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## THE CHAMPION SCHEME

BY

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*The Question of the Hour.* The Champion Scheme lay quietly on the shelf for the past three years, as the local bodies which had been asked to submit plans for its introduction did not mostly respond to the invitation owing to the financial burden entailed in it. Recently instructions were sent by the educational department to the inspecting officers to prepare their schemes within *two months*. In their haste some deputy inspectors went *ultra vires* and already gave notices to managers to close down the standards above the second. The private managements got alarmed and have held protest meetings in various parts of the presidency.

*Some Protests.* "The Muhammadan Educational Association of South India, Madras, views with great regret and surprise that in spite of the unanimous opposition of the Muslim public of the presidency steps are being taken to give effect to the Champion Scheme of Consolidation and Concentration of Elementary Schools with reference to Muslim Schools also and urge upon the Government the immediate necessity of excluding all Muslim Schools from the Scheme."

The All-India Catholic Congress that met at Loyola College, Madras, during Christmas holidays declared that the Champion Scheme "was not only highly injurious to Catholic Schools, but objectionable, nay unworkable."

A Madras Teacher-Managers' meeting held on 18th January under the presidency of Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, in which Mrs. Alamelumangathayammal, Rev. E. W. Legh, Rev. Fr. P. Thomas and Mr. A. C. Balasundara Naickar spoke, was of opinion "that the Champion Scheme should be held in abeyance till 1936 and in the meanwhile a Commission be appointed to tabulate and pass judgment on the grievances and suggestions of all private educational institutions and to sound public opinion in educational and political circles as to how it can, be made workable and acceptable."

*The Champion Scheme.* What is meant by "the consolidation and concentration of elementary schools," otherwise called simply as "the Champion Scheme"? As Mr. Champion's report runs over some thirty closely printed pages, and, as it is not easily available to the general public, I shall expose here its chief traits as briefly as possible.

Mr. Champion deplors that "education in a large number of schools is little better than sham," and asserts that "if elementary education is ever to make any appreciable advance in quality it is necessary that all the children of school age resident in the same locality should, as far as possible, be gathered together in one school and taught in classes of such strength as will justify the employment of one teacher to each class." "Any scheme of consolidating elementary schools must with a view first to educational efficiency and secondarily to financial economy, aim at the creation of schools containing full classes of 30 pupils and the employment of one teacher in not more than one class."

*Three kinds of schools.* Under this scheme, there will be three kinds of schools: the Central School, the Junior School and the school that is expected to develop into a Central School. Let us describe each of them in the words of the Report.

*The Central School.* It is to accommodate "all children of school age of all communities and both sexes, residing within a distance of one mile . . . The Central School will accommodate anything up to say, 1,000 children. It will, where necessary, include a separate section for caste Hindus, a section for Muhammadans, a section for depressed classes, and a section for girls." Can aided managements have Central Schools? Listen to the Report. "The only management that can run a Central School for all communities is the local authority—Taluk Board, Municipal Council or other public body . . . The maintenance of a small Central School may indeed be within the financial capacity of a private body, but a private body with denominational or sectarian foundation"—mark the words "denominational or sectarian"—is clearly not in a position to undertake the education of different communities professing different religious beliefs." Yet the Report admits there may be a few exceptions.

Next come the *Junior Schools*. "Outside the school centre with its Central School will first be a number of Junior Schools serving the needs of younger children who are unable to walk the distance to the Central School. These will contain only standards 1 and 2." Speaking of the teacher-manager, the Report says: "Whereas he now endeavours and fails, to conduct a school of four standards with 2 teachers, he will ultimately be limited to the management and conduct of a school containing not more than 2 standards." According to the Report, "As soon as the Central School contains accommodation for all the children attending standards 3 to 5 in schools situated within a radius of one mile and for the needs of the immediate future, all other schools within that radius, except well-conducted aided schools capable of being developed into Central Schools, should be declared to be Junior Schools and action should be taken by the District Educational Council for the necessary decapitation of standards above standard 2 and for the distribution of these schools with a view to the termination and avoidance of unhealthy rivalry." What is this third kind of schools, described as "well-conducted

aided schools capable of being developed into Central Schools?" This definition is rather vague and nebulous and may be subject to a liberal or strict interpretation by the inspecting officers. Is their nothing more precise still? The Report says: "Outside the school centre will be well-conducted aided schools under managements capable of developing them into efficient economical schools containing standards 1 to 5 with a full average strength of 30 pupils in each standard" *In cauda venenum!* This category is practically the same as the Central School, as we cannot with the usual leakage from one standard to another, and the process of elimination during promotions, secure 30 pupils in each of the higher standards, unless we have hundreds of pupils on the whole school.

### A SCRUTINY OF THE SCHEME

Now that we have a clear idea of the Champion Scheme, let us examine for a moment how far it is sound from an educational, financial and moral point of view.

*Distance too great.* One misconception on which the scheme is based is that parents are so thirsty of knowledge as to send their small children eagerly to the Central School from all the villages scattered over a wide area of one mile radius. We know what a herculean task it is for our school authorities to get the children to the school that is next door to them. They have to scold pupils and parents, administer cuts, levy fines and yet the school room remains mostly empty, except perhaps for small babies, the parents of which wish to be rid of them to be more free for their work. How many of the small boys and girls of standards 3 and 4 will, after finishing the Junior Schools, walk four times a day to the distant school during the hot and rainy seasons, often over pathless ways and wet fields, intersected by canals or obstructed by other impediments? "The percentage of girls in elementary schools to the total male population was 8, at the end of 1931-32. The percentage of girls in elementary schools to the total number of girls in the Presidency between the ages of 5 and 15 was 12.4 and that of boys to the total number of boys between the ages of 5 and 15 in the Presidency was 33." Though this percentage of literacy is low enough, it is sure to sink down much lower, after the introduction of this Scheme.

*Is Plural class teaching the Primary cause?* A second misconception which seems to be the pivot of the whole system is that the present great inefficiency of the elementary schools is *primarily* due to one teacher handling several standards and that if one-teacher-one-standard system be introduced, the schools would become highly efficient. But have we not elementary schools with one teacher for each class which are as inefficient as schools with plural-class teaching? Inefficiency in elementary schools is rather due to admissions at all times of the year, the irregular attendance of boys, the absence of books or slates for many months after admission, the handling of old methods, the want of properly trained teachers and a variety of other causes. Even if we get a full class of 30 pupils conducted by one teacher, are we sure to secure homogeneity in it? Supposing even we secure a homogeneous standard, the pupils owing to the causes mentioned above, fall soon into three categories, the best, the middling and the worst. Is it worth while then to disturb the smaller schools nearer at home to put the Central School at one mile distance with a view to secure full classes of thirty? Will the village

parent who may be inclined to send his children to the school at his door-step continue to do so, if the children have to walk four times a day to a distant hamlet where the Central School may be situated? Does our experience of the Indian farmer show he will do it, in a voluntary system of elementary education? Does this not leave him a choice between some education and no education?

*Waste of Public Money.* The third misconception underlying the Scheme is that this system of concentration and consolidation will result in financial economy. Let us scrutinize this plea. In 1931-32, the distribution of elementary schools of boys according to managements was as follows: Government 4%, Municipal 2%, Local Board 31%, Panchayat 3%. Aided Mission 15% Aided Non-Mission 44%, and unaided 1%. Thus the aided managements conduct 59% of the schools and the rest 41%. As regards the number of pupils, out of a total of about 2 million pupils in the boys' schools, more than one million are now in the aided schools. (Report of the D.P.I.). Now, according to Mr. Champion himself, the Central Schools will be mostly conducted by the local bodies. See what an additional amount of expense it means for local bodies and how much expense contributed by aided agencies would be lost to education. In 1932, the aided agencies have contributed Rs. 27,78,112 to elementary education say, a total of Rs. 30 lakhs nearly.

Again according to the Report of the D. P. I. for 1932: "the average annual cost of a Municipal school is Rs. 1,529, of a Taluk Board Rs. 586, of a Government school Rs. 577, of an aided school Rs. 372. The cost per pupil was Rs. 13-2-7 in a Government school, Rs. 10-14-0 in a board school, and Rs. 6-7-7 in an aided school." Does the needless multiplication then of board schools, in place of aided schools, contribute to financial economy? Add to this the capital outlay that must be necessarily made on buying large sites and erecting big buildings, so as to accommodate the 500 to 1000 children of the Central Schools. Even, as matters stand at present, for a total of 46,681 elementary schools in the presidency, there are only some 5000 Municipal and Board schools that are mentioned in the Quinquennial Report as having buildings of their own. And of these buildings too, how many can hold a Central School of the new type? Each of these Central Schools may cost with their playgrounds some Rs. 50,000. How many thousands of them will be required for the whole presidency? What about the salaries of the headmasters and assistants of those big schools, and the army of clerks and peons needed for such a school? Can all this colossal sum needed as capital and recurring expenditure be called financial economy? Does it not look as if to spare a penny we were ready to go in for a pound of capital expenditure? Will this, moreover, suit these times of financial stringency?

*The Inspectors as propagandists of co-education.* The fourth misconception, the most dangerous of all, is that it is a sign of advance and progress to encourage co-education of boys and girls. The latest instructions of the educational department to the inspecting officers emphasises this aspect of the Champion Scheme in the plainest possible words. "A separate school for girls is therefore not necessary in most localities and where such schools exist steps should be taken to convert them into mixed schools or to amalgamate them into the existing boys' schools. . . . Where on account of pronounced local opposition to amalgamation, the inspecting officers are compelled to recommend the retention of existing schools for girls, they should regard this

as a temporary measure"—Kindly mark well the following words—"and should constantly be endeavouring by propaganda among parents and by encouraging the admission of girls into boys' schools to secure amalgamation with the local boys' schools." The instructions exclude from the operation of this scheme only such girls' schools as 'can show a strength of approximately 30 pupils in each class,' which is a *rara avis* in rural parts. Though girls, according to the present instructions, are to be compelled to study at least up to the 3rd standard, "no obstacle should be placed in the way of mixed education in the *entire primary stage*." (The italics are mine). It looks like the thin end of the wedge." Thus the starting of mixed schools is not a measure to be tolerated for avoiding a greater evil, but a positive good measure of which the inspecting officers should become active propagandists. Some of us may be led, owing to a comparison with European schools where boys are admitted with girls up to the age of ten or twelve, to make light of the matter. But the Indian girl, who attains the age of maturity in this hot climate much earlier, and who, hears so much at home and in the street about marriage is not quite like her European sister of the same age. To herd these precocious Indian girls with all sorts of boys in crowded class rooms and that too, under men teachers is a pernicious measure that is sure to be a source of moral danger. "The indiscriminate conversion of separate boys' and girls' schools to so-called mixed schools may result in the formation of schools containing only a small minority of girls, and would for that reason be a set-back to the development of the education of girls" says Mr. Champion himself. I would add that all mixed schools, except perhaps in places like Malabar, would be a powerful set-back to female education which is still at a very low ebb in the presidency.

The Director in his instructions says: "conditions in this presidency are very favourable to mixed education in elementary schools judging by the large percentage of girls reading in boys' schools." As a matter of fact the percentage of girls educated in boys' schools in 1931-32 rose from 51.9 to 52.6. But these figures cannot be taken as a proof of the popularity of mixed education. It must be shown that where separate schools are provided for girls, parents prefer to send their girls to boys' schools for some reason or other; otherwise the natural conclusion, especially in a purdah ridden country like India, is that the parents in many places have no other schools but boys' schools to send them to.

*Elementary Education almost a monopoly of local bodies.* A mere cursory view of the Scheme may lead some to believe that it is not so objectionable and that it even favours the work of the aided schools. The Champion Report explicitly states that "it is essential in these proposals that nothing should be done to the detriment of aided efficient schools; further, that they should be encouraged to expand and develop." But this will remain merely a pious recommendation on paper. For Central Schools, which form the pivot of the whole Scheme, are expected, when the Scheme is in full working order, to be so huge in size and so freely open to the admission of pupils of all communities and both sexes that practically only local bodies could undertake to run them. Mr. Champion himself confesses this clearly at the end of his paragraph on the aided Central School: "The effect of these recommendations will be that the *large majority* of Central Schools will be Board and Municipal schools with a minority of aided Central Schools." The Scheme therefore tends practically to kill the aided schools and place all elementary

education sooner or later in the hands of local bodies, to kill, in other words, all initiative and private enterprise, and all that culture that is peculiar to a single community like the Christian, Muhammadan or Hindu. The words of such an educationist of ripe experience as Dr. W. Meston, are quite to the point. "The practical administrator cannot but see that, if 65% of the educational institutions of the country are in the hands of private agencies and 33% in the hands of local bodies, the surest way to advance is to give these two great joint contributors to Indian literacy the unassailable status of partners. With equitable rules as to aid, and an administration which extends impartial encouragement to both partners, we should see friction largely eliminated, local patriotism mobilized in the furtherance of education and private resources tapped as they have never been before. Local and private agencies, as partners in a great national concern, . . . would afford the most effective means of rolling away the reproach that even now only 42% of the school-going age, and only 10% of the girls of school-going age, are actually at school."<sup>1</sup>

The Hadow Scheme which is now being enforced in England consists also of Central Schools and Junior Schools and has created much opposition in England. What Archbishop Downey of Liverpool said against it, while laying the foundation stone of a new school at Norris Green may form the conclusion of this article. "We respectfully submit that the erection of school-buildings and the acquisition of schools sites are not the most important factors in the education of the child; and that parents are entitled to refuse to countenance any premature adoption of the Hadow Scheme and insist on their children receiving a perfectly legal, secular and religious education in our own parochial schools. . . . It is not only Catholics and voluntary school managers generally who are being coerced by the Board of Education's officials in the hypothetical interests of the Hadow Scheme; local education authorities also all over the country are being stampeded into expensive, and, in many cases, unsatisfactory projects of reorganization. . . It is surely time to pause and consider whether these dubious experiments are worth the cost."<sup>2</sup>



(1) International Review of the Missions, July 1930, pp. 347-348.  
 (2) The Universe, 24th November, 1933.

## CONSOLIDATION AND CONCENTRATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The recent decision of Government to apply the scheme of concentration and consolidation of elementary schools all over the presidency has created quite a stir among all sections of the public and apprehensions are entertained that the measure, if adopted, will be fraught with serious consequences to elementary education. It is therefore proposed to discuss in this article the essentials of the Scheme and examine its implications so that the public may gain a correct idea of the Scheme.

The Scheme aims at securing *educational efficiency* and *financial economy* by replacing a large number of small schools by a small number of large schools. All rural education systems suffer from an uneven distribution of schools and the existence of a large number of small schools. In a country which is so preponderantly agricultural as India this characteristic is especially marked. According to Mr. Champion, the author of the Scheme as it emerged in 1930, the value of a school might be measured by the criteria of *educational efficiency* and *financial economy*. That school is considered educationally efficient where no teacher has to teach more than one class. Plural class teaching, which is the name given to the arrangement under which a teacher has to teach more than one class, is considered detrimental to efficiency. Again, the normal size of a class for efficient instruction is 30 pupils and wherever a class consists of less than 30 pupils, the teacher's services are not fully utilised, so that there is financial wastage. Judged by these standards, the Madras schools are considered by Mr. Champion wanting in educational efficiency and financial economy. The statistics from which he has drawn these conclusions are that in Madras an elementary school of five standards has on an average only two teachers and the normal size of a class is only 20 or 25 pupils. Later, however, he qualified himself by stating that these facts cannot by themselves establish the fact that the Madras schools are educationally inefficient and financially wasteful. The utmost that he can say about them is that they are deficient in possible educational efficiency but are not wasteful financially also.

Starting on these premises, Mr. Champion recommends the creation of schools containing full classes of 30 pupils each and the employment of one teacher for each class. The existing conditions are not favourable for securing such classes in the schools already working and he therefore recommends the closure of a large number of small schools and their amalgamation with large and Central Schools to be opened in each school unit. For this purpose he suggests the division of a local area into a number of school units each of which should possess a large Central School containing full classes of 30 pupils with a separate teacher for each class. Having determined the school units, the next step is to choose a school which is central for the unit and amalgamate with it all the other schools in the unit. This is in essence the theoretical conclusion arrived at by him in his scheme.

When however he descends to practical application, he finds himself faced with peculiar and manifold difficulties. First, there are in the country

very many small population centres which cannot by any means be combined for the purpose of creating a Central School for them. Most of the villages and hamlets in the interior are of this type. These Mr. Champion would leave out of the Scheme; he would allow them to continue as separate units notwithstanding that the schools in them can scarcely be educationally efficient and financially economical. Secondly, there is the difficulty of different languages in the same unit. The case of Muhammadans is the common instance in point. They receive instructions in Urdu and through Urdu and they cannot therefore be combined for instruction with children whose mother-tongue is not Urdu. He therefore makes an exception in their case. But he does not favour the existence of separate Muhammadan schools; he would make them separate sections of the Central School. Thirdly, there are the depressed classes who do not in many places gain admission in schools attended by caste-Hindu pupils. Mr. Champion recognises that, although untouchability is fast waning, it is still there and takes account of it. He would allow therefore an exception in their case wherever the prejudice against those classes is still strong. But as in the case of Muhammadans so also here, he does not advocate separate schools for the depressed classes; he would instead have separate sections for them in the Central School. Fourthly come the girls. The prevalence of gosha among Muhammadan girls precludes all possibility of bringing them into any general scheme of mixed schools. He therefore excludes schools intended for them out of his scheme. As regards the other girls, he advocates co-education in mixed schools as it is already largely in favour in the province. But wherever local opinion is against co-education, he would have separate sections for girls in the Central School. Fifthly, a rigid application of the scheme would lead to the amalgamation of all schools within a radius of one mile, the distance prescribed in the rules framed under the Madras Elementary Education Act, 1920, but as this would compel young children to walk a mile four times a day, he recommends the creation of a sufficient number of Junior Schools having only standards 1 and 2 in the area lying outside a radius of half a mile. Lastly, there is the additional complication of schools under different managements in the same school area. This makes it difficult to decide which should be the Central School and which schools should be closed or amalgamated with it. He therefore enunciates the principle that the amalgamation of public schools should first be ordered and the amalgamation of private schools with public schools or with other private schools should not be ordered except with the consent of the managements concerned. In thus adding qualifying provisos one after another, Mr. Champion has failed to see that he is sacrificing the essential principles of educational efficiency and financial economy which he claims for his scheme. Under the arrangement proposed by him the Central School with four departments or sections will have uneconomical classes and will be obliged to adopt plural class teaching for the purpose of securing economy. But he should be given credit for taking due account of these factors and emphasising that they should be recognised. It was for these reasons that he stated in his report that a comprehensive and universal programme of amalgamation of schools was not immediately possible. The existence of these factors may be deplored but cannot be ignored. What he recommended was but the making of a move in the direction pointed out so that the ideal might be realised in the course of some years at least and yet here is the decision of Government to introduce such a comprehensive programme all over the presidency and in a form which ignores many of the factors which, Mr. Champion said, must be taken due account of.



