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[Despatch Abstract.]

Primary & Secondary Examinations

Submitting, with reference to Govt of India Resol^n 495, Educational, dt 28.10.99, a report on the System of —— which is in force in this Presidency

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

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

Government {1900} of Madras.

EDUCATIONAL.

—o—

Read. } 1900. *Enclosures*

Regd. } *Spare copies*

G.O., &c., Nos. 352-A, 352-B, 9th August 1900.

AUGUST.

Primary and Secondary Examinations.

Submitting, with reference to Government of India Resolution 495 (Educational), dated 28th October 1899, a report on the system of—which is in force in this presidency.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Read—again the following paper:—

Extract from Resolution of the Government of India, Home Department, No. 495, dated 28th October 1899.

* * *

Examinations.

14. Mr. Cotton remarks that "the system of primary examinations is very complicated." It would perhaps be more accurate to say that the information supplied regarding these examinations is very meagre and indefinite. Nor can it be said that the subject of secondary examinations is very satisfactorily treated in the review. The whole question of examinations is one of great importance; and the Government of India desire to invite special attention to it, and direct that the system of both primary and secondary examinations be fully considered and reported on by each Local Government. The character and effects of these examinations have attracted attenton all over India. In the North-Western Provinces and Oudh this question has formed the subject of an inquiry resulting in Resolution No. 262, dated 27th June last. In Madras a part of it has formed the subject of an interesting discussion to which reference is made in the Education Report for 1897-88 (paragraph 69). There is a strong impression in many influential quarters that the present system fosters "cramming" in the earliest years of a boy's education and subordinates educational work almost from the first to public examinations. This is a matter that calls for most serious consideration. The Government of India must, therefore, ask every Local Government to sbmit a clear report on the system actually in force, to compare it with the principles laid down by the Education Commission in paragraphs 124 and 283 of their report, to examine its operation and effects in the light of experience and of the opinion of the best educational authorities of the province, and to make such recommendations as may seem expedient. The whole question will then be considered by the Government of India and final orders will issue.

* * * * *

Read—also the following paper:—

Letter from the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, dated 25th June 1900, No. 6091.

Order—No. 352-A, Educational, dated 9th August 1900.

Ordered that the following letter be sent to the Government of India:—

(True Extract.)

M. HAMMICK,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

Letter—No. 352-B, Educational, dated Ootacamund, 9th August 1900, to the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department.

In paragraph 14 of the Resolution in the Home department, No. 495, 28th October 1899, the Madras Government is requested to submit a clear report on the system of primary and secondary examinations which is actually in force; to compare it with the principles laid down by the Education Commission in paragraph 124 (which is a repetition of a misprint for 224) and 283 of their report; to examine its operation and effects in the light of experience and of the opinion of the best educational authorities of the province; and to make such recommendations as may seem expedient.

2. As regards the existing system, I am directed to state that the summary in paragraph 97 of Mr. Cotton's review is correct in respect to this presidency. There are four examinations for secondary schools—Matriculation, which is conducted by the University and which therefore does not come within the scope of this report; the upper and lower secondary examinations, the former of which will be separately dealt with in a letter written in reply to paragraph 11 of the Resolution; and the results standard examination. The remarks which I am to make will therefore be confined to the lower secondary examination and the examination for the results standard.

Lower Secondary Examination.

3. The former is primarily intended to be a leaving certificate examination for lower secondary education, and it also serves to test the eligibility of pupils of the seventh standard or third form for results grants, and the general qualifications of candidates for lower secondary teachers' certificates.

It is under the control of the Commissioner for Government examinations, and is conducted according to such instructions as he may give to examiners appointed by him for the purpose.

It is open to pupil candidates and private candidates. Those pupil candidates who take up the compulsory subjects and non-technical optional subjects are required to be in the third form of a school recognised for general education; those who desire to be examined in technical subjects must be in the highest elementary technical class of a school recognised as affording instruction up to the standard of the elementary technical examination in the subjects chosen.

Private candidates must be in the fourth or higher form in a recognised school for general education, or else must produce a certificate from an inspecting officer, or the head of a recognised college or secondary school, to the effect that they have not, since the beginning of the official year in which the examination takes place, been pupils of any school, recognised or unrecognised.

