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[Despatch Abstract.]

Conference.

Recording the resolutions passed at the Educational -----
held at Conjeeveram in May 1918.

BACK PAPERS.

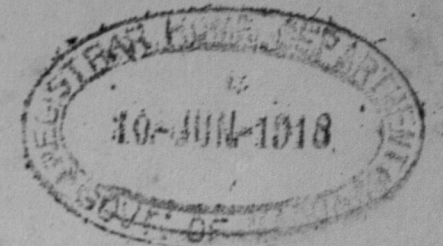
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PRIVATE SECRETARY'S OFFICE, MADRAS.

Memo. No. *112-P*



Transferred to the Secretary to Government, *Home (Education)*

Department, for favour of disposal.

ENCLOSURES :

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(By order of His Excellency the Governor.)

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The 8th June 1918.

K. H. N.
Private Secretary.

BACK PAPERS.



3
31st May 1918



From

M.R. Ry K. Ramanuja Chariar Avl., B.A., F.M.U.,

Professor of History,

Pachaippa's College, Madras,

A N D

President of the 10th Educational Conference,

CONJEEVERAM.

To

His Excellency the Governor of Madras.

May it please your Excellency,

I have the honour to ^{submit}~~communicate~~ to your

Excellency the following Resolutions passed at the Tenth

Educational Conference held at Conjeeveram on the 8th, -

9th and 10th May 1918.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient servant,

H. Ramanujachari

P R E S I D E N T.

THE TENTH EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, CONJEEVERAM.

Held on the 8th, 9th and 10th May, 1918.

--:oOo:--

RESOLUTIONS.

(1) This Conference begs to convey to His Imperial Majesty King George V. through His Excellency the Governor of Madras ^{it} ~~their~~ devotion to the Throne and ^{it} ~~their~~ unflinching loyalty to the British connection and prays for early victory to the allies in the present War.

(2) This Conference earnestly desires all the Members of the teaching profession to co-operate with the Government and do their utmost in their endeavours to secure man-power and -- finance in connection with the present War.

(3)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(4)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(5)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(6)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(7)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(8)	x	x	x	x	x	x

(9) This Conference, while reaffirming the resolution of former Conferences, praying the Government to give effect to their promised scheme of Provident Fund, desires the Government to make the institution of such a fund one of the conditions of recognition.

(10) This Conference urges upon the Government that for the proper working of the S.S.L.C. Scheme, it is absolutely --

essential that the majority of the members of the S.S.L.C. Board shall be members of the teaching staff of High Schools.

- (11) This Conference is of opinion that any changes contemplated in the S.S.L.C. Scheme or in the syllabus be published in the Gazette and opinions invited thereon from the teachers and teachers' associations before such modifications are submitted to the Government for approval.
- (12) This Conference is of opinion that as a first step (a) the medium of instruction in non-language subjects shall be the vernacular of the pupil in IV Form also (b) the group B subjects shall be taught in the V Form in the Vernacular.
- (13) This Conference is of opinion that with a view to give freedom to parents to withdraw their children from religious instruction to which they have conscientious scruples, a conscience clause be inserted in the Grant-in-aid Code for Indian Schools.
- (14) This Conference requests the Government to nominate at least 5 members of the teaching staff of High Schools as Ordinary Fellows of the Madras University so that the interests of Secondary Education might be properly represented on the Senate.
- (15) x x x x x x
- (16) x x x x x x
- (17) This Conference is of opinion (a) that bona fide teachers be exempted from the production of the necessary attendance certificates to appear for all the University Examinations, (b) that teachers who are holders of S.S.L.C., but who have to improve their certificates may be allowed to do so without

undergoing a supplementary course at school.

- (18) This Conference is of opinion that medical inspection of schools is indispensable.

(19)	x	x	x	x	x	x
(20)	x	x	x	x	x	x

- (21) This Conference resolves that a committee consisting of 15 members whose names are given below, be formed to discuss and frame syllabuses in History, Geography, Science, Vernaculars and Classical languages and submit a report to the Union by the end of October 1918. The members of the committee are Messrs. S.K. Yagnanarayana Ayyar, G.Srinivasan, P.G.Raghavachariar, K.S. Sambamurti, K.Narasimhachari, M.A.J. Tirumalai Ayyangar, L. Viswanathan, T.S. Abraham, H. Narasinga Rao, -- T.R. Krishnamachariar, V.Guruswami Sastri, C.S. Dikshitulu and T.S. Krishna Rao (conven^er), N.Srinivasachariya^{barada} and C.S. Kothandarama Sastri.

- (22) This Conference is of opinion that the Indian University Act, 1904, should be amended so as to increase the electi^{ed}ve element in the Senate, and that the South India Teachers' Union should be constituted into an electorate and authorised to elect five Ordinary Fellows to the Senate.

- (23) This Conference is of opinion:--

(a) that the portion fixed for the non-detailed study in English for the S.S.L.C. Public Examination should not exceed 250 pages.

(b) That Shorthand and Typewriting be treated as two separate subjects under Group C.

- (24) This Conference resolves that a committee consisting of Messrs. V.Shama Rao, C.S.Ramaswami Ayyar, V.Subbayya, -----

K.Narasimhachari, K.S.Sambamurti Ayyar, P.Rangaswami and C.K.Krishnaswami Ayyangar be appointed to draft a report on the pay and prospects of teachers based upon the economic enquiry conducted by the Union and submit the same to the Union by the end of October 1918.

(25) This Conference is of opinion that teachers be nominated more largely as members of Municipal Councils, Taluk Boards, District Boards, Legislative Councils and other public bodies.

(26) x x x x x x

(27) This Conference recommends to the Department and to the managers that teachers of 10 years' service and more be treated for purposes of pay and status on a footing of equality with the trained teachers of the same general educational qualifications.

(28) x x x x x x

(29) x x x x x x

(30) This Conference recommends that Educational Service in all institutions under the management of Public bodies be provincialised and a uniform scale of salaries be adopted therein, for securing continuity of service.

(31) That this Conference is strongly of opinion that the needless distinction between Elementary and Secondary Schools be abolished in the immediate future.

(32) This Conference is of opinion that in the interests of the general progress of the country the time has come for Elementary Education being made free and compulsory and prays Government to formulate and sanction a scheme as early as possible for carrying out this object.