Even the cautious and modest scheme of Mr. Champion failed to secure the support of the authorities and the public. Among other and vital reasons there was the impossibility of finding sufficient funds for constructing buildings for the proposed Central Schools. Although the report has been before the public for nearly three years, little has been done to give effect to it.

The Director of Public Instruction seems, however, to have been in frequent correspondence with the Government on this subject and submitted a special report also. In that special report he has brought to the notice of Government certain difficulties in the way of introducing the Scheme as formulated by Mr. Champion. He has also observed that the lukewarmness of the local bodies in the matter might be due to the apprehension that they will lose the subsidies sanctioned for the schools to be amalgamated. He has therefore recommended that local bodies might be allowed to keep the savings to themselves and utilise them for educational purposes. Government have, however, expressed their inability to pass a general order of this kind in the absence of information as to the financial effects of the adoption by all local bodies of a scheme of consolidation and concentration of schools. What is exactly behind the mind of Government is not easily understood. No scheme is going to involve additional expenditure from provincial funds for the maintenance of schools. Again, they say that each case will be decided on its merits but the previous sentence in the order indicates that the schemes of all local bodies in the presidency must be considered together so that the full financial effects of the scheme may be ascertained. Thus no scheme can mature and will be ready for adoption until all the schemes have been received and scrutinised.

Among the difficulties pointed out by the Director are the option given to private schools to continue if they do not agree to amalgamation, the lack of interest and enthusiasm on the part of local bodies to initiate schemes of concentration and the slowness with which local bodies and District Educational Councils generally deal with such schemes. He has therefore suggested that all classes of schools should be included for purposes of amalgamation, that schemes should be prepared by the officers of the education department and forwarded to local bodies and District Educational Councils, and that local bodies and District Educational Councils should be required to send them to him for approval within a prescribed time. Government, while generally accepting his suggestions, have stated that, in view of possible opposition from some quarters, only the maximum amalgamation possible under the circumstances should be aimed at and that the schemes themselves should be forwarded to Government for final orders. They have prescribed a time limit of two months for the inspecting officers and four months for local bodies and District Educational Councils for scrutiny and transmission. This modified scheme which has come to be styled as *Champion-cum-Reddi* Scheme, is, it will be readily conceded, much more drastic and impracticable than its original and it is therefore no wonder that it has created a storm in the educational world.

Let us now examine the possible objections to the scheme and its inherent defects. The authors and promoters of the scheme woefully forget the essential fact that we are here considering not the case of a new country where we have complete control over the distribution of population and consequently perfect freedom in the location and distribution of schools, but of

a country where population centres have long existed and schools too have existed for a time long enough to possess a value in the eyes of the people. This one fact by itself must make the scheme of concentration extremely difficult.

The fact that in our country population centres are old and have in most cases possessed schools is not however the only objection to the scheme. There are other and more serious objections too. Ours is essentially a rural country where 90 per cent of the population live in small and scattered villages. These are in many cases separated by wet lands, lakes, tanks, unbridged streams, groves, forests, etc., so that it is not possible for young children to go to adjoining villages or hamlets for the purpose of education. Difficulties of a different kind exist in urban areas. Congested and crowded roads attended with heavy traffic, chance of being led astray in the crowd, fear of personal safety and robbery are some of the causes which induce urban people to desire to have schools near their homes. This desire can hardly be called irresponsible. Again, even supposing that these causes are absent, there is the fact that to oblige children to walk one mile a day for the purpose of attending schools would not only unfit them for receiving the full benefits of education at school but would also expose them to danger and disease by making them walk in the hot sun or heavy rain.

The existence in a locality of schools under different managements makes the problem of concentration extremely delicate and complex. These schools, excepting perhaps the public schools opened in recent years from political considerations, have all been opened to meet a felt and legitimate want and many of them have come to possess a value and tradition which are prized by the public. And yet, the modified scheme aims at amalgamating these different kinds of schools. An exception is however made in the case of Muhammadan schools where instruction is in Urdu. And this exception is sought to be extended to other Muhammadan schools also for the reason that religious training forms an essential part of the education given in Muhammadan schools. Of the other schools, some are maintained by Mission agencies where religious training is as much an essential part of education as in Muhammadan schools. The same is the case with a large number of Hindu schools maintained by private managers and teacher-managers. It is not understood how these different classes of schools can be forced to merge themselves into one without interfering seriously with such religious training. Surely, the department and the Government do not mean that communities other than Muhammadans can afford to be irreligious. When religious training in Muhammadan schools is not only tolerated but is also aided from public funds, it stands to reason that similar facilities, at least as far as tolerance is concerned, should be extended to the other communities by allowing for the provision of such training in separate denominational schools. The case is, however, different with public schools. These came into the field only recently and did so in most cases not to meet a felt educational want. Religious training does not also form a part of the education given in these schools. There can be therefore no objection to amalgamating public schools with private schools but the amalgamation of private schools with public schools or of one class of private schools with another is neither easy nor desirable.

Next come the schools opened for the depressed classes. For very many years both the public and the Government remained indifferent to these un-

fortunate communities and their interests so that their education was completely neglected. Subsequently, public opinion gradually recognised the injustice of a situation under which these communities were denied all educational facilities but by that time the social prejudice against the depressed classes had got hardened and crystallised so that it was not an easy thing for the depressed classes to secure admission in schools. The Government issued instructions in this regard and insisted that all recognised schools should be made accessible to them but progress in this regard was and is slow. Hence special facilities had to be provided for them by opening separate schools so that the gulf that separated them from the higher classes might be bridged sooner and faster. This policy is responsible for the existence in many localities of a large number of special schools for the depressed classes. Some of these are maintained by mission agencies, some by local bodies and some by the Government. It is now proposed to close these schools and merge them with the other schools in the locality. Exception cannot be taken to this proposal if it will not deprive the depressed classes of the special educational facilities provided for them. But we are not sure if such favourable conditions exist generally all over the presidency. The unreasonable prejudice against the depressed classes still persists in many areas and if in these areas the special schools are closed, the only consequence will be that the depressed classes will be left without any provision for their education and will not be able to secure admission in other schools. Foreseeing this difficulty, the department and the Government have directed that wherever public opinion towards mixed schools is not favourable, junior schools with two or three standards may be continued for the depressed classes and that the pupils who pass out of the junior schools should be secured admission in the other schools for the higher standards. If caste prejudice prevents the admission of depressed classes in the lower standards of a school, it is not known how it is not going to operate for admission in the higher standards. This proposal will only mean that as far as the depressed classes are concerned, their education will practically end with the second or third standard. The futility and waste of such education are only too patent to need any explanation. The education imparted will not take the depressed classes any long way towards progress; they will remain as illiterate as they are; and the huge sums spent on the maintenance of the junior schools will mean a waste. Hence, while a mixed school should be made the rule in all areas where public opinion favours it or is not at any rate violently opposed to it, separate schools for the depressed classes containing five standards should be continued in the case of the other localities.

There is then the question of the great loss resulting from the closure or absence of a school in a village or part of a population centre. The absence of a school in a village means the absence of a community centre for that village. The value of such centre as a means of promoting healthy life in rural tracts and of moulding healthy public opinion cannot be exaggerated. In the schemes for rural reconstruction which are afoot everywhere, great importance is attached to the village school and the village teacher as the centre from which light and learning will emanate to the people of the village. This useful and available means will be lost if on grounds of false economy and doubtful efficiency many villages or population centres are deprived of their schools.

The merits claimed for the Scheme are that the Central School proposed to be constituted will have economically full classes and will be efficient edu-

ationally, as every class or section of a class will have 30 pupils and no teacher will have to teach more than one class or section. One has seriously to ask whether it is at all possible to make the several classes or sections of every department of a central school 30 strong. There is little room to think that in practice any central school will satisfy this artificial and theoretical standard. Even in a central school some classes or sections will have less than 30 pupils and to this extent the school will not be financially economical. Where the classes or sections are not 30 strong, recourse will have to be had to the combination of two classes or sections for instruction in the interests of economy and thus even plural class teaching will not be eliminated entirely. Thus even in the Central School the merits cannot be achieved in full.

We have next to consider whether from the point of view of the child it is the smaller or larger school that is conducive to efficiency. A small school with handy classes will secure that close personal contact between the teacher and the taught which is so necessary for efficiency. Such close association of the teacher with the pupils makes for efficient training as it enables the teacher to pay individual attention to his pupils and adjust his matter and methods to individual needs. All educationists must agree that such close association of the teacher with his pupils is absolutely necessary in the case of elementary schools. It will be possible only in small schools with handy classes. In large schools with full classes mass teaching of a formal, dull and uniform type is all that is possible. The loss to the child, and indirectly to education, under the arrangement proposed is therefore immense. Hence, while speaking of economy, we have to qualify it by stating whether such economy is secured without in any manner affecting the full and many-sided development of the individual child and an arrangement which secures economy at the sacrifice of harmonious development of the child should be discarded as educationally unsound.

The next defect of the scheme is the institution of junior schools. To meet the difficulty arising from the fact that children cannot be expected to walk to the central school four times a day, the scheme contemplates the establishment of junior schools with two standards in localities more easily accessible to children. The presumption is that, after finishing their education in the junior school, children will go to the central school for further education. The authors and promoters of the scheme expect these junior schools to be economically full and educationally efficient. Given satisfactory conditions, there is nothing to prevent a junior school having classes economically full from having such classes even in the higher standards, for in the ordinary course all the pupils are expected to rise to the higher standards without stagnation or wastage. In that event there is little justification for reducing them to the status of junior schools. The recommendation to reduce certain schools as junior schools can be justified only on the presumption that the existing stagnation and wastage will be perpetuated and not eradicated. Such a presumption is contrary to facts and is also indefensible. More than anything else the prevention of stagnation and wastage should demand the immediate and earnest attention of the authorities, for they militate against the realisation of full benefits resulting from educational activities, and if steps are taken to prevent such stagnation and wastage, there will be hardly any need for reducing the status of any school to a junior school.

One other serious objection to the arrangement under which a large number of schools will be only junior schools with two standards has to be

noticed. Even when schools having four or five standards are in the vicinity of the population centres, parents take away their children from school before they complete the full course available in the school. If, under these conditions, the status of the schools is also reduced, it may be safely predicted with certainty that most of the children of the junior schools will stop their education with the second standard, so that these schools will make little contribution to education and there will be a great set back to educational progress. The supporters of the scheme may of course say that such premature withdrawal can be prevented by enforcing compulsion. To this the only reply is that at the rate at which we have been progressing there is little prospect of compulsion becoming an accomplished fact for very many years to come. At any rate, it will be many years before it is introduced on any wide scale in rural areas and in the interval considerable harm will have been done. Again, if compulsion is introduced, the junior schools will themselves be economically full and there will be little justification for depriving them of the higher standards. Even when compulsion is introduced and attendance of children is enforced, there will be inducement for both parents and teachers of junior schools to detain children in the junior schools during the full compulsory period to avoid sending them to the central schools. The parents can avoid risk and danger to their children by doing so, while the teachers are also benefited by so detaining them. The consequence will be that children will fail to derive even the little benefits that they get under the existing arrangement. This inducement to detain children in the junior school will be the greater when the junior school and the central school are under different managements. The Hartog Committee has attributed the wide prevalence of wastage to the existence at the present time of a large number of schools with two or three standards only and recommended that these schools should be developed into complete lower elementary schools. The scheme proposed by the Government of Madras seeks to create a large number of schools with two or three standards by reducing the status of the existing lower elementary schools, a measure which has been condemned as harmful and prejudicial to educational progress and efficiency.

In the field of elementary education reforms of a more urgent nature are awaiting solution. There is first the provision of educational facilities in localities not already provided with them. Secondly, the enforcement of compulsion for securing the attendance of pupils, more especially in the rural tracts, is another urgent need. Thirdly, the content of education has to be completely revised and altered so as to make it correspond to life and changed conditions. The curriculum in force has been condemned as lifeless, soulless and mechanical and its revision has been again urged. Yet, the department has not deemed it fit to direct its attention to these urgent measures and effect the necessary reforms. For over five years it has been wasting pretty large sums which the province can ill afford to waste, on this scheme of concentration of schools as though the province is weighted down with a superfluity of schools and as though concentration of schools is the panacea for all ills to which the educational organisation of this presidency is subject. Even the author of the scheme has clearly stated in his report that it is not so and that he has not dealt with those reforms which make for real progress and efficiency in education. Under these circumstances it is most discouraging to see that the department and the Government should keep this question in the forefront of their programme and devote to it an undue proportion of their time and energy. It is also surprising that, in an important

question like this where the largest interests affected are the interests of the child, there is no provision for consulting public opinion before attempting to introduce the scheme. The whole scheme seems to be one framed in haste without regard to the practical difficulties lying in the way and the loss to educational efficiency likely to result from it. Considerations of harmony and co-operation must dictate that such proposals should be framed by a committee representative of all the interests affected. A scheme that looks well and nice on paper is not a scheme that will always prove practicable or efficient in actual working. The question of concentration and distribution of schools, is not merely a question of arithmetical calculations or rupees, annas and pies. Other and more important factors have also to be taken into account and to the extent these factors are recognised and made to reconcile themselves with economy and efficiency the scheme will be acceptable and useful. To frame a scheme which will be so acceptable and useful the appointment of a representative committee of the kind suggested for each local area is very necessary and a proposal framed by such a committee will make it possible to achieve the objects much more easily and expeditiously than the arrangement proposed by the Government.

*Practical.*

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## REACTIONS TO THE CHAMPION SCHEME

A first reading of the "Champion Report on the Consolidation and Centralization of Elementary Schools" leaves a good taste, decidedly. Here, at last, is a serious attempt to bring our elementary education out of the slough of despond. Here is constructive thought and planning on a statesmanlike scale. And here is an antidote to the spirit of communalism that crumbles Indian life so hopelessly.

Then one doubt arises and then another. Will it work? Is it fair to vested interests? Is it likely, *in reality*, to make for economy and increased efficiency? The deeper one goes into the practical details of its working, the more one feels the chill of doubt, as the theoretical advantages evaporate.

And finally the conclusion settles on the disappointed mind that the Scheme is immature and undigested, and that the setting of it in operation wholesale, without any local try-outs and practical adjustments is just another piece of high-handed coercion foredoomed to eventual collapse.

It is, then, in no spirit of obstructionism that the following objections to the Scheme are penned, but in an effort to clarify the issue and to show how the Scheme could be amended so as to achieve the object that all of us have in view, the improvement of elementary education in the presidency with the smallest possible outlay. Let us save the Scheme if we can, by lopping off all that goes to make it unworkable, unacceptable to many and palpably unfair; for, in practice, nobody will accept it as it stands.

Is it economical?

We must not do Government the injustice of supposing that when they talk of "economy" they mean to cut down the already painfully inadequate allotment of funds for elementary education. No real advance will be made, as everybody knows, till the cash available is largely increased and equitably distributed.

What is meant by "economy" is obviously the prevention of waste of whatever funds there are. Will the Champion Scheme prevent waste? Surely not.

1. "The only Management that can run a Central School for all communities is the local . . . public body," says the Report. To form these Central Schools of 500 or 1,000 children, aided schools will drop out by the thousand. The statistics for the past quinquennium assert that the cost to Government per pupil has averaged Rs. 6-7-7 in aided schools and Rs. 13-2-7 in Government schools.

In Central Schools the cost per pupil (already double the cost in aided schools) will necessarily go up. For a more expensive type of teacher will

be required, and the need of writers, peons, sweepers and the like will appear at once ; not to speak of benches, desks, blackboards and other equipment with which inefficient schools dispense.

2. The position in regard to buildings is even more alarming. Even though many Central Schools be allowed, for a time, to scatter their classes among the premises of their component schools, rent will have to be paid and eventually proper buildings erected. Now Government, municipal and local boards at present own less than 5,000 out of the 46,000 schools in the presidency ! Allowing a modest average of Rs. 25,000 for the erection of a Central School or of Rs. 1,000 for the renting of ten or more temporary class premises, look at the bill confronting them in the name of " economy " !

3. The only way in which any saving of money can be effected by Government under the Scheme is by encouraging " aided schools " to shoulder the burden of building and maintaining Central Schools on teaching grant alone (at the reduced rate) or to stand out of the Scheme and run their schools at their own expense—" Your money or your life."

Will it make for efficiency ?

This is very debatable indeed, and certainly not sure enough to justify such a revolutionary measure as the Champion Scheme being foisted on an unwilling public as if it were an unquestionable benefit.

1. Both of its basic assumptions may be contested. It is by no means an axiom that no teacher can efficiently handle two classes at one time ; granting that the infant standard requires a teacher to itself, on account of the special strain of Kindergarten work, one is forced by experience to assert that a good teacher, with a well-planned time-table, can very well indeed manage two classes (of 15 or 20 children each) once the pupils are able to read ; in fact practice in *studying alone* (which is thus necessarily given to each class in turn) is one of the most valuable educational exercises known, and most modern systems of teaching are based on it ; one of the chief defects of many Indian pupils who push through to higher studies is that they have never been taught to work alone.

