

Law (Education) (1926) Department.

Ord. SERIES.

G.O. No. 872

DATED 14. 5. 1926

[Despatch Abstract.]

Legislative Council - Budget motion

Sending up all boys for the
S.S.L.C. Examinations at the
end of the School course

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

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DEMAND XIX--EDUCATION (TRANSFERRED)

Mr. K. Prabhakaran Tampam:-

p. 226.

215. To reduce the allotment of Rs. 11,13,000 for ^{direct} district grants to non-Government Secondary Schools by Rs. 1,000/-

(To make it obligatory on the school authorities to send up all boys of the VI form to the S.S.L.C. examination).

Law (Education) Department.

Under the rules relating to the scheme for the award of the Secondary School Leaving Certificates the Head-master of a school should forward to the Secretary to the S.S.L.C. Board at the end of the course in the sixth form the certificates of such of his pupils as wish to complete them by appearing for the public examination conducted by the Board and "as are in his opinion competent to appear ^{for} that examination." In accordance with this rule headmasters of schools hold an examination for the selection of candidates who are fit to appear for the Public Examination; and those who are not considered fit are not allowed to appear for the examination. In a purely educational matter of this kind it is not clear how the Legislative Council Members can pass a resolution fettering the discretion of the school authorities. If any such direction is issued by Government the head master will cease to be responsible for the efficiency of the institution. This will be a retrograde measure and it is not desirable for the Government to lend their support to the proposal. If necessary, the D.P.I. may be requested to note on the suggestion of the mover.

In report of every public Examination a selection examination is held in every institution. There is no reason why in

regard to the public exⁿ connected with S.S.L.C. alone the procedure sh^d be altered



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* Mr. K. PRABHAKARAN TAMPAN :—" Sir, I move
' that the allotment of Rs. 11,13,000 for direct grants to non-Government
secondary schools be reduced by Rs. 1,000'

" Sir, I want to suggest by means of this token motion to the Government that it should be made obligatory on the part of the high school authorities to send up all boys who have studied for one year in the sixth form to the school final public examination. In many institutions the custom is to detain several such boys in the sixth form to show a better percentage of success in the examination. I am one of those who believe that it ought not to be done. According to the present practice there are only 40 boys in a class and if a teacher who is entrusted with the coaching up of that number, is not found capable of teaching efficiently this small number during the course of one year, he is not fit to be placed there. Instead of detaining a boy at that stage, it would be better if he is not promoted from the fifth form. It is indeed very hard to detain him at this fag end of the school final career. Strict rules ought to be enforced in promoting a boy from the fifth form to the sixth. It is very hard upon the boys to be told at the time when applications for the public examination are sent, that they would not be sent up. In a district like Malabar where we have the adjoining State of Cochin where the rules are not so strict, what happens is that the boys so detained go there and appear for the examination. I may say that my school also occasionally sins in this respect. We detained two or three boys last year but they went to the Cochin examination with the result that this year we have sent up all the boys. I should suggest that in ordinary circumstances no boy should be detained in the sixth form having put in the full one year's course in that class."

* The hon. Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—" I am very sorry that my hon. Friend has brought this motion. It is educationally very unsound that the Government or the Legislative Council should interfere with the educational standards of schools. It is a matter entirely for the headmaster and