Compulsory subjects of the Lower Secondary Examination.

The examination is divided into two parts, compulsory and optional. The compulsory subjects are:—

1. First language.
2. Arithmetic.
3. Geography.
4. History of India.

Optional subjects.

The optional subjects are:—

1. Elementary science.
2. Second language.
3. Needle-work (for girls only).
4. History of Great Britain and Ireland.
5. Domestic economy (for girls only).
6. Geometry and algebra.
7. Any subject that may be taken up for the elementary technical examination.

A minimum percentage of marks varying between 25 and 35 is required in the compulsory subjects, and failure to pass any one subject disqualifies the candidate; but while a similar minimum has to be attained in the optional subjects, a candidate is under certain restrictions permitted to appear again for particular subjects in which he may have failed. Marks for the several subjects of the elementary technical examinations are laid down in the syllabus and failure to obtain them in any one subject disqualifies.

It is probably unnecessary to give any further details than these about the lower secondary examination, but I am to enclose a copy of the rules on the subject. In a subsequent paragraph of this letter it will be discussed how far effect has been given to the recommendations of the Education Commission.

Examination for the results standard (secondary).

4. As regards the examinations for the results standard I am directed to explain that these are conducted by the inspecting officers for results grants and by the boards appointed to conduct the primary examination and the teachers' certificate examination. These boards examine persons who desire to qualify for admission into training schools under article 12 of chapter VI of the educational rules, and also teachers, trained students, or students under training, who desire to qualify for primary grade teacher certificates of the first class. Pupils are not examined by these boards but by the inspecting officers of the department.

Examination for results standard (primary).

5. In paragraph 123 of his review Mr. Cotton writes "In Madras there appear to be three "departmental examinations of pupils in the "primary stage; (i) the primary examination;
(ii) the primary results standard examinations;
(iii) an examination for the award of results stipends."

This is, however, not quite correct, as there is no difference between the examination for the award of results stipends and the standard examinations for the award of results grants. Both examinations are conducted by the inspecting officers in the same way and the standards are identical. The amount of stipends is calculated at the same rates and according to the same method as that of grants. The difference is only in name and in the fact that in the one case the amount earned is awarded to the teachers of what are called salary results schools, which are under public management, and in the other case is paid to schools under private management. If the Government of India desire more complete information as regards the primary examination than that contained in this letter they will find it in the enclosed copy of the notification relating to it. I am also to request reference to paragraph 83 of the quinquennial report for a statement of the changes which the notification in question has undergone since the institution of the examination in 1889.

Primary Standard Examinations.

The primary standard examinations, I am to state, are those conducted by the inspecting officers in the infant and the first three standards, for the award of results grants to schools under private management. Promotions do not necessarily depend on the results of these examinations but are left to the discretion of the school authorities. I am to add that a conference attended by selected officers of the educational department and by representatives of mission and non-mission schools was held in Madras in December last to consider whether any changes were necessary in the curriculum for primary and lower secondary schools, and that a curriculum revised in accordance with the recommendations of the conference is now before Government. The Government has before it the suggestions and recommendations of the best educational authorities in the presidency.

Principles of Education Commission.

6. As regards the lower secondary examination, His Excellency the Governor in Council has compared the existing system with the principles laid down by the Education Commission in paragraph 283 of its report and is of opinion that it does not conflict with any of the recommendations which were made. There is a very wide range of optional subjects, including in addition to others all the subjects of the elementary technical examination. In conducting the examination the recommendations of the Education Commission are kept in view. In the committee appointed to conduct the examination, managers and teachers of the various non-Government schools are associated with the officers of the department, and all the examiners, whether officials or non-officials, are remunerated from the fees levied from the candidates. The examination is not a test of the fitness of pupils of the third form for promotion to higher forms, this being entirely left to the discretion of the authorities. The examination, as pointed out by Mr. Cotton, is purely optional, managers being under no compulsion to send up pupils.

Criticisms of Lower Secondary Examination.

7. The lower secondary examination has been subjected, as the Government of India are aware, to much hostile criticism, and some of the assailants have been persons intimately acquainted with the educational system and well qualified to judge. The Governor in Council, however, considers that their conclusions are not founded on a sound basis.