2. The thirty-pupil unit is no less vulnerable. Teachers vary enormously in capacity for holding the attention of a class : then how can it make for efficiency to standardize class strength at 30 ? Efficiency depends on the personality of the teacher, not on the number in the class. And furthermore, there are thousands upon thousands of localities where the educational need is pressing yet where there are not a hundred children all told, let alone enough to supply 30 for every class ; are these to be regarded as waste matter, and given an education by definition inefficient ?

It might further be contended that, under the regime of mixed education, where sexes, religions, castes and races are commingled, each seething with its own prejudices and passions, a fantastic optimism is required for the hope that one teacher will be able to keep the peace let alone attend to education, among thirty miscellaneous imps for whom he is responsible both in the class-room and during periods of intermission.



But where the mystic figure of 30 in each class stands forth as patently absurd is in its generality. According to the department's own statistics, the following was the ratio of attendance in 1932 :

5th Standard	..	3.7 %
4th	..	10.9 "
3rd	..	14.4 "
2nd	..	20.3 "
1st	..	48.4 "

So, in order to get 30 pupils in the 5th Standard, one would have to make provision for over 400 in the 1st Standard—or anyway, granting some improvement in the ratio, it would take ten First Standards to produce one Fifth. This might work out in the Central School itself and to that extent is one of the good points of the Scheme ; but is it not rank hypocrisy to pretend that *any* aided school can *ever* fulfil such conditions and thus be fully recognised—for recognition and grant are to be given to each class separately—in the future ? The Champion Scheme therefore amounts purely and simply to a step towards State monopoly of primary education, a condition which, when it comes to be realised, will rule it forthwith out of any possibility of acceptance by liberty-loving people .

Is it fair ?

Perhaps fairness is no longer to be expected of the department of education. Recently it issued a ruling that Lower Elementary Trained teachers who wish to change their certificates to High Elementary must pass the Higher Elementary Examination. This (like the Champion Scheme) looked an excellent arrangement on the face of it and dealt the death-blow, long overdue, to certain night-schools that lived by a shady traffic in their students' hopes of easy re-grading. But two defects were pointed out : first that no Lower Elementary teacher can hope to pass the vernacular tests of the Higher Elementary Examination without leaving his work and going to school for a considerable time, in order to study, *under a pundit*, the difficult vernacular texts assigned ; this amounted to almost requiring him to undergo training a second time, without stipend. And secondly a large number of teachers had partly, or even fully, gone to the trouble and expense of fulfilling all the conditions previously required for regrading, and were only waiting for it to suit the whim of some inspector to sign the completion of his certificate or of his bond ; to make a new set of conditions binding retroactively on these teachers was obviously unfair. Face to face, no official of the department could deny the unfairness ; yet individual cases have been submitted, and the reply has uniformly condemned them all to the heavy penalty of fulfilling the new conditions.

It follows that fairness is not to be *assumed* in the department and that no assurances or guarantees can be accepted which are not backed by an explicit Government Order in black and white. This is the reason why the vested interests should fight for the public amendment of the Champion Scheme before accepting it, and not allow themselves to be cajoled by promises, however well-meant by individuals in authority, of common-sense adjustments and tactful give-and-take arrangements that might save their schools ; since human relations are sacrificed on the altar of bureaucracy, let us be rather safe than sorry.

How then is the Champion Scheme unfair to vested interests ?

In the first place, while it gives "preference" to aided schools in the matter of becoming Central Schools, it does so cynically and openly with a view to saving money. The aided school remains in its present position of inferiority as to teaching grant, and is further burdened with the duty of supplying increased accommodation and equipment at its own expense.

The unit of recognition is to be the class and no longer the school ; so that aided managements which for years have been running efficient schools suddenly find themselves faced with ruin unless they can overnight fill up all their classes to the mystic 30.

The Mission Schools of course are hit the hardest of all. As the Report itself admits, they cannot pose as non-religious schools, open to the advocacy of contrary beliefs. Or if any of them do, they lose that atmosphere and formative force which alone justifies their existence. They are condemned to sterility or death. Is this the reward of a hundred years of pioneering in the cause of education ?

And there are communities, like the Catholic, whose law binds them to educate their children in a definitely religious environment. This the Champion Scheme (or rather its present interpretation) definitely penalises. If you want religion with your education, you must have your own schools ; if you cannot have schools with 30 pupils in each class, you must pay your own teachers, after paying those of the state through your taxes. And so you are penalised (although your schools are usually the most efficient because honestly conducted and properly supervised) simply because the absurdity of religion without education is to you a *principle* and not merely a pious opinion as it is to Lord Irwin, who yet spoke strongly enough about it, as Educational Minister of England, in a recent speech :

"Every training college, in my judgment, needs a religious background if it is to do its work ; for more and more it is realised that religion is the essence and the condition of character. In these days I do not hesitate to assert my conviction that no system of State education can afford to ignore this vital element."

The Champion Scheme is further unfair to vested interests because it leaves them on tenterhooks about the future. Even if they squeeze into the Procrustes-Scheme somehow or other to-day, what about to-morrow or next day ? What about fluctuations of population, of prosperity, of creed ? Will the recognition of each class in every school be reconsidered every year (after an unreliable inspection and withdrawn if there happen not to be 30 pupils at the moment of inspection. And no provision is made for future developments. A Central School once established in a locality will make the educational development of any private agency impossible there, whatever the conscientious objections of that agency may be to the Central School. Or if a village where at present some community is desirous to run a school of its own but is not strong enough subsequently grows able for the venture, what chance will it have of obtaining recognition ? The Central School will in its turn have become a vested interest, with which this time, no interference will be brooked. Heads I win, says the department, tails you lose!

And finally the whole manner in which the Champion Scheme has been suddenly put in operation, without the public having any voice in the matter, seems to indicate, on the part of the department, a sense of its inacceptability. However, all is not lost. For the District Educational Councils may still be wakened to timely opposition and some very uncomfortable questions may still be asked in the Legislative Council and elsewhere. Meanwhile, general abstention by private agencies from participating in the Scheme is clearly indicated; thus alone can we stay the hand that holds the gun. This is the stand already officially taken both by the Muhammadan and by the Catholic Educational Associations of Southern India.

Will anyone accept it ?

It is inconceivable that the generality of Indian opinion will stomach a scheme of which mixed education on a formidable scale is an inherent part. Only imagine the possibilities (I take an extreme, perhaps an incredible case, but what I want to show is the *kind* of thing that the Scheme *implies*.): a staff blended of educated men and country bumpkins, of women (even teaching Sisters may be) and women teachers separated by their profession from their legitimate mates; children of all ages and of both sexes, some of them coming from homes where decency means nothing at all; girls from the purdah, boys from the street; a mixture in which the lowest elements predominate, as they invariably will where assurance and loud talk and ridicule rule the roost, as they always do in school. What a picture! And this is at the root of the Champion Scheme. Never in a thousand years will it be swallowed by the decent public opinion of this presidency.

But, apart from this, the Scheme is so sudden, giving the impression of a stab in the dark, so problematic in its outcome, so subversive of the existing order, so doubtful educationally, so patently unsound financially—that it has no chance of coming into operation otherwise than as a regime imposed by force against the will of the majority.

And when it goes, will anybody regret it ?

It is hard to imagine why anybody should. Certainly not the public, which is thrown from the frying pan of our present chaos into the fire of the Scheme's intolerance. But we doubt if even the Department will regret it; hardly a single D. E. O. believes in it; and at headquarters they will be swamped, unless we are slaves and worse, with bushels of protests upon every application of the Scheme; for every application injures somebody; and the local boards will be even more than now, at loggerheads with the D. E. O.'s; and communal jealousy will be aroused at the appointment of every teacher; and financial squabbles will be never-ending; so that the work of the department will be brought to a standstill by the sheer weight of accumulating protest.

What then is to be done ?

Scrap the Scheme ? This is not necessary. But instead of making it coercive, it can be toned down and worked experimentally, over a period of years and in the state schools, with a door left open to all aided schools to come in when their interests shall seem safe. As a basis of co-ordination the Scheme has admirable points; as a gun levelled at our heads by theorists, it is not so nice.

Never Say Die.

# MASS EDUCATION AND THE CHAMPION REPORT

## A RETROGRADE STEP

BY

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Ruskin began his criticism on the Political Economy of his day by saying "I neither impugn nor doubt the conclusions of the Science if its terms are accepted. I am simply uninterested in them as I should be in those of a science of gymnastics which assumed that man had no skeletons." My attitude towards the Champion Scheme is something very similar. His conclusions follow mathematically from his premises. But the assumptions made in the report both by way of commission as well as omission are at best only half truths.

### WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL EFFICIENCY ?

Mr. Champion begins his report by saying that *the value* of an elementary school may be measured by two criteria (a) educational efficiency and (b) financial economy. By educational efficiency he means the efficiency with which those pupils who come to school are taught. What about those that are prevented from going to school thanks to the new Scheme? There is certainly another function for the elementary school—the elementary school forms a very important part of the system of mass education in the country. If the elementary schools however efficient and however economically managed they may be, if they form part of a system which diminishes the number of pupils at school and which prevents a large number of pupils, of school going age from attending these schools, *their value is not very great* from the point of view of National Economy.

### THE SCHEME RETARDS THE SPREAD OF MASS EDUCATION

Mr. Champion is not altogether unaware of this aspect of the Scheme. He says in para 22 page 7 of his report, "it may frankly be acknowledged that the acceptance of these recommendations may, at the present rate of expenditure, involve a slower rate of progress in the number of children attending school." But the acknowledgment is not full. The Scheme involves not merely a slower rate of progress but an immediate positive decrease in the number of children attending school. Mr. Champion justifies himself by saying that the aim should not be one of mere expansion. But it is forgotten that the aim should not be mere efficiency in instruction either, especially when it involves not only no expansion but positive retardation. There is no need to labour this point. When the author of the Scheme himself says, it involves a slower rate of progress, one may be sure it involves immediate retardation by throwing out of school a number of pupils that now attend the to-be-abolished smaller schools that are near their homes.

## REGAINING THE PRESENT POSITION IS NOT AN EASY MATTER

But the regaining of the position thus lost with regard to the number of pupils at school is the work of time. But the Scheme is not calculated to help it but on the other hand may hinder it.

## FOUR MILES A DAY

Girls and boys of 8 and 9 years are expected to walk daily 4 miles two or three of which, during the hottest part of the day in a tropical country like India. As Mr. Champion spent his school days in a cool country like England, he may be excused if he did not fully realise the difficulties of our children. It is inexcusable if we ourselves do not realise it. I was at school in Findlay College, Mannargudi, from the Second Form up to the Senior F.A. class. I was living at a place which was just about a mile away from the school. When I was admitted into the school I was about 12 years old. I was not particularly a weakling. I know what I felt when I had to run up to school soon after meals and three times out of four in the hot sun. If it is so with regard to boys at a high school, what would be the case with boys and girls of 8 to 10 years of age in a Primary School? Again, this walking will hardly leave any time or energy for play. I have no doubt this will prevent a large number of pupils, especially the girls, from attending school. Moreover parents will think twice before sending their girls of 8 to 11 years to a school one mile away especially in villages,—a clear step back, at any rate, so far as girls' education is concerned.

## TEACHING EFFICIENCY

The Scheme of consolidation, I am afraid, will not bring about that amount of efficiency in teaching that is expected of it. Here again it is because the educational assumptions made are, at best, only half truths. The report says that efficiency requires that one teacher should be in charge of one class and that a class should be full i.e., it should contain 30 pupils. But the actual sentence in the report (see bottom of page 1 of the report) is "To reach the *minimum* of efficiency and economy, a school should have full classes and one teacher in charge of each class." The Printer's Devil by changing the word 'maximum' into minimum, curiously enough, made the sentence nearer truth. If a teacher is given a class of 30 pupils and 45 minutes to teach, say, a bit of Arithmetic—I have made experiments myself, and I have made my students under training to do so—and therefore I can speak from personal knowledge, that if the teacher divides the class into two and spends half the given time on each section he can get better result on the whole than if he taught the whole class during all the 45 minutes. That is to say, *you can do better work with 15 boys in a given time than with 30 boys in double the time if you keep all the 30 boys together.* The efficiency of the Dalton Plan of teaching depends only on an extension of this truth. As the two sets of 15 boys are taught separately, it makes no difference if the two sets come from two different classes. It follows therefore a teacher who is in charge of two classes containing 15 pupils each can do his work more efficiently than another who is in charge of one class containing 30 pupils. Taking into consideration both the departmental and the aided schools, at present, one teacher, is, on an average, in charge of 25 pupils. This is as it should be. It is a piece of natural adjustment which should teach us the actual number that a single teacher can manage efficiently. 25 rather

than 30 is the proper number one can manage efficiently and it is better if the 25 are distributed in two different classes than gathered up in one class. But, of course, special training may be required on the lines of Dalton Plan in order that one teacher may manage 25 boys in different classes. Incidentally this system will give greater time for play and practical work such as gardening. Expansion of mass education consistent with efficiency and economy requires that no check should be placed on plural class teaching and the existence of small schools provided the teacher is properly trained and that one teacher is in charge of 25 and not more than 25 pupils. The present inefficiency in teaching is not due to small schools or plural class teaching but to the method of recruitment and the training of teachers and the character of the Inspectorate. The remedy is not to abolish schools but to improve the quality of teachers and the Inspectorate.

### IS IT ECONOMY ?

The other advantages claimed for the large Central School are equally illusory. For instance, the report says—page 8 para 25 (c)—that “the essential requirement is that a Central School should be a really big school.” The illustration given in page 16 gives an idea of the contemplated size of the proposed Central School. It is to have 850 pupils and at least 30 teachers. It may be economy to have one headmaster for such a large school but it is certainly not efficiency. Experience in high Schools everywhere and vernacular middle schools in Travancore, shows this clearly. If it is so with older boys and highly educated teachers, it would be ten times more difficult to manage a large number of assorted primary school teachers and pupils coming from all sorts of creeds and communities and sexes. Not even the hoped for “secondary or even the collegiate grade teacher” can control and supervise such a school let alone the ordinary vernacular school teacher.

Take again the amalgamation of school 8 (Municipal) and school 29 (aided) mentioned in page 19 of the report. ‘The abolition of school 29 would result in a saving of a teaching grant of Rs. 85, one additional teacher would be needed in school 8,’ says the report—who is to pay for this additional teacher? The Municipal authorities, I suppose. So, a saving of Rs. 85 for the Government (or is it for the Municipality?) is to result in an additional expenditure of at least Rs. 150 for the Municipality. Rob Paul and pay Peter. The amalgamation would make the staffing adequate and work more efficient, says the report. The statistics given does not seem to bear out this claim.

### STANDARDS

	1	2	3	4	
School 8	57	21	13	5	3 teachers
School 29	13	4	4	—	1 teacher
The amalgamated school	70	25	17	4	4 teachers

In the amalgamated school, plural class teaching has not been avoided, two teachers out of 4 are in charge of classes containing 35 pupils each—much more than they can manage efficiently. How is this arrangement more efficient than, say, the following?

In school 8, let two teachers be in charge of the 70 boys in classes 1 and 3, one teacher in charge of classes 2 and 4, totalling 26 pupils, and the fourth teacher in charge of school 29 which contain on the whole 21 pupils. I don't say this is the best arrangement but I do say this is not less efficient and perhaps more economical than the amalgamation. At any rate there is a possibility of expansion. The small school is bound to be developed.

### IS IT CONSISTENT WITH EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY TO ABOLISH AIDED SCHOOLS ?

Mr. Champion has got to admit—see page 6, para 12—that no private body let alone individuals can run the proposed Central Schools and only public bodies like the Taluk Boards can run such schools. It is notorious that the schools run by public bodies are less efficient than those run by private agencies. Mr. Champion himself admits this and says that “on the ground of efficiency and economy, a well conducted aided school should be encouraged to the utmost”—but his method of encouragement, to say the least, is somewhat strange. It is to propose a scheme under which, to use his own words, “there will be comparatively few aided Central Schools for, comparatively few private bodies are financially or otherwise in a position to provide accommodation, equipment and staff for a complete elementary school with full classes.”

The Report began by saying that the Scheme is intended to increase educational efficiency and financial economy and ends by proposing measures calculated to abolish the admittedly efficient and economically managed aided schools. I think, I have said enough to show that the proposed scheme is a retrograde step from the point of view of expansion of mass education and is not more efficient or economical than the present system.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE

At present the schools especially those that are managed by public bodies, are inefficient, it should be admitted. I have known pupils avoiding schools next door and going to a more distant aided school merely on the score of efficiency. We have to find out a method under which there will be scope for expansion, it will be possible to provide suitable schools in the sparsely populated inland villages, the schools will, be, as far as possible near the homes of the children and at the same time the education imparted should be efficient. Economy should also be a consideration. But considerations of economy may postpone expansion, they should not prevent expansion.

### THE BEST METHOD

The best method seems to be to organise rural education in the same way as Rural Medical Relief has been organised. Don't discourage plural class teaching. Don't allow a teacher to be in charge of more than 25 pupils. Allow these pupils to be in more than one class. Give special training to these teachers on the lines of the Dalton Plan. Give a lump grant or a living salary to each teacher in charge of 25 pupils and send them out to the villages to organise schools. Improve the method of recruitment to the Inspectorate. Most of the educated unemployed will be very usefully employed, and the percentage of literacy will increase in leaps and bounds.

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# REORGANIZATION OF S. S. L. C. STUDIES IN ENGLISH

BY

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## (A) ENGLISH AND VERNACULAR

In two articles, the writer proposes to deal with the subject and begs to place before the public certain suggestions and views which he has formulated on the basis of some experience and thinking to which he lays claim. It is more with a view to exercise our minds in this vital matter, to stimulate group-consciousness than to set an air of finality, that the contributions have been contemplated. No more finality is claimed than that of a humble inquirer after truth.

In the first place it is proposed to examine the common accusation against the standard of English in our schools and to exploit a possible correlation between English and the vernacular or the mother-tongue, taking the two to mean the same thing for the purposes of our investigation.

