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Educational (1902) Department.

ORDINARY MS.

G.O., No. 683-84

DATED 31-10-02.

INDEXED

[Despatch Abstract.]

Forwarding to the Govt of India a letter
addressed to ~~the~~ the Viceroy by the
teachers' association of Trichinopoly
saying some remarks on the report
of the Universities Commission.

BACK PAPERS.

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

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.
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Educational (1902) Department.

CURRENT No. 1619

From

[Name] H. Malim Esq. M.A.

[Designation] Presdt, Trichinopoly Teachers' Assocn.

[Station] Trichinopoly.

No. _____

Received 27. 10. 1902

Dated 16. 10. 1902.

Enclosures _____

Registered 28. 10. 1902

SUBJECT.

Submg a letter to be forwarded to the Viceroy
Containing some remarks on the recommendations
of the Universities Commission.

BACK PAPERS.

FURTHER PAPERS.

TRICHINOPOLY,
16TH OCTOBER 1902.

FROM

H. MALIM ESQ., M. A.,
PRESIDENT, TRICHINOPOLY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY, THE VICEROY OF INDIA.
THROUGH THE CHIEF SECRETARY,
GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

At a meeting of the above association held on the 14th October 1902, the report of the Universities Commission was considered, and I was directed by the association to forward the following letter to your Excellency.

Being a purely local body, we do not presume to criticise the recommendations of the Commission as a whole, but venture to offer remarks on a few points which seriously affect the southern part of the Madras Presidency. The Commissioners with their wide experience and large opportunities are far more competent than we to form an opinion as to what reforms are necessary in University education if it is to be made uniform throughout India: but in our humble opinion, such uniformity is undesirable, and we feel that to impose new laws upon Madras, because they are needed in Bombay or Calcutta will cause serious hardship. Doubtless, reform is needed, and we believe that on the whole, such reform should be made on the lines proposed by the Commission; but due consideration should be given to local circumstances and needs. Whatever may be necessary elsewhere, we think that on *three* points at least the enforcement of the Commission's recommendations will be injurious to education in this presidency.

1. *Vernaculars*: As regards the proposal to remove the vernaculars from the B. A. curriculum, *literary* Tamil can hardly be called a vernacular. It differs as much from colloquial Tamil as the Greek of Homer does from that of modern Athens, or as Anglo-Saxon does from the English of to-day. It embodies a rich literature (though not so rich a one as Sanskrit). The Commission says that "the study of classical languages is of the utmost importance for the improvement of their allied vernaculars". Now Tamil is not allied to any of the classical languages enumerated by the Commission. These remarks apply (though in a less degree) to the other Dravidian languages. In support of our contention we append extracts from the writings of Bishop Caldwell and other Tamil Scholars.

2. *Second Grade Colleges*. If the number of undergraduates is not very greatly reduced by giving effect to the recommendations of the Commission, it will be a disaster to close all second grade colleges. Last year 1924 students appeared for the Madras F. A. examination and 964 and 869 for the English and Science branches of the B. A. Had there been no such colleges, either the junior classes of many colleges would have been unduly crowded or the senior classes very small. Hitherto, as far as can be judged from

examination results the second grade colleges of the Madras University have given as good instruction as the junior classes of first grade ones. While recognising that inefficient colleges (whether 1st or 2nd grade) should be closed, we can see no reason why efficient second grade ones should be condemned merely because they are second grade. It seems improbable that many of them are in a financial state which will allow them to be raised to the first grade. By reducing them to high schools great hardship will be inflicted on many students who can now obtain the first part of their university education near their own homes: for they will be put to very considerable expense by attending a first grade college (perhaps 200 or 300 miles away) for their *whole* course.

3. *Philosophy.* The Commissioners remark (p. 71) that care should be taken to see that subjects are not so numerous as to lay an undue burden on the minds of the candidates. At the same time they suggest that Philosophy be made compulsory for the B. A. Degree, thus increasing the number of subjects (in the Madras University) from 3 to 4. This seems to be a sacrifice of depth to width. It will be impossible for students to get more than a smattering of these 4 subjects in two years. We may remark that at Cambridge students give *three* years to *one* subject. Hitherto the study of Philosophy has been optional. One would expect that on making it compulsory, the part prescribed would be reduced, but we find that the portion suggested by the Commissioners is actually more than at present taught in the Madras University. The sole result of this addition to our already overburdened curriculum would be to increase cram and to render it impossible for students to read anything beyond the prescribed text-books.