(33) This Conference is of opinion that considering the great strain

strain on the part of the students preparing for the examinations, the University and the Government be requested to change the time of all public examinations to the month of December instead of holding them in the months of March and April.

- (34) This Conference recommends that the University library be thrown open for the use of the Members of the staff of all affiliated colleges in the Presidency and of all registered graduates.
- (35) This Conference requests that the Government be pleased to exempt trained graduates from undergoing a further course of training to qualify themselves for the L.T. Degree.
- (36) This Conference recommends to the University that the History of India be made an optional subject for the Intermediate course.
- (37) This Conference urges upon the University that, instead of the present rules for deciding the eligibility of candidates to enter the University course it is desirable that candidates should be declared eligible if they secure a --- certain fixed percentage in the several subjects or the Presidency Average in them, whichever may be less.

H. Ramanyachari

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The Tenth Educational Conference

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
The South India Teachers' Union,
HELD AT COGNJEEVERAM

ON THE 8TH, 9TH & 10TH MAY 1918.
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY
Professor K. Ramanujachariar, B. A., F. M. U.
of Pachaiyappa's College, Madras.

We are met under the shadow of the greatest war known to history, ancient or modern. Half the world has been dragged into it, and almost all the leading nations are engaged on one side or the other. Countless troops are carrying on the work of destruction, above ground, below ground, above the sea and under the sea, with the help of the latest developments rendered possible by science. More widows & orphans have been created in this single war than in all the wars of the last century put together. The loss of property and destruction of buildings sacred and secular have simply staggered humanity. The daily expenditure on the armies and navies of the belligerents strikes one with despair. Crowns held to be most secure have tumbled down and many landmarks of history have been completely effaced. Into this war, so wide in its extent and so far-reaching in its devastating character, England has been reluctantly forced to enter, not from motives of selfish aggrandisement or territorial lust, but from the righteous desire to maintain the independence of small nations, and to uphold the integrity and sacred character of the obligations imposed by treaties solemnly concluded by civilised nations. India has been led by her intense loyalty to send her bravest sons to the fields of battle and to pour her treasures into the British Exchequer to bring the war to a successful issue.

This war, therefore, while furnishing us the best opportunity for displaying our devotion to the Throne and our loyalty to the British connection, has stirred up men, both in England and in India, to furious thinking over their present conditions, and created a wholesome feeling of discontent with the existing order of things. It has led to great and far-reaching political changes in England, and given rise to various hopes and aspirations in Indian minds. It has caused England to shed off her economic heresies and attempt a new Economic reconstruction. The English Educational System has been subjected to a minute scrutiny and has been found wanting. Lord Haldane led the movement and Dr. Fisher, the Minister of Education has most powerfully appealed to people of all classes and is effecting radical changes in the Educational ideals and machinery. His Education Act, now very carefully piloted in the Parliament, will, if passed, create a revolution as important in the Educational world as the English Revolution did in the political.

While such transformations are going on in the rest of the world, it is little wonder that India also should begin to exhibit a feeling of unrest and discontent with the existing system. I shall, therefore, with your permission, proceed to make a few observations on points which, in my humble opinion, are worthy of consideration.

I must first place on record my feelings of gratitude for the present system of Education which has conferred enormous benefits upon the Indian population. It has opened the treasures of the West to the people of the East and has created a large body of educated men to act as interpreters between the Rulers and the ruled. It has brought new ideals of life and conduct, which have had a most wholesome effect on oriental conceptions. It has, to a large extent, succeeded in removing narrowness of vision and implanting fresh and liberal views. It has produced splendid administrators like Raja Sir T. Madhava Row, Sir K. Seshadri Ayyar, Dewans Rangacharlu and Ramiengar; level headed Members of Council like Sir P. S. Sivaswami Ayyar, Sir Sankaran Nair, V. Krishnaswami Ayyar, and P. Rajagopalachariar; eminent jurists and judges like Sir T. Muthuswami Ayyar, Sir V. Bhashyam Ayyangar, Dr. Sir Subrahmanya Ayyar, P. R. Sundara Ayyar, K. Srinivasa Ayyangar and S. Srinivasa Ayyangar; well-known journalists like G. Subrahmanya Ayyar, S. Kasturiranga Ayyangar, G. A. Natesan and A. Rangaswami Ayyangar; remarkable mathematicians like R. Ramachandra Rao and V. Ramesam, B. Hanumanta Rao and V. Ramaswami Ayyar, P. Ranganada Mudaliar and R. Swaminatha Ayyar; great educationists like Rao Bahadur T. Gopala Rao, Sadhu Seshayya, K. B. Ramanada Ayyar and K. V. Rangaswami Ayyangar; orators like Dewan Bahadur A. Govinda Raghava Ayyar, C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar and the Hon. Mr. B. N. Sarma; clear-headed constitutional writers like Mocherla Ramachandra Rao and A. Rangaswami Ayyangar; and political Sanyasins like Rao Bahadur V. K. Ramanujachariar and V. S. Srinivasa Sastriar. These are only samples, a few chosen at random from a large constellation of notable personages. No one can say that a University system of Education which has produced such a galaxy of worthies is a failure. While admitting, therefore, the merits of the present system and the brilliant success which it has achieved, I feel it my duty as the occupant of this chair, to invite your attention to certain features, which are bound to exist even in much more perfect systems than the University of Madras and its associated agencies.