To some, the decline in the standard of English is still a moot point in the sense, that it has not been statistically investigated and proved. With those, who entertain this belief and with those who share it, I do not propose to quarrel. But it must be admitted that there are certain things which are self-evident and axiomatic that they need not be established. At any rate, let us proceed on the assumption that there has been a decline in the standard and the complaint is wide-spread and made by sane critics whose wisdom we have no reasons to doubt.

This decline or deterioration deserves to be analysed. We can distinguish three really different processes or different abilities which together constitute what is called the acquisition of English. One may read well or widely but speak ill or write ill. In the same manner it is possible to conceive that speaking is different from writing or reading. Considered from this point of view, it is for us to explore what abilities have been on the wane. Is it the reading ability? He will be a bold man indeed, who will assert that there is less of reading matter at present. Can it be, that the pupil reads less? An average pupil has to read more than what a pupil of old would have had to do. We are nearer the truth when we seek to maintain, that in the midst of plenty, the average pupil is still poor. There is plenty of reading matter but very poor pupils do any extra reading. It is paradoxical, but it is a fact that our pupils strictly confine themselves to the books set for study.

The brunt of the accusation falls squarely on writing ability. That it is of a lower quality has to be admitted beyond doubt. The powers of composition have suffered a set back and it is indeed deplorable to observe how helpless a pupil feels, when he is asked to write a composition on a general subject.



With respect to speaking ability however, one cannot be so dogmatic or unreserved in one's assertion. We find a fluent speaker in place of a tongue-tied pupil and if there were fluent speakers in the past—and there were some notable varieties among them—they thrive in spite of the Translation Method.

In all these abilities, as we can readily perceive, the modern pupil has exercised a liberal measure of freedom to commit errors and that is indeed the problem.

No elaborate investigation seems necessary to get at the real causes. Three of them are given by Mr. W. C. Douglas (See his lecture at the Non-Gazetted Officers' Association meeting, December 1925.). The classes then were smaller, the pupils were select and their intelligence was of a higher order. These are so obvious that a mere mention is enough, though they can bear repetition any number of times. To these, I wish to add two more, really one, the other being only an explanation of what has been already stated. Modern life is becoming more and more complex and the progress of democracy is having its repercussions. English education has spread through a wider strata of society and larger numbers of pupils, far larger than schools of old could contain or have dreamt of, are in schools at present and that it may be said that the expansion of English education has been more horizontal than vertical. Mention must also be made of the scant courtesy with which the indigenous methods of teaching have been treated. Perhaps their very strength was their weakness. While books are relied on in no small degree at present, books were relied on in no degree then, for the very reason, that there were no books. The void was filled by the Guru. Memory was cultivated to a marvellous degree that it has become a thing of the past. The swing of the pendulum has gone too far now with the rejection of memory training along the rejection of the indigenous systems of learning.

What is the situation to-day? There has been a fall not only in the standard of English but also a seeming decline in the general level of intelligence. Knowledge is confined to books and the situation is portrayed by Dr. West in his "Language in Education." "When a man has lost the power of propositionizing (Dr. West quotes from Henry Head's Aphasia) and cannot speak or write, when both internal and external speech have been destroyed, it is obvious . . . that he will be lame in thinking." This quotation is from Henry Head and describes the mind of an aphasic. For the words "lost and destroyed" in the above passage, substitute the words "undeveloped" or "badly trained," and we have a description of the mind of the educational aphasic. And Dr. West speaks all this with reference to India.

What Dr. West refers to is the loss of language, a loss of thought, as well and this is described as a malady in education, as aphasia, which is really the loss of speech as a result of an injury to the brain. He says, "I believe that the real root of the evil in the language situation in this country does not lie in the teaching of English and that English teaching is indeed almost a trivial and unimportant matter compared with the urgency of improving the teaching of the vernacular." It would seem therefore that much of the criticism against English teaching in schools should have been directed against the vernacular teaching. In the words of Dr. West, "It is not English teaching, good or bad, too much or too little, that is doing all this harm to your

children. It is cheap teachers of the mother-tongue frittering away golden hours of youthful energy upon compound words and grammatical discriminations; teaching boys to loath the sight of their own heritage of literature by chewing pretty morsels of it into a sour chyme; binding down childish dreams and aspirations under 'set headings'; under-paid, under-qualified, helpless baits in their bear-garden of a class room."

Indeed, according to an investigation started by Mr. B. K. Banerjea of Anjora, a correlation between English and vernacular has been discovered and the co-efficient of correlation has been calculated to be positive and as high as 95. In other words, it means, pupils scoring high marks in their vernacular have scored high marks in English also. It will be clear, therefore, that just as efficient teaching of the vernaculars will lead to efficiency in English also, an inefficient handling of the vernacular may result in lowering its standard and with it the standard of the English also. This seems to square with the facts of the situation we have already referred to. Dr. West, in his book on "Language in Education," observes that as a result of a proper training in his mother-tongue, a pupil must be able :

"(1) to think clearly and be able to convey his thoughts clearly and accurately to others;

(2) to read effectively;

(3) to use the language artistically as a means of self-expression;

(4) to read and appreciate the best poetry and prose literature of his language as expressions of the great selves among his people."

It requires no elaborate process of thinking to infer that very little of these things is attempted in our vernacular teaching or in vernacular examinations. A typical paper on the vernacular contains some questions on subject matter and the language of prescribed texts, on the amplification of a passage or two, on translation, an essay and a composition. And this certainly cannot test the things that are meant to be tested.

It is outside the purview of this contribution to enter into a detailed examination of the vernacular teaching and its methods, but its bearings on the question of English studies have to be examined. Then the position of the teacher in charge of the vernacular *vis a vis* the English teacher, may be briefly indicated. While it is the duty of the first to convey, not knowledge, but a certain attitude, to create literary appreciation, a sense of artistry in expression and that "literary conscience which cannot bear to set down a thing on paper which is not clear and correct"; and in short, to create and develop the literary side, the duty of the English teacher will be to create and improve facility of expression in English, such expression being expected to be clear and correct. High expectations of the standard in the vernacular are formed. Improved methods of teaching, better trained teachers and books based on and graded according to a scientific plan go to constitute the standard. A re-orientation in the methods of teaching has to be imparted.

The high correlation between English and the vernacular referred to already implies very many things. It entails a great co-ordination of English

and vernacular studies. As at present, they move in independent orbits. But hereafter, they will have to be brought nearer together. There are very many points which should not be attempted in English unless they have been previously taught in the vernacular. Habits of clear expression in English owe their origin to clear thinking and precise expression in the vernacular. So the two teachers have to settle their plans beforehand. It may be laid down as a dictum that no composition on any general subject can be conducted in English unless it has been done in the vernacular before, say a week or two weeks before. It is not the purpose to make the vernacular a hand-maid of English studies but to restore the vernacular to its worthy place in the scheme of studies.

The spade-work in English grammar must have been done in the lesson on vernacular grammar. Much time is wasted, the opportunities gained in the vernacular grammar are lost on English, when we seek to teach the elements of English grammar to our pupils. The foundations have been laid by the vernacular grammar and why should we not build on them in English lessons ?

There are points of agreement as there are differences between English and the vernaculars but they are living languages and we can institute a study in comparison and contrast between the two in their grammars and grammatical usages.

The more we go into the question the more irresistible is the conclusion that facility in English speaking can be primarily acquired through one's vernacular, progress in English composition is rendered easier by the principles of composition learnt and practised in the vernacular, the obstacles in the teaching of English grammar can be overcome by a proper treatment of grammar by the vernacular teacher and that habits of independent, silent and rapid reading and literary tastes in English can be forestalled through one's vernacular.

Not that, all that should be done in English can be attempted through the vernacular but that, it is true for the most part, cannot be denied. It must, nevertheless, be admitted that much depends on the exact aims and organization of English studies. To it we shall revert shortly.

This article cannot be considered complete without a reply to doubts, raised in some quarters. The question of the vernacular medium is a big problem. Its reaction on English must be made the subject of an elaborate experiment. Whether the reaction is likely to be adverse, can to a certain extent be repudiated by the tentative conclusions reached by Mr. M. R. Paranjpe in his "Report on the use of the Mother-tongue as the medium of instruction and examination in certain subjects for the Matriculation Examination of the Bombay University," parts of which, relevant to our purpose, are extracted below :—

"In the table (Matriculation Results 1929, English Medians for different centres given) it is obvious that the mother-tongue group at all centres is the weaker group in English and one is led to believe that there is a strong basis for the fear that the increasing use of the mother-tongue in the class room will tend to affect the students' knowledge of English. But if this

be a fact, one would expect a certain amount of correlation between the weakness exhibited by the mother-tongue at a centre and the extent of vernacularisation of that centre. An inspection of the last two columns would show that such correlation is non-existent. Poona, Baroda and Sangli are highly vernacularised but there the two groups are almost equally strong.

Centre.	Eng. Medians for those who answered in		Difference.	Extent of vernacularisation.
	Mother-tongue.	English.		
Poona	82.2	83.6	1.4	78.3
Baroda	83.5	85.3	1.8	77.6
Sangli	79.7	82.2	2.5	73.1
Bombay	79.5	86.4	6.9	31.3
Rajkot	77.1	82.0	4.9	17.6
Dharwar	75.5	82.9	7.4	27.7
Karachi	81.0	87.0	6.0	38.7

Bombay, Rajkot, Dharwar and Karachi are apparently resisting vernacularisation but there the disparity between the two groups is comparatively greater. Obviously increasing use of the mother-tongue is not the cause of the comparative weakness of the mother-tongue group; at least that is not the sole cause."

#### (B) THE OBJECTIVE OF ENGLISH STUDIES IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Probably no other school subject receives greater attention than English and in no other subject is the disparity in result when viewed from the expenditure of time and energy greater. In the measure of the disparingly poor result, lies the extent of dissatisfaction.

In the first section the decline in English standard was discussed and the correlation between English and vernacular was examined with a view to raise the standard not only of the vernacular but also of English.

In this section it is proposed to define the precise objective of S. S. L. C. English studies and examine its bearings on the English texts prescribed for S. S. L. C. Examination in particular and the higher forms in general.

What should be the aim of English studies in our schools? As Mr. H. G. Wyatt says "The lack of a clear distinction between the teaching of language and the teaching of literature has led to a persistent confusion of the two in schools, as in college teaching, with much harm and hindrance to the pupils' progress in both directions." Is it to teach literature or language, even taking for granted that they can be taught? How many or how few of our graduates have cultivated a real taste for English literature? How many can enjoy the best in thought and expression in the English language? How many can appreciate the noble thoughts and beautiful imagery in English literature? Without much ado and in due humility it must be admitted that English literature is "caviarre to the general." Even assuming that a good per cent. of them can cultivate it, how many of the pupils in secondary schools seek the University course? How many of them that get into the I form

pass out of the schools as 'eligibles'? There can be only one answer to all these questions and that is dependent on the need of the average S. S. L. C. pupil, a living entity for our purposes.

It is for us to define what is expected of an S. S. L. C. pupil. He must learn to speak English in a clear, correct and coherent manner. He must understand spoken English, not of course the slang variety. He must be able to write sentences, paragraphs with an amount of reasoning and lucidity, that must have overflowed from a corresponding ability in the vernacular. And then he must acquire practice in silent and rapid reading, of a kind and character which will be described in a later article. The idea is that in any situation demanding the use of English, the secondary school pupil should not be found wanting. From a single sentence answer to a description in accurate and clear language, a composition something short of reflective or expository essay, every problem must be capable of being tackled by him or her. More of this will appear in a later paper.

In this connection let us pause a bit to examine Dr. West's exposition regarding the need of an Indian pupil. In his words, "Their need (the need of the Bengalis and this may be taken to refer to Indians in general) is not English to speak, nor to write; but English to read in order that they may enter that vast repertory of knowledge which is contained in the richest of all languages." It must be admitted that reading ability can be distinguished from speaking ability or writing ability, but in practice they are inseparable. Whenever we read, we think and we also express or speak in a way—we cannot write unless we are able to read or speak somewhat. In these days of improved communications by land, sea and air and thanks to the invention of the gramophone, broadcasting and the talkies, the world has grown smaller and the nations have been drawn nearer to one another. The English and the Indians have been brought nearer together than at any time before so that the reading ability as the sole aim appears to be too narrow.

Let us assume that reading ability is the aim and to some extent it is so, for in the high school forms we have to concentrate on that—what is the means to be adopted? Dr. West advocates reading to be practised by reading according to the principle of specific practice. We have to consider if that is the only way and the effective way of achieving the aim. Reading ability may be our aim, but it does not follow that this can be pursued only by reading to begin with. Therefore this reading ability is more a question of method than of aim. The real problem in India is largely the problem of the preliminary stage and according to Mr. H. E. Palmer, Adviser to the Japanese Government on English education, a well-known authority on foreign language learning, "It is the possession of the language as speech, (in other terms, being able to think in the language) that enables us to write our mother-tongue without making what are called 'foreigners' mistakes.' The language as speech is the key to rapid reading and accurate and natural writing." In the light of these observations the advocacy of reading as a method appears hardly tenable.

The differentiation between a linguistic bias and literary bias, in our studies has its repercussions on the choice of books and the selection of reading matter for pupils in our higher forms.

For the S. S. L. C. Examination of 1932 a scene from "Henry IV" in which Falstaff figures had been included in the S. S. L. C. Selections. The humour was too much for our pupils and the expressions, in particular the puns, (for they were too many) were found too difficult and somehow or other the pupils managed to gobble the stuff for purposes of examination in order to disgorge it when an occasion arose. The writer in one of his conversations with the chairman of the English Committee of the S. S. L. C. Board drew attention to the unsuitability of the extract for the very reasons on which they would be considered suitable for English children. The Chairman was convinced of the force and truth of the argument and gave an assurance that such things would not be repeated in future. And the assurance was taken for what it was worth.

This is only one of the many unsuitable extracts that have been included year after year. Again it is a matter of common knowledge how the S. S. L. C. English selections invariably include any one of the *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Mary Lamb. It is admittedly a book of a high order and highly literary, more so, in view of the fact that Charles Lamb has made it a point not to make any deviations from the language of the original unless compelled by exigencies of space and arrangement. The style becomes quaint, strange and difficult. No objection can be raised on the score of literary merit but that itself is the very ground for our rejection of the selection, as long as we have in our mind the linguistic content as the main criterion. On this ground, we have to rule out many extracts unless they are modernised and retold for Indian children, and this is by no means an easy task.

Abridged editions of classical works are often prescribed for detailed and non-detailed study and the writers are far too many. What is the objective here? The abridged edition is meant as an introduction to the classical work or the original itself. In the hands of an ordinary author, a third rate or fourth rate author, it easily becomes' (for sore is the temptation) a short cut to literature, no better than an examination guide or of no more value than a cram book. In that case, what applies to an examination guide also applies to the abridged edition. None but a great writer can be trusted with the produce of a great writer, and even great writers do not always succeed. I have in mind an author who applied himself strenuously to the task of abridging "Mill on the Floss" two years ago and I do not know if he has completed it. At one time when I met him, I congratulated him on his having finished it for he realised, as well as I knew, how arduous is the task to re-create the past atmosphere that has been visualised by the great writer. For let us remember that we cannot teach literature by means of books meant for linguistic training nor can linguistic training be imparted by means of good literary pieces. Not that an abridged edition is impossible but that it has to be judged by a high literary standard.

There is also the question of poems. How far the teaching of poetry in our schools has been effective and how far it has created or developed a real English literary sense or conscience, will form a good subject for experiment but that the success has not been commensurate with the time and energy spent on it, is denied by few. The main difficulty is not that of language, though in some measure, it does create obstacles. There are many pupils in our schools who freely use the poetic diction and style for the explanation in prose of the lines in poetry. But what is more important than

this, is the fact that the poet is writing for a western and an English audience and assumes on the part of his readers a familiarity with a whole range of beliefs, customs and experiences and ideas that are comparatively unknown or strange to Indian students. An obvious form of this difficulty is connected with the descriptions and images formed in English poetry. If the reader has never listened to a nightingale or skylark he cannot fully appreciate Keats and Shelly. If he has always lived in a warm climate, he will find some difficulty in forming any mental images corresponding to Cowper's description of a winter day. Perhaps all this criticism may cut at the root of all poetry teaching in our country. But it is as well for the teachers to remember that no poem should be taught unless they appreciate it and that the approach to literature may be made, if at all, through the vernaculars.

In this connection, I wish to point out that there is scope for research on the subject of English poetry in our schools, how far English poetry is appreciated, which poems are the most popular, and which the least popular.

In general, what has been suggested so far has a great bearing not only on the S. S. L. C. Selections but on the choice of books in the IV and V Forms. For, what happens is that the S. S. L. C. Examination casts its long shadow even on the IV and V Forms, if not the lower forms, in an equal degree. There is a tendency of all important subjects to spread downwards in the educational system. The parents are interested in the end—result, i.e., in the preparation of the schools for a future. In the selection of extracts as in the choice of books, the guiding consideration must be the modernity of an author. Books written by modern authors or modernised versions of classics have to be preferred to the classics themselves. In particular there are some authors whose works can be thought of as helpful in our endeavours. Swift, Stevenson, Macaulay and Arnold will be more useful than others and among the living writers, who can exchange places with Arthur Mee, of the My Magazine fame ?

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## GLEANINGS

### THE PRIME MINISTER ON TEACHERS' PROBLEMS\*

The Prime Minister, who was spending his Christmas holidays at Lossiemouth, accompanied his daughter, Miss Isabel MacDonald, L.C.C., when she attended the E. I. S. Congress at Elgin on December 28, to deliver an address on Nursery schools.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, on the completion of his daughter's address and in response to an appeal from the President, addressed the Congress. He said he was only a visitor there that morning and must not take up their time. But he had two things on his mind. He congratulated them on selecting Elgin for their Congress. Part of his first thought was to wish them all a very good New Year. I know, he said, some of you may put a misinterpretation upon those words. (Laughter). And that brings the second thought into my mind. I must be cautious (Laughter). You and I are fellow-sufferers as a result of one of those curious cataclysms which do not belong to Governments but belong to Providence in one aspect or another. You and I are victims. We have both been cut. (Laughter). We both expect these lean years to go over as quickly as possible, and we both want to make ends meet in a decent and honourable way, and the *only grievance I have got against you is this, that you have been so successful in the pressure that you have made upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister of Education and others that you have managed to get in front of Ministers and your cuts are going to be restored apparently before ours.* (Laughter and applause). Well, we will see (Laughter). But I assure you that we have got a mutual interest in the reform which we both expect. I am not going to say anything on what has brought you here. My interest in my old profession remains undimmed (Applause).

