

THE SOUTH INDIAN TEACHER

Vol. VII

15th May 1934

No. 5

THE LATE MR. W. M. THEOBALD

The news of the death of Mr. W. M. Theobald, on the 13th instant in England should have come as a great shock to the teachers in South India. It was only this day last year he delivered the commemoration address on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the South India Teachers' Union, celebrated at the Lawley Hall, Trichinopoly. His melodious and inspiring talk of that night should still be ringing in the ears of the many teachers that were gathered on the occasion. He was described on that occasion by speaker after speaker as the Father of the Union and truly he was that. He came to Coimbatore in 1904 as Principal of the Stanes High School, Coimbatore. He was then a member of the National Union of Teachers. He found teachers in South India disorganised and their emoluments poor. The ardent N.U.T. member preached the gospel of Self-help, Unity and Organisation to the teachers of Coimbatore. The Coimbatore Guild was started. From 1904 to 1907, he used to attend the educational conferences of the Madras Teachers' Guild as a representative of Coimbatore. He then popularised the idea of the organisation of a provincial Union of teachers. In 1908, a committee was appointed to consider the steps necessary for the formation of such an association. Messrs. P. Lakshminarasu, and J. P. Cotelingam were members of that Committee and the enthusiastic and young European from Coimbatore was its convener, who soon prepared a draft constitution for consideration at the first Conference to be convened in December of the same year. Sir Murray Hammick opened the conference and Dr. J. H. Stone addressed it. It was then that Mr. Theobald was elected secretary. He was secretary for only one year and in that year he had sown the seeds which sprouted in later years. He held his office with great distinction. He persuaded Sir J. H. Stone, to introduce a scheme of Provident Fund for teachers. After 15 years of agitation, the Government was pleased to prepare a scheme of Provident Fund for teachers in non-government service. So, to-day if teachers in these institutions have some pension benefit they owe it to Mr. Theobald.

Twenty five years later in January 1933, Mr. Theobald again came in touch with the Union, almost by an accident. When he learnt of the preparations made by the Union for its Silver Jubilee he made enquiries whether this was the Union he ushered into existence in 1908 and when requested to deliver the commemoration address he readily consented to do so. In the course of his address he outlined the work of the N.U.T. and suggested to

the S. I. T. U. the raising of funds similar to the B. & O. Fund. His appeal was so fervent and sincere that on the spot a sum of over Rs 500 was collected ; and it now forms the nucleus of the Jubilee Fund. To the members of the S.I. T U. he was a real inspiration. They will do well to remember the concluding words he uttered on that occasion "*Band together, smk individual difference. be united, for, united you stand and divided you will fall.*"

Mr. Theobald was a great educationist. He was the founder of the Breek's Memorial European School, Ooty. He was very popular in Ootacamund. He took a real and sincere interest in the education of the people of that place. His death is a great loss to South India, Europeans and Indians alike. Teachers of European schools seldom take an interest in Indian schools or Indian teachers. Not so Mr. Theobald. Though he worked in an European school, he has given to Indian teachers that light they need most for their real advancement. May his soul rest in Peace !

VERNACULARISATION OF STUDIES

BY

MR. R. M. SAVUR,

District Educational Officer, Madura.

In the newspaper report of Mr. Erlam Smith's speech at the opening of the recent meeting of the Madras Teachers' Guild he is stated to have made the following observations.

"He was glad to find that the agenda of the conference included discussion of subjects involving the application of scientific methods and the statistical treatment to educational topics. He knew that there was a general feeling in India that these matters were often decided by mere expressions of opinion. If twenty and odd people joined and came to a decision, that carried an enormous amount of weight in dealing with educational policy. This state of affairs was not desirable nor destined to continue long.

Those who were accustomed to a scientific study of subjects would realise that the mere *ipse dixit* of a scientist would not carry any weight unless it was followed by demonstrations and experiments. * * *

* * * Generally in educational enquiries what was needed was more and more measurement and mathematical treatment. For example, in considering a subject like the use of vernaculars in the S. S. L. C course he did not think that they could settle the question by merely getting individual opinions on the subject. What was needed was a proper statistical study by means of going through the marks of candidates, etc. The proper method was to deal with the results of examinations from the statistical point of view."

In view of these remarks made by the Director of Public Instruction what I said in one of my lectures delivered in connection with the University vacation course last December may be of interest to some of your readers.

That part of the lecture which I am giving here aroused a great deal of indignation among the listeners. So much so that one teacher even waylaid me outside the Senate House and asked, "Have we been sent for only to be insulted?" However, the reader who reads carefully what follows will be able to judge who has insulted whom.

Extract from my first lecture of University Vacation Course.—

"To-day I mean to plead for a radical change in the manner of tackling the many important educational problems that are in urgent need of solution. Education in India is a fertile virgin field for research—a field so fertile and neglected that a mere cleaning of weeds and scratching of the surface will give a plentiful yield. No profound learning or superior intelligence is necessary for a worker to obtain valuable results, provided the scientific method is employed.

The oldest and most futile method of attacking problems was the traditional *a priori* method of controversial discussion. Centuries ago this method was employed even in what to-day are called the 'Sciences' in which the scientific method is exclusively employed.

One subject after another adopted the scientific method and became a science. The last to utilise the scientific method and achieve the status of a science was Pedagogy.

A book published more than 15 years ago contains the following.

"The method of attacking the solution of such fundamental questions—school problems—prior to our generation was clearly traditional and based on individual experience. It was said by the representatives of the established sciences, and freely admitted by pedagogues, that 'Education' was not a science—that its method was not 'scientific.' By this was meant that school men did not make use of the fundamental steps in the scientific procedure of solving problems.

Lack of thorough collection of facts concerning educational conditions, measurement of results, statistical treatment of data, setting up experimental methods of studying school practice—these are the counts on which the older pedagogy was indicted.

The above statement of the ways in which pedagogy failed to utilise scientific method reveals specifically the steps in the development of 'scientific education' during the past two decades. The school man has turned to exactly these steps of procedure in the attempt to determine the present status of school practice and to direct scientifically the course of its development."

The extract gives an idea of how pedagogy attained the status of a science in foreign countries. 15 years ago in Europe and America, the old, traditional, *a priori* method of controversial discussion had given way to experimental and statistical attempts to solve school problems scientifically.

In other countries than ours both psychology and pedagogy—which is merely applied psychology—have so rapidly and completely developed owing to the adoption of scientific methods that almost universally the method of experiment is adopted to settle any question. The most carefully reasoned *a priori* arguments are rejected in favour of experimental evidence when that evidence is contrary to the logically presented arguments.

I may give here one example of how experimental methods are being used even to settle what may appear to be unimportant questions.

Take the subject-method of subtraction. Most of us are probably aware that there are more than one method of doing simple subtraction. In fact there are three methods. Which of these three is the best ?

The following extract gives a clear idea of how the modern scientific pedagogue looks at such questions.