Alleged compulsory character of examination.

It has been alleged for instance that the examination is so generally regarded as being compulsory that it has become so in effect, but this contention is disproved by the annual statistics of the three years ending the quinquennium to which Mr. Cotton's review related. If the belief were as stated, year after year there would be a close correspondence between the total number of pupils in the fourth or lowest form in the upper secondary department, and the number of boys who passed this examination from the third or highest form in the lower secondary department. There is however, as a matter of fact, no such correspondence as the following figures—to take the last two years of the quinquennium as an illustration—will clearly show. In 1896 the number of boys on the rolls of departmental high schools who passed the lower secondary examination from the third form was 748; in 1897 it was 846. On the last day of the official year 1897 there were not less than 4,570 boys on the same rolls in the fourth form. If the pupils and their parents had regarded the examination as compulsory, it is obvious that the number of pupils who appeared for the examination would have been incomparably greater. This is considered to be in itself a very convincing proof that many boys do not appear for the examination at all, knowing well that their promotion in ordinary course from the third to the fourth form will not be in any respect prejudiced by their abstaining from appearing for the test. So far as the orders of Government and the practice of the officers of the educational department can avail in such a matter, every endeavour has been made to remove the idea that the examination is treated as compulsory, and that promotion from the lower to the upper part of a school depends upon it.

Alleged evil effects of examination.

8. A more serious charge against the examination is that urged by persons who regard it as a leading cause of the defective state of secondary education in this presidency, and who contend that to subject boys to the strain and anxiety of a public and competitive examination at an early stage in their school career must inevitably injure the higher and only true interests of education.

His Excellency in Council is in entire sympathy with the opponents of systems under which public tests are forced upon boys of tender age, but he is of opinion that the particular test under discussion is hardly open to the accusation which has been laid against it. The average age of the boys who appear for the examination is about fourteen; at that age the subjects to be taken up have, as a rule, been mastered, and very little, if any, special preparation ought to be necessary. If the subjects required for the test differed from what boys have to learn in the

third form of a school there might be some danger of their cramming for it; but this is not the case, and so long as the promotion of pupils, as recommended by the Education Commission, depends on the yearly school examination, and so long as it is shown by periodical statistics that this fact is well known and recognised in practice, the Government cannot admit the argument that whatever is wrong in the present system of education may be laid at the door of this test. In the discussion to which the Government of India refer in the Resolution under reply, Dr. Duncan, the then Director of Public Instruction, a very experienced officer of the Madras educational service, wrote as follows on this matter, and, in the opinion of Government, his words are especially worthy of attention at the present stage of this controversy:—

"I cannot understand how any one who has seriously studied the subject "... can come to the conclusion that the lower secondary examination is "... 'the canker at the root of our whole system of education.' To my "mind one must go deeper, if one is to find a true explanation of the defects in "our secondary education. It is easy enough to blame the system under which "one works for one's own shortcomings. But in this case it is not the general "system of public instruction and public examination that is mainly at fault. "The evil is due to the indifferent teaching throughout and to the want of "thoroughness in the lower classes and forms. The former defect is, I "hope, gradually being removed by the efforts made to train teachers for "their profession, to improve text-books both in matter and form, and to "provide suitable appliances and school houses. The latter defect will not "be removed until parents combine with managers and teachers to make the "best interests of the children the first consideration. The unhealthy rivalry "between schools in the same neighbourhood leads to injudicious admissions "and promotions. The desire to attract as many as possible to his school leads a "manager to admit pupils into higher classes than they are fit for, knowing as he "does that, if they are not admitted to his school, they will probably be admitted "elsewhere. But it is probably in the matter of promotions that most mischief is "done. If a boy who is deemed unfit for promotion is not promoted the manager "or headmaster knows that the boy will almost certainly join another school. In "this way managers and headmasters are really at the mercy of their pupils and "their pupils' parents. I have ... invited ... attention ... "to one of the consequences of this, namely, the overcrowding of the sixth form. "Without let or hindrance boys move up one form every year. Is it surprising "that when brought face to face with a public test like the Matriculation examin-"ation they fail miserably?"

Main purpose of examination.