*Problems Ahead.* This morning I looked down the advice you got yesterday from various authorities on points that you were asked to keep in front of you and so on, and I have listened to-day to what my daughter has been saying to you. If there is any further consolation of seeing work in one's imagination that one is interested in carried on when one's own time has come to an end, I have had a certain amount of it this morning. But I am not going over that ground. The one thing I am interested in is your products. The problems ahead of the coming generation are not to be simple problems. They are not to be one-sided problems. They are problems that are going to call for great minds, firm minds, steady minds, reflective minds, and whether the next generation is going to have those great possessions combined with fine character at its disposal or not depends very largely upon you. What have you got to do? Whether you are at nursery schools or at ordinary elementary schools or secondary schools, the day will come when the pupil and you part company. You have done all for him or for her that you can, you have brought him to that point of the road where it is forbidden for you, except in his memory, to go further. You leave him and you say, "It is now for you to find your way through life." What is it that you are sending out? Perhaps we have got a little misunderstanding and a little grievance with each other. You blame government for supplying unsatisfactory things to you. Governments sometimes blame you for turning out bad material. I daresay they are just the usual little misunderstandings and rather hurried conclusions that do not stand close examination.

*New Values.* I am not at all sure but that you and the country and ourselves and everybody would be benefited if there was a thorough survey of the whole educational

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\* Reprinted from "Schoolmaster and Women Teachers' Chronicle," Jan. 4th, 1934.



system and its results made known. The work given to a teacher, the machinery put at his disposal, and the organisation he is to use have all been built up piecemeal. A good deal of it has been provided for the purpose of dealing with a special problem, and its consequences have not been considered carefully at the time that the work was done. For instance, in 1870, the great problem was how to read, write and count. A rather poverty-stricken middle class idea of life was in front of us—to get black coats on our backs and to get smooth skin on our hands. Things have changed, and things will change still more, and the most important thing is we are beginning to put a new value upon the services that man can give to his community and the way that a man can live his life. All that has got a great bearing upon education, and I sometimes feel that the educational system is like the lady who, in order to be very respectable, puts on too long skirts. The result is she trips herself up in her flummery. I believe we ought to go back upon the simplicities of life—the real simplicities, the real realities of that strangest and most complicated of all creation, the human being. Do we really understand what the human being is? I was so interested in hearing about the influence of nursery schools.

*The Work of the Teacher.* But I must not go on taking up your time. One wanders along that very beautiful and very delightful and most interesting country of the life, the works, the tasks of a teacher. Oh! I wish we were all full of understanding of what it is to train children so that when they become adults and when they have to look after themselves they can live the glorious life, full in all its aspects, the intellectual aspect, the aspect of appreciation of the beautiful, the aspect of moral determination to go ahead in spite of all difficulties, all criticisms, and all injustices. Let us get men, let us get women whose heads are up who belong to no class but are happy with all and talk straight to them all, whose great consciousness is the consciousness of service, finding in what they give the only permanent riches they can take with them to the brinks of their graves. (Applause.).

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## TIT-BITS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD

By

ANGLER.

After Tiruvadamarudhur, Virudhunagar! It is reported that the department of Education has given notice to the K. V. High School, Virudhunagar about the withdrawal of school recognition. This is another welcome departmental guidance. What about schools with no moral endowments?

### RETIREMENT AT 55.

The recent G. O. against the extension of service of teachers, among other local board employees, is a happy step. Though it may work hardships against poor individuals and communities in disfavour at the hands of communal ministry, it is a necessary step in the interests of unemployed teachers and atrophied teachers. It is desirable for aided schools and colleges to act similarly to give over-worked teachers some rest after service.

### PRONUNCIATION PROBLEMS

The British broadcasting corporation has done well to recognise the impossibility of uniformity of pronunciation in the English language. Non-English races speaking English have developed their own code of English. There is bound to be variety in pronunciation from clime to clime, and this is rightly recognised by the B. B. C. Our schools and colleges will do well to note this trend in pronunciation problems, leaving standard pronunciation to Pandits and Scholars of English.

### ENGLISH IN THE S. S. L. C.

The Recent refresher course at Madras for teachers of English in Secondary Schools but touches the fringe of the problem of English in the S.S.L.C. Course. English in the High School will develop on profitable lines not so much by refresher courses or new methods but through new teachers of English who know English, and who can handle English with ease, confidence, purpose and effect in all stages of the School course through a co-ordinated plan of work with correct sentence construction in forms I to III, and with framing a paragraph in forms IV to VI as the main objects of English teaching. Teaching the fundamentals of English speaking and writing must be supplemented by a programme of organised extra reading and self activity in speaking and writing by boys, who must be given the time and facilities for the same by teachers. Examinations must be based not on the hybrid type of questions now sought to be introduced in the S.S.L.C papers, but real new type questions to test the boys' grasp and use of language. English grammar must be taught merely to aid speaking and writing and not be once more made a fetish of. Will head teachers organise?

### VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

After all, the Madras University seems to have recognised the need for creating a bureau of employment. This has been long over due. The bureau must get prepared a list of its unemployed alumni and get into touch with employers who have vacancies so as to offer vocational guidance to graduates. Apart from this, the bureau must press for a re-ordering of the University Courses of study to enable graduates to pass out of the University through the job-jungle into the occupational world. The University may well copy the American example where the movement of vocational guidance for youth is based on the persistent social philosophy of the American people to equalise opportunities for its children and to perfect their social efficiency. Our graduates require an

antidote to vocational snobbishness and they must be made to recognise the dignity of labour and find for each his effective place in work and in citizenship. The Madras University library may well stock American books, reports and conference proceedings on vocational guidance to popularise modes of vocational care of students by Universities, colleges, and schools.

#### ACADEMIC FREEDOM

At a recent meeting of University Teachers of London, complaints were made against inroads against academic freedom. Russia, Italy and Germany are, in the pursuit of their policies, restricting academic freedom of Teachers. In India, the problem is complete non-exercise of academic freedom by teachers of all grades because all teachers are wedded to teaching through cramming stuffing, drilling and coaching. It is high time that university and school teachers learn and teach academic freedom and release themselves from the unwanted fetters of government and party-politics.

#### SALARIES OF TEACHERS

Those authorities and public in India who deprecate claims of Teachers for better salaries will do well to note that teachers and authorities in England do not view the agitation for just wages as indecent or sordid. Professional self-respect demands for its background a decent status, a wage for living and self-education, and due observance by employers of salary scales and provident fund rules. Will patronising politicians and grasping employers recognise this in the interest of fairness?

#### ETHICAL CODE FOR TEACHERS

Consistent with the motto of the S. I. T. U, teachers have to evolve a code of professional conduct. The scheme of ethics for the Teaching profession adopted and observed by the National Educational Association of the United States, since 1929 is well worth consideration by the S.I.T.U, and its members and affiliated Teachers' Associations. Some years ago, an S.I.T.U Committee appointed to draft a code and rules for a Teachers' registry with Mr. K. Rangaswami Iyengar of the Theological High School as convener has not yet submitted its report. In the existing programme of work of the S. I. T. U, when Teachers' associations require to be guided by definite codes of professional conduct, an S.I.T.U. Code to suit local conditions is imperative. In the work of emancipation of the teacher, the greater moral force behind teachers, the better will be their success in any agitation. At any rate teachers and teachers' associations who say and do differently, offending ethical principles accepted all over the world, must be made to observe an agreed code in respect of professional relations.

#### THE LINDSAY COMMISSION AND AFTER

The above commission has come and gone, leaving behind the scheme of concentration and consolidation of Xian Educational institutions with all its baneful reactions. The Findlay College with its tradition of discipline and manners, sporting and efficiency, and the Bishop Heber College with its hoary associations and work are at the end of their useful careers, thanks to the Lindsay commission report. Missionary conferences are considering proposals to replace non-christian staff with Christian staff, save in indispensable cases, in the interests of Xian Education! Apart from revealing communalism loyal non-Xian teachers are likely to be suddenly stranded in life by this procedure. Communalism is bound to be met by counter communalism of non-Xian parents who may withdraw the Hindu boys who form a majority of the strength of Xian institutions. The valuable training in character given by teaching-missionaries to the students who have come under them is likely to be lost in the mad pursuit of communalism either of caste or creed. The S.I.T.U. will do well to wait in deputation on the Lord Bishop of Madras and the Missionary Councils to see that the concentration scheme is not vitiated by communalism and in particular to represent the claims of the existing staff to be retained on the same terms of service as till now.

## FROM OUR ASSOCIATIONS

### V. M. HIGH SCHOOL, PERIAKULAM

Under the auspices of the Victoria Memorial High School Teachers' Association, Periyakulam, a public meeting was held on the 1st February, 1934, in the spacious central hall of the high school, when M.R.Ry T. V. Venkatarama Aiyar, B.A., L.T., Senior Deputy Inspector of Schools, Periyakulam Range, delivered a very informing, interesting and instructive lecture on "The Champion Report on the Consolidation and Concentration of Elementary Schools," under the distinguished presidentship of M.R.Ry. M. R. Rangaswami Ayyangar Avl., M.A., L.T., Headmaster and President, High School Teachers' Association. The function was largely attended and proved a great success.

The lecturer, at the outset, reviewed at length the growth of elementary education from the days of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms till the year 1930, when Mr. Champion, the then Deputy Director of Public Instruction, undertook, at the instance of the Government, to survey the state of elementary education in the province and suggest changes likely to secure greater educational efficiency and financial economy. He referred to the fact that there was only a quantitative expansion of schools, resulting in the enormous increase in the number of small multiple-class schools and the rise of small and separate schools for girls, Muhammadan and depressed classes children, without any corresponding improvement in the quality of education, in the period just preceding 1930 and explained elaborately how plural-class teaching, lack of equipment and inefficiency on the part of teachers had led not only to stagnation but also to wastage. The rise in literacy was, in short, not commensurate with the enormous increase in expenditure in the sphere of elementary education.

The Scheme, formulated by Mr. Champion, aimed, in the opinion of the speaker, at a more qualitative distribution and expansion of schools, that is to say, at the establishment of large schools, called "Central Schools," consisting of a number of standards or schools that would grow naturally into large schools in which one teacher would have charge of a full class of 30 pupils and of not more than one class and which would be attended, in the long run, by boys and girls, Hindus, Muhammadans and depressed classes. There was an imperative necessity to fuse a large number of inefficient small schools into a smaller number of efficient larger schools containing full classes. Well conducted aided schools were sought to be encouraged to expand and develop on grounds of efficiency and economy and hence managements of such institutions need not entertain any apprehensions about their schools. In the neighbourhood of the Central Schools, there would be a number of Junior Schools existing for the purpose of instructing young children in Standards 1 and 2. It was proposed to do away with single-teacher schools managed and taught by unqualified teachers, with no adequate financial resources, unsuitably and inadequately housed, essaying the impossible task of educating children of different classes and ages. The unit of recognition would be the individual standard and not as at present, the school as a whole.

The existence of small separate schools for girls, Muhammadans and depressed classes, the lecturer went on to say, was also deprecated not only on grounds of educational inefficiency but also on social grounds, as, especially in the case of the depressed classes, the present system would perpetuate their social degradation. In the matter of education of girls, conditions were very favourable to mixed education in elementary

schools, judging by the large percentage of girls reading in boys' schools. Finally, the speaker answered at length several of the objections raised against the Scheme.

The Chairman, in bringing the proceedings to a close, observed that the lecturer had done full justice to the subject and that the Champion Report aimed at a system of school distribution which would conduce immediately to increased efficiency and ultimately to more economical schools and that it offers a partial solution and opens the way to a complete solution of existing social and communal segregations. He also referred to the fact that the time was ripe for consideration of the fundamental question whether the aim of school provision should continue to be one of mere expansion. Education in a large number of elementary schools was in his opinion little better than a sham and it would continue to be a sham, so long as efforts are directed mainly to increasing the number of inefficient schools. The Scheme suggested in Mr Champion's Report aimed first at concentration, and a form of concentration that provided a starting point for efficient and economical expansion and as such it deserved a careful study and judicious adoption.

With a hearty vote of thanks proposed by the Secretary of the Association, to the lecturer and the Chairman, the meeting came to a close.

#### PACHAIYAPPA'S HIGH SCHOOL, CHIDAMBARAM

The Pachaiyappa Old Boys' Association, Chidambaram, celebrates the Annual Reunion this year in April. All "Old Boys" are requested to send in their subscription to Mr. V. Venkatesa Aiyar, the Corresponding Secretary.

#### THE RAMNAD DISTRICT TEACHERS' GUILD

Conference at Virudhunagar, on 27—1—1934

A Conference of the Ramnad District Teachers' Guild was held on 27—1—'34, in the K V High School, in Virudhunagar. Over forty teachers attended representing ten affiliated associations.

The Conference, which met at 8 p.m., was opened, in a sympathetic speech, by Mr. V. V. Ramaswami, Municipal Chairman, Virudhunagar. The meeting proper then commenced with the President of the Guild, Mr N S Venkatarama Aiyar, M.A., L.T., in the chair. The following resolutions being discussed, were all unanimously adopted:—

#### RESOLUTIONS

I. Inasmuch as the present practice of holding the S S. L. C Public Examination in two sessions each day is a heavy strain on the mind and body of the candidates, this Guild earnestly requests the S. S. L. C. Board to give it up forthwith, in favour of a single session per day, say, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; and the Guild further assures the Board that the teachers who may be appointed as Assistant Superintendents would be content with a smaller remuneration, in case the change is effected, extending the examination over twice the present period.

II. In view of the fact that, literally, thousands of knowledge-items have to be stored in the memory of S S. L. C. candidates in connection with the subjects, under the A-Group, of History, Geography, and Elementary Science, (the lowest computation being 20,000 items in all), and inasmuch as such storing, while being a strain on the pupils' memory, dwarfs their other faculties, the Guild earnestly begs the S. S. L. C Board to lighten the syllabuses in these subjects in the manner suggested below:—

- (1) History of India—By deleting the portions up to the Mughal Period;
- (2) History of England—By deleting the portions up to the Tudor Period;
- (3) Geography—By limiting the portion to a regional survey of the world with special reference to India;

(4) *Physics and Chemistry*—By prescribing in each subject twelve to sixteen specified experiments ;

(5) *Animal and Plant Life*—By prescribing the study of 10 or 12 specified typical animals and 10 or 12 specified typical plants ;

(6) *Physiology*—As much of it as will make First Aids intelligible.

III. The Guild views with apprehension the proposed introduction, at an early date, of the Central School System, seeing that, besides bringing about the closing of innumerable schools and the turning of several hundreds of teachers out of employ, the proposal is not calculated to serve the objects aimed at, and suggests that the objects would be best served by mobilising the honorary services of trained Graduate Masters in Secondary or Higher Elementary Schools, in the way of periodical supervision of Elementary schools in adjoining areas.

IV. This Guild calls upon all teachers in charge of classes to get into close touch with the home-life of their wards by making periodical visits to their homes, in order that work at school may be adjusted so as to suit the home conditions of each pupil.

At the close of the meeting, Mr. V. Ramachandra Aiyar, B.A., L.T., on behalf of the Teachers' Association of Rajapalayam, cordially invited the Guild to hold its next Conference at Rajapalayam, towards the close of February, (presumably on Saturday the 24th), holding out the prospect of a teachers' excursion to an adjacent water-fall. The Conference concluded with a hearty vote of thanks to the President.

#### TRICHY DISTRICT TEACHERS' GUILD

##### Second Quarterly Meeting

(From our Trichy Correspondent.)

The second quarterly meeting of the Trichinopoly District Teachers' Guild was held on 10—2—1934, in the St. Joseph's College High School Science Hall, with the Rev. Fr. A. M. Antoniswami, S.J., Vice-President, in the chair. The meeting commenced at 1 P.m. after lunch provided by the St. Joseph's Teachers' Association.

Mr. V. D. Venkatasubramania Aiyar, Secretary of the Teachers' Association, welcomed the guild.

The Chairman referred to Mahatma Gandhi's presence in their city that day as an inducement to gather a large number of teachers. He next outlined the subjects for discussion for the day. He was of opinion that in the revision of the S. S. L. C. scheme, the conclusions of the teachers who worked it must prevail. Referring to the Champion Scheme, the Chairman considered it as of greatest importance to the progress of education in the presidency.

After the president's introductory speech, on the motion of Mr. G. Varadachariar, seconded by Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar, the minutes of the last meeting were taken as read, the chair moved the following resolutions :—

Resolved that the guild do place on record its sense of loss sustained by the death of the Editor, "The Hindu," Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, publicist and patriot.

Resolved that the guild do extend a hearty welcome to Mahatma Gandhi on his visit to Trichy and pray for the success of his mission.

*S. S. L. C. Scheme.* Mr K. Ramaswami Aiyar opened a discussion on the S. S. L. C. Scheme and circulated a draft amendment to the proposals coming up for discussion in the Madras University Academic Council by which he proposed that every boy should take 3 subjects in A group and 2 subjects of the same group in C and any other subject from any three optional groups.

Mr. S. K. Devasikhamani pointed out that the guild's opinion would be of guidance to members of the Academic Council.

Mr. L. R. Natesa Aiyar wanted the guild to be consistent and not to compromise with anybody on essentials.

Mr. Y. Vaidhyanatha Aiyar considered that it was difficult to reconcile the interests of the University, High Schools, and pupils.

Mr. V. G. Subbier wanted a return to the old S. S. L. C. Scheme.