"One of the most debated questions in the teaching of Arithmetic is that of the method to be used in subtraction. Of the various methods proposed, three have received the greatest study, namely, the method of de-

composition, the method of equal addition and the Austrian or additive method. Books on methods of teaching Arithmetic have devoted pages to discussions with regard to which of these three methods is best. Practically all the discussions are *a priori* in character and undertake to point out the logical arguments for each type of procedure. A good example of these theoretical discussions is given by Thorndike, who devoted some eight pages to a review of the various arguments on this issue.

After regarding the many pages of logical discussion in the books as to which method of subtraction should be followed the scientific student of education is surprised to find that few experimental studies have been made to determine the results of using these various methods. *Much discussion and little experiment has characterised the controversy between the methods.* (Italics are mine).

* * * * *

The experimental evidence from the four investigations mentioned is uniformly in favour of the method of equal addition. Although the number of investigations is small, the unanimity of their findings would warrant the preference of the equal addition method, at least until further evidence is available."

This is the attitude which characterises the student of Education in other countries even towards questions of minor importance. What methods have been so far employed by educationists in this country to solve problems of supreme importance? Briefly—much discussion and little experiment has characterised the controversy on every important question.

If the discussions consisted always of cool, calculated, dispassionate arguments adduced by open-minded people some useful purpose would be served. But often sentiment and passion take the place of sound reasoning and this only leads to futile discussions.

Take a problem of first-rate importance like the medium of instruction. In any conference of teachers a secondary grade teacher or unqualified pundit will stand up and thump the table and spout patriotism and the audience, forgetting all the most carefully reasoned arguments of any speaker who might have been bold enough to oppose vernacularisation, will pass unanimous resolutions in favour of immediate and compulsory vernacularisation

If we are to arrive at really worth while conclusions then all sentiment should be set aside and we should attack every problem in a cool, calculating, dispassionate manner. There is no place for sentiment in science. The true scientist must be as ready to accept the experimental evidence which proves his theories to be wrong as to accept favourable evidence.

I am therefore going to deal in some detail with one question the discussions about which have always been characterised by too much sentiment and too little of a genuine desire for truth. I am beginning thus by deliberately choosing so very controversial a subject. Those who can listen to me today dispassionately as befits the scientific pedagogue may benefit from my succeeding lectures.

I therefore propose dealing with the subject "Medium of Instruction." *I am not going to say anything either for or against the use of vernacular as*

the medium. But I intend only to show you how this problem has been tackled—to show what has been done and what left undone.

Steps in the scientific attack on a problem.

- (1) Clear statement of the Problem.
- (2) Collection of all existing and available data.
- (3) Formulation of a preliminary theory.
- (4) Experimental verification of the theory.

These are roughly the steps to be taken in a scientific attack on a problem. Have these steps been taken before arriving at a solution to the problems ?

(1) *Clear statement of the problem.* Has the problem been clearly stated ?

(a) Those who have listened to debates on this question and read articles dealing with it will have noted that the words “Vernacular” and “Mother tongue” are used indiscriminately. When we talk of using the vernacular as the medium in the place of English do we mean simply the official vernacular language of the District or do we mean the mother tongue ? If the vernacular proposed to be used as the medium is not the mother tongue how can the change be beneficial ? Learning will not be made any easier for an Urdu speaking Muhammadan boy changing the medium from English to, say, Tamil. Obviously therefore all the time we are saying “Vernacular” we must be meaning “the mother tongue.”

(b) Again, the problem has never been stated clearly but been left delightfully vague for no definite statement has been made as to what we hope to achieve by a change in the medium of instruction.

It must be obvious that we should know our goal and make certain that the chosen path does lead to the goal before we set out. Otherwise we may start out from Madras to Chingleput and find ourselves at the Red Hills and have to retrace our steps, come back to the initial starting point and set out again.

At least two objects have been stated as the aims—improvement of the vernacular and raising the standard of attainments.

Our aim cannot be the improvement of the vernacular for if it were we would have by now taken the more obvious and direct steps to our goal. These are, employing better qualified men to teach the vernacular, and paying them what they really deserve. So long as our schools continue to give our pandits the pay and status of a little lower than that of the District Collector's Duffadar we can give little credit to the claim that we desire to improve the status of the vernaculars.

The only object left is the improvement in the standard of attainments. We can now state the problem clearly as follows : To raise the standard of attainments we must use the mother tongue of the pupil as the medium of Instruction.

We may now proceed to see whether step (2)—Collection of all existing and available data has been taken.

There are other countries in the world besides India where bilingualism is a problem, e.g. America, Wales, Switzerland, Austria. There must be a mass of evidence available on this question in those countries but I will not take up your time by considering such evidence. Is there no data available in India and have steps been taken to collect and study this data ?

I shall just give two instances of available data which we have failed to study.

First let me reiterate our contention. We maintain that the sole reason of the low standard of attainments is the use of English as the medium of instruction.

The S. S. L. C. Board have repeatedly stated that Girls' Schools do better than Boys' Schools. Yet most Girls' Schools use English as the medium of instruction not only from the 4th Form but from the 1st Class upwards. Yet why do they do invariably better ? Small classes ? But there are many Boys' Schools with small classes which never do so well. In fact Boys' Schools with small classes are no better than Boys' Schools with big classes.

Next, let us compare a bilingual district with a unilingual district—say South Kanara with any purely Tamil district.

What are the mother tongues of the people of South Kanara ? Three large and most highly educated communities in South Kanara viz., Saraswats, Gowd-Saraswats and Roman Catholics, form a very large portion of the population. The mother tongue of these communities is Konkani which has very little connection with any Dravidian language but is a dialect of Hindi mixed with Mahratti. Two other large communities—non-brahmin communities—speak another unwritten language called Tulu which has little resemblance to Kanarese. The Moplals and the whole of one taluk is practically Malayalam. Only one taluk in the whole district is Kanarese. Yet the official language is Kanarese and the medium of instruction is Kanarese till Form IV. The result is that children say, of Konkani speaking parents, have to learn three languages by the time they are six. They speak in Konkani with their parents, in Tulu with servants and Kanarese in School and later on English. Compare the state of these children with those of a purely Tamil district.

S. Kanara Dt. These are taught from Standard I to Form III, i.e. 8 years, in a language (Kanarese) which is not their mother tongue. From Form IV to Form VI, i.e. 3 years, they are taught in English.

Tamil District.—For the first 8 years instruction is in the mother tongue (Tamil) and only for 3 years in English. I set this out in the table for ease of comparison.

District.	Standard I to Form III. First 8 years.	Form IV to VI Last 3 years.
S. Kanara	Medium—NOT mother tongue but Kanarese.	Medium—English.
Madura	do. Mother tongue.	Medium—English.

For the first 8 years of school life when a solid foundation of sound study habits and skills should be laid one district uses the *mother tongue*, the other a vernacular which is *not the mother tongue* but is almost as foreign to the children as English. In one district the children are *never* taught in mother tongue while in the other district for the first most important 8 years of the 11 the children are taught in the mother tongue.

Therefore, if our contention, viz., that the use of a language not the mother tongue is the chief cause of the low standard of attainments, is true then the results in the South Kanara Schools should be worse than the Madura results. But ask any one who has been an S. S. L. C. Examiner at any time and he will tell you that the average standard of South Kanara papers is invariably about the best in the Presidency, much better than the average standard of any purely Tamil or purely Andhra district.