Our University established in 1857 inaugurated for the time a new era of progress. Its Senate under the old system was an unwieldy body of more than Two Hundred gentlemen, a few only of whom had any concern with education, direct or indirect, and the rest found a place for purely other than educational reasons into which we need not enter. Its jurisdiction was enormous and its direct control over Colleges and Schools scattered over this vast area was all but slender. Things went on in a humdrum, happy-go-lucky fashion, and did not attract the serious attention of the public for a considerable time. Then came the new University Act introduced with a flourish of trumpets under Lord Curzon's regime intended to inaugurate a period of vigorous reforms in the Educational World. It has completely officialised the University. It has been aiming at height at the expense of breadth. It has made an ideal of 'Efficiency' and invites all and sundry to bow down before it. In its name many things are done which do not meet with public approval. Men posing as experts assume divinity and expect to be worshipped. The elected element is only one-fifth of the whole body of the Senate, and the nominated gentlemen constituting about 80% dominate the situation. These gentlemen though estimable in themselves and worthy of all respect, cannot in the nature of things escape the suspicion, however unfounded it may be, of being not altogether free to act as one might wish and of being under some sort of obligation to the nominating authorities. It is an accepted rule that, in all advancing institutions and bodies, the elected element ought to preponderate, and nomination

should be employed to guard particular unrepresented interests and feeble Minorities. The invertebrates and the salaaming sycophants, who had found a place in the old Senate do not seem to have altogether disappeared from this body. As the Senate, is at present constituted, the Indian Voice stands little chance of being heeded, and the atmosphere of the Senate Room is on occasions unwholesomely heated. The record of votes and polls has a sad story to tell. It remains still mainly an Examining University. The regulations framed under the Act, owing to their imperfection, require constant tinkering. It is, therefore, desirable, in my opinion, that an attempt should be made to procure a modification of the University Act so as to secure the predominance of the elected element, reduce the influence of the so-called expert and make the Syndicate more amenable to the influence of the Senate.

There is not much encouragement afforded by the University for the opening of fresh Second-grade Colleges or their being raised to the First-grade. The conditions of affiliation are so comprehensive and onerous and the demands are so strictly understood and so rigorously enforced, that few are found ready to undertake the work in view of the high standard of equipment insisted on in the matter of buildings, furniture library, laboratories and staff, involving, as it does, the expenditure of sums of money, often beyond the means of managerial bodies.

I would next invite your attention to the place that Education should occupy in the scheme of social values. The old theory that Education is an expensive luxury and not a vital necessity and that those who want Education, whatever may be its grade, ought to pay for it, ought to be exploded. The State ought to recognise its responsibility for the complete education of its people so as to secure every individual an opportunity to rise to the full height of his stature. This responsibility has been accepted in the case of Elementary Education by England and most other European countries, by the United States of America, by Canada and Australia, by Japan and the Philippine Islands, by Ceylon, by Mysore, Baroda and Sangli. It has been recognised by the province of Bombay, when it passed what is popularly known as Mr. V. J. Patel's Act; the Municipality of Sukkur has not let the grass grow under its feet, and has already taken the preliminary steps to introduce free and compulsory education within its limits. The Madras Government has also risen to the occasion and has convened a meeting of a few gentlemen, official and non-official, for consultation on the Elementary Education Bill said to be under its consideration. We may, therefore, confidently expect that all India will soon adopt this course and provide funds to carry out this scheme. The percentage figures relating to literacy and to the number of the school-going population have a sad tale to tell. One has only to be told of these astounding figures to become convinced of the necessity of free and compulsory Elementary Education.

But I go one step further. The new Education Bill in England is not satisfied to drop the child with his Elementary Education. It wants to raise a superstructure on the foundation it has laid. It wants to take up boys of over 12 or 13 years of age and give them part-time instruction at least. What is learnt in the elementary school is, in 80% of the cases, forgotten in a year or two. India must make an effort, if not now, at least in a not very remote future to pursue the child in his adolescent years and give him the education suited to his age and condition.

You may consider that I am making an extravagant demand, when after telling you that in some parts of America and Denmark, even University Education

is free, and that the progressive Mysore has recently adopted a resolution to the same effect. I ask you to hope for a time when India likewise will be given a similar privilege and blessing. When that time comes, for which I fervently pray, then India can be said to have constructed a highway of Education open to all her children—a thoroughfare open to all regardless of colour or creed. Things that were considered to be beyond the wildest dreams of a mad man have now come within the range of practical politics. The impossible of to-day, may, God willing, become the nucleus of the possible of tomorrow. I wish that this goal may be borne in mind and concerted attempts made to reach it by steady if slow stages.

The present Educational Scheme labours, as all of you may be aware, under the often-repeated charge of paying unduly large—I will not say exclusive—attention to the study of languages, and of relegating Scientific studies to a remote back ground. Knowledge of things is more important than knowledge of mere words. This is perhaps a reflex of the influence of the older Universities of England, and does not contribute to the desirable synthesis of Humanistic and Scientific studies which well-regulated Universities ought to strive to attain. Education should not exclusively aim at culture, however valuable in itself it may be, but should also try to secure utility. There must be a happy combination of literary and vocational or quasi-vocational training, and Germany and the U. S. A. have much to teach us in this direction.

The place that English occupies in the Intermediate and B. A. Pass courses where the students are expected to specialise is rather unique. In the latter, about half the time is taken up in the study of English Language and Literature instead of the greater portion of the available time being devoted to the study of the particular subject in which the student is expected to specialise. Even in the Intermediate, English claims an inordinate share of attention, much to the detriment of the specialised study. A good working knowledge is all that ought to be insisted upon—and when this is achieved, there ought to be an almost whole-hearted and whole-timed devotion to the chosen subjects. The time and energy are merely wasted in acquiring a knowledge of the idiosyncracies of the language which the moment the examination is over and the student believes it has served its purpose, passes out of the over-worked brain as unassimilated and unassimilable material.

Another feature that may have struck you is the existence of two parallel courses of study for the pass B. A. and the Honours B. A. Examinations. The subjects prescribed in certain groups are nearly the same, the questions frequently are of the same standard and the only difference is in the *percentage* of passes. The Pass B. A. labours, as I have said elsewhere, under the additional disability of having to grind through a larger number and greater variety of text books in English, some set for detailed study and others for non-detailed. Is it not possible to devise a scheme in which the two courses may run on divergent lines?

