

Home (1913) Department.
Education

Ordinary SERIES.

G.O. No. 126

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[Despatch Abstract.]

Examinations.-

Recording office notes relating to the scrutiny of resolutions of the Legislative Council dealing with education during the past five years with a view to see to what extent the question of maintaining the standard of examination and of instructions set in colleges and high schools was considered.

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Edu 3157A
31.12.18

Edu. 24.12.18



Recd
Urgent
LWS
30.12.18

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
GUINDY.

29th December 1918.

My dear Swamikannu Pillai,

I am to ask you kindly to arrange to have resolutions of the Legislative Council dealing with education during the past five years examined to see to what extent the question of maintaining the standard of examinations and of instruction set in colleges and high schools was considered and the non-official members of the Legislative Council made or supported proposals tending to lower the standard and quality of education. The note should also summarise briefly any other evidence derived from recent discussions of non-official communications to the department bearing on this subject.

Yours sincerely,

K. M. S.

M. R. Ry Diwan Bahadur L. D. Swamikannu Pillai Avl.,
I.S.O.

Home (Edn.) Dept.

The papers on the subject have been examined, & the following extracts show that there is general impression among non-officials that the general standard is an extent higher than necessary & that it is tending to become so Schools.

In connection with a resolution recommending the opening of a civil engineering school in the Northern Circars moved at the meeting of the Leg. Council held on the 13th March 1915, the Hon'ble Mr. Naresimheswara Sarma in the course of his speech stated that "for the sake of efficiency good many 'things seem to be sacrificed in this country. We 'want first class medical practitioners and 'therefore there must be one medical college. We 'must have first class overseers who are to be 'pitted against men from Roorkee and we must have 'one first class institution. But that, I hope, will 'not be the attitude of the Government."

(2) The Hon'ble Mr. Ramakrishna Yengar urged at the meeting of the Council held on the 24th November 1916 that the rule that headmasters of incomplete secondary schools should ordinarily be L.Ts. should be removed. His Excellency the Governor explained that the rule was worked with the utmost consideration and that it would not be well that the council should lend its support to any form of words lowering the ideal standard.

(3) At the meeting of the Council held on the 23rd May 1917, in proposing a re-constitution of the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Board, the Hon'ble Mr. Venkatapati Raju complained that the syllabus and the courses of studies in secondary schools were bad and that the examinations were unnecessarily rigid. In his opinion the S.S.L.C. system was introduced with a view to making the

10.17 of 80. 466 (A)
1-5-15

pages 7 to 10 of 80. 174 (C)
14-2-17

pages 4 to 11 of 80. 1006 (D)
3-8-17

course of studies less rigid and to afford facilities for students to enter a University course more easily than under the old matriculation examination. The Hon'ble Mr. Stone repudiated this idea and explained the real object of the S.S.L.C. system. Attention is solicited to his speech on page 8 of G.O. 1006 Home (En.) dated the 3rd August 1917.

(4) In connection with a resolution moved at the meeting of the Leg. Council held on the 20th November 1917 regarding the reduction of fees in schools and colleges, the Hon'ble Mr. Yaqub Hasan stated as follows:-

"I for my part would rather have the quality of education reduced and a larger number of people become educated. I would rather have one hundred half-educated persons to the one highly educated person of the present system."

(5) The Godavari District Conference held at Ramachandrapuram in March 1916 passed the following resolutions:-

"This Conference resolves to request

"(4) that as this physical deterioration is largely due to the heavy syllabuses or courses of studies prescribed for the S.S.L.C. public examination which regulate the course of studies in all colleges and secondary schools down to the lowest classes, these syllabuses need considerable curtailing and simplification.

"(5) that as too much prominence and importance (as against the vernacular) are being given to English, a foreign language in which the high standard set up equally for all the students irrespective of their special subjects except in the B.A. Honours course require the major portion of the student's time and attention, it is responsible for the inordinately high percentage of failures in examinations."

p. 9 of go. no 113 of 1.2.18 (E)

para 4 of note on p. 2 of go. no 113 of 1.2.18 (E)

At the same meeting the Hon'ble Mr. Venkatapatni Raju asked a question suggesting a lighter test for the S.S.L.C. public examination so as to secure a greater percentage of passes.

page 2 + 3 of go. no 602 of 1.6.16 (B)

(6) At a public meeting of the townsmen of Rajahmundry held in June 1918 the following resolution was passed:-

"This public meeting of the townsmen of Rajahmundry including the guardians of students places on record its emphatic protest against the way in which the S.S.L.C. examination is at present conducted and expresses its grave apprehension at the growing and abnormal failures therein and considers that the examination should be made lighter and the percentage of passes enhanced by the adoption of the following amongst other measures:-

"(a) the introduction of the compartmental system for A & C Groups for all students.