9. It has been justly observed by the same authority that the main purpose for which the lower secondary examination was instituted has at times been forgotten. It serves in this presidency to mark the close of the school career of one of every two boys, of four out of every five girls: an examination which does this should, as Dr. Duncan remarked, be most beneficial if properly conducted. It must not be supposed, I am to add, that in thus defending this examination the Governor in Council desires to ignore defects which may mark it, and which from time to time may become prominent. All he wishes to contend is that, on the whole, its influence has been for good, and that in establishing it the principles laid down by the Education Commission have in no way been neglected. The Governor in Council in this matter has been fortunate in having been advised by two Directors of Public Instruction, the late Mr. Grigg and Dr. Duncan, who throughout their tenure of office worked with energy and zeal and with remarkable loyalty to the principles laid down in the Report of the Education Commission.

Examinations for the Primary and Lower Secondary results Standard.

10. As regards the examination for the lower secondary results standard, I am directed to state that the recommendations made by the Education Commission in their report are carefully and continuously observed. The same

remarks apply in the matter of the primary examination. A large number of practical and industrial subjects have been introduced, and the examination, which is optional and mainly *viva voce* and practical, is conducted for the most part in the vernacular. Both this examination and the lower secondary examination are the continual subjects of criticism by the local educational bodies, and suggestions for their improvement are frequently under the consideration of the Director of Public Instruction and the Government.

Primary examination.

11. As stated in the fifth paragraph of this letter the Government has now under consideration certain proposals for revising the curriculum of the primary as well as of the lower secondary examination, and in the revision care will be taken to carry out such changes as shall most completely prevent any subordination of the work of education to public tests. A copy of the proceedings passed on the correspondence relating to this question will in due time be forwarded to the Government of India for information.

As in regard to the secondary examination, so in regard to the primary examination the Government is glad to avail itself of the advice and recommendations which are submitted to it from time to time by the best educational authorities in the presidency.

M. HAMMICK,

Acting Secretary to Government.

V.U

1900.

HOME DEPARTMENT.

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From

The Government of Fort St. George.

Recd. } 1900. *Enclosures*

Regd. } *Spare copies*

Draft.

Letter, No. 3563, **dated** 9th **August 1900.**

RECEIVED 10 AUG 0

AUGUST.

Primary and Secondary Examinations.

Submitting, with reference to Government of India Resolution 495 (Educational), dated 28th October 1899, a report on the system of—which is in force in this Presidency.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

From

M. HAMMICK, Esq., I.C.S.,

Acting Secretary to the Government of Madras,

Educational Department,

To

The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA,

Home Department,

Dated Ootacamund, August 1900.

Sir,

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His Excellency in Council is in entire sympathy with the opponents of systems under which public tests are forced upon boys of tender age, but he is of opinion that the particular test under discussion is hardly open to the accusation which has been laid against it. The average age of the boys who appear for the examination is about fourteen; at that age the subjects to be taken up have, as a rule, been mastered, and very little, if any, special preparation ought to be necessary. If the subjects required for the test differed from what boys have to learn in the third form of a school there might be some danger of their cramming for it; but this is not the case, and so long as the promotion of pupils, as recommended by the Education Commission, depends on the yearly school examination, and so long as it is shown by periodical statistics that this fact is well known and recognised in practice, the Government cannot admit the argument that whatever is wrong in the present system of education may be laid at the door of this test. In the discussion to which the Government of India refer in the Resolution under reply. Dr. Duncan, the then Director of Public Instruction, a very experienced officer of the Madras educational service, wrote as follows on this matter, and, in the opinion of Government, his words are especially worthy of attention at the present stage of this controversy:—

"I cannot understand how any one who has seriously studied the subject
" . . . can come to the conclusion that the lower secondary examination is
" . . . 'the canker at the root of our whole system of education.' To my
"mind one must go deeper, if one is to find a true explanation of the defects in
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"system of public instruction and public examination which is mainly at fault.
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"best interests of the children the first consideration. The unhealthy rivalry
"between schools in the same neighbourhood leads to injudicious admissions
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"done. If a boy who is deemed unfit for promotion is not promoted the manager
"or headmaster knows that the boy will almost certainly join another school. In
"this way managers and headmasters are really at the mercy of their pupils and
"their pupils' parents. I have . . . invited . . . attention . . .
"to one of the consequences of this, namely, the overcrowding of the sixth form.
"Without let or hindrance boys move up one form every year. Is it surprising
"that when brought face to face with a public test like the Matriculation examination, they fail miserably?"