Mr. V. Krishnamurthi Aiyar wanted that the University should be ignored in any consideration of High School education.

Mr. S. K. Devasikhamani, intervening, said that the double part of the S. S. L. C. Scheme of a self-contained Secondary education and preparation for a University course was an evil, but opined that it had to be faced and solved by compromise.

Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar moved, and Mr. L. R. Natesa Aiyar seconded the following resolution which was unanimously carried :—

This guild resolves that the new proposals re. the S. S. L. C. coming up before the Academic Council on 16—2—1934, are unacceptable as they contain the defects of the existing scheme without any relief to the pupils and reiterates its support to the decisions of the XXV Provincial Educational Conference and the Academic Council meeting in August 1933 in favour of five compulsory subjects.

*Champion Scheme* A discussion was then started on the Champion Scheme by Mr. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar. The speaker traced the genesis of the Champion Scheme and the implications of G.O. 740 of 1930 and 1639 of 1933. The Scheme gave a diagnosis of the disease in respect of Elementary education and outlined the scope for improving efficiency, avoidance of financial wastage, need for consolidation and concentration of schools with a view to expansion, while recognising difficulties in the way of concentration. The report outlined certain remedies like classification of schools with form and symmetry, provision of full and cosmopolitan classes, co-education, and provision for sections in Central Schools to meet the different interests of many agencies. The speaker then dilated upon the criticisms against the Champion Scheme forthcoming from Catholics, Muhammadans and Teacher-Managers and pointed out that they were credal, communal and selfish. In conclusion, the speaker asked Teachers' Guilds to stand for educational efficiency and efficient expansion in national interests, and he concluded by suggesting amendment of the Elementary Education Act with a view to overcome legal difficulties and to provide for care committees of children going to Central Schools.

The following resolution was moved and seconded by Messrs. S. T. Ramanuja Iyengar and V. Radhakrishna Aiyar.

The Trichy District Teachers' Guild agrees with the general principles enunciated by Mr. H. Champion in his valuable report as embodied in G. O. 740/30 and G.O. 1639/33 regarding the need for efficiency and economy with a view to expansion of Elementary education by gradual fusion of schools by mutual agreement among different agencies in each area; requests the Ministry of Education to adopt a ten-year plan of expansion of Elementary Education to bring every child of school-going age into Elementary schools, in consultation with organised teaching opinion in each area; and calls upon the legislators and politicians to amend the Elementary Education Act with a view to make Elementary education the first charge on Provincial Finance.

In the course of the discussion, Mr. V. G. Subbier opposed the Scheme. Fr. Antoniswami voiced Catholic opposition to the Scheme. The Chairman also disagreed with the implication that education should be a state monopoly and was against co-education on educational and philosophical grounds. On a motion for adjournment for fuller discussion, the meeting terminated with a vote of thanks.

## PERIYAKULAM—A PUBLIC MEETING

A monster meeting of the citizens of Periyakulam, Vadagupatty, Sedapatty, Mel-mangalam and Keelamangalam was held at 5 P.M. on 13—2—1934 in the spacious premises of Sri Varadaraja Swami Kovil to concert measures for the continuance of the management of the Victoria Memorial High School under the Madura District Board. The meeting was presided over by M.R.Ry. S. Sundaresa Aiyar Avl., B.A., First Grade Pleader and the President of the Periyakulam Urban Bank. The President made out a strong case for the continuance of the school under the able management of the Madura District Board which alone by its increasing resources will be able to run the school on sound lines. Messrs Krishna Aiyar, P. S. Sundaram Aiyar, First Grade Pleader, P. V. Venkateswara Aiyar, Pleader, and others spoke on the same subject, touching also on the financial aspect of the question. It was at last unanimously resolved to request all the members of the Madura District Board to continue the Victoria Memorial High School, Periyakulam, under the management of the District Board and to drop the proposal to appoint a committee for considering the question of retaining the control and the management of the V. M. High School in non-District Board area and making necessary recommendations to the Board.

The proposition was moved by Mr. Krishna Aiyar, seconded by Mr. Kasim Bava Rowther and supported by Mr. P. Narayanaswami Chettiar of Sedapatty.

It was next agreed that a very strong and representative deputation should wait on the President and members of the District Board at the time of the next meeting of the Board to press upon them the case for the continuance of the school under the management of the Madura District Board.

After a hearty vote of thanks to the President, Mr. Sundaresa Aiyar, who ably conducted the meeting, the meeting dissolved.

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 THE S. H. N. E. HIGH SCHOOL, SATTUR

## Anniversary and Laying the Foundation stone for new building

The anniversary celebration and the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new block to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 10,000 in the S. H. N. E. High School, Sattur, came off on the 1st instant, V. R. Ranganatham Esq., M.A., B.Litt. (Oxon), District Educational Officer, Ramnad, laying the foundation stone.

There was a large gathering which included R. B. MacEwen Esq., I.C.S. (District Collector), Mr. Abdur Rahim Sahib Bahadur (Dt. Munsiff), Mr. Masilamony Pillay (Tahsildar), Mr. Paramasivam (Sub-Registrar), Mr. Sankaranarayana Pillay (Postmaster), Dr. T. M. Pillay, Mr. Krishna Iyengar (Headmaster, Hindu High School, Srivilliputtur), Mr. R. Duraiswami Aiyar (Circle Inspector of Police).

After prayer, a variety entertainment was gone through. Mr. V. M. V. K. Rajamani Nadar, the correspondent of the school, surveyed the history of the institution which was started in 1910 and said that with the object of providing proper accommodation for the Elementary School and the High School, they had started the construction of the new buildings. Then he requested the President, Mr. V. R. Ranganatham to lay the foundation stone of the new block.

The President then laid the foundation stone and in doing so wished the institution all success.

The High School boys then staged two farces "The Film World" and "Sembadavan," written by Mr. S. Dandapani, B.A., L.T., of Sattur, which were highly appreciated.

Then Mr. N. Chakravarthi Iyengar, the Headmaster, presented the report. After the distribution of prizes to the best boys and winners in sports, the President paid a tri-



bute to the management for providing an additional block to the school as it was not possible to import the right type of education when school atmosphere was not what it ought to be. In the construction of the building, he said, they should think more of the artistic side than of the utilitarian aspect. He admired the philanthropic spirit of the Nadar community who had given a great impetus to education in this district. Drama, he said, must be made a regular part of the school curriculum. He requested the committee to make a substantial endowment in cash to the school for nowadays it would be practically impossible to run a school satisfactorily without it.

With a vote of thanks the function terminated.

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### KHASTRIYA VIDAYA SALA HIGH SCHOOL

Virudhunagar Case

(From a correspondent.)

The trial of the K. V. Sala High School case commenced on 4-2-34 before Abdur Rahim Sahib Bahadur, District Munsif Sattur. The Plaintiff Mr. Palaniswamy Nadar was examined in the suit. The suit was then adjourned to 5-2-'34 for further evidence. Before the case was taken up for trial, it was submitted to the court that the matter was about to be adjusted and the trial might be postponed to a few hours. The compromise was talked about in the court premises and after herculean efforts the settlement was arrived at. At 8 p.m. the Rajinama (compromise) was presented to the Court. As per terms of the compromise the first defendant Mr. V. V. Shunmuga Nadar is to continue in the office as the correspondent and secretary of the K. V. Sala Schools till 23-2-34 after taking charge of the office from the receiver on 6-2-34. The Treasurer Mr. Muthusankar Nadar has to deposit in the court a sum of Rs. 10,931-12-0 already spent by the 1st Defendant. On the 1st Defendant Mr. V. V. Shunmuga Nadar handing over charge on 23-2-34 to the plaintiff Mr. Palanisamy Nadar, the first defendant Mr. V. V. Shunmuga Nadar will be entitled to draw the amount from court. In case of default, the treasurer will draw back the amount from court and the plaintiff Mr. Palaniswamy Nadar will be entitled to become the Secretary of the School by virtue of the compromise decree. The Receiver has to hand over the books, possession etc., to the 1st Defendant on 6-2-34 and submit his accounts to the court. In addition some more clauses have been added to the effect that the members of the managing board should be increased from 31 to 41, and the number of directors from 9 to 12 and the necessary amendments to be made in the articles of the association. It was also provided therein there should be happy co-operation between them in seeing the school running satisfactorily.

The Judge after recording it expressed his heart felt satisfaction in the matter and paid a tribute to the District Educational Officer Mr. Thathachariar and Mr. Venkatachala Iyer of the Madura Bar thanked the court for having been patient enough to wait long till the settlement was arrived at.

The next day the amount having been deposited in the court, the learned Munsif has been pleased to pass the decree in terms of the Rajinama so far as it related to the suit.

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### Y. W. C. A. SUMMER SCHOOL—ANANDAGIRI, OOTACAMUND, NILGIRIS.

Preliminary announcement of a Teachers' Refresher Course under ideal conditions with expert educational leadership, May 10th—May 24th, '34.

The programme will include :

*Lecture courses.* Modern methods of teaching, child Psychology, Parent-teacher work, Rural Education, Home Science, Religious Education and Worship.

*Practical work.* Handicrafts, Physical Education, Games and Folk Dancing, Kindergarten, Projects.

*Discussion periods.* For the interchange of ideas and experiences.

*Social Hours.* Sightseeing, picnics, dramatics, Y. W. C. A. membership, etc.

The course is open to all teachers. Students must register for the whole course and should have a fair knowledge of English.

*Cost.* Railway. return ticket for one way fare. Registration fee. Rs. 2.

Share Room and Board. Rs. 2 per day. Rs. 30 for the course.

For further information write to the Summer School Secretary,  
National Y. W. C. A., 134, Corporation Street, Calcutta.

### AMONG OTHER DEFECTS

(Only less serious)

*Algebra and Geometry with Elementary Mathematics in the A-Group*  
In the New S. S. L. C. Scheme.

1. A practically unworkable scheme: Every High School Master will subscribe to this opinion.

2. At one stroke the two aims have been frustrated; providing a liberal education to pupils by the inclusion of Geometry and Algebra in A and fostering University education by the deletion of the same from C. Elementary Mathematics ceases to be elementary with the inclusion of Algebra.

3. 'Algebra and Geometry' the handmaid of all Sciences, is for the academy and not to the average student and is essentially a C-group subject. While every subject under the C groups has at one time or other been in the A, 'Algebra and Geometry' has never been. In the C-group it will foster mathematical talents and prepare the pupil for the Intermediate.

4. This inclusion has brought about (i) a mutilation of a well-knit and correlated syllabus in Elementary Mathematics, and (ii) a mutilation of a neat syllabus in Geometry and Algebra calculated to prepare pupils for the University course.

5. Curious combinations like History and Chemistry, Typewriting and Physics, Book-Keeping and Botany will be the consequence. How do these efficiently cater to the needs of the University? If these must be, how are these spoiled by placing Algebra and Geometry also in the second sub-division of C-group subjects?

6. If it is a despair to the generality of pupils it is wretchedness and misery to the girl-pupils, and to pupils who have recently taken up to Higher Education.

7. The reports of the S. S. L. C. Examiners in Elementary Mathematics itself have this burden of a complaint that a large bulk of the pupils do not deserve to be in the High School. How disastrous the consequences would be, if Algebra and Geometry were also included and Elementary Mathematics made more difficult?

8. There is perhaps one apology of a justification for the inclusion: that all pupils declared eligible would be fit for Group I of the Intermediate. Will they really be? Even granting this, 20,000 innocents are forced to suffer for the fancied fitness of a couple of thousands.

9. To make matters worse, this inclusion combined with immediate introduction, as is feared, even in Form V, would lead to disaster; such precipitated actions of the Department are not without precedents; the introduction of the new form of questions in all the forms straightaway for instance. Let not this be tolerated. Give time to masters to study the syllabuses, equip themselves and let everything be ready before introduction in schools is thought of.

P. R. SUBRAMANIA IYER,  
Pudukotta.

# THE S. I. T. U. PROTECTION FUND

## NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given to the members of the South Indian Teachers' Union Protection Fund that the *Sixth Annual Meeting* of the General Body of the Fund will be held on *Sunday the 1st of April, 1934, at 3 P.M.*, at the Singarachariar Hall, Hindu High School, Triplicane. All the members are requested to attend.

## AGENDA

- (1) Minutes of the last meeting of the General Body held in Trichinopoly.
- (2) Consideration of the Sixth Annual Report.
- (3) Election of office-bearers.
- (4) Election of an Auditor.
- (5) Sanction for the increase of units already made.
- (6) Consideration of Amendments to the Rules given notice of by members.

*Mr. H. Krishnasamy Aiyar*—Reg. No. 680.

*Rule 24.* At the end of the last paragraph, add "provided no change made in Rule 10 shall affect the rights of any member mentioned in Rule 10, who has been admitted as a member of the Fund before the date on which the change in the rule comes into force."

*Rule 16. Line 5.* Change 75% into 90%.

*Mr. V. Sreenivasan*—Reg. No. 7.

*Rule 6.* After line 6, add "A member may apply for any number of additional units (subject to the maximum fixed) payment towards the same and benefits accruing therefrom commencing from the date of sanction of the application by the Board of Management. Such a member shall pay in addition to the extra monthly call an Annual contribution of Rupee one and Annual Subscription of Rupee one per extra unit."

*Line 8.* After "person," add "or allow any member to increase the number of units." (Consequential alterations to be made in the other rules.)

*Rule 23. Line 4.* Delete "and."

*Line 5.* Add "and the budget estimates for the year for consideration and adoption."

*Rule 18. Line 2.* After "annually," add "in accordance with the bye-laws to be framed by the Board."

*Line 5.* Add "all nominations for the offices of members of the Board and auditors shall reach the office of the Fund on or before 1st January. A list of valid nominations shall be sent to each member at least a fortnight before the date of the Annual Meeting."

*Rule 16. Line 5.* Substitute 90% for 75%.

41, Singarachari Street,

Triplicane, Madras.

15—2—1934.

R. RAMAKRISHNAN,  
Honorary Secretary.

# THE S. I. T. U. PROTECTION FUND

## THE SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

The Board of Management has great pleasure in submitting the Sixth Annual Report of the South Indian Teachers' Union Protection Fund, Madras, for the year ending 31—12—1933.

*Reorganisation of the Fund.* The most important event during the year under report was the reorganisation of the Fund on scientific actuarial basis. The scheme based on the report of the actuary, Prof. K. B. Madhava, M.A., A.I.A. (Lond.), Mysore, was considered by the General Body of the Fund at an Extraordinary Meeting held on 26—2—1933, and the main principle of the scheme was accepted by the General Body. Consequential changes in the rules of the Fund were made at that meeting. The General Body also passed at the same meeting a transitory rule permitting those who were not willing to continue under the new scheme, to withdraw from the Fund. It was further decided that such members be paid the total call amount paid by them less as many rupees as the number of members benefited during the period of membership. 277 applications for withdrawal were at first received. Out of these 40 expressed their willingness to continue and the request was granted by the General Body. 237 members withdrew from the Fund and an amount of Rs. 4,327-7-0 was paid back to those members in complete settlement of the claims of 236 of them. One of them has decided to take the money due to him at the time of his retirement from the profession. The revised scheme came into force from the 1st of July 1933.

*Strength.* At the beginning of the year, under the old scheme, the strength of the Fund was 997. Under the transitory rule 237 members withdrew from the Fund. 66 members were in arrears for more than three months and hence their names were removed according to Rule 14 (e). But 22 of them availed themselves of the concession allowed to them for re-admission and they were re-admitted. There were six deaths during the year, three occurring before July 1933 and three after June 1933. One member withdrew from the Fund under Rule 10 of the new scheme taking the withdrawal amount referred to in Column 3 of the schedule of benefits mentioned in the above rule. During the year there were 29 admissions out of which 26 were under the new scheme and three under the old scheme. The number of members on the register on 31—12—1933 was 738. The number of members on the date of report is 749.

Under the Resolutions passed by the General Body at its meetings held on 26—2—1933, and 17—5—33, 249 members increased the number of units.

On 31—12—33,						
the total number of members contributing to 4 units	was	41				
”	”	”	”	3	”	47*
”	”	”	”	2	”	161
.....	”	”	”	1 unit	”	489

and the total number of units in force was 1,116. The total amount receivable each month towards Benefit Fund account only is Rs. 1,313 (including the payment towards the back fee).

*Meeting of the General Body.* An extraordinary meeting of the General Body of the Fund was held on 26—2—1933 to consider the new scientific scheme proposed by the Board. The Fifth Annual Meeting of the Fund was held on the 26th of February 1933 in Madras for the consideration of the Fifth Annual Report, and the election of office-bearers. An extraordinary meeting of the General Body was held on 17—5—1933 at Trichinopoly in the Provincial Educational Conference week, to consider the resolutions given notice of by the Board of Management in connection with the re-organisation of the Fund. At that meeting the General Body among other things, passed a resolution ratifying the action of the Board in sanctioning Rs. 100 out of the Profession Fund towards the Silver Jubilee of the South India Teachers' Union.

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*Board Meeting.* The Board of Management met thrice during the year, on the following dates: 15—1—'33, 16—5—'33, 13—8—'33. Many items of business requiring the consideration of the Board were decided by circulation according to Rule 21-b, sub-clause 2.

*Award of Benefit.* It was with deep regret that the Board learnt of the death of the following members of the Fund. Their nominees were paid the following amounts:—

*Under the Old Scheme.*

Reg. No.	Name and Address.	Benefit amount.
1. 264	V. Vasudeva Rao, Trivandrum	.. Rs. 499 8 0
2. 752	K. S. Narayanaswami, Dharapuram	.. „ 439 8 0
3. 100	T. Subramania Aiyar, Madras	.. „ 389 8 0

*Under the New Scheme.*

Reg. No.	Name and Address.	Benefit amount.
4. 897	R. Venkatachari, Negapatam	.. „ 510 0 0
5. 821	V. S. Natesa Aiyar, Gudiyattam	.. „ 256 0 0
6. 245	S. Rangasami Iyengar, Conjeevaram	.. „ 550 0 0*

\* This amount will be paid on the receipt of the necessary claim documents. The death took place on 24—12—1933.