"(b) the reduction of the required minimum marks to 35 per cent or Presidency Average in English and one of the C Group subjects and to 33 per cent or Presidency Average in the other A & C Group subjects.

"(c) declaring eligible for admission into Intermediate all School Final candidates who failed this year by just one mark in any subject and showed a good record in other subjects."

(7) In its memorial dated the 25th December 1917, the Council of Indian Education complained that the Examiners in the S.S.L.C. public examination exacted too high a standard of efficiency in English answer papers, that too many books were prescribed for detailed and non-detailed study and that the curriculum of studies was determined to a large extent by European Inspectors of Schools who did not know the conditions of the country and the needs and requirements of Indian children.

p. 278. 10400 (L)
10.8.18

paras 10(3), (4) & (5)
p. 7 + 8. 598 (H)
7.5.18

Colleges.

(8) At a meeting of the Leg. Council held on the 7th February 1917 the Hon'ble Mr. Venkatapati Raju while proposing the establishment of a separate Andhra University and the opening of additional schools and colleges in the Telugu districts spoke as follows:-

"The existing second grade colleges can at once be turned into first grade colleges if only the Govt. would not in the name of efficiency require an impossibly high funded capital to be provided by the management before they are raised to the first grade." * * *

"The proper method of encouraging the growth of education is to start colleges with provision for education in such subjects as History, Philosophy, Oriental languages, the teaching of which does not require any initial outlay and when these colleges gradually secure the necessary endowments, open science chairs."

The Hon'ble Mr. Stone pointed out that the opening of these colleges was not so easy as the additional member thought if regard should be had to efficiency.

(9) In the course of his speech in connection with a resolution for the increase of accommodation in Govt. colleges brought forward at the meeting of the council held in August last, the Hon'ble Mr. Yub Hasan stated that "the University may say that it is better to give the best education to a few than any education to a larger number. My principle is that a larger number should be given some education rather than a few should be given good education."

In his opinion additional provision for

p. 4 of Extract of el.
Process at (18)

p. 7 of el.

p. 4 of G. 1493 Ed. 2
25.11.18

collegiate education could be made without any perceptible increase in recurring expenditure "because there is no limit to the classes in colleges and a larger number of students can be taught by the same staff as at present." He stated that a model college such as the Presidency College should take students who were not brilliant and by stint of their attention make them really capable students. With regard to this, the Hon'ble Mr. Stone stated as follows:-

"In order that ~~you~~ may carry on education in the best sense you must be allowed to choose persons whom you will admit. If you will admit all and sundry, because their parents live in Madras ~~you~~ must depress the level of education carried on there. A college is judged not only by teachers but by students, and in order to have a college of the kind which we wish the Presidency College to be you must have a select class of students."

(10) At the same meeting the Hon'ble Mr. K. Rama Ayyangar moved a resolution on the following terms:-

"This Council recommends ^{to} the Governor in Council that the Syndicate of the Madras University be asked to consider that the deficiency in the School Final examination of one mark and less in English or any other subject be treated as not unfitting boys for Intermediate course when they have taken more than the required marks in the other subjects and that this in any case be made the rule in the case of boys from recognised institutions which have been doing well in English during the last 5 years."

The resolution was opposed on the grounds that it was highly necessary to maintain a high

p. 3 of Sec. 1493 Edn.
(Q) 25.11.18

p. 4 of Sec. 1508 Edn.
27.11.18
(2)

standard in English, that it was necessary to draw a ^{somewhere} dividing line/between the fit and the unfit and that it was the policy of the Govt. not to interfere with the discretion of the University in matters of this kind.

(11) The Hon'ble Mr. Venkatapati Raju gave notice of a resolution in the following terms for the meeting of the Council held on the 3rd April '18:-

"This Council recommends to the Governor in Council to be pleased that in view of the circular of the Govt. of India a committee of officials and "non-officials be appointed to enquire thoroughly "into the effects of the present examination system "on the health and mental strain of students and to "suggest a system best suited to the genius and "needs of the people."

