importance of giving a practical turn to elementary instruction is being emphasized in both the training and other schools. The Government also have recognized the value of manual training in elementary schools and provision for imparting the same has been made in certain selected schools: Please see G.O. No. 1440, Home (Education), dated 16th November 1917. A provision of Rs. 62,000 has been entered in the current year's budget for extending the facilities for manual training. As remarked by the Director, considerable impetus will be given to vocational instruction when the new district educational authority proposed in the Bill is constituted.

5. In the opinion of the Director the several suggestions of India are merely palliatives and to completely eradicate the evil of premature withdrawal he thinks legislation quite necessary. The Government have now under separate consideration a bill to make better provision for the elementary education of children and it is to be hoped that the evil now complained of will disappear when this is passed into law and parents come to recognize the value of education.

6. In paragraph 5 of their letter, the Government of India desire this Government to inquire as to what extent the premature withdrawal of pupils is due to economic reasons. The Director is unable to make any definite statement. He remarks that the inquiry is one which may usefully be instituted by the proposed district educational authorities.

7. No action seems to be called for on any of the suggestions of the Government of India. For orders whether the papers may be recorded.

T.K.K.—23-7-18.

N.K.—11-8-18.

In short, the proposed Bill is looked up to largely to effect an appreciable improvement in the matter.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—14-8-18.

Paragraph 3 above.—The point of the Government of India letter is that if the two upper classes are combined the master will have more time to spend on the lower classes.

Paragraph 4.—The reference to manual training is not understood.

The letter raises an important issue as to how far the course of primary instruction serves to retain the pupil literate. I understand the Director of Public Instruction to mean that if one undergoes the full course of four years his instruction is not wasted. So that, so far as this Presidency is concerned, the main thing is to induce the pupils to undergo the full course of four years. The suggestions of the Government of India while no doubt bear on this aspect appear to be framed primarily with an assumption that even the full four years' instruction appears to be wasted in some cases.

2. So far as the suggestions are concerned—

(a) Replacement by efficient teachers. We have recently increased the minimum pay of teachers and are paying increased attention to training.

(b) Reduction of classes. This can be done even under the present rules. All that is necessary is to draw the Director of Public Instruction's attention to the observations of the Government of India.

(c) Vocational training. Our chief vocation is agriculture and the question is under discussion elsewhere.

3. The Government of India raise the question as to how far the wages earned by children of school-going age serve as an inducement to parents to withdraw pupils prematurely from school. The Director of Public Instruction suggests that the inquiry may be postponed to the proposed district educational authorities. This will take some time. Perhaps half a dozen schools in different districts may be selected where the duration of school-life is small (less than two years) and inquiries may be made with the district officials.

4. In another connexion the Director of Public Instruction has recommended a varying rate of capitation grants (if to be continued) increasing with the grade of the class in the school.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—15-8-18.

OFFICE OF THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

His Excellency considers that all that is necessary is to say in reply that the assumptions made in paragraph 2 of the Government of India's letter are probably considerably more favourable than the facts justify in Madras, that an Elementary Education Bill is under preparation which it is hoped to forward shortly and that the Madras Government look to the impetus which will thus be given for the gradual reduction of the wastage which at present undoubtedly occurs.

(By order)

T. E. MOIR—20-8-18.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

A draft reply to the Government of India is submitted for approval.

T.R.K.—22-8-18.

N.K.—22-8-18.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—24-8-18.

R.R.—28-8-18.

[G.O. Nos. 1098-99, Home (Education), dated 29th August 1918.]

Duration of school-life in elementary schools.
 REPLYING to a letter from the Govt of India on the subject of reducing the proportion of children in elementary schools who fail to become literate on account of premature withdrawal or other causes.

READ AGAIN G.O. No....., dated 191 .

” ” ” ” ” 11

READ ALSO:—

C. No. 1514 A From the Govt of India Dept of Education No. 437 Fd dated 29 - 5 - 1918.

" " Fndt To " " D.P.I. " 1514A-1 " 26-6-1918.

" 1836A From " " do B.C. NO. 5616, " 13 -7 - 1918.

ORDER.

Press

No. 1098, dated 29-8-1918.

The following reply will be despatched to the Government of India.

To the D.P.I. (~~with a copy of the letter~~
to the Govt of India)

Letter:- № 1099829. 8.18.

To

The Secretary to the Govt. of
India, Dept. of Education.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 437, dated the 29th May 1918 conveying the views of the Govt. of India on the subject of ~~reducing the proportion of children in elementary~~ ^{of} schools.

who fail to become literate on account
of premature withdrawal ^{of children from the schools} from the schools

~~and the consequent losses~~
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I have, etc.

6-9-18
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2. So far as the alleged waste is due to pupils failing to complete their course, it has hitherto been ordinarily assumed that, if a child has received education for 4 years and has gained promotion annually from one class to the next, he may be considered to be literate; and, although the truth of this assumption has been impugned in certain quarters, the Government of India see no reason why, for practical purposes, it should not be accepted as a fair working hypothesis. The actual average duration of primary school life is a subject which is open to considerable differences of opinion and the calculations upon which conclusions can be based are of a complicated character. The Government of India do not desire to accept or reject any one of the various calculations which have been made by experts on this aspect of the case, but from such data as are available they believe that it may be, on the whole, assumed that a child who enters on primary education remains under primary instruction for an average period of about 4 years. The published statistics indicate that about nine-tenths of the children at primary schools do not pass beyond the lower primary stage and if it is assumed that the lower primary course for the purposes of these statistics represents a four years' education, it may be roughly concluded that about one-tenth of the children under primary education do not complete the full period of four years which is assumed to be necessary for the production of a literate child.

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3. As regards paragraph 4 (b) of India's letter, it may be noted that the timetable of every elementary school has to be approved by the Inspecting officer and he is expected to see that the distribution of work as between the teachers is suitable (rule 20 of the Madras Educational Rules). There is some truth in the remark that there is a tendency to neglect the lower classes, but I do not see the connexion between this and the number of classes nor how a reduction in the number of classes, which is governed by the number on rolls and the distribution of the pupils, would be beneficial.

MR

4. Paragraph (c) of the letter raises the whole question of vocational training and while little has been done in this regard in the past, the importance of reconciling the claims of education proper with those of utility and of giving a practical turn to elementary instruction is now generally recognized, and in particular both in the training schools and in the schools themselves the claims of rural science are being emphasized. There are also part or whole-time schools where provision is made for manual training or weaving or some industry suitable to the locality. It may be hoped that the proposed district educational authorities with the co-operation of local bodies and private enterprise will be able to give greater impetus to the vocational side of elementary education.

5. My remarks are also desired regarding paragraph 5 of India's letter. It is impossible to say with any degree of precision to what extent the premature withdrawal of pupils is due to economic reasons, but that they operate strongly is widely believed. Inquiries such as those suggested by India are just those which the proposed district educational authorities could most usefully institute.

6. The letter from the Government of India is herewith returned.

Order—No. 1098, Home (Education), dated 29th August 1918.

The following reply will be dispatched to the Government of India.

(True extract)

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,
Secretary to Government.

To the Director of Public Instruction with a copy of the letter to the Government of India.

12

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS
HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT
No. 1099

From

THE HON'BLE DIWAN BAHADUR
R. RAMACHANDRA RAO AVARGAL,
Secretary to the Government of Madras,
Home (Education) Department,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Dated Ootacamund, the 29th August 1918.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 437, dated the 29th May 1918, conveying the views of the Government of India on the subject of the premature withdrawal of children from elementary schools and the consequent lapse into illiteracy of the students after a few years.

2. In reply, I am to state that the average duration of school life in elementary schools in the Madras Presidency is only a little more than two years and that the assumptions made in paragraph 2 of your letter are considerably more favourable than the facts in this Presidency justify. A bill to provide better facilities for elementary education in the Madras Presidency is now under preparation and the Governor in Council hopes to forward a copy of the bill shortly to the Government of India. This Government mainly look to the impetus that will be given to primary education when the bill becomes law, for the gradual reduction of the wastage among primary school pupils which at present undoubtedly occurs.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO,

Secretary to Government.

For approval
11-9-18
NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. Nos. 1098-99, HOME (EDUCATION),
DATED 29th AUGUST 1918

[SUBJECT.—Duration of school-life in elementary schools.]

From the Government of India, No. 437, dated 29th May 1918.

Please see paragraphs 18 and 19 on pages 9-12 of G.O. No. 178, Educational, dated 17th February 1916, in which the duration of school-life is discussed. The Director of Public Instruction then remarked as follows:—

"That in the absence of compulsion the duration of school-life should be comparatively short is due to causes outside the control of the department but it is remarkable that the increase in the general well-being in the country has not, as it might reasonably be expected to do, increased duration of school-life and for this I believe our educational system is partly responsible. It results largely from an increasingly disproportionate size of the infant standards, and from the diminution in the amount of the promotion from/to first standards. This I think is the necessary result of giving a capitation grant or allowance for each child irrespective of anything but its attendance at school. This makes it the teachers' interest to show as many children in attendance as possible and since in the great majority of schools the levy of fees is left entirely to him, pays him to admit children free for the sake of capitation grant or allowance."

2. To meet these evils the Director in his recommendations on the proceedings of the Educational Conference held in March 1916, proposed the adoption of a graduated scale of capitation grant. This proposal is separately under consideration. Attention is also solicited to paragraph 74 of the report on Public Instruction for 1916-17.

3. The three suggestions made in paragraph 4 of the current letter from the Government of India may, in the first instance, be referred to the Director of Public Instruction for remarks.

4. A draft endorsement is submitted for approval.

A.S.—19-6-18.

N.K.—24-6-18.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—25-6-18.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—26-8-18.

[Endorsement No. 1514 A-1, Home (Education), dated 26th June 1918.]

From the Director of Public Instruction, R.C. No. 5616, dated 13th July 1918.

In paragraph 4 of their letter on page 2 of current file, the Government of India suggest three different remedies to obviate the premature withdrawal from schools of children attending elementary schools. The Director of Public Instruction's remarks thereon are in paragraphs 2 to 4 of the report on Public Instruction for 1918-19. They are examined below.

2. Suggestion (i)—India think that the introduction of more efficient teachers in schools will bring on larger number of children to schools and finally induce their parents to keep them there longer. The Director agrees with India as to the value of this suggestion. This Government have also recognized that ill-educated teachers means ill taught pupils and with a view to increase the efficiency of teachers employed in elementary schools, steps have been taken, so far as funds permitted, by offering qualified hands sufficient attraction by way of increased pay and better prospects. Please see G.Os. No. 33, Home (Education), dated 11th January 1918, No. 170, Home (Education), dated 12th February 1918 and No. 361 Home (Education), dated 18th March 1918. It is hoped that further attempts in the same direction will be made when proposals for the utilization of the Imperial grant of 5-5 lakhs are being considered.

3. Suggestion (ii)—The Government of India suggest the introduction in schools of time-tables which should permit the teacher to take a certain amount of work in every class during a week. They also suggest the advisability of reducing the four lower classes to three. As regards the introduction of suitable time-tables, the Director of Public Instruction observes that India's suggestion is already in practice in the elementary schools of the Presidency in as much as under rule 20 of the Education al/

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2 Pm
2 Pm

2 NOTES to G.O. Nos. 1098-99, HOME (EDUCATION), 14TH AUGUST 1918 29/
Rules time-tables of all elementary schools have to be approved by the inspecting officer who generally looks to the proper distribution of work between the teachers. The Director admits that there is a tendency on the part of teachers to neglect the lower classes but does not think that a reduction in the number of classes will in any way secure the object in view. Moreover it may not always be possible to bring up two or more classes together as under rule 81 of the Educational Rules the maximum permissible strength of a class has been fixed at 30.

4. *Suggestion (iii).*—The introduction of vocational training in the curriculum of studies will in the opinion of the Government of India induce parents to keep their children longer at school. The Director also agrees as to the value of utilitarian studies and remarks that though very little has been done in the past the importance of giving a practical turn to elementary instruction is being emphasized in both the training and other schools. The Government also have recognized the value of manual training in elementary schools and provision for imparting the same has been made in certain selected schools. Please see G.O. No. 1440, Home (Education), dated 16th November 1917. A provision of Rs. 62,000 has been entered in the current year's budget for extending the facilities for manual training. As remarked by the Director, considerable impetus will be given to vocational instruction when the new district educational authority proposed in the Bill is constituted.

5. In the opinion of the Director the several suggestions of India are merely palliatives and to completely eradicate the evil of premature withdrawal he thinks legislation quite necessary. The Government have now under separate consideration a Bill to make better provision for the elementary education of children and it is to be hoped that the evil now complained of will disappear when this is passed into law and parents come to recognize the value of education.

6. In paragraph 5 of their letter, the Government of India desire this Government to inquire as to what extent the premature withdrawal of pupils is due to economic reasons. The Director is unable to make any definite statement. He remarks that the inquiry is one which may usefully be instituted by the proposed district educational authorities.

7. No action seems to be called for on any of the suggestions of the Government of India. For orders whether the papers may be recorded.

T.K.K.—23-7-18.

N.K.—11-8-18.

In short, the proposed Bill is looked up to largely to effect an appreciable improvement in the matter.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—14-8-18.

Paragraph 3 above.—The point of the Government of India letter is that if the two upper classes are combined the master will have more time to spend on the lower classes.

Paragraph 4.—The reference to manual training is not understood.

The letter raises an important issue as to how far the course of primary instruction serves to retain the pupil literate. I understand the Director of Public Instruction to mean that if one undergoes the full course of four years his instruction is not wasted. So that, so far as this Presidency is concerned, the main thing is to induce the pupils to undergo the full course of four years. The suggestions of the Government of India while no doubt bear on this aspect appear to be framed primarily with an assumption that even the full four years' instruction appears to be wasted in some cases.

2. So far as the suggestions are concerned—

(a) Replacement by efficient teachers. We have recently increased the minimum pay of teachers and paying increased attention to training.

(b) Reduction of classes. This can be done even under the present rules. All that is necessary is to draw the Director of Public Instruction's attention to the observations of the Government of India.

(c) Vocational training. Our chief vocation is agriculture and the question is under discussion elsewhere.

3. The Government of India raised the question as to how far the wages earned by children of school-going age serve as an inducement to parents to withdraw pupils prematurely from school. The Director of Public Instruction suggests that the inquiry may be postponed to the proposed district educational authorities. This will take some time. Perhaps half a dozen schools in different districts may be selected where the duration of school-life is small (less than two years) and inquiries may be made with the district officials.

4. In another connexion the Director of Public Instruction has recommended a varying rate of capitation grants (if to be continued) increasing with the grade of the class in the school.

R. RAMACHANDRA RAO—15-8-18.

OFFICE OF THE PRIVATE SECRETARY
TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

His Excellency considers that all that is necessary is to say in reply that the assumptions made in paragraph 2 of the Government of India's letter are probably considerably more favourable than the facts justify in Madras, that an Elementary Education Bill is under preparation which it is hoped to forward shortly and that the Madras Government look to the impetus which will thus be given for the gradual reduction of the wastage which at present undoubtedly occurs.

(By order)

T. E. MOIR—20-8-18.

HOME (EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT.

A draft reply to the Government of India is submitted for approval.

T.K.K.—22-8-18.

N.K.—22-8-18.

C. RAMANUJA ACHARIYAR—24-8-18.

R.R.—28-8-18.

[G.O. Nos. 1098-99, Home (Education), dated 29th August 1918.]

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