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the staff to decide whether a student is fit to appear for the examination or not. We cannot lay down the test, for it is they that are in close contact with the work and study of the student and in a position to judge as to the capacity of the student. Under the existing rules the headmaster of a school has to intimate to the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate Board the number of students that are qualified for appearing from his school for the public examination. He judges the students by their marks, by the class examinations which the headmaster and the teachers hold, by the general conduct, and by the general level of intelligence of the candidate. I should appeal to the House that in a matter like this it should be left purely to the discretion of the headmaster. My hon. Friend has pointed out that in some cases the headmaster and the staff may not be able to judge and that the record of work maintained in the school in the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate book may not be accurate. These are no doubt some of the drawbacks of the present Secondary School-Leaving Certificate system. They are all now being revised and considered by the Committee that is now sitting and going into the details of it. Because there has been an abuse in some places or because one headmaster of an institution has not been discharging his responsibility properly I should not certainly suggest that there should be a wholesale revision of the existing system. How best the system could be rectified must be considered. I am sure hon. Members realize that there are defects in the working of the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate system. There has been public agitation in the matter and we have realized that there are some defects. We have, therefore, appointed a committee to go into the scheme and revise the course, and in doing so, to see how best we can adjust it between the old Matriculation and the present Secondary School-Leaving Certificate and effect a compromise between the two. And it is utterly inadvisable for us to take upon ourselves to dictate to the Educational authorities that this should be the standard or that should be the standard, and that all boys of the VI form irrespective of their qualifications and equipment, irrespective of their study or anything, irrespective of the fact whether the boys are fit to be sent up for the examination, should be sent up to the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate examination. That is educationally unsound, and I may say from the point of view of the students, it would be disastrous. Far from rectifying the defects in the system, it will be enhancing the present difficulties. It is suggested that the headmasters sometimes take advantage of the position or the power vested in them and they abuse it in some cases. Very rarely no doubt such abuses are brought to notice. The remedy that is now suggested is that all boys of the VI form should be sent up for the examination, which means that you leave the headmasters and other teachers so as not to be strict in their work and not to enforce the standard that is necessary for the purpose of the examinations. All this will become lax and the educational standard will be very much lowered. Therefore the remedy that is suggested is not a proper one. If there is any other remedy that the hon. Member may suggest we will consider it, but this is not at all a proper one. It will enhance the present difficulty of selection, and does not enable them to take into account the record of the students in the IV, V and VI forms, and also the preliminary examination that is held. In every school what is generally known as the preliminary examination is held a few months before the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate examination, and boys are sent up to that examination from the results of this preliminary examination; and

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in the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate book they also state whether the boy is properly qualified to sit at the public examination. Hence I should think that this suggestion is not at all a proper one as by adopting it we will be interfering in the matter of purely educational management of schools."

* Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—"I am prepared to admit, Sir, that there is some force in what my Friend, the Minister for Education, has stated, but we have advantages and disadvantages on both sides and I am inclined on the whole to agree with my Friend Mr. Prabhakaran Tampan. ('Hear, hear'.) I know, Sir, it is the instinct of schoolmasters to send up only those boys who in their opinion will certainly pass in the examination, and that instinct of schoolmasters is based upon this circumstance, namely, that they want always to have a high percentage of passes so far as their schools are concerned. But there is the other aspect also, namely, the aspect of the students themselves and the aspect of the parents. The parents who spend money for these boys and the students who study are desirous of the boys passing the examination, and I can see no reason why a boy who is studying in the sixth form, who is prepared to spend the necessary amount of fees for the examination and who has been paying the fee to the institution itself should not be allowed to go up for the examination. My Friend, the hon. Sir A. P. Patro, says it is a matter that should be left entirely to the discretion of the headmasters and the staff. As a matter of fact, very often the headmasters and the members of their staff differ as to whether a particular boy should be sent up for the examination or not, and in the result what happens is this, that the will and opinion of the headmaster prevail, and not the opinion or will of the members of his staff. Sometimes it also happens that those students who in the deliberate opinion of the headmaster or of the staff, or of the headmaster and staff combined will pass, do not pass. We come across such instances very often and then what becomes of the infallible test which is based on the opinion of the headmaster? And then my Friend says to allow all the boys to appear for the examination is disastrous from an educational point of view. I cannot understand how it would be disastrous from an educational point of view. The boys go up for the examination, and they fail or succeed and take the consequences. And if this fetish of the schools caring only for the high percentage of successes from their institutions disappears, I submit no evil consequences will result, and there will be no disastrous consequences at all from an educational point of view."

* Mr. K. PRABHAKARAN TAMPAN :—"I believe, Sir, that, if the headmasters exercise that amount of care in promoting boys from the fifth form which they exercise in detaining the boys of the sixth form, I do not think this necessity will arise at all. If a boy who is promoted up to the sixth form and has studied for one year in the sixth form cannot be found fit for being sent up for the examination if he was given the ordinary tuition that is given in the schools, the inference is that the teachers are more anxious to get boys into the sixth form than to coach and send them up for the examination, and towards the end of the year they take it into their head to show efficiency by detaining the boys in the sixth form, and send up only the picked or selected few because it is upon the results of the School Final Examination that the efficiency of the school is judged by the authorities. After having received the tuition fee which in itself is very large and presses

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hard on the poor parents, a student ought not to be detained, and I think it is highly necessary that an order to that effect is issued. If my hon. Friend the Minister cannot accept the proposition, I have nothing more to say."

The motion was by leave withdrawn.

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