9. It has been justly observed by the same authority that the main purpose for which the lower secondary examination was instituted has at times been forgotten. It serves in this presidency to mark the close of the school career of one of every two boys, of four out of every five girls: an examination which does this should, as Dr. Duncan remarked, be most beneficial if properly conducted. It must not be supposed, I am to add, that in thus defending this examination the Governor in Council desires to ignore defects which may mark it, and which from time to time may become prominent. All he wishes to contend is that, on the whole, its influence has been for good, and that in establishing it the principles laid down by the Education Commission have in no way been neglected. The Madras Government, in this matter has been fortunate in having been advised by two Directors of Public Instruction, the late Mr. Grigg and Dr. Duncan, who throughout their tenure of office worked with energy and zeal and with remarkable loyalty to the principles laid down in the Report of the Education Commission, to which the Governor in Council has always attached the greatest value.

Main purpose of examination.

10. It will continue to be the endeavour of the Government to remove whatever under the present system may lead, by any possibility, to the practice of cramming for this examination; and headmasters and managers of high schools under the education department will be induced to dissuade such pupils in the third form as intend to pursue their studies in the upper classes from unnecessarily presenting themselves for the test.

11. As regards the examination for the lower secondary results standard, I am directed to state that the recommendations made by the Education Commission in their report are carefully and continuously observed. The same remarks apply in the matter of the primary examination. A large number of practical and industrial subjects have been introduced, and the examination, which is optional, mainly *vivâ voce* and practical, is conducted for the most part in the vernacular. Both this examination and the lower secondary examination are the continual subjects of criticism by the local educational bodies, and suggestions for their improvement are perpetually under the consideration of the Director of Public Instruction and the Government.

Examination for the Lower Secondary result Standard.

12. As stated in the fifth paragraph of this letter the Government have now under consideration certain proposals for revising the curriculum of this as well as of the lower secondary examination, and in the revision care will be taken to carry out such changes as shall most completely prevent any subordination of the work of education to public tests. A copy of the proceedings passed on the correspondence relating to this question will in due time be forwarded to the Government of India for information.

Primary examination.

As in regard to the secondary examination, so in regard to the primary examination the Government are perpetually considering the advice and recommendations which are submitted to them from time to time by the best educational authorities in the presidency. The Government of India may rest assured that constant vigilance is exercised towards minimizing the evil results which may follow from these examinations, and that every effort is made to improve the conditions under which they are held.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

3.7.1900

Acting Secretary to Government.

3. VIII. 00

6.8.1900

Read again - extract from Resol.ⁿ of Govt of India, Home dept., N° 495, 28 Oct

Examinations.

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inations is very perhaps be more the information Nor can it be y treated in the tance; and the that the system reported on by minations have and Oudh this No. 262, dated interesting dis- -98 (paragraph hat the present ion and subordi- This is a matter must, therefore, tually in force, ra- ght nce, will ects in t authorities of the P pedient. The whole quest

supplied regarding these examinations is
said that the subject of secondary exa
review. The whole question of examin
Government of India desire to invite spe
of both Primary and Secondary examinat
each Local Government. The charact
attracted attention all over India. In t
question has formed the subject of an in
27th June last. In Madras a part of it
cussion to which reference is made in t
69). There is a strong impression in
system fosters "cramming" in the ear
nates educational work almost from the
that calls for most serious consideratio
ask every Local Government to submit
to compare it with the principles laid
graphs 124 and 283 of their report, to
of experience and of the opinion of th
and to make such recommendations as may seem
then be considered by the Government of India and final orders will issue.

Read also:- letter from the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, dt 25th June 1900, N° 6091.

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Order N° 352-A Edl. dt. 9th August 1900.



First copy sent to Press.

Returned for signature.

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Read again G.O., No. , dated 189 .

Current No.

Enclosures to C. No.

Order of Government

Letter of Government.

Statement with ditto.

Papers not filed up, being meant for despatch as original.

N.B.—

A = Print in full
B = Not to be printed.
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