The Intermediate examination is made to serve a three-fold purpose, inconsistent each with the other. It serves as a test for the selection of students of the famous "race-horse" type for the Honours B. A. course. It is also a half-way house for students of the "draught-horse" type who are content with the Pass B. A. course. It is also prescribed as a qualifying test for admission into the Engineering and Medical Colleges. The examiners who are generally gentlemen connected with the Honours classes often, unconsciously, no doubt, place before them-

themselves and insist in others under their control a standard suitable for one purpose, and the unfortunate candidates have to pay the penalty for the sin of one examination being compelled to serve so many different purposes. The failures have been in recent years abnormally high—almost amounting to a scandal and continued to be high in spite of repeated endeavours to improve the situation. An attempt was made to throw the whole blame on the unregulated and consequently unsuitable and lax admissions, but facts and figures were marshalled out to prove the utter untenability of this theory, and this position appears to have been reluctantly abandoned. At the same time, partly perhaps to show that a theory once advanced so boldly and openly could not be abandoned without loss of prestige, and partly from the University's unwillingness to part with its direct control over the S. S. L. C. candidates, the system of publishing an eligible list of students has been adopted, out of which alone admissions could be made into the intermediate classes. The compartmental system of Examination has also been introduced and some lightening of the courses, especially in English introduced by the Hon. Mr. J. H. Stone must mitigate the severity of the examination and improve the position of the student population. It is a fact that all should bear in mind that it is the duty of the University to adapt itself to the capacity and conditions of the persons for whose benefit it is intended, and not to adopt an inflexible and uniform standard to reject the majority as failures. Just fancy for a moment what it means to the candidates that are turned out of the portals of the University as weighed and found wanting—in the matter of energy and brain power, in the matter of money and time and in the matter of their future careers.

The S. S. L. C. Examination also labours under the disadvantage of being utilised for a variety of purposes. For one thing it is a test for selecting candidates who are fit to enter the University classes and receive the University training. For this, obviously, a high standard is and ought to be insisted on. It is also a qualifying test for entry into the public service. This does not generally require quite so high a standard, or the same emphasis on all subjects. Hence a larger number may reasonably be expected to fall under this category. Again, in the case of several, it is merely a stage that marks the end of school education, and here too the standard insisted upon may be lowered. But the publication by the University of the 'Eligible List' as it is called makes no distinction and places all on the same level as being eligible for admission into the College classes. There must, therefore, be an error either of undue exclusion, or of unsuitable inclusion. Here again the student pays a penalty for a fault which is not of his creation.

The S. S. L. C. Scheme was intended to remedy several defects associated with the old Matriculation Examination which in its unbending rigidity insisted on passing all through the same mill, and was therefore received with open arms by the whole school-world. Its advantages were recognised by all. In the course of working various defects were noted from time to time and these have been receiving due attention. Defects still existed and various changes have been made or adumbrated with a view to further improvement; and in the midst of all these the University authorities have come in taking away the freedom enjoyed by Colleges, introducing a list of 'Eligibles'—which is another name for Passes—and therefore converting it into a modified form of the old Matriculation, so that our old friend appears in a new disguise. We must not think of doing away with the School Final, whatever may be said against it, but attempt to improve it into a better and more workable scheme.

Another question that has been vexing the mind of the Educational World, as well as the outside public is in regard to the Medium of Instruction in non-language subjects. It is contended, and rightly contended, that the Vernaculars ought to be so employed exclusively in the lower forms and along with English, in gradually varying proportions in the higher forms. If this principle is accepted and not merely accepted with lip loyalty but followed, steadier and more rapid progress may be visible and fewer tears would be shed by the unfortunate children who at once unable to understand the language and unable to understand the matter begin to cherish a hatred for education altogether, or lose the little brains they had when they entered the schools. In the College, doubtless, English ought to be the Medium; for, without it no progress in the higher studies is possible. It is also desirable, nay, even necessary that a good working knowledge of the Vernaculars should be acquired if one were to be of service to the public in one capacity or another, but this ought not to be confused or mixed up with the problem of studying the higher Vernacular literature as a means of culture, which will always remain in the future the work of only a select few. No useful object can be gained by mixing up different problems as if they constituted a single one.

One cannot but regret the utter absence on a fairly large scale of what is known as Research Work. It is an essential feature of higher education in all European and American Universities, but unhappily has hitherto either not claimed, or been unable to obtain a satisfactory measure of attention among us. The recent appointment of three University Professors for Indian Economics, Indian History and Archaeology, and Sanskrit Philology—is a move in the right direction, but it is too early yet to pronounce an opinion as to how far the experiment has been a success, though prophets of evil are not wanting in predicting failure in one direction or another.

There are two kinds of Research—Research in pure science, and Research in applied science—the former capable of being pursued in college laboratories that are properly equipped and manned, the latter bearing on industry and requiring a costlier equipment. Modern industry is the out-come of science, and Chemical industries in particular have their birth in the laboratory. It is science, which has developed the manufactures of hundreds of important commodities from a single substance like coal. Germany employs an army of Chemists on a single Dye-works; America spends large sums of money in fitting up laboratories and maintaining them; and England comes a long way behind. But what is India's position even in this research work carried on outside the University walls? True she maintains an agricultural Research Institute at Pusa, and a Forest Research Institute at Dehra Dun, and maintains an army of experts—such as the micologist, Quinologist, Cellulose Entomologist, Meteorologist, Cotton and Silk and Leather experts, besides the Geological, Zoological, and Botanical surveys and the fisheries department. There is, besides, the famous Tata Research Institute of science at Bangalore, maintained on a costly scale from a threefold source. It is a matter of regret that there is no co-ordination of work; there is duplication of men and material; each carries on his work with a magnificent indifference to the results of the labours of his brother expert. The net result though imposing, when expressed in the Indian official phraseology, does not convince the man in the street that India gets her money's worth, whatever may be the cause. India's misfortune is that She does not appear to thrive much in research work whether carried on inside or outside the University. Technical Scholarships are also awarded by the Government of India, to enable Indian youths to go to foreign countries and pick

up technical knowledge; and the expert scholar returns and finding no scope for work often takes up any job that offers itself however remote from the subject of his special study.

Of recent years the problem of discipline in Schools and Colleges has attracted a great deal of attention. In certain quarters, owing to a lack of imagination and insight into the working of the Indian student's mind, a feeling has arisen, gathering more and more volume with every fresh incident, that discipline is going down and that the student is growing more and more irreverent towards his teachers and less and less amenable to control. This view receives additional weight from occasional eruptions which are really due to specific causes that can be spotted out, but are held by superficial observers to be due to the innate depravity of the Indian youthful mind, or to the instigation conscious or unconscious of external agencies. A closer analysis is bound to eliminate and set aside ebullitions due to specific causes into which it will be invidious to enter, and will assign the so-called growing irreverence to the fact of the higher level of intelligence of the pupils as a class, and the lesser intellectual distance between the teacher and the pupil.

In the matter of political meetings, the Government have until recently been following a wise policy of drift, trusting ultimately to the good sense of the students and to the sympathetic and watchful supervision of the masters. Suddenly the G. O. No. 559 of which so much has been said and written fell like a bolt from the blue and placed principals and professors in an undesirable, not to say most unenviable position. The conference of Principals at which H. E. the Governor was present must have sounded the note of warning and the G. O. which has not been, as a matter of fact, formally cancelled has been so modified as to vest considerable discretion in the hands of principals. This is certainly a wise course, but a wiser course would have been not to have issued the G. O. in question at all.

A hopeful feature of the times is the rise into prominence of movements such as the Boy Scout system, Social Service Leagues and Student's Conventions. Their real significance must be understood in all their bearings, and if sympathetically and judiciously handled they are bound to serve as an excellent machinery for developing all that is best in the Indian character, manliness, self-reliance, humanity and genuine patriotism, and will prove of immense good.

It has long been a standing complaint that, while a country like England with a population equal to that of the Madras Presidency, has a large number of Universities, catering to the wants of the younger generation, our 'Benighted Province' should be content with her one, huge, overgrown leviathan of a University. There cannot be much of zeal and efficient control or first hand knowledge or sympathy, and the work to be turned out by the University authorities consequently becomes mechanical and lifeless. The rise of new Universities at Benares and Aligarh, at Bankipore and Dacca, at Haidrabad and Trivandrum and at Rajahmundry and Madura must be most heartily welcomed, ~~and~~ effecting a much-needed decentralisation, destroying the dead Uniformity that is sickening, and as affording room for new departures and possessing more flexibility and adaptability to varying conditions obtaining in different parts of this vast continent. There is a guarantee of closer contact and greater sympathy besides lessening the intolerable burden resting on the present overgrown University. We ought to welcome these new arrivals and work and pray for the birth of many more ones.

The position of the teacher is, and has been, in spite of its being occasionally glorified as the profession followed by Socrates and Arnold and other eminent men, one of low popular esteem. The remedy lies in the hands of the teacher himself. He must qualify himself fully for his work, must throw himself heart and soul into it, should never think himself superior to his duty and must maintain an upright and estimable character. When men of this stamp organise themselves into associations and work with vigour, consistency and sincerity, a welcome and desirable change is bound to take place. No man is the architect of his own fortune in a truer sense than the school master.

The report of the Public Services Commission which was inaugurated under such happy auspices and from which so much was expected, and rightly too, has in the case of the Educational World proved most disappointing, whatever may be the nature of its recommendations in regard to other services. It perpetuates and even aggravates the existing cleavage between the Indian and the Provincial Services and in other respects is open to the charge of ignoring Indian interests. Not even its best friends can claim much merit for it in the direction in which it was expected to promote contentment and cordial co-operation.

It is with considerable reluctance I venture to make a few observations on a movement, influentially supported and apparently enjoying wide popularity, which has recently been eliciting comments of diverse characters both favourable and adverse—I mean the National University Scheme. The existing system is by no means perfect and is certainly open to attack on the ground that the control of Education is not in the hands of the nation, or even largely in the hands of Indians. It is my own opinion that the best teachers of a nation are those chosen from the nation itself, for these alone understand the social system, can fully enter into the feelings of the students and sympathise fully and genuinely with their ideals, hopes and aspirations, whereas a foreigner, however capable and well-intentioned cannot or can but imperfectly see the student's point of view or know his habit of mind. There is a general feeling that Indian Vernaculars and classics are thrown into the back ground instead of occupying their rightful position. Under the present arrangement Indian patriotism, it is averred, is not fostered though much is made of 'loyalty'; and the Indian religions are not utilised in developing Indian character according to the national bent, but are often used as foils to exhibit the real or assumed superiority of foreign religions thereby touching the Student in his most sensitive part. Again considerable difficulty or embarrassment, it is said, is felt in the teaching of History—the history of India for instance—in the way it ought to be, owing to the influence of other considerations than the exposition of the Simple Truth. But assuming all these statements to be true, I ask, is it really desirable or necessary to start a rival system, running practically on parallel lines so far as general education is concerned? Does it not merely amount to a duplication of machinery? Can it be said that any other agency than the State can carry on Education systematically, comprehensively, and without ignoring all diverse interests? Can a private agency command the resources necessary for such a gigantic undertaking? What is the career open to students who pass through this course? Will not even private employers of educated labour prefer men with a certificate of known value to those holding one whose value is unknown or uncertain? I ask these questions more for the sake of information than with a desire to cavil. If however the new movement will take up technical instead of general Education—such as Commerce, Medicine or Engineering for instance—or establish

technological institutions for promoting industries or found Schools and Colleges for girls, it might render far more useful service and entitle itself to the eternal gratitude of the people. Private agencies cannot be a substitute for state agency even though they may be useful for filling up gaps or making novel experiments. It is, I fear, rather too early to pronounce any final decision likely to be acceptable to all thoughtful people, since the scheme is but in the course of incubation and can hardly claim to be fully comprehended either by its friends or by its foes. The movement, we must concede, without the slightest hesitation, is actuated by the kindest intentions on the part of its founders and therefore demands patience on our part before either extolling it to the skies, or crying it down to the depths of the ocean.

Before concluding, gentlemen, I wish to convey to you my sincere thanks for the patience with which you have listened to my remarks and shall feel considerably gratified, if I have succeeded in drawing your attention to the various points which I consider to be worthy of the attention of the Educated world, and of this Conference in particular.

Home Education Dept

CNo 1487 A

Letter: - No. 1487 A-1

19.6.18

To
2/6/18

M.R. K. Khamanuja Acharyar.

President of the 10th Sol. Conf.

held at Kayewaram

by air 19/6

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge
the receipt of your letter of 31.5.18
forwarding copies of the resolutions
passed at the 10th Sol. Conference
held at Kayewaram in May 1918
I have etc.

12.6.18

16/6/18

18/6/18

19/6/18

Home (Education) Dept

CNo. 1487 A from the P.S.G. memo. no 112 P of 8.6.18
Subject. Resolutions passed at the Educational
Conference held at Coimbatore in May 1918.

A draft acknowledgment is submitted for
approval.