The benefit amount of Rs. 498-8-0 due on account of the death of late Mr. P. G. Sundaram Aiyar on 19th December, 1932, was paid to his nominee on the 19th Jan. 1933.

*Loans.* Under Resolution 1 passed at the extraordinary meeting of the General Body held at Trichinopoly on 17—5—1933, the number of *Special Loans* issued to enable members to pay up the amount for the previous years is one hundred and the total amount due as principal on these loans is Rs. 6,330. The number of *Ordinary Loans* issued under Rule 16, is 7 and the total amount due as principal under this head is Rs. 190. Of this, one loan with Rs. 30 as principal was repaid by the member during the year under report.

*Finance.* The financial statement is appended to this Report. The amount to the credit of each of the following accounts on 31—12—1933 was as follows:—

Benefit Fund account	..	Rs.	41,829	3	7
Profession Fund account	..	„	1,663	11	3
Reserve Fund account	..	„	3,066	10	0
Working Fund account	..	„	364	0	9
Deposit with our Bankers & cash on hand	..	„	38,999	4	6

*Declaration of Bonus.* At the meeting of the General Body held on 26—2—1933 a resolution was passed requesting the Board of Management to “take steps to get expert advice regarding the question of declaring a bonus” to the members out of the surplus declared by the Actuary to exist on 31—12—1932. The Secretary on behalf of the Board entered into correspondence with the Actuary, Prof. Madhava. In his last letter on the subject the Actuary has advised us not to declare a bonus now. The Board considers it desirable to follow the advice of the expert on this matter. This need not mean any hardship since the bonus to be declared in future will be proportionate to the period of membership, etc.

*Exemption from Income-tax.* A request was made to the Secretary by some members that the Fund should take steps to get the amounts payable to the Fund by the members, exempted from income-tax. The Secretary on behalf of the Board consulted our Legal Adviser, and according to his advice, a petition has been sent on 25—1—'34 to the Government of India in Council requesting for the necessary exemption.

*Propaganda.* The Board at its meeting held on 13—8—1933 allotted an amount of Rs. 150 out of the Profession Fund to meet the actual expenses of the gentlemen requested by the Committee to undertake propaganda work in various districts, regarding the Protection Fund and the activities of the South India Teachers' Union. An amount of Rs. 47-4-9 only was spent out of it during the year under report.

The Board wishes to express its thanks to the various members and sympathisers of the Fund for the propaganda work done on its behalf, and for their hearty co-operation.

(By order of the Board.)

Triplicane,  
15-2-1934.

R. RAMAKRISHNAN,  
*Honorary Secretary.*

#### ANNOUNCEMENT

*Re. Increase of Units.*

At the request of a large number of members, the Board of Management of the Fund has, subject to the approval of the General Body, extended the time for increase of units up to the end of March, 1934, provided the amount due from July, 1933, is paid at the time the application for increase of units is made.

*N.B.*—This does not apply to members who joined the Fund after the 26th of February, 1933.

R. RAMAKRISHNAN,  
*Honorary Secretary.*

# THE S. I. T. U. PROTECTION FUND MADRAS.

## STATEMENT NO. 1.

### WORKING FUND ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR 1933.

EXPENDITURE	Rs. A. P.	INCOME.	Rs. A. P.
Printing .. .. .	302 13 0	Opening balance .. .. .	224 15 6
Contingencies .. .. .	23 2 0	Annual Contribution for the year .. .. .	1,006 0 0
Stationery .. .. .	30 2 6	Annual Subscription 50% .. .. .	494 8 0
Postage .. .. .	164 1 9	Interest thereon .. .. .	40 0 0
Salary .. .. .	360 0 0	Fines .. .. .	125 4 0
Re-organisation Fund written off for the year .. .. .	78 12 6	Interest on special and ordinary loans 25% .. .. .	41 4 6
Value of registers written off for the year .. .. .	10 0 0		
Electric charges .. .. .	18 0 0		
Rent for the year .. .. .	60 0 0		
Audit fee .. .. .	60 0 0		
Social .. .. .	45 0 0		
Travelling allowance .. .. .	147 13 6		
Honorarium to Secretary for 1932 .. .. .	200 0 0		
Advertisement charges .. .. .	15 10 0		
Contribution to S. I. T. U. Souvenir .. .. .	33 0 0		
Typewriter hire charges .. .. .	15 0 0		
Depreciation on furniture .. .. .	4 8 0		
Balance carried to Balance Sheet .. .. .	364 0 9		
	Total Rs. .. 1,932 0 0		Total Rs. .. 1,932 0 0

*Examined and found correct.*

Triplicane,  
5-2-34.

(Sd.) R RAMAKRISHNAN,  
*Hon. Secretary.*

(Sd.) T. S. VISWANATHAN, G.D.A., R.A.,  
*Regd. Accountant and Auditor.*

## STATEMENT No. 2.

## ABSTRACT OF CASH ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR

RECEIPTS.	Rs.	A.	P.
To opening balance:—			
M. T. G. C. S. Ltd. Current account .. .. .	..	642	12 3
Fixed deposits matured during the year .. .. .	..	8,700	0 0
Interest received .. .. .	..	1,400	15 6
Registration fees .. .. .	..	165	0 0
Annual Contribution .. .. .	..	1,006	0 0
Annual Subscription .. .. .	..	989	0 0
Fixed calls .. .. .	..	13,417	0 0
Suspense account .. .. .	..	880	11 9
Fines .. .. .	..	125	4 0
Postage recovered .. .. .	..	34	1 0
S. I. T. U. Subscription .. .. .	..	27	3 0
Prepayment (for 1934) .. .. .	..	182	0 0
Ordinary loan (amount repaid) .. .. .	..	30	0 0
Interest received on special loan .. .. .	..	12	14 0
Benefit Fund account (amount returned) .. .. .	..	71	5 0
S. I. T. U. Propaganda account (amount returned) .. .. .	..	2	6 3
Commission .. .. .	..	0	6 0
Withdrawal from Indian Bank S/B account .. .. .	..	55	0 0

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Total Rs. .. 27,741 14 9

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## STATEMENT No. 2.

ENDING WITH THE 31ST DECEMBER 1933.

## PAYMENTS.

	Rs.	A.	P.
Fixed Deposits with Indian Bank .. .. .	4,000	0	0
Fixed deposits with Mr. T. G. C. S. Ltd. .. .. .	7,700	0	0
Printing .. .. .	302	13	0
Stationery .. .. .	30	2	6
Postage .. .. .	198	2	9
Salary .. .. .	360	0	0
Re-organisation .. .. .	183	2	0
Rent and Lighting charges .. .. .	91	2	0
Furniture .. .. .	5	9	0
Audit fees paid .. .. .	90	0	0
Actuarial charges .. .. .	50	0	0
Social .. .. .	45	0	0
Travelling allowance .. .. .	147	13	6
Honorarium to Secretary for 1932 .. .. .	200	0	0
Contingencies .. .. .	19	13	3
S. I. T. U. Subscription account .. .. .	27	3	0
Suspense account .. .. .	932	3	0
Prepayment of 1932 adjusted during the year .. .. .	187	0	0
Advertisement charges .. .. .	15	10	0
Commission .. .. .	0	6	0
Contribution to S. I. T. U. Souvenir .. .. .	33	0	0
Do to the South Indian Teacher for '33 .. .. .	50	0	0
Do. S. I. T. U. Silver Jubilee Fund .. .. .	100	0	0
S. I. T. U. Propoganda account .. .. .	49	11	0
Typewriter hire charges .. .. .	15	0	0
Ordinary loan account .. .. .	190	0	0
Emergency calls adjusted .. .. .	841	0	0
Benefit Fund account* .. .. .	7,031	12	0
Indian Bank Savings Bank account .. .. .	601	8	0
Post Office do. .. .. .	173	9	0
M. P. C. Bank Prudential deposit account .. .. .	20	2	0
Recurring Deposit with Madras Dt. C. Bank .. .. .	1,250	0	0
<i>Closing balances:—</i>			
Indian Bank Ltd. current account .. .. .	2,793	11	11
M. T. G. C. S. Ltd. do. .. .. .	6	8	10
Total Rs. ..	27,741	14	9

\*This includes the amount paid under the Transitory rule.

Examined and found correct.

(Sd.) T. S. VISWANATHAN, G.D.A., R.A.  
Regd. Accountant and Auditor.

## STATEMENT NO. 3.

## BALANCE SHEET OF THE S. I. T. U. PROTECTION

LIABILITIES.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
<i>Reserve Fund account:—</i>			
Opening balance	..	2,717 10 0	
Add Registration fees	..	165 0 0	
Add interest	..	184 0 0	
		<hr/>	3,066 10 0
<i>Profession Fund account:—</i>			
Opening balance	..	1,216 6 0	
Add 50% Annual Subscription.	..	494 8 0	
Add interest	..	150 2 0	
		<hr/>	
	..	1,861 0 0	
<i>Less contribution to S. I. Teacher for 1933</i>	..	50 0 0	
Silver Jubilee Fund of the S. I. T. U.	..	100 0 0	
Propaganda account (S.I.T.U.)	..	47 4 9	
		<hr/>	
		197 4 9	1,663 11 3
<i>Benefit Fund account:—</i>			
Opening balance	..	28,055 6 8	
Add fixed calls received	..	13,417 0 0	
Add special loan	..	6,330 0 0	
Add interest	..	1,828 3 11	
		<hr/>	
	..	49,630 10 7	
<i>Less Emergency call adjusted</i>	..	841 0 0	
Death claims	..	2,593 0 0	
Withdrawal under rule 10	..	40 0 0	
Do under Transitory Rule	..	4,327 7 0	
		<hr/>	
		7,801 7 0	
		<hr/>	41,829 3 7
Working Fund account	..		364 0 9
Pre-payment for 1934	..		182 0 0
Suspense account	..		105 11 3
Staff security deposit	..		205 0 0
Outstanding expenses (audit fees)	..		20 0 0
			<hr/>
		Total ..	47,436 4 10
			<hr/>

## AUDITOR'S REPORT.

I have audited the above Balance Sheet of the S. I. T. U. Protection Fund, Triplicane, for the year ending 31st December, 1933, and have obtained all the informations and explanations required. I certify that in my opinion the balance sheet is properly drawn up in conformity with the rules of the Fund, so as to exhibit the true and correct

## STATEMENT NO. 3.

FUND, TRIPPLICANE, AS ON 31—12—1933.

ASSETS.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Furniture account as per last balance sheet	..	87 12 6	
Purchase during the year	..	5 9 0	
		<hr/>	
		93 5 6	
Less depreciation for the year	..	4 8 0	
		<hr/>	
			88 13 6
Interest accrued but not due	..		1,581 13 4
Ordinary loan account	..		160 0 0
Special loan account	..		6,330 0 0
<i>Investments</i> .—			
Madras Teachers' Guild Co-op. Society Fixed deposits	..	7,700 0 0	
Post office cash certificates (F. V. 10,000)	..	7,500 0 0	
6½% Govt. Bonds (F. V. 3,500)	..	3,543 0 0	
5½% do. do. (F. V. 1,000)	..	980 0 0	
Indian Bank, Ltd., Fixed deposits	..	7,250 0 0	
Madras Dt. Co-op. C. Bank do.	..	6,500 0 0	
		<hr/>	
			33,473 0 0
Reorganisation Fund account as per last balance sheet	..	132 0 0	
Add expenses during the year	..	183 2 0	
		<hr/>	
		315 2 0	
Less written off for the year	.	78 12 6	
		<hr/>	
			236 5 6
<i>Stock of registers</i> :—		50 0 0	
Less written off for the year	.	10 0 0	
		<hr/>	
			40 0 0
<i>Cash balances</i> :—			
M. T. G. C. S. Ltd. Current account	.	6 8 10	
M P Co. B. Prudential deposit account	..	298 5 0	
Indian Bank S. B. account	..	645 11 7	
Post Office S. B. account	..	518 9 11	
Madras Dt. C. C. Bank R. D. account	..	1,250 0 0	
Contingent advance with Secretary	..	2 8 0	
Indian Bank, Ltd., Current account	..	2,804 9 2	
		<hr/>	
			5,526 4 6
		<hr/>	
			Total .. 47,436 4 10

(Sd.) R. RAMAKRISHNAN,  
Hon. Secretary.

· Triplicane,  
5—2—1934.

view of the affairs of the Fund as on 31st December, 1933, according to the best of information and explanations given to me. I have verified the investments on this date.

(Sd.) T. S. VISWANATHAN, G.D.A., R.A.,  
Regd. Accountant and Auditor.

5th February, 1934.

## OUR LETTER BOX

### S. I. T. U. PROTECTION FUND

Need for a few changes in the bye-laws.

Sir,

According to the present rules of the S. I. T. U Protection Fund, a member should decide on the total number of units he desires to subscribe for when he joins the Fund and he cannot increase it later. It will be highly desirable if the rules are amended so that a member may increase the number of units (subject to the maximum fixed and other rules re. age limit, etc) at any time he pleases, the benefit for the increased unit commencing from the date of payment of the first instalment towards the same. This would amount to issuing a number of certificates, the date of benefit on each commencing from the payment of the first monthly instalment This would be helpful to teachers and increase the usefulness of the Fund A teacher joining the profession, say, at the age of 25 may take up 4 certificates, one in his first year of service, another in his 2nd year of service and so on, as he gets more increments in his salary.

Such a change in the bye-laws will not entail any extra risk to the Fund, since the Fund would incur the same risk if a new member of the same age joins the Fund. Sure there will be an increase in clerical work ; the extra expense can be met from the extra annual contribution levied for every extra unit taken later.

To permit a member to increase the number of units and ask him to pay all back fees will not really be helpful to many.

The Board of Management would do well to bestow thought on the above and consult an actuary on the matter. It may not be considered a good or convenient thing to change the rules of the Fund from time to time But we should not fight shy of making the necessary changes if we are convinced of their need and practicability.

V. Srinivasan.

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### RELATION BETWEEN TALUK BOARDS AND DISTRICT BOARDS

Sir,

It is necessary to refer to certain facts touching on the relationship between Taluk Boards and District Boards, now that the employees under Taluk Boards are expecting the District Boards to come to their rescue, in the event of the abolition of Taluk Boards.

Taluk Boards have been in the past altogether independent bodies. They made their own appointments District Boards have had no control over Taluk Boards. The manner of recruitment of clerks to the officers of the Taluk Boards has been far from satisfactory. Qualifications for posts have not been properly taken into account. Promo-

tions and increments have been given precipitately. Many of the clerks have been given almost the maximum.

When vacancies in the higher posts occurred in Taluk Board, the claims of the District Board servants were not considered. When retrenchments in the staff of the District Boards were made, the Junior Taluk Board men were kept up and the senior District Board servants were sent out.

Taluk Boards have always held that they are independent Bodies. They never came to the rescue of the District Board servants in the past. Each Taluk Board had its own way in the matter of appointments and promotions. Though both the posts of Taluk and District Board servants are pensionable, still the District Boards have had a separate cadre whereas the Taluk Boards have had different cadres even in a single District. For various reasons, it has been found quite impossible for a District Board President to send a District Board Servant to a Taluk Board or to take a Taluk Board Servant to a District Board even in the interest of work and efficiency. If any abolition of Taluk Boards is made, independent bodies—Viz, the Taluk Boards, would suffer themselves. Any scheme to absorb Taluk Board servants into the District Boards, as a condition for the abolition of the Taluk Boards will seriously interfere with the status and prospects of the District Board servants. District Board servants have been recruited with much greater care and District Boards have established in the past a high tradition and good name for Administration. Any admixture of Taluk Board elements might possibly pull down the morale besides creating hardships to several District Board servants. For the sake of accommodating several Taluk Board employees belonging to a set of independent bodies, the District Board servants should not be made to suffer. Employees under a set of anomalous and independent bodies cannot but suffer, when the time for reform in Local Self Government has come.

*One Affected.*

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## THE SOUTH INDIA TEACHERS' UNION

### AN APPEAL TO M. L. Cs.

#### *Memorandum on conditions of service of teachers in schools.*

The disabilities of teachers in schools are (1) salaries without any scale worth mentioning; (2) irregular payment of salaries and (3) insecurity of tenure even in schools where the departmental agreement is in force.

Conditions may be some what better in schools under some local bodies, but there are several instances of arrears of salaries for teachers in elementary schools under Taluk boards. There is serious dissatisfaction with the conditions that prevail in aided-schools, elementary and secondary. The latest report on Public Instruction for 31-32 leaves no one in doubt as to the disquieting conditions in aided schools. The D. E. O. of Tanjore reports as follows:—"their salaries are poor and what has been poor has become poorer still under the present financial stress. In a few cases the salaries are kept in arrears for months together." The D. E. O. of Malabar refers to "the very sad feature of differences in the salary shown in the account books and the salary actually disbursed." The D. E. O. of East Godavari feels that "pecuniary embarrassment undoubtedly affects the efficiency of teachers and their wages should not be reduced below the efficiency minimum." The D. E. O. of Coimbatore is of opinion that "the agreement between the management and teachers practically serves no useful purpose and certainly does not achieve the ostensible object in view. Even local bodies treat temporary and acting teachers in a harsh manner, sending them away at the beginning of the vacation and re-employing on the reopening date without vacation pay." The D.E.O. of Madras complains of the lack of stability in the teacher's tenure. The Director states among other things in his report as follows: "Even worse than the prevalence of the low rates of salary is the delay that often occurs in the disbursement of salaries in some of the committee and individual management schools. Such delays lead teachers into debt, worry and litigation. Salaries are allowed to accumulate in some schools while in others managements are not able to pay the teachers at the rates on which they were appointed." Further on the report refers to the situation in the following terms:—"Where managements have no other visible source of income than the fee income and the Government grant, they are driven to make-shifts of various kinds. Delay in the payment of salaries, dispensing with the services of teachers at the end of each year and payment at rates different from those shown in books are some of the devices by which managements keep down their expenditure.—In most schools such agreement has been drawn up but the provisions of these agreements do not appear to afford adequate protection to the teachers against ill-treatment by the management."