The circular referred to above is No.1043 dated 7th December 1917 in which the Govt. of India desired to know how far the prevailing system of examinations was responsible for such deterioration in the health of students as might be noticeable and whether there was any need for mitigating the rigour of examinations by the introduction of a provision for partial passes. The reply of this Govt. will be found in letter No.388 Edn. dated 21st March 1918 wherein it was stated that the compartmental arrangement of examinations was practically in full operation in this Presidency and that there was hardly room for its further extension. The Additional Member's resolution was disallowed as the subject matter was then under correspondence with the Govt. of India.

(12). The proceedings at the meetings of the Senate have also been examined and they do not disclose any definite suggestion ^(for a lowering of standards) having emanated

p. 8 of G.O. 1508
(2) 27.11.18

p. 20 of notes to

G.O. 28 Lagun
10.4.18 (VI)

p. 1 of G.O. 387 Edn.
(Y) 21.3.18

(Y)

Para 4 of Letter 388 Edn.
(Y) 21.3.18

This can hardly be correct. As a fellow of the Univ. I have witnessed repeated attempts to lower standards of the entrance from Mr. Allen's & Sir H. Stone's speeches more correct summary of what has occurred since after the time in the Senate L.H.S. 34.19

¶ para 3-p. 5

of G.O. 1344 Edn.

(X) 8.12.15

from non-official members. On the otherhand a strong committee of the Senate specially appointed in 1914 to revise the curricula for the Intermediate examination was inclined to believe that the courses were heavier than ^{what} originally intended and on their recommendation certain regulations were sanctioned by Govt. with a view to lightening the courses in question - Vide G.O. 1344 Edn., dated 8th December 1915.

The protests lodged in connection with the revision of the history course for the B.A. Honours degree may, perhaps, be attributed to a desire to secure a low standard of examinations.

(13) Other evidences in support of the impression that the Indian public generally advocate light courses of studies and easy examinations are perhaps to be found in the statements made by certain gentlemen, official and non-official, in response to a call for opinions on the Govt. of India's circular letter No. 365 dated 24th April 1917 regarding the constitution and functions of University Senates. On the non-official side, Dr. T.M. Nayar and the Rev. W.C. Penn expressed the opinion that the Indian Fellows on the University Senate were always in favour of supporting proposals which would make the attainment of a 'degree' easy. Among officials Messrs Allen & Hunter shared the same opinion. Mr. Allen's view is reproduced in the following passage:

"In conclusion on the general issue of nomination or election I have to invite attention to the academic law of gravity - the steady downward pull ever exercised on our University standard by the fact that a degree is desired for economic, social, or domestic reasons, for almost every reason in fact but that which it bears on its face

¶ 14 of G.O. 867 Edn.

(V) 12.8.16

pp 142 of G.O. 987 Edn.

(N) 27.7.17

Portions underlined

at pp 7 & 18 of notes to

G.O. 987-8 (N)

27.7.17

para 10-p. 9 of notes

ibid.

"in illustration of which we have the recent appli-
"cation of the compartmental system to the Inter-
"mediate examination and the constant outcry,
"notwithstanding, against the length of its courses
" * * *. If any opinion exists in this country
"in favour of improving University standards it is
"assuredly inarticulate. On the otherhand for 'making
"things easier' opinion is not merely vocal but
"clamant".

(14) Attention is also invited to the follow-
ing extract from Mr. (now Sir Henry) Stone's letter -

"Almost without exception the Indian members
"of the Senate are in favour of anything that will
"make the attainment of a degree easier. This is
"directly or indirectly the aim of practically
"every proposal made by the opposition led by
"elected members of the Senate. There has always,
"in my experience of the Senate, been this tendency
"towards lowering standards in the supposed inte-
"rests of students, but since the Universities Act
"of 1904, it has become more marked".

Sir Sivaswami Ayyar took an opposite view
altogether - vide para 4 of his minute of dissent
at pp.4 & 5 of letter No.305 dated 5th March 1917.

More detailed information could be compiled from pros of
the Senate but the above bears out the genl proposition

3.1.19.

3.1.19

N.K.
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Leds
3-1-19

H.E. the Governor

A copy of this note should now be sent -
without delay - to the A.P.I. for his use.

P.
4.1.19.

Geo. 157 Edm
16.2.17 (S)

para 2 - p.3 of Geo.
304 Edm
(Vn) 5.3.17

Edms 3157A1
5.1.19

copy sent to D.P.9
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NOTES.

Submitted that these notes
maybe 'Recorded' ^{mis. No. 126 / 29 Jan. 1919}

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