2. The resolutions may be submitted to H.E.
for perusal. Orders are solicited whether they
may be 'revised'

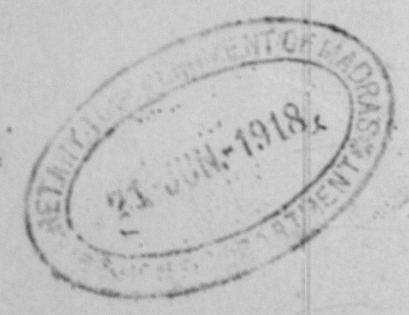
La
12.6.18
MX
16/6/18

CR
18/6/18

Issue.
2. for perusal
18/6/18

Issued on
20.6.18

H.E.



Returned with thanks.
H.E.
13/6/18

over no. 822
mini 24.6.18

Recorded

CR
24.6.18

Conference
Recording the resolutions
passed at the Educational
Conference held at Coimbatore
in May 1918

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21.6.18
MX
22/6/18

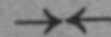
THE
PROVINCIAL EDUCATIONAL
CONFERENCE

HELD AT

CONJEEVERAM

ON

8th, 9th & 10th May 1918



ADDRESS OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
Mr. N. PARAMASIVA AIYAR.



MADRAS
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1918

Ladies and Gentlemen and members of the South India Teachers' Union and friends of the cause of education :

On behalf of the Conjeeveram Teachers' Association and of the Reception Committee of this Conference, I beg to offer you a most hearty welcome to this city of ours. Conjeeveram as you all know, Gentlemen, is one of the seven sacred cities in India and of the seven, it is the most renowned (Nagaresu Kanchi). Professor Geddes of Town Planning fame, when he visited this city was very much struck with its formation and observed that it was a model city. Its respectable antiquity is proved by the references made to it in our Puranas and in the sacred songs of the Tamil Saints and by the classical writers of Greece and Rome. Its historical importance is known to every student of Indian History. It won great renown as the capital of the ancient Pallava and Chola kings. It was famous as a seat of learning. It was in ancient times either the birth-place or the main centre of the activities of our great Gurus, Sankara and Ramanuja. All the important religionists of India—Hindus, Muhammadans and Buddhists—hold this city in great veneration. It is the city of temples renowned far and wide, which attracts very large crowds annually during the festival seasons. Such a city is therefore a pre-eminently fit place for holding an annual Conference of teachers. I offer you, once again, my hearty thanks for your kindness in having accepted our invitation and come here from long distances at very great sacrifices and inconvenience, to yourselves, in this scorching weather.

2. I must, at the outset, on behalf of the whole body of teachers present here, express our sincere thanks for the cordial welcome extended to us by M.R.Ry. M. E. Srirangachariar, the premier citizen

of this city. As you all know his interest in education is not merely of lip service. He maintains a High School solely out of his own private funds, and puts himself out of pocket annually to an extent of Rs. 3,000 or even more. It must be a matter of no small gratification to the members assembled here to be welcomed by a gentleman who takes such practical interest in education and keen interest in every other field of public activity.

The programme of work for this Conference is likely to be long, varied and important. From the analysis made of the subjects suggested for consideration by 25 societies, I find that there are as many as 129 subjects. These may be roughly classified into 44 subjects under the S.S.L.C. scheme, 29 under prospects of teachers, 6 under media of instruction, 17 under grants, examinations, training, etc., and 33 under miscellaneous.

The time at our disposal is very limited, and we shall have to go through several of the above items as expeditiously as possible. I shall not therefore take up your valuable time by attempting to consider some of the questions in detail or even to review them as a whole. I shall therefore merely touch in a sketchy way on some of the leading questions, which will come before us for detailed and mature consideration at our sittings.

It is gratifying to note that teachers are now forcing themselves up so as to make their voice more and more articulate. By combination and push, they are trying to occupy a place of increasing importance in the social world. But a good deal more remains to be done. The teacher should give up his diffidence and shyness and come out of the background which he now occupies, to assert his right to a fair share of public life. He should participate in the larger life of the world like men in other walks of life, if he wants to be more respected. The profession, if it only asserted itself, would secure adequate co-operation from public men. But it must combine and be united and must come to have a vigorous opinion upon all the educational questions. The technique of education should be thoroughly

debated and healthy opinions and satisfactory conclusions should be arrived at. Then society is sure to pay teachers deserved respect.

A good deal of lip respect is now paid to the profession by the public. It is praised as the noblest of professions, as one that has the building up of the mind, morals and character of the youths of the country. But adequate recognition of its difficulties, of its poor emoluments is wanting. It behoves therefore that we should combine and make our importance felt on society so that our dues and our rightful place in society may be secured. Curiously enough, often improving teaching takes the form of improving the appliances, building and other equipments and rarely the pay and prospects of teachers. The teacher who does not feel himself above want, who does not find sufficient security of tenure, cannot be expected to turn out good work notwithstanding better buildings and superior equipments.

While striving to secure our rights and dues, we should also be alive to our duties. The market value of our services should not in the least, influence us in the discharge of our duties. Any teacher who measures his work by his pay becomes self-degraded and is unfit for the calling. While agitating for better pay and prospects, we should strive to discharge our duties to the best of our abilities. Says Ruskin "It is physically impossible for a well educated man or brave man to make money the chief object of his thoughts; just as it is for him to make his dinner the principal object of them." A teacher should keep himself well-informed of all the varied activities of the world. He, being as it were, the link between the present and the future, should be well posted with information in all subjects so that he may satisfy the eager up-turned look of the young committed to his care. His character and morals should be thoroughly unblemished so that he may serve as a model for imitation.

There is a good deal of unrest in the educational world just now, just as there is in every other sphere of human activity—a sign of healthy and active life. New ideals are pulsating all over the country and

departures from the existing system of education are vehemently preached. The existing system devised for a set purpose has created new wants and aspirations which it is not able to satisfy. In a Parliamentary Blue Book issued in 1854, the object of the existing system is stated thus:—"The Universities are not to be themselves places of education, but they are to test the value of the education given elsewhere. They are to pass every student of ordinary ability who has fairly profited by the curriculum of school and college study which he has passed through, the standard required being such as to command respect without discouraging the efforts of deserving students. Education is to be aided and supported by the principal officials in every district and is to receive besides, the direct encouragement of the State by the opening of Government appointments to those who have received a good education irrespective of the place or manner in which it may have been acquired." No wonder therefore that the system devised to supply educated labour to the State should fail to satisfy the new wants and aspirations. The cry that the present education is literary and that it should be replaced to a large extent by vocational, industrial and technical education deserves our earnest and serious consideration. It has become more imperative to do so, now that State employment is almost closed to certain sections of the country. In the present struggle for existence it is more imperative that bread-winning trades and professions should be placed within reach of young men, after they have reached a certain stage of general education.

The most serious defect of the present system is that it is far too literary and linguistic and as such does not prepare our young men for life in the modern world. The future economic condition of our country is dependent upon a system of industrial education aiming at covering all possible courses, providing instruction for the several trades and professions. The evolution of Germany as an industrial nation has been brought about by the provision of such courses in the various states and

cities of Germany. The city of Munich has provided courses suited to 67 trades and Berlin 267 trades. The State thus looks "after the artisan and house-keeper, but it also provides for the master workman, the foreman, the manager, the contractor, the builder, the expert technician, the chemist, the designer, the draftsman, the salesman." Germany has state schools "for the higher wood working industries, for the building trades, for the textile industries, for mechanical and electric engineering trades, for the chemical industries; for watch-making, ship-building, soap-making, paper-manufacture, optical instruments, hotel-keeping, automobiles, etc."

The next defect in our present system of education is that the course is far longer than it need be. A much shorter course will quite do to meet the practical needs of our people. General education should stop at the most, at the school final stage, or even a little earlier and provision should be made for training young men for practical life, according to their leaning and taste and heredity. The present long and overloaded course interferes a great deal with the physical vigour of our young men. The nervous break-down which we commonly see in them could be avoided if the courses are shortened and made lighter. The languid and listless look of our young men in schools and colleges is mainly due to the heavy course through which they are taken and the hurry with which it is done. Vocational schools will, while providing instruction of the required type, also prevent the deterioration of the body and the mind.

Another defect urged against the present system is that it is far too costly for Indian conditions and that education ought to be very much cheaper than it is. It is generally held that it is the duty of the State to provide education at least as far as the secondary stage, at little cost to the people. But the Government by its attitude does not indicate the recognition of its duty in this matter, for, high fees are levied, and low grants are made to secondary schools, by an ingenious Grant-in-Aid system. The Code requires considerable revision and we are yet

anxiously awaiting the result of the deliberations of the Conference held over 2 years ago for its modification and improvement. As it now is, the help given to aided schools engaged in secondary education is proportionately very meagre, and a more liberal scale of help is urgently needed for the betterment and growth of these schools. In this connection I shall be wanting in my duty if I fail to draw your attention to the change effected at the last revision of the Code as regards poor boys. The change has been evidently made on the theory that the poor boy has no right to receive higher education and that talent combined with poverty is to be neglected and afforded no opportunities for rendering service to society. Managers of schools who recognise merit in poverty and give it help are penalised to that extent in the grants allocated to their schools. Poor parents anxious to secure the benefits of higher education to their capable sons seek for help at the hands of the already overburdened managers and they are obliged to grant scholarships though thereby they suffer a proportionate loss in the amount of teaching grant. In the old Grant-in-Aid Code 10 per cent. of the fee-income was recognised as legitimate expense under this head and the grant was calculated only on the 90 per cent. of the total fee due as per standard rates. In the revised rules, this provision was deleted. The Conference will have to agitate that for calculation of net cost this item of necessary expense should be taken into account.

Another defect in the present day education is the neglect of the vernaculars. The Hon'ble Mr. S. Srinivasa Aiyengar, Advocate-General, in his address at the Prize-distribution of Pachaiyappa's High School, Conjeeveram, said the other day, "For one thing it did not give sufficient importance to the vernaculars; not that the present system neglected them altogether, but it dealt with them in such a fashion that a considerable section of Indian opinion thought that it was worse than ignoring them."

The Chairman of the Reception Committee last year raised three distinct questions *re* vernaculars and they are (1) the need for a study of the vernacular

literature, (2) the use of the vernaculars as media of instruction in the non-language subjects, and (3) the creation of modern vernacular literature reflecting the present day thoughts and problems to educate the masses and stir them up to be in touch with all the developments in all the fields of human activity—social, political, economic and scientific.

As regards the third point all are agreed, and the sooner the need is supplied, the better will it be for the country and the speedier will be the realisation of all the ardent hopes and aspirations now pulsing over the whole country. Opinion on the other two points is sharply divided. Some, while warmly advocating instruction through the vehicle of vernaculars are not for a study of the vernacular literature; some others hold that the literature should be studied as closely as English but the instruction after a certain stage should be only through the medium of English. Again there are very many who think that the vernacular literature should be studied as a compulsory subject in the secondary and collegiate stages also and that the medium of instruction in the non-knowledge subjects up to the college course should be through the vernaculars only. Thus the question is complicated by currents and cross-currents and it is the essential duty of a body of experts like the Teachers' Conference to settle this question in the best way practicable.

Teaching would certainly become more useful and practical if conducted through the vernaculars and a great deal of the energy spent in acquiring knowledge through a foreign language may be profitably saved. The race is nothing too strong, and any saving of the physical vigour through any source, is highly welcome. But we have to remember also that the English language has come to stay and that it is essential for our well-being and for taking an intelligent part in the concerns of our country, that a work a day knowledge of the English language should be possessed by every one at the end of his school course. Whether such a knowledge could be secured by an average secondary school certificate-holder, if instruction is imparted in the knowledge

subjects also through the vernaculars in the High School forms, deserves serious consideration. Further College experts already cry hoarse that the knowledge of English in the pupils seeking admission into the College classes is nothing too rich and we have to consider whether instruction through the vernaculars in knowledge subjects, will not still further diminish the store of English possessed by our young men.

The question of the creation of vernacular literature touched by me naturally leads me to the consideration of Elementary education. Government has recently paid considerable attention to the spread and improvement of Elementary education and though the Free Elementary Education Bill of the late lamented Professor Gokhale was vetoed in the Imperial Legislative Council, yet the spirit of the Bill has been in the main approved in the steps subsequently taken by Government for the spread of Elementary education. It is recognised by Government that it is its duty to give Elementary education free, if financial considerations would permit it. It is therefore our duty to agitate for the cause until Government feel that finance can permit it. If necessary curtailment of expenditure under some other heads should be made to find funds for it. But the spread of Elementary education should not take the form of more buildings, more furniture, more appliances for Elementary schools, as is done now. Costly buildings and appliances cannot in themselves spread education. More schools should be opened in rural and village areas and efficient teachers should be engaged to give the true rural color and bias necessary to spread education among the masses. Humble dwellings are enough and type-designed buildings are unnecessary.

Again if Elementary education should spread on healthy systematic lines, large programmes covering a space of several years should be drawn up and their working should be entrusted to local committees under the guidance and supervision of experts. If the above suggestion be adopted, I have no doubt that simple and cheap buildings needed for

Elementary schools will be provided by the people themselves and all the funds can be utilised for the increase of schools and betterment of teachers.

I next proceed to Secondary and Collegiate education. The Secondary school course which was devised for giving a finish to those students who stopped with it has been ruthlessly interfered with, by the University experts. The latter in their jealous care to pick those who were fit for the College course, fettered the school course from time to time with stringent rules and regulations and the net result is that it has broken down as a school leaving test. All its essential merits have been taken away in the interests of the University. Thus the scheme framed for freeing the school course from University domination, has again come to be under its control. It is, as it is now, "the old Matriculation, writ large." We have again a list of passes or eligibles; the freedom to attend only a few of the subjects has been wiped off, and an ingenious system of moderation has been invented.

Another regrettable feature connected with the system is that frequent changes are made in the courses of studies and with the rules which interfere very much with smooth working. Text-books are sometimes announced some months after the commencement of the school year and portions originally prescribed are often omitted nearly at the end of the year. Further the control which was originally outside the University men, is now largely in their hands. That it ought to be mostly in the hands of teachers of Secondary schools cannot be disputed by any, though in practice the contrary is the rule. The same spirit of constant tinkering, of half yearly changes of rules and regulations on the part of the Senate is a prominent feature of our University. I have only to mention the case of vernaculars to exemplify my statement. In great haste a new change is made, some element of a scheme is dropped, the syllabus of some subjects is revised, and some subject is made less important. The consistency of the plan under which these changes are effected is not plain. The net result is

much damage is done and many a deserving lad is ruthlessly ploughed.

Gentlemen, I am afraid I have trespassed too long upon your time and patience and I beg to be excused for the same. There are various other problems such as changes in the Educational Rules, the Boy-Scout Movement, Religious instruction, Medical inspection of schools and colleges and their pupils, the spread of education among the backward classes, the urgent need for a conscience clause, the lightening of the course of studies, especially in English, the change in the syllabus of British Empire under group B, making better provision for the study of Geography, the creation of School Councils, Provident Funds, and a hundred other themes which we might discuss and in which we can make helpful suggestions to the authorities concerned. It is for the Conference to select such of them as may be useful and urgent and to discuss them and arrive at mature suggestions for the betterment of education.

However, before I close I wish to touch, in a passing way upon three more subjects. The first of them is the need to allow Secondary school representatives in the Senate.

Gentlemen, I feel very strongly that it is a slur and an insult to the profession to shut out Secondary school teachers from the Senate, except through election. Lawyers, merchants and revenue officers are nominated to the Senate from time to time, but no Secondary school teacher has yet been added on to the new Senate. Some of the recent Universities such as Patna and Allahabad have provided for a certain percentage of representatives from Secondary schools and it behoves us therefore to ask for 5 per cent. as our due. I would suggest that all the registered graduates in Secondary schools may be formed into an electorate and empowered to elect 5 out of the total number of 100 Fellows of our University.

The next subject is the much abused Headmasters' Association. In this connection I feel it my duty to appeal to the large body of Assistant-masters, not to misunderstand me, as making any

special pleading on behalf of the Association. As you all know I was one of the few that stoutly opposed the formation of the Association as unnecessary and undesirable. However my opinion did not find favour and the Association was ushered into existence. Being in its inner council and partaking in all its deliberations, I can assure you that all the passion and feeling that its formation raised, were not deserved by it. The scope of its work is not, in my opinion, very different from that of the S. I. T. U. or the Madras Teachers' Guild. The little that it has done during its short period of existence is for the betterment of teachers as a whole. There is no spirit of antagonism in its councils to Assistant-masters or Managers. On the contrary, the Association in all its deliberations is more anxious to serve them and thus to deserve better of them. May I therefore venture to appeal to the Assistant-masters to view the Association with less passion and greater tolerance.

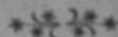
The third question is the Pension and Provident Fund scheme. There are several schools which have no Provident Funds. It is imperative that such funds should be started in all schools and that all these funds should be amalgamated and placed under the management of a body of men under the co-operative scheme. In the management all the three interests—the State, the private managers and the teachers—ought to be equally represented. Such a union of the funds will have the advantage of enabling teachers not to undergo any loss when they change from one school to another. The rules should be pretty liberal and elastic.

Closely connected with it is the pension scheme for teachers who cannot be benefited by the creation of Provident Funds. There are several teachers who have already put in 20 years' service and over and they are, in my opinion, entitled to pension, as far better public servants than the public servants directly under Government. The latter have merely discharged their duties, while the former have created them, shaped them and built their character. If the public service of to-day is efficient and honest,

the credit in the main belongs to the hardworked body of teachers who trained and disciplined them. I therefore raise my feeble voice in appeal to Government to recognise the urgency of a pension scheme for old teachers.

Gentlemen, one word more and I have done. The South India Teachers' Union has been in existence for over 10 years. Yet its work is not quite so successful as it ought to be owing to the indifference of teachers. The number of Associations affiliated to it is small. Unless we co-operate and form a strong union, our opinions will not receive adequate consideration. I therefore appeal to you all to form associations in all your educational centres and to affiliate them to the Union. Our united voice will command greater respect and will produce marvellous results.

"We have our duties—union in our ranks, sobriety in our councils, adaptation to our environments—all dominated by an overwhelming love of our country—these are the qualities which the situation demands from each one of us. God grant that we may possess all these qualities."



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