If we look at these data dispassionately we shall be forced to one of two conclusions :

(1) The average intelligence of the people of South Kanara is very much higher than that of the Tamils. (This of course no man will grant).

(2) After all it may be possible that the medium of instruction is neither the sole nor the main cause of the low standard and that there may be other causes at least as important as the medium of instruction instrumental in keeping the standard of attainments so low as to cause general dissatisfaction.

Thus we see that we have not taken steps (1) and (2) of the scientific method. But clearing steps (1) and (2) with a jump we have landed on step (3) and formulated a theory. This theory is—the sole obstacle to learning is the foreign medium used and consequently changing over to mother tongue must automatically raise the standard of attainments.

This still leaves us face to face with the question, is the standard of attainment satisfactory in the forms and classes below Form IV where the mother tongue is the medium? No one discusses this, but is tacitly assumed that everything is O.K. till we come to Form IV, and then suddenly the patient takes a turn for the worse and finally expires in the Sixth. How¹ ever let us not unnecessarily exercise ourselves in wondering whether the standard of attainments up to Form III is as high as it ought to be and cannot be raised any higher but pass on to see whether step 4—experimental verification has been taken.

Of course no one has definitely undertaken this experiment as an experiment to settle a doubtful theory. But many headmasters, already convinced of the effect of change of medium to the mother-tongue, have taken the plunge. Whatever the motive of the headmasters might have been, we have ready at hand an experiment conducted on a gigantic scale. Over a hundred High Schools have been using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The results of these schools must settle the question beyond any possibility of doubt. If the S.S.L.C. Marks of the candidates from these schools are better than the scores of candidates from English medium schools, then a satisfactory case has been made out for the immediate change of medium from English to Vernacular in all schools: if they are no better, or if they are worse, then equally obviously there is some other cause (or

causes) besides the medium which operates in keeping down the standard of attainments.

For information on this point we must obviously look to the S.S.L.C. Examiners. Let us see what they have to say. Looking over the annual reports of the S.S.L.C. Examiners we find that excepting the report for one particular year the other reports make not even a passing mention of this topic. One solitary chief examiner in only one year has said anything about it. Here are his remarks.

“ A few observations on the medium of instruction may be welcome. *A comparison of the average of the English and the Vernacular answer papers would be misleading, unless it be postulated that the candidates are of equal mental power.* The poor performance in Telugu is attributed by an Assistant Examiner to the lack of good suitable text books ; this is a want that can be supplied. The two assistant examiners who valued Tamil Papers have found good reasons to prefer the vernacular medium ; one of them is happy to note the absence of such faulty expressions as those in English, e.g., The balance of power was without fear * * * * The contrast between the media is well brought out in the following expressions.

“ Henry VIII wanted Anne Boleyn who was a dancing girl.”

ஹென் றி ஆன் பொலினிடம் மோகம் கொண்டான்.

It is worth considering whether the abandonment of the English medium in History may not result in diminution of occasions for faulty expressions in English.”

The above remarks are worth close study. The reader who wants to cultivate the scientific attitude should read not only the lines but between the lines as well ; and he will be very edified if he does.

Take the first sentence : A comparison of the averages of the English and the Vernacular answer papers would be misleading, unless it be postulated that the candidates are of equal mental power.

The following is obvious :—

(1) The examiner is himself convinced that the medium should be changed to the vernacular and is therefore anxious to make out a case in favour of his conviction,

(2) A comparison of the marks of the English and the vernacular answer papers is unfavourable to the case he wants to prove. Therefore he suppresses this evidence,

(3) He suppresses the only evidence that the scientific pedagogue wants and proceeds to give an apparently scientific reason to justify the suppression of material evidence.

“A comparison ” says he “ would be misleading, unless it be postulated that the candidates are of equal mental power.” Why would we be wrong in

postulating that the two groups are of equal mental power? Any one with the most elementary knowledge of statistical methods would know that if two groups are large it would be scientifically correct to "postulate that the two groups are of equal mental power. Over a 100 schools have been preparing and presenting candidates in the vernacular. Taking a low average of 20 pupils presented from each school we have every year a group of 2,000; if we take the last three years we have a group of 6,000. Surely when dealing with such larger groups postulating equality would be a scientifically accurate procedure! If it weren't then the whole science of statistics as developed at present must be scrapped as inaccurate.

The next sentence lets the cat out of the bag. "The poor performance in Telugu . . ." So the Telugu mother tongue candidates have done worse than the corresponding English medium candidates! Yet the examiner wants to make up for this admission by attributing it "to the lack of good suitable text books." Lack of good and suitable text books indeed! What a libel against the enterprise of our textbook writers and publishers! Presumably also lack of suitable text books will be alleged as continuing until the vernacular medium boys begin to do better than the English medium ones.

Having suppressed the really material evidence because it is unfavourable, the examiner proceeds to look for evidence with which to support his contention that using the vernacular medium does raise the standard of attainments. Let us consider these reasons. If we study the rest of the remarks we see that his whole case is based on the comparison of a few howlers from the English medium papers with a choice expression from the vernacular medium papers.

The contrast between the two media is well brought out in the following expressionsetc." What a highly scientific reason on which to base the decision on so important a problem as the cause of low attainments in schools! One howler against a vernacular expression of doubtful merit! Is the expression. *ஹென்ரி ஆன் பொலினிடம் மோகம் கொண்டான்.* so superior to "Henry VIII wanted Anne Boleyn who was a dancing girl" as to overrule the material evidence of the marks of the two groups? Do English school boys taught English History in English never commit howlers? Here is one such howler I can recollect reading in a book of authentic school boy howlers. It is peculiarly apt because it deals with the matrimonial adventures of Henry VIII. Thus wrote the English school boy taught in English "Henry VIII was the world's greatest widower. He became lame because he had an abcess on his knee." In spite of this as far as I am aware, Teachers in England have no intention of changing the medium of instruction in their schools.

Such suppression of material evidences and presentation of arguments which would not convince a child not already convinced is scarcely complimentary to the intelligence of our teachers.

Let me here reiterate what I said towards the beginning. I said "I am not going to say anything either for or against the use of the vernacular as the medium." I am merely pleading for the adoption of the Scientific attitude towards school problems. The following are only a few of the problems that need to be studied and that can be solved satisfactorily only by a scientific attack on them.

Keep in mind that our sole object is raising the standard of attainments as high as possible throughout the secondary school in every subject of the curriculum.

I. In the lower secondary department of the High Schools where the mother tongue is exclusively the medium is the standard of attainments as high as it can be or at least sufficiently high to cause us satisfaction ?

II. (a) If the standard in these classes is not sufficiently high in spite of the medium being the mother tongue what are the causes which keep the standard low ?

(b) If these conditions are present in the lower classes may they also not exist in the higher classes and contribute towards the lowness of attainments.

III. (a) Is the medium of instruction the sole cause ?

(b) Is it one of general major causes ? If so, what are the others ?

(c) Is it after all only a minor cause ?

IV. (a) Does the change in the medium alone unaccompanied by other changes in school practice raise the standard ? By how much ?

(b) If not what other changes in school practice must be adopted in addition to a change in the medium of instruction."

(Extract ends here)

I have myself not done any experimental work with the medium of instruction, for a more or less superficial study of the problem convinced me that the English medium is only one of several causes that together contribute to the lowness of attainments.

Several teachers have thought to annihilate me by asking "Is it not a axiomatic truth that pupils will understand better if they are taught in the mother tongue ?" I ask in return, "Is there any magic in the mother tongue which will enable a boy to understand an idea couched in words (of the mother tongue) which he has never heard before ? Why does a Tamil boy require so much explanation before he can understand Tamil verse ?

Please consider the following evidence collected in the course of an attack on quite a different problem.

Our boys begin learning English in Class IV. How much English do they know by the end of Form III ? It is almost impossible to tell how much the average boy learns of what he is taught ; it all depends on the method of teaching. Modify the question—How many English words does the school attempt to teach a boy by the end of Form III ?

A study of the various readers actually in use in various schools from Class IV to Form III was made. It was found that there was enormous variation from school to school. The least ambitious taught 1,427 words and the most ambitious 4,000 words.

Let us assume that the best boy in the most ambitious school has learnt all the words taught. Such a boy knows 4,000 words when he enters the IV Form.

In the IV Form the medium of instruction is English. Obviously he can understand ideas expressed in sentences made up of these 4,000 words he has been taught. If words outside these 4,000 are used he cannot understand what the teacher is talking about.

An elementary science text book written according to the S.S.L.C. Syllabus was taken. This book is in three parts. Only the part dealing with elementary chemistry portion was taken. Analysis of the words of this book showed that it contained 728 new words over and above the 4,000 which we have presumed the boy knows.* Is it any wonder that the boy fails to grasp what is being taught in the elementary science class when we know that no specific attempt is made to teach him the meaning of these new words? Now imagine how many new words occur in the "Animal Life" and "Physics" portions. Is it any wonder that the boy makes a mess of it? What about a boy in another school who has been taught only 3,000 words in his English course?

Apply the same reasoning to the mother tongue. How many Tamil words does a tamil child know when it enters standard I. Obviously this will depend on the kind of home from which it comes. The child from an 'uncared for' home knows far fewer words than one from a 'cared for' home. If the child is to learn any additional words it has to be taught them in school. We know the status of elementary school teaching and we also know that few high school have the classes 1 to 3. The status of the teaching of the vernacular is not very much better in classes IV to Form III.

How many tamil words does the boy know when he enters Form IV? How many new words over and above those he already knows, do the Tamil text books on the non-language subjects for the S.S.L.C. contain? What are these words? When and how are the boys to be taught these and who is to teach them? If there is no word already in Tamil to express the idea 'Alkalinity' we can invent one, but how will the boy understand it if he has never come across it before unless he is taught it?

That the vernacular should be the medium no body will dispute but much experimental work has to be done before the standard of attainments can be raised. Fortunately the Headmasters of Madura have realised the need for such scientific study and experiment. The Headmasters' Association has undertaken the work of collecting data about tamil words on the lines I have mentioned in the above paragraph and we hope to have some useful information before the end of the year.

In conclusion I would like to draw the readers' attention to Mr. Erlam Smith's remarks quoted at the beginning of this article. "What was needed," he said, "was a proper statistical study by means of going through the marks of candidates. The proper method was to deal with results of examinations from the statistical point of view." To whom are the S. S. L. C marks available except to the S. S. L. C. Examiner? Who therefore has the best opportunity to make the necessary statistical study of marks of candidates? Of course the S. S. L. C. Examiner. Yet why is he allowed to suppress this evidence and to throw dust in our eyes?

The reader who has read so far will I am sure echo my hope that on the S.S.L.C. Board to be newly constituted this year there will be at least one man scientifically minded enough to put at our disposal the marks of candidates so that teachers may act on Mr. Erlam Smith's advice and make "a proper statistical study by going through the marks of candidates."

* Words like Potassium, Barium, Cyanide were not taken into account, but general words like acid, oxidation, alkaline, were taken.

ECONOMICS OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE*

The foretaste I had of the essentially practical outlook of your representatives who called at the University Library last December to discuss with me the ways and means of providing the people of your district with an effective library service has dissuaded me from devoting any portion of my address to the history of the libraries of our past, as those libraries, though powerful as collections, were organised more for the chosen few—for the intellectual aristocracy—than for the masses. Again the fact that I am addressing, not a group of professional men working in established libraries, but a gathering of distinguished men, who are anxious to intensify public opinion in favour of the establishment of public libraries, has ruled out my enlarging upon some of the aspects of the library technique to which I claim to have devoted some continuous thought for over ten years. Neither my "Five Laws," nor my "Colon Classification," nor my "Cataloguing Code" will be, I take it, the right topic for my discourse to-day.

Such processes of elimination have taken me a little beyond the field where I can be easily at home. But looking around me to-day at the forces that are working for and against the spread of library movement in our land, I have deliberately decided to discuss with you this morning the *Economics of Public Library Service*.

Economics, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is a practical science. Hence, it is perhaps best to pursue first the matter of fact approach to the *Economics of public library service*, i.e., examine the place the *public library service* occupies in the national economy of the forward nations of the world.

LIBRARY SERVICE IN GREAT BRITAIN

Let us first take Great Britain, as most of us are more familiar with it than any other country. As early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, one of her far-seeing sons succeeded in impressing on his countrymen the need for universal education. At first—for nearly a century,—the term 'education' was narrowly interpreted to mean a formal process that begins to affect an individual usually at five and recedes from him at twelve, fourteen or sixteen. The statesmen of Great Britain soon realised the futility of an education of that restricted type and the wastage of public money that it really involved. Hence the idea of education was generalised as a lifelong process, of which the period of forward education was but the very fringe of beginning. The steady recognition of this fact led to the establishment of an increasing number of libraries during the last forty years. England with its population of less than 40 millions, has now nearly 600 library authorities, maintaining some thousands of public libraries. Practically all the counties maintain a rural library service. 97 per cent of the people of England have now easy access to the books they want. 13 million volumes are to be found in its libraries with an annual issue of 80 millions. Its annual library expenditure is, in rupees, no less than a crore and a half. This is largely met by a library rate whose medium value is about 2 pies in the rupee for urban areas and a little less than half a pie for rural areas.

To give a closer picture of the economic value attached to *public library service* by Great Britain, let me give you a few recent figures, which reached

*The presidential address delivered at Tinnevely by Mr. S. R. Ranganathan, M.A., L.T.

my hands only a few weeks ago. The figures relate to an English Town with a population of nearly two hundred thousand. 30 per cent of this population or nearly 70 thousand people hold the reader's tickets of the Town Library. The Library has a collection of two hundred thousand volumes and had an issue of 2 millions last year. Of these 2 millions, nearly a million and a half relate to books that were taken for study at Home. The library arranged for 750 library talks for adults and about 250 story hours and library talks for the children. The town spends on its public library service 1 sh. 7½ d. per head of population.

I ask, will the Englishman with his well known business instinct ever organise such a costly *public library service* and maintain it so efficiently if he did not find in it some lasting economic value and return? To my mind no greater demonstration is required than what is implied in these figures to find the place of *public library service* in the national economy of any country.

RUSSIA'S USE OF LIBRARIES.

Passing from a State that follows recognised and time-honoured methods for keeping itself in the forefront, let us see what value is attached to the *Economics of public library service* by a State that is adopting what are considered to be utterly novel methods for bringing itself up to the front rank. We have the testimony of no less an authority than Professor Paul Monroe, Director of the International Institute of Columbia University, for the vital part that is being played by the "Cottage libraries" of Soviet Russia in the rapid reconstruction that she is experiencing. The maker of modern Russia proclaimed in 1921, "Unless the masses are enlightened, a rigorous heightening of their economic welfare is impossible." Hence the first fact to which the energy of the new Government was turned was the alarming illiteracy and ignorance of the people. According to the census of 1929, 68 per cent of the people were illiterate. "One of our primary tasks," it was declared, "is the abolition of this illiteracy. By 1933-34, the ability to read and write should be the possession of every citizen of the Soviet Union." This resolve led to the establishment of thousands of permanent and itinerant libraries. The phenomenal spread of library movement during that last 15 years has resulted in such a widespread love of reading that a reading room is not infrequently found even in the lobbies of cinemas, where the audience waits for the next performance.

The cautious, steady, practical old Britain and the young, unsettled, experimenting Russia, which differ from one another as poles asunder practically in everything, appear to be thus at one in the appraising of the economic value of the *Public library service* and exploiting it.

JAPAN AND PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE.

The *Economics of public library service* does not suffer a break as we pass from Europe to Asia. Look at Japan and the place she has given to libraries. Look at the fundamental grasp that the Japanese people seems to have of the necessary place that has to be given to *Public Library Service* in an advancing nation. When Japan broke away from the policy of seclusion and said to herself "Change as the World doth change," she sent her best sons into the world to find out what she lacked and what she should do. When these sons returned with their reports, she said "Very well, mere sartorial revolutions and the indiscriminate bodily importations of impossi-

ble theories made in Europe or America will not produce the necessary change. *Education—universal education—perpetual education—is the only panacea.* Let education be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family nor a family with an ignorant member” How is this to be achieved without the establishment of a well-planned system of *national library service*? Accordingly, 1899 saw the issue of the first library law Japan which had less than two hundred libraries at the turn of the present century has now over 5,000 libraries, all built deliberately and steadily in relation to one another. If Japan is now a power that counts, if the Japanese are now a band of happy, industrious and resourceful people, who can deny that the *Public Library service* of Japan has played a great part in making her all that she is to-day? I am not so rash as to say that the *Public Library Service* is by itself sufficient for the advancement of a people. But I am sure you will grant that the instances I have given—which can be multiplied indefinitely if there is time—warrant the proposition that *Public Library Service—well-planned on a national scale—is necessary* for the progress and the well-being of a people.

CHANGING WORLD.

Let me now switch off, with your permission, to an *a priori* approach to the subject. I shall start with an assumption. Change, rapid change, increasingly rapid change is a characteristic of the world and the conditions of life to-day. Many of the conditions that prevailed a century ago were of the same order as the conditions that prevailed even some thousands of years ago. But most of the familiar features of life in 1934 were totally absent in 1904. The change is not merely quantitative but qualitative. The rate of change also is very high

The measure of all things is man. In proportion to his numbers we must reckon every thing which he needs or creates. Whereas he was only 790 millions in 1800, he was 1,950 millions in 1928. Let us next examine the increase in the mechanical power stored up by him in machinery. In 1835, man had at his service 65 millions of horse power. In 1928, he had increased it to 1,350 millions. A measure of his interdependence can be found in the volume of foreign trade. In rough round figures, the volume of foreign trade in 1800 was estimated at 150 crores of rupees whereas it had reached the colossal figure 1,500 crores of rupees in 1928.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE INEVITABLE.

What lies behind these figures, from our point of view? The increase in mere numbers implies increasing struggle for existence. The rate of increase in mechanical power implies that a nation that fails to provide facilities for the constant improvement of the knowledge of its citizen will go to the wall. The mounting upon of international trade indicates that no community can now live in seclusion, relying merely on its traditional knowledge about others. The frequent dissemination, among the people, of the latest commercial intelligence about the different parts of the globe is obligatory or ruin will follow.

What is the agency that can supply the knowledge necessary and disseminate that information necessary, if it is not the *Public Library Service*. We can now appreciate why most of the countries of the world pay so much attention to their library system, why every country and every town in the

West and in Japan grudge nothing to improve the efficiency of their *public library service* why even individual industrial concerns and commercial firms have begun to vote a big slice of their revenue for the maintenance of their special libraries, and why some of the countries of Eastern Europe have attempted, during the post-war period to make amends for their pre-war neglect by the adoption of compulsory Library Acts, by working out ten year programmes for covering the country with libraries and by competing with one another in reaching the era of universal library service earlier than others.

WASTE IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

This sums up the economics proper of *Public Library Service*. But there are also other aspects. One of them has been already touched upon in dealing with Great Britain. It is now recognised in all countries and it has been taught by painful experience—that library provision and State aid to libraries is a mere economic necessity, in the sense, that, in its absence, the money spent in Elementary education is largely wasted by widespread lapse into illiteracy. In our own country it has been officially stated that 39 per cent of the children educated relapse into illiteracy within five years of their leaving school. How many more do so in their later years has not been officially ascertained. One may safely hazard the opinion that 50 per cent of those that survive the first onslaught relapse. This gives us another way of looking at the *Economics of Public Library Service*. We spent nearly two crores of rupees on Elementary Education during the last financial year. Do we not have a lesson to learn from the Department of Public Works, which sets apart every year, a fair percentage of its annual budget for keeping its edifices in good repair. Should not the Elementary Education budget of two crores be similarly safeguarded by a public library budget of at least two lakhs? Is it wise to say that all the funds that the Government can spare should be devoted solely to Elementary Education and that no funds can be set apart for public libraries? Is it not like saying that all the money is required to extend the mud walls of a house and that not a rupee can be spared to put up a roof to protect those very walls against destructive weather?

AN ECONOMIC INVESTMENT

Here is still another aspect of the problem. The money spent by Government on public libraries really comes back to it in several ways in the long run in the form of an improved civic conscience and of increased economic efficiency in its citizens. This aspect of the problem has been carefully studied by an American. According to him the people of any community are its greatest economic asset worth in rupees several times more than all its material property. An Insurance Company estimated the economic values of the people of the United States in 1922 as five times as great as the material wealth of that country. Everything that helps to make this human asset more productive and valuable is of direct economic value to the community. Schools and libraries are two of the most important public institutions for improving the economic value of this human asset even apart from the far more important spiritual value. No doubt, a knowledge of this tremendous value cannot be realised by the general tax-payer. It is the business of the statesmen who are at the helm of affairs to perceive it clearly and instead of taking refuge under the unwillingness of the short-sighted tax-payer to take a bold step forward and instead of taking shelter under a transient economic depression boldly vote for *public library service*—even to dispel that depression. As for the people who are served, if they get the books they want when they

want them and if their economic efficiency is increased by the library service, it will not be long before they rejoice to see the library item before the tax bill. To give but one example, in 1850, the first Library Act of England providing only for a permissive half penny rate as maximum, was passed in the teeth of opposition by what looks like a fluke. But half a century of public library service resulted in the 1919 Amending Act which altogether took away the upper limit for the library rate being carried without a division.

We have so far dealt with the *public library service* as a necessary agency in the economic upkeep of a community. We have, further, seen that the public library service is a necessity to eliminate wastage in our educational system. We have also seen that investments in public library service is a sound investment. I shall now deal with another aspect. I should like to present public library service as a means of keeping the community from mischief. Leisure is a boon which may easily prove a curse unless one knows what to do with it. Public Libraries form an important national agency that points the way by educating the public to spend their leisure. In our country, however poor we may be in the world's goods, our masses have more leisure—it may be forced leisure—than what they want. Hence, we should have plenty of public libraries, which should act as power house in the community—centres from which inspiration, education, information and civic conscience spread out into every home and convert leisure hours into potential economic assets.

THE WAY OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY BILL

It is considerations like these that prompted the Madras Library Association to promote a Public Libraries Bill which has just emerged from the Select Committee stage. The Association is convinced, that, if the distribution of books should be a public project, supported by public funds, if its continuance should not be contingent on the life of an enthusiastic individual but should be invested with an element of perpetuity that should characterise all public institutions, if it should return to all the sections of the public full value on its investments, if it is to eliminate the waste and inefficiency that would be involved in the institution of uneconomic library units, a Public Library Act is a necessity. We are thankful to the Hon'ble Mr. Ramadas Pantulu for ably emphasising the value of an ideal Library Act. I can quite understand his evaluation of my Model Act as an ideal measure, with a compulsory financial clause and a fifteen year programme. But I am unable to appreciate his unwillingness to distinguish the ideal from the practical in this matter. Surely in his long political career Mr. Ramadas Pantulu is not unaccustomed to the expediency of taking good things in small instalments. With his varied political experience, he cannot fail to discern in the deviation of the Association's Bill from my Model Act just those elements of compromise and give and take which form well-known concomitants to all first attempts at legislation. We have now reached a stage with the Bill so ably sponsored by Mr. Basheer Ahmed Sayeed, when non-official attention should be temporarily withdrawn from its omissions and its entire weight should be thrown on its favour, even as it is, so that Madras may make a beginning at least with a purely permissive and enabling measure.

History shows that not a few countries of the world have been able to build up a satisfactory public library system on the foundation of permissive Acts such as the Madras Act promises to be. As has been already stated, it

has been one of the peculiar features of library movement in many countries that a preliminary working for some years of a permissive Act is the surest way of creating the necessary public opinion in favour of a compulsory Act.

THE FUNDAMENTAL GUARDIAN

Let me conclude by emphasising that the subject of Public Library Service is a subject of vital, national importance which should be kept above controversy. It should be given the loyal support of all persons, into whatever camps they may be divided in other matters. We have unfortunately side-tracked in this province into a mire of division and mutual distrust which is obstructing progress in every direction and leaves us far behind the world in every matter and the library cause is no exception to it. This retardation on our part in contrast with the onward march of other nations where the spirit of co-operation and mutual good-will prevails is daily increasing the gulf that separates us from the progressive nations of the world. In the name of the cultural and economic future of our country, I appeal to our educated countrymen to transcend all narrower loyalties and to work with harmonious eagerness for the uplift of the masses, that is of the nation. Let us co-operate with mutual trust and pleasant relation in establishing throughout the length and breadth of our land hundreds of that instrument of universal education in whose name you have willingly assembled here to-day. I hold that a net-work of public libraries and wide-spread ability to read books are the fundamental guardians of material advancement and cultural standards in a diseased and desperate world. Let us not put hurdles in the way of progress. Let us not discourage those of our countrymen who try to do their honest bit by the library cause in our country. Let us, on the other hand, cheer them up by a kind word, by a kind act or by a kind gift.

EXAMINATIONS

BY

LAURIN ZILLIACUS.

(From the *New Era*, March-April, 1934.)

THE ESSAY AS A METHOD OF EXAMINATION

The essay stands at one pole of examination method, the standardized test at the other. An essay is like the first impression of a new face. It may be an effective means of securing a rapid general sketch of the mentality behind the outward expression, a sketch which includes elusive personal qualities that evade any standardized test yet invented. In France, where the essay is accorded the place of honour among examination techniques, the examiner is expected to have 'a flair' and to be equipped 'not merely with intelligence, but with intellectual sympathy'; he must 'be prepared to give the right of way to those (candidates) who have tact.'? Judgments based on essays, however, share the drawbacks of first impressions: they are subjective. The mark awarded for an essay is essentially nothing but a measure of the *rapport* between the writer's and the judge's minds. Where a teacher has to choose his future disciples from among a large number of aspirants and wishes to select minds that are in harmony with his own, the essay may therefore be recommended. When the examiner has to choose disciples for others, it is another matter. The larger and more impersonal the examination system, the more diverse the activities for which it is to admit or reject candidates, the less adequate the essay becomes. Where the essay fails, the standardized test steps in. Specific qualities are in general measurable. Does the candidate possess a specified body of knowledge, or a specified ability, to a specified degree? As soon as the question is thrown into this form, a test can be devised with the single purpose of supplying the answer.

THE STANDARDIZED TEST

The very limitation of aim enables the test to be exact and 'unequivocal' in its pronouncement. The standardized test is gaining ground in many countries. In America it is being applied over an ever-increasing range of examination territory.

THE PRESENT CONFUSION—

The examinations that at present bestride our school systems are a veritable hodge-podge, a mixture of various 'essay' factors with different types of tests, any one of which taken alone could be standardized but which, fused together, put the examiner in the position of trying to solve several unknowns with one equation. Take a history or a science paper of the usual kind: the candidate in answering will have to draw on his ability to express his ideas in writing; on his store of memorized knowledge of facts and opinions (he is allowed no reference literature such as any grown-up with a sense of responsibility would use when writing a paper); on his understanding of the meaning of this body of knowledge as exemplified in his ability to draw

obvious inferences and make easy applications ; on his higher reasoning powers as shown in his ability to make more difficult deductions or inductions ; on his luck in finding among the narrowly limited battery of arbitrarily chosen questions some that he has happened to study with particular thoroughness ; on his power of remaining level-headed under nervous strain or a combination of this power with mere examination habit ; and, lastly, too often on his physical endurance, and even, at times, his ability to interpret ambiguously phrased questions. The examiner sees the joint product of all these and other factors, and calls it 63 per cent. in Inorganic Chemistry or English History—or, if the candidate is less fortunate, 33 per cent.

—AND UNRELIABILITY OF EXAMINATIONS

It is small wonder that doubts have arisen as to the scientific validity of such a system. Examination bodies in most countries are august and singularly unapproachable. Nevertheless, during the last few years a number of investigations of their work has been carried out. Experienced examiners of Essays, of History, Latin, Mathematics and Modern Language, have had their systems of marking evaluated, generally by the method of comparing their marks with those given by other examiners for the same work. The results—at least those that have been published—indicate that there is a wide range of variation in the marks assigned even by examiners working within the same institution. In the marking of essays the range is wide enough to fulfil at times the Biblical prophecy ' the first shall be last and the last first ' ; but even in other subjects bad failures and good passes change places with bewildering ease. When one considers that this distressing uncertainty arises in judging the finished product of the examinee, and that this product itself gives a most uncertain picture of its maker, a picture influenced by arbitrary and irrelevant factors, then we can rejoice with Ballard when he notes that although the old type of examination does not yet seem to be called in question in some countries, in England it is already under suspicion and in America has been definitely put under arrest.

Mention should here be made of the particular unreliability of the usual examination at the lower stages in school life (e.g. the entrance examination to secondary schools). All who have in any measure studied the question seem agreed that the examination hazards increase as we move down the age scale and that, as Professor Valentine has demonstrated, the prognostic value decreases until at eleven plus it has reached vanishing point.

THE REIGN OF THE FOOT-RULE

Our criticism of examinations has as yet only been concerned with their failure to live up to their own claims. The essential criticism is, however, on another plane. Throughout the length and breadth of the civilized world—indeed even among the backward people on whom we have pressed our blessings—examinations have become the master, not the servant, of education. On the Continent of Europe, with its rigidly centralized State school systems, the domination of the examination is absolute. The State prescribes the curriculum to the last cast-iron detail and sets up an examination system definitely and avowedly as a control. The teachers in their turn definitely and avowedly teach what is required for the examination. It is difficult to express in words the consequent havoc wrought among educational values. Regard for the person of the child, for his all-round growth, for his

urge to become a social being, an artist, a healthy organism, all this has no examination value, and is therefore neglected. Not even intellectual growth, nor indeed the very acquisition of knowledge, is held in honour: knowledge itself is prostituted to the examination mark. Whatever is easiest to assess in an examination gradually fills, nay, becomes, the course of studies. In languages this means all too easily simply grammar and the ability to translate correctly, in composition the mere mechanics of the art, in 'content' subjects, strings of unrelated facts. Whatever is difficult to measure comes gradually to be regarded not merely as unnecessary, but as inimical to examination success, e.g. in composition most of the elements that give a work of art its value, in languages 'at-homeness' in the language and understanding of the literature and society it represents, in 'content' subjects the ability to think in terms of the subject. In fairness it must be said that the examinations of the English and Welsh School Certificate examining bodies appear to be less reprehensible in this respect than their compeers in the frozen North. Yet not even they can wholly escape the accusation that the convenience of the examiner's foot-rule has come to decide the nature of the product it is set to measure.

Viewed from across the Channel, the English school system appears as a promised land of freedom. A Continental schoolmaster finds it astounding enough to learn that no detailed courses are laid down by State Authorities for the English schools to follow; but that there is not even a compulsory list of 'subjects' seems to him well-nigh incredible. Add to this that the State does not impose or indeed run any examination system, and the golden vision is complete. Yet we have so incontrovertible an authority as Sir Philip Hartog saying that 'from the very bottom, or almost from the bottom, of the educational scale to the top, education is at the present moment in England very largely controlled by examinations'. Hartog's statement is amply confirmed even by a casual glance at the English educational press, or the resolutions of English educational conferences, or simply by conversation with English teachers. It seems a curious anomaly that the school in a great country should be granted freedom by the State only to lose it to private examining bodies. The curriculum appears to be nearly as 'set' as that of the State-ridden Continental schools—nearly, but not quite. The difference is important and points to one of the avenues of escape.

CAPITULATION OF THE EDUCATOR TO THE TEXT-BOOK WRITER.

The examiner has been allowed to play ducks and drakes with education because the teacher has not known his own mind. A fundamental confusion reigns in the realm of secondary education. Shall the school aim at all-round education, taking regard for the individual and the claims of society as paramount, or shall it seek to lay the foundations for higher studies, taking the claims of the university as paramount? In theory, the answer has generally been: both. The practice, however, has been to entrust the curriculum to subject specialists, who have had things very much their own way, limited only by internal disagreement as to how to divide the booty. The fact that the curriculum has from time to time been augmented as a result of the more vociferous claim of other parties does not invalidate this description—it has simply meant additions to the burden the white man has handed on to the white, and often to the black or yellow child. Exaggerating somewhat for the sake of making the main point clear, we may say that the subject specialist's view of the curriculum is upside down: taking the sum total of knowledge (a vast total) and of performance (a more modest

amount) considered necessary in his subject for the label of Bachelor or Magister, he shakes it out like the toy known as Jacob's ladder, assigning the top rungs to the university, the middle to the secondary school, and the lowest to the primary, while between them he turns the examiner loose. The other specialists do the same, and so you have the child regarded as a gradually increasing fraction of a professor in each branch of study, doomed to swallow (with or without cramming), and at stated times to regurgitate for inspection, these logically perfect but psychologically indigestible gobbets of erudition.

THE PRESENT IMPASSE—

The text-book writer's view of education, while particularly to the fore in the secondary school, has not wholly spared the primary. In democratic school systems to-day the tendency is everywhere to smooth the passage from primary to secondary education. This means linking the two closer together, which, in turn, tends to bring the lower school, too, under the dictatorship of the examiner. Fortunately, it also increases the number of those who are interested in a reform. Primary education is no longer seen as a self-contained entity, but as a first course; secondary education is no longer the diet of the selected few in training for the university, it is great Nurture's second course and chief nourisher in the educational feast for the mass of future citizens. The need for a renewal of education up and down the line, for a change in content as well as in method, becomes ever more apparent. The new schools with their curriculum experiments are feeling their way to this change, and are therefore in the forefront of the struggle against current examinations. They have something they want to do, and examinations stand in the way.

There is a legitimate function for examining, and there are useful forms of tests. The legitimate function is not that of a control from outside—which will always tend to impoverish the product it is intended to guarantee—but that of a tool in the hands of the teacher and the taught. The useful form is that of specific tests as part of a comprehensive system of analysis and record-keeping, tests fashioned to follow the work done and not to predetermine it.

THE EDUCATIONAL RECORDS BUREAU

It is along these two lines—the evolution of scientifically valid tests and the relegation of the examination to its rightful place in education—that reform seems to be coming. We find both happily combined in the work of the Educational Records Bureau of New York. A number of schools have here joined forces to take examining into their own hands: the Bureau established by them has as its sole function to evolve tests and methods of record-keeping that will give the clearest and most useful picture possible of the development of every child in the constituent schools and to help each teacher to analyse his or her work more effectively. It is an experiment that will be watched with interest by the educational world.

SCIENTIFIC EXAMINING

Many other attempts are being made to move along one or both of these main lines of reform.

The scientific study of examinations is gathering momentum. The spread of specific tests is indicated already by the diversity of names under

which they are known, e.g. Standardized, Constant Value, Objective, Scholastic and Achievement Tests. As they depend for their effectiveness on their clarity of purpose, these tests are doing good work in stimulating teachers to ponder on their aims. "What exactly do you want me to examine?" the new examiner asks the educator, and the latter is forced to do some intensive thinking. He may then find that there are certain desiderata he has airily assumed he has been achieving which he has in fact been driven to neglect by the present kind of examination: such as the ability to use reference literature. The formulation of specific aims for the tests is also making it clear that whereas certain results of education lend themselves to measurement by examination, others do not. When those that do not bear fruit in tangible works, e.g. when creative literary ability produces literature, whether stories, poems, narratives or essays, or when ability to carry through a sustained piece of work in science gives rise to a scientific report, then evidently these tangible works may be incorporated with the 'case history' of their maker. They may even be appraised by the teachers and the (necessarily) personally coloured verdict added to the records. When, however, the results of Nurture on Nature lie wholly in the realm of the imponderable—say, reactions of some kind to truth, beauty or goodness—it is probably safer to let the individual alone concentrate the attention of Authority on inspecting from time to time the kind of nurture given. A school will gradually build up a reputation, and this coupled with a report from its teachers will here prove a surer guide than any examination.

THE SCHOOL RECORD AND TEACHER JUDGMENT

We have crossed over to the other line along which reform seems to be coming: relegation of examinations from the position of master to that of servant. This is being attempted in many ways in many places. In Sweden legislation in the realm of examinations has steadily moved in the direction of making the school record count for more and giving the teachers a greater say in the marking and even to some extent in the setting of the questions. This wellmarked tendency is by no means confined to Sweden. In its extreme form it leads to the abolition of examinations conducted by persons outside of the individual school. In Belgium and Esthonia, e.g., matriculation is gained from an approved secondary school without examination. The system does not appear to meet with unqualified support, particularly from new school circles. The reason is that "approval" necessitates strict adherence all through to a rigidly defined curriculum. In the U. S. A. the matter has been more satisfactorily arranged by private action. A group of schools has secured agreement with the majority of the larger universities to make the experiment of admitting applicants on the recommendation of the school and the school record. A liaison committee has been formed, and all the implications of the experiment are being worked out and followed. These schools are not bound to a narrow course of studies; on the contrary, the main purpose of the experiment is to try the value of a curriculum for life as a foundation for university work.

Another step towards examination reform is that of allowing greater freedom of choice among subjects and of admitting new subjects that have not previously counted. The School Certificate in England and Wales and recent Swedish legislation afford examples of cautious progress along this line. Appreciative mention should here be made of the willingness of the English Certificate examining bodies to accept alter-

native syllabuses from individual schools. The fact that this breach in the examination wall has not been more widely used is presumably evidence that it is more difficult to build up a syllabus than to criticize examinations.

THE SCHOOL FREED FROM THE UNIVERSITY

The English School Certificate presents another feature that is of interest: the possibility of obtaining a certificate that does not admit the holder to any of the universities. In the recent report of the investigators appointed by the Secondary Schools Examinations Council it is even proposed to divorce the examination entirely from university entrance considerations. The School Certificate would thus become solely a school-leaving examination and entrance to a university would always necessitate at least one additional year of specialized study and a new examination. If this reform were carried through, one might well hope—indeed demand—that the subject specialist's view should no longer be allowed to dominate the secondary school, and that the leaving examination be designed solely to serve as a tool in the service of the school. With a "life-centred" secondary school in place of the present "subject-centred," the need would no longer exist for separation into different schools under different roofs at the beginning of the secondary stage. The pressure on the primary school would be eased and the way opened for the only reform generally regarded as adequate in the present selective, competitive entrance examination at eleven plus; i.e. abolition. It may be added that much the same reform has been advocated in the press in Finland, and is at present before the Swedish Parliament in the form of a private Member's Bill.

EDUCATION MUST LIVE DANGEROUSLY

Oppressive examinations and rigid curricula are a children's disease of mass education. They are the attempt of society to obtain a guaranteed produce in the face of large numbers and a huge machine. But you cannot play for safety in education. Every advance is here gained by the creative acts of free individuals. Every way out of the present impasse leads in some measure to a loosening of the bonds, to experiment and therefore uncertainty, to elasticity and therefore variation, to trust and therefore risk. A vast factory turning out standardized goods may with advantage be highly centralized and have minutely specified functions and controls for its different departments. An educational system can be managed in the same way: if it is, it can even be made to a considerable extent failure-proof and fool-proof in turning out a product that comes up to certain minimum specifications; but that product will not be *homo sapiens*.

TIT-BITS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD

By

ANGLER.

MADRAS SECONDARY EDUCATION BOARDS

District Secondary Education Boards have been in existence in Madras for nearly a decade. They were creations of the Justice Ministry and are *ad hoc* boards, which are non-statutory and advisory. The Department of Education has been loyally keeping in the continuance of these boards at least in name. After the reconstruction of February 1928, they are fairly representative bodies, both of the Secondary Education of boys and girls. Strictly speaking, these boards might very well be the nucleus for a Provincial Board of Education and they ought to be for Secondary Education, what educational councils are for Elementary Education and what the academic council is for University Education. Unfortunately, these boards are merely called into existence once in three years and are allowed by District Educational Officers, who are Secretaries, to be moribund. Even when problems of Secondary Education are being discussed and decided upon, the opinions of these boards are neither asked for, ascertained nor taken. It seems as though these boards are under Government's ban! If they are not under a ban, it is the duty of the District Educational Officers—Secretaries to see that their boards do not hibernate. If the Ministry and the Department persist in ignoring these bodies, which are part of the educational machinery, it is high time that representatives of the teaching staff on these bodies resign in protest. When everywhere co-ordination of agencies engaged in Secondary Education is taking place, the Ministry of Education in Madras cannot do better than make these boards statutory, with powers of organising District Secondary Education. Will the Hon Mr. Kumaraswami Reddiar do it?

DENOMINATIONAL POLICY IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The Diocese of Madras under the Lord Bishop of Madras has given effect to the policy of "New Arrangements" in the interests of concentration of Christian effort. The first fruits of the progress of this policy have resulted in the closure of valuable and hoary colleges, leaving a pathetic void behind. Close upon this, a batch of Hindu teachers among others, have been thrown out of service in the Bishop Heber High School and in the Findlay College High School. It is understood that representations to the Lord Bishop have elicited the reply that plans settled could not be altered. In other words, Xian needs render imperative the throwing out of loyal Hindu teachers, because they are Hindus! The action of the Diocese of Madras, backed up by a Xian or Indian (?) Government raises important issues. What is the department going to do to protect these teachers? What is the Government's attitude to public institutions receiving grant from public funds adopting a denominational policy? What are Hindu parents going to do to protect the interests of Hindu teachers and Hindu pupils in Xian managed institutions? What are the M.L.C.s going to do to prevent the further victimisation of Hindu teