

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MILITARY DEPARTMENT.

Languages—Examinations.

Read the following paper :—

No. 238. From Major-General Sir E. H. H. COLLEN, K.C.I.E., Secretary to the Government of India, Military Department, to the Secretary, Board of Examiners; dated Simla, the 10th October 1894, No. 2744-B.

Languages—Examinations.

I am directed to state, for the information of the Board of Examiners, that the Government of India having had under consideration the rules for examination in Hindustani by the Lower and Higher Standards, have arrived at the conclusion that the tests laid down for the Bengal Presidency in India Army Circulars, clause 129 of 1888, made applicable to the Bombay Presidency by clause 210 of 1889, and embodied in Army Regulations, India, Volume II., paras. 2660-93, require modification.

2. The tests in force in the three presidencies now stand as follows :—

BENGAL AND BOMBAY.	MADRAS.
<i>Lower Standard.</i>	<i>Lower Standard.</i>
A.—Reading fluently from the Bagh-o-Bahar.	A.—Reading fairly from the Bagh-o-Bahar.
B.—Translating written English into written Urdu.	B.—Conversing with a Native on subjects likely to occur in the performance of regimental or professional duties.
C.—Reading and translating a manuscript in Urdu.	<i>Higher Standard.</i>
D.—(i) Conversing with the examining officer.	A.—Reading fluently from the Bagh-o-Bahar.
(ii) Conversing with a Native.	B.—Translating accurately written English into Urdu.
<i>Higher Standard.</i>	C.—Reading and translating an Urdu manuscript.
A.—Reading fluently from the Premsagar.	D.—Translating short sentences, English into Urdu.
B.—Translating accurately written English into written Hindi.	E.— <i>Vivâ voce</i> translations into Urdu of proceedings of a court-martial.
C.—Reading and translating a manuscript in Hindi.	F.—Conversing with a Native.
D.— <i>Vivâ voce</i> translations of sentences into oriental language.	

3. It will be observed that Hindi is not included in the Madras tests, and that, in this and other respects, the examinations in that presidency for the Lower and Higher Standards are not as difficult as the corresponding examinations in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies.

In consequence of the amalgamation of the three Staff Corps, the frequent transfers of departmental officers from one presidency to another which now take place, and the approaching abolition of the presidential army system, the Government of India have arrived at the opinion that it is desirable that there should be but one standard of qualification for Bengal, Madras and Bombay.

4. As regards Hindi, the process of unifying the standards may be accomplished either by making the test in that language applicable to the three presidencies, or by abolishing it altogether. The former course does not appear to be desirable. In Madras, Hindi is of little use, and there are few facilities for its study, while in Bengal and Bombay its usefulness is limited to officers employed in certain localities and with certain castes. Bearing these points in view, the Government of India consider that Hindi should be eliminated from the Higher Standard tests, and that the examinations should be in Urdu only. The Government of India are however of opinion that, on permanent appointment to a regiment, an officer should be required to pass in the language spoken in the regiment, and that it should be made compulsory for an officer to study the language spoken by the men in his regiment, whether it be Hindi, Mahrati, Tamil, or any other dialect, in the same way as Pushtu has been introduced as a language necessary to officers employed in some of the Punjabi regiments.

5. The Government of India have also had under consideration the question whether, taking into account the various objects for which officers are required to pass in Hindustani, the tests as fixed at present are the most suitable that can be devised. After giving the subject their very careful consideration, the Government of India are of opinion that the first test to be passed by an officer need not require a greater knowledge of the language than is sufficient to qualify him for his ordinary military duties. On the other hand, to make the examination too easy might result in the candidate neglecting to study for it until he joins his Native regiment, thereby making his usefulness much less than if he joined with some knowledge of the language. Further, it is not desirable that, after passing the Lower Standard examination, a much more difficult Higher Standard should lie before the candidate, as his regimental training might be interfered with by the necessity of severe study in order to pass such an examination, failure in which is followed by the very serious penalty of removal from the service.

6. In laying down the tests which should constitute the Higher and Lower Standard examinations in future, the Government of India consider that the following points should be borne in mind :—

- (i) Both examinations being in Urdu, the Lower Standard should be a stepping stone to the Higher.
- (ii) An additional language qualification will be imposed on Staff Corps officers when they are required to pass in the language spoken by the men of their regiments.

7. The Government of India are disposed to think that the following test might be adopted for the examination by the Higher Standard, but before prescribing it would be glad to learn whether it is approved by the Board of Examiners or whether they would suggest any modification :—

- (a) Written translation of half a page of the Bagh-o-Bahar into English.
- (b) Written translation of English into Urdu.
- (c) Reading and translating an Urdu manuscript.
- (d) Conversation with an educated Native, special attention being paid to pronunciation.

8. As regards the Lower Standard test, I am to ask that the Board of Examiners may be moved to favour the Government of India with their suggestions as to what the examination should be, so as to ensure a knowledge of grammar and a thorough grounding on the part of the candidates. The examination should include exercises in rendering English into written Urdu, which should however be of the simplest character. It is intended that the test should be such as an officer of ordinary capacity might reasonably be expected to pass before he has been a year in India.

9. I am further to ask the opinion of the Board whether it would not be possible to have some work in thoroughly good Urdu for the study of candidates, which might, for example, give an account of the Muhammadan and Hindu religions, and

describe the manners and customs of natives of India, instead of the Bagh-o-Bahar, which, apart from its literary merit, is of the smallest interest or usefulness.

No. 2744-B.

Copy forwarded to the Secretary to Government of Madras, Military Department, with reference to his letter No. 6193, dated the 3rd October 1892, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

(By order.)

SIMLA,
10th October 1894.

(Signed) A. E. JONES,
Asst. Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 239. ORDER THEREON, 23rd October 1894, No. 6502.

Communicated for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, with reference to Proceedings of Government, No. 6192, dated 3rd October 1892.

(True Extract.)

A. E. Jones Colonel,
Offg. Secretary to Government.

To the Adjutant-General.
„ Public Department, for information.

Gobt. of {1894} Madras.
MILITARY.

To THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated October, 23rd.

Issued

Recd. Encl.

G.O., 23rd October 1894, No. 6502.

OCTOBER.
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Languages—Examinations.

Examination in Hindustani by the Lower and Higher Standards.—Letter from the Government of India directing certain modifications to be made in the rules for — in view to unifying the standard of qualification for the three presidencies, communicated for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.

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OF 18

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OF 189

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[Despatch Abstract.]

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India directing certain
definitions to be made in
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