The salaries of teachers in aided-schools and in schools under the local bodies were not improved while those of the employees under Government were reorganised some years back. Their repeated representations were not heeded. A very small sum of one lakh was made available as a special teaching grant to aided-secondary schools under stringent conditions, and very few schools could take advantage of this dole. Even this special teaching grant has been cut out as a measure of retrenchment. Owing to the existing financial stringency a cut on the low salaries has been imposed and it varies from 5% to 10% and in several schools increments have been stopped. The scales have also been appreciably reduced and curiously enough the existing incumbents are required to accept lower salaries.

The department of Public Instruction is aware of the situation. When it was approached by the South India Teachers' Union we were told that it would be willing to do what was possible. We understand that the only way in which pressure may be brought to bear upon the management lies in the withdrawal of recognition. This is really a serious step which will cause considerable inconvenience to the public. The department feels that many of the objectionable practices will cease to exist only if there be a strong public opinion. The union feels that with a sound and well-informed public in the locality the conditions of service may show signs of improvement. But the need for prompt and direct action is real and urgent. The undesirable features referred to in the report are not exceptional nor are they confined to any one locality. How can progress in education be satisfactory when the agencies that play the dominant part in the educational system are seriously crippled? It is not a wise policy to stick to red tape and formulae when the agencies that are doing the work of the state are in a depressed condition. Education is very largely in the hands of private managers and local bodies. Their contributions are substantial and they relieve the state of much of its burdens. In view of the soundness of the widely accepted policy of state aided-education, several private bodies interested in education have come to stay and have been able to tap resources from different quarters. It will not be possible to replace them to any extent nor is it desirable to let them die. Statesmanship requires that a helping hand must be extended to managers and local bodies so that they may be in a position to tide over the crisis. The following tables show what a large part the aided schools have been playing all these years in regard to every sphere of education. Hence the growth and progress of aided-schools should be a matter of great and special concern to the state. The children that are reading in such schools are the sons of taxpayers and they are entitled to all facilities for sound education just like the children in Government and board schools. The country will suffer if over one lakh of pupils in aided-secondary schools and over one million in aided-elementary schools be allowed to shift for themselves. The average fee in aided-schools is greater than that in the local board or Government school while the average cost is less in aided-schools. This means, (1) that the pupils in aided-schools pay more by way of fees, (2) that the schools are under staffed, (3) that the teachers are over-worked and under-paid and, (4) that the expenditure on equipment is reduced to minimum. Tax-paying parents who send the children to aided-schools are seriously handicapped and they have to find additional funds to keep them going. Should they not expect help from the State? Arguments may not be necessary to urge the need for adopting measures for the improvement and support of aided-schools.

In view of the dominant part played by aided-schools and in view of the very large number of scholars passing through them it is necessary that the public should be induced to take an abiding interest in the administration and stability of these schools. Leaders should therefore be pleased to urge, (1) that the Grant-in-aid Code be revised and that additional resources be made available as teaching and equipment grants so as to enable managements to pay reasonable salaries regularly and to provide the necessary equipment, (2) that certain definite rules governing the conditions of service be introduced and insisted upon as a condition of recognition and aid so that the teaching staff may be freed from the worry of insecurity of tenure and may not be subjected to frequent reductions and cuts arbitrarily imposed, (3) that a minimum scale of salary for every grade of teacher be fixed and insisted upon as a condition of recognition and aid, (4) that a provision for an arbitration board be made to consider points of dispute referred to by the teacher or manager and to fix the compensation, (5) that steps be taken to associate public men with the school board or committee, (6) that the department be entrusted with powers for a more effective control of schools and, (7) that the advisory committee of education be given an opportunity to guide the department in the framing of Education Budget and, (8) that the professional organisation, the South India Teachers' Union or its affiliated guilds as the case may be officially represented by nomination if need be in the Legislative Councils, District Secondary Education Boards, District Educational Councils, S. S. L. C. Board, etc., so as to place the point of view of the profession in regard to every question of educational importance.

## I

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR INDIAN BOYS.

Management.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No. of teachers.	Contribution from general revenues. Rs.	Total direct expenditure. Rs.
Government	.. 1686	74638	2496	971241	980081
Municipality	.. 1116	122148	4232	531139	1739636
Local Board	.. 14302	794221	29389	4580816	8488298
Aided	.. 27533	1199815	55428	4317654	7784583

## II.

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR INDIAN BOYS.

*Direct Expenditure.*

Management.	No. of schools.	No. of scholars.	No of teachers.	From General revenue. Rs.	Expenditure. from fees. Rs.	Total from all Sources. Rs.
Government	.. 15	3940	226	192864	86773	281261
Municipality	.. 50	21439	1039	185447	538721	937750
Local Board	.. 205	50020	3086	624887	1024667	2761170
Aided	.. 251	102720	4980	674763	2671809	4519337



## III.

## AVERAGE COST AND AVERAGE FEE IN RUPEES AND ANNAS

Grade.	Government.		Local Body.		Aided.	
	A. Cost.	A. Fee.	A. Cost.	A. Fee.	A. Cost.	A. Fee.
College	.. 258-3	85-5	—	—	162-9	90-6
Secondary	..					
School for	..					
Indian boys	.. 68-12	21-6	49-7	21-9	41-14	25-4

## IV.

## AMOUNT ON BUILDING, FURNITURE, APPARATUS IN 1931-32.

Source.	College.	High School.	Middle School.	Elementary School.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
General revenue	.. 795712	295506	53258	138344
Local Board	.. ..	377396	82898	620028
Management through sub- scription, etc.	.. 538350	711951	52137	530464

M. S. SABHESAN,  
*Secretary.*

## THE SOUTH INDIA TEACHER'S UNION.

Notice is hereby given to the members of the Union, that the Annual meeting of the Union will be held on Saturday the 31st March 1934 at 11 A.M., in the Hindu High School, Triplicane. All affiliated associations are requested to send delegates.

## AGENDA.

1. Adoption of the Annual Report.
2. Election of office-bearers.
3. Service conditions bill.
4. Any other urgent official item.

## EDITORIAL

### CHAMPION SCHEME

This Scheme is the talk of the day. The department has called upon the inspecting officers to submit definite proposals for giving effect to the scheme in their respective areas. The managing bodies never thought that the department would take up the Consolidation Scheme seriously and they now feel they have been taken by surprise. Even the local bodies which have to bear almost the entire responsibility under the changed conditions, find themselves unprepared. To add to the confusion, there is the bill for the abolition of taluk boards in our presidency.

Our readers will be glad to find in this issue, special articles on the "Champion Scheme" contributed by persons who are competent from their personal experience to express an opinion on the different aspects of the scheme. We shall not be understood as necessarily supporting all the arguments advanced by our distinguished contributors. But we may make bold to state that a good case has been made out for *hastening slowly*. This scheme was placed before the public in April 1930 and the local bodies were called upon to consider the steps necessary to give effect to the scheme. The scheme has been more or less comfortably lodged these three years and none of the parties concerned seemed to be enthusiastic over the scheme.

We considered this Consolidation Scheme as early as August 1930, and the lapse of three years does not require any modification of our views expressed at that time. One who chances to study the Champion Scheme may be apt to imagine that the expansion of Elementary education has gone on for some years at a break-neck pace and that the number of elementary schools is far more than what may be necessary even according to modern standards. If we should turn to the latest quinquennial report we are surprised to note that ingenious attempts are made to explain away the fall in the number of schools. The progress in elementary education during the last quinquennium is one of which no one can be proud. "Schools, more schools, still more schools," is, and should be, the cry even at the present moment. Sir A. P. Patro had in his programme one school for every village with a population of 500 and we are still far away from that ideal. Many are the villages in rural areas where schools have yet to be started. Compulsion has been resorted to only in a few areas. It is amusing, therefore, that at this stage the department should attempt to bring into force the "Champion Scheme" which in effect rules out proposals for expansion. We wish to reiterate the view we had expressed in our columns in August 1930. "No purpose will be served by using strong words, and a scheme which is likely to check expansion will not commend itself to the public worker. He will be anxious to have from the expert a scheme which will, without interfering with expansion, tend to improve the quality. He will certainly expect something more than 'a starting point for efficient and economical expansion' in the year of grace 1930."

One who is familiar with the history of education in our presidency will find serious difficulties in the actual working of the Champion Scheme. The difficulty becomes all the greater in view of the certain reservations contained in the instructions. The number of aided schools is considerable and any proposal which does not seek to enlist the sympathetic and hearty co-operation of the managers of aided schools will be found unworkable. Our local bodies are not yet in a position to bear the entire responsibility and the financial condition of many of these bodies is not satisfactory. Members of the Legislative Council had, on several occasions, been compelled to bring to the notice of the Minister of Education that the salaries of teachers in several board elementary schools were kept in arrears for months. Who can expect such bodies to be able to maintain and run *Central Schools* which involve greater expenditure on buildings, furniture and equipment? If the authorities should persist in their attitude, they will compel a number of useful and efficient aided schools to be closed but they will be unable to get the local bodies to start schools wherever necessary. The financial contribution which the aided schools have been making in respect of elementary education is not at all inconsiderable and to enforce the Champion Scheme amounts to a rejection of the willing and generous contribution of aided schools towards elementary education. Secondly, the idea of Junior Schools with two standards is open to serious objections. It will be found uneconomical to run such schools and they cannot hope to be efficient. These schools will serve only to keep the children within their walls and there will be no incentive for equipping them properly with charts, apparatuses and other teaching appliances. Parents are generally keen on their children completing a stage in the same school and they will find it difficult to reconcile themselves to the idea of letting their children remain in indifferent and ill-equipped Junior Schools. Much is made in the report of the classes being maintained up to the full number of thirty. We doubt very much whether, in actual practice, the sections even in the Central School can always remain thirty strong. Each class in the Central School may, in addition to a general section, have to provide for a section for Muhammadans, a section for the depressed classes, and a section for girls if necessary. We have no doubt that several sections will not be thirty strong and "economic management" will be only on paper. As regards co-education which is not given the consideration it deserves in the scheme, the observations of our contributor should not be ignored. "It is inconceivable that the generality of Indian opinion will stomach a scheme of which mixed education on a formidable scale is an inherent part. Only imagine the possibilities (I take an extreme, perhaps, incredible case but what I want to show is the kind of thing the Scheme implies.): a staff blended of educated men and country bumpkins; of women (even teaching sisters may be) and women teachers separated by their profession from their legitimate mates; children of all ages and of both sexes, some of them coming from homes where decency means nothing at all; girls from the purdah, boys from the street . . ."

Equal facilities for religious instruction to children of all faiths do not seem to be possible under the scheme. The difficulty has been clearly pointed out in the special article as follows: "If you want religion with your education, you must have your own schools; if you cannot have schools with thirty pupils in each class, you must *pay your own teachers after paying those of the state through your taxes.*"

There is one other important objection to which the attention of the authorities should be drawn. No desirable reform in respect of curriculum or of educational method can possibly be introduced, when elementary education is centred in Central Schools. The large number of pupils has always been found to be an insuperable difficulty in the way of educational reform in secondary schools and colleges. Individual attention to pupils is found impossible and all the defects of paper administration are noticeable in secondary schools and colleges. With Central schools rising into prominence and assuming greater importance, it will be impossible to take note of the individual differences in pupils and the results will be disastrous.

It is putting the cart before the horse to think of consolidation and concentration at the present time. The time for taking up that question is when we have a vast net-work of elementary schools within easy reach of one another. The District Educational Councils have got powers enough even now to prevent the starting of schools in areas where there may be no urgent necessity. Unnecessary competition and wastage may be thus avoided. The real problem that has to be tackled in respect of efficiency is the improvement of the resources of the different agencies associated with elementary education. Once suitable agencies really interested in elementary education are found, the duty of the Government is to recognise their position and to make it worthwhile for them to continue their useful work. The remarks of Dr. Meston quoted by one of the contributors are significant. "The practical administrator cannot but see that if 65% of the educational institutions of the country are in the hands of private agencies and 35% in the hands of local bodies, the surest way to advance is to give these two great joint contributors to Indian literacy the unassailable status of partners. With equitable rules as to aid and an administration which extends impartial encouragement to both partners, we should see friction largely eliminated, local patriotism mobilised in the furtherance of education and private resources tapped as they never have been before. Local and private agencies, as partners in a great national concern, would afford the most effective means of rolling away the reproach that even now only 42% of the children of the school-going age and 10% of the girls of the school-going age are actually at school."

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#### THE OLD STORY AND ITS MORAL

The mind of the Academic Council of the Madras University is inscrutable and its decision on the revised proposals of the Syndicate regarding the S. S. L. C. scheme reminds one of the story of the *old man and the ass*. Our readers will remember that only in last August the Council adopted a motion that the S. S. L. C. Course shall comprise five subjects under the compulsory group. The suggestion of two optionals was thrown out. In the face of this clear expression of opinion, the Syndicate came forward with another suggestion in regard to the S. S. L. C. scheme. The chief features of this revised scheme are: (1) the substitution of Mathematics including Algebra and Geometry for Elementary Mathematics under the compulsory group; (2) the deletion of all knowledge subjects from the compulsory group; and (3) the selection of three optional subjects one being chosen from each of the three subdivisions under the optional group. The B. Group provided for a study of History of England and India in Form IV. There were a number of amendments to this revised scheme of the Syndicate which aimed at re-

moving the objectionable features of this scheme. When this item was taken up, the resolution of Mr. Satyamurthi, requiring admission to be thrown open only to candidates who have passed the Matriculation Examination came also to be considered. The discussion lasted for some hours and good old arguments were repeated once again. The decision on the resolution of Mr. Satyamurthi was deferred and the motion of the Syndicate was considered. Several amendments were rejected. It is a surprise that no member chose to point out the impracticable nature of the proposal of the Syndicate. Under the revised scheme, every candidate has to select three optional subjects, one from each subdivision. The object of this provision seems to be to give an opportunity to the pupil to study a subject in the humanities group, one in the science group and one in the vocational group. This kind of restriction in the optional group means that the school should in addition to instruction in History or Geography provide for the instruction of all students in a science subject as well as in a vocational subject. Taking the existing facilities in schools into consideration, it will be obvious that they cannot manage to give instruction to all the pupils, say, in Physics or Chemistry. While it is found difficult even now to give the necessary laboratory facilities under the existing scheme, it is well nigh impossible to think of teaching all the pupils optional Physics or Chemistry. Boys who have selected Physics or Chemistry are now working on Saturdays and if the number requiring instruction should increase considerably, the schools with their slender resources will hardly be in a position to cope with the situation. What has been said about Science subjects will apply to technical subjects like Typewriting. Our schools have neither the accommodation nor the equipment necessary for the working of the scheme. It is well known that the department cannot hold out any hope of increase in grants which will enable the managements to take on hand the expansion of the school. Frequent changes of a radical character are a great inconvenience to our schools. They cannot make up their mind to spend their resources if any, when they are not sure of the position next year. The existing scheme may not be altogether good but it has not been given a fair trial. It does not entail additional burden on the management while it makes it possible for the laboratories to be utilised. If one should contend that one optional subject cannot be considered adequate for the purpose of the University, this proposal of the Syndicate does not improve the situation. The grouping under the Syndicate scheme will be haphazard and cannot help being haphazard. It is not left to the school or to the pupil really to exercise a free choice. Opinions will differ with regard to the prescription of three subjects in the optional group. It is also debatable whether the University should necessarily compel every student to select one subject from the vocational subdivision. There may be a fairly good section of pupils who may be keen on definitely proceeding to the University and thus qualifying themselves from the school stage onwards for the University career. It is one thing to make a provision for a vocational course in the scheme and it is quite another to compel everyone to choose a subject under the technical subdivision though he does not care to earn a living by the study of Typewriting or Book-keeping.

The Academic Council has chosen to go back on its decision and it is not possible to say what the next move will be. There may be some satisfaction inasmuch as the number of subjects to be selected from the optional group is reduced to two. But the resolution as adopted still requires

the candidate to select one from each of the two out of three subdivisions. This decision serves merely to lighten the course considerably but it does not make it easy for schools to offer the necessary courses. The original object which the Syndicate might have had in view is also frustrated. There is one other objectionable feature which requires the careful consideration of teachers. The inclusion of Mathematics with Algebra and Geometry raises serious apprehensions in the minds of teachers in schools. They are of opinion that this will be a great hardship to a large number of pupils who have no aptitude at all for Mathematics. Very few will be found to support the old-fashioned idea that higher Mathematics should find a place in the compulsory group because of its value from formal training. We may be told that the syllabus will be definite and clear cut. It is feared that a good number of students who find even our present Elementary Mathematics a hard nut will be seriously handicapped. While this compulsory mathematics will act as a heavy strain on many pupils, it will not be of any distinct help to students who may intend to select Mathematics as an optional subject in the college classes. We fail to see the merit in adopting a proposal which benefits neither the one nor the other. Now that the Academic Council has decided to have three subjects in the compulsory group and two in the optional group subject to certain restrictions, it is for schools to think over the practicability of the decision and to communicate their opinion. They should know where the shoe pinches.

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#### PROPAGANDA

We invite the attention of our readers to the memorandum on the "Conditions of Service of Teachers," published elsewhere in this issue. This has been prepared for the information of the members of the Legislative Council who have been approached with the request that they take the points into consideration and do the needful. Some members have already promised to study the questions presented by the Union and bring them to the notice of the authorities at the time of the Budget discussion in the Legislative Council. We appeal to our readers scattered throughout the presidency to see the members of the Legislative Council in the respective areas and to enlist their sympathy and support. What is needed is a well-informed public opinion and we trust our appeal to the M. L. C.s will not go in vain. We hope they will find it possible to build up a sound public opinion and also to urge on the authorities the necessity for rushing to the rescue of the aided schools and the schools under local bodies, especially at the present moment.

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#### TEACHERS' BOOK-SHELF

The reviews of a large number of books have been held over for the next issue. We regret it very much, but as we wished to offer facilities for a detailed consideration of the Champion Scheme we are compelled to keep the reviews for the next issue.