These seem to our association to be the chief points in which the Commissioners' recommendations need reconsideration. We trust and hope that they will receive attention from your Excellency before your Government takes any action in the matter.

I have the honor to be
Your Excellency
Your Excellency's obedient servant
H. MALIM,

PRESIDENT, TRICHINOPOLY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

Extracts from "A comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages. (Dr. Caldwell).

"*Tamil.*—This language being probably the earliest cultivated of all the Dravidian idioms, the most copious, and that which contains the largest portion and the richest variety of indubitably ancient forms, it is deservedly placed at the head of the list. It includes two dialects the classical and the colloquial, or the ancient and the modern, called respectively the 'Sen-Damir' and the 'Kodun-Damir,' which differ one from the other so widely that they might almost be regarded as different languages."

"No person who has any acquaintance with the principles of comparative philology, and who has carefully studied the grammar and vocabularies of the Dravidian languages, and compared them with those of Sanskrit, can suppose the grammatical structure and inflexional forms of these languages and

the greater number of their more important roots capable of being derived from Sanskrit by any process of development or corruption whatsoever."

"So completely has this jealousy of Sanskrit pervaded the minds of the educated classes amongst the Tamilians, that a Tamil poetical composition is regarded as in accordance with good taste and worthy of being called classical, not in proportion to the amount of Sanskrit it contains, as would be the case in some other dialects, but in proportion to its freedom from Sanskrit!"

"It is the only vernacular literature in India which has not been content with imitating the Sanskrit, but has honorably attempted to emulate and outshine it. In one department at least, that of ethical epigrams, it is generally maintained, and I think must be admitted, that the Sanskrit has been outdone by the Tamil."

From "The Folk Songs of Southern India" (Mr. Charles E. Gover).

"It will be seen that the Dravidian peoples possess one of the noblest literatures, from a moral point of view, the world has seen."

"Compare with the above the remarks of the Rev. A. Percival, in his excellent book, "The land of the Veda"—"Perhaps no language combines greater force with equal brevity; and it may be asserted that no human speech is more close and philosophic in its expression as an exponent of the mind.....the language, thus specific, gives to the mind a readiness and clearness of conception, whilst its terseness and philosophic idiom afford equal means of lucid utterance".

"The Rev. W. Taylor, the well known Dravidian scholar, declares of Tamil, the representative Dravidian tongue,—"It is one of the most copious, refined and polished languages spoken by man." And again in his Catalogue Raisonnee of Oriental MSS (Vol. I. p. V.) "It is desirable that the polish of the Telugu and Tamil poetry should be better known in Europe; that so competent judges might determine whether the high distinction accorded to Greek and Latin poetry, as if there were nothing like it in the world, is perfectly just".

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Please stick under
a copy of the letter
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C. No. 1617

SUBJECT.

Remarks on the recommendations of the
Universities Commission.

The letter may be forwarded to the
Govt. of India without any remarks.

The Govt. of India have just referred the report for
remarks on certain points and whatever the Madras Govt.
have to say can be embodied in the reply.

7/11 PH
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As at H.

31.10.12

The draft placed below may issue.

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30/10/12

It must apparently go
on but is not a valuable
production.

PH

31.10.12

Better take a note of the matter
of the Com. if you have no dupli-
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we have duplicates. X

READ ALSO:—

C. No. *1617*, From the *H. Malim Esq.*, No., dated *16th October* 190*2*

ORDER

No. 683, dated 31 Dec 1902

Miss

To
The President, Teachers'
Association Trichinopoly.

The foregoing letter from the Trichinopoly Teachers' Association will be forwarded to the Government of India.

P.T.T.

31-10-2.

Letter no. 684 of 31.10.02

To the Secretary to the
Govt. of India,
Home department.

Sir.

I am directed to forward the accompanying letter addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy by the Teachers' Association of Trichinopoly. The letter contains remarks of the association on the recommendations

of the University Commission.

P.T.T.

31-10-2.

A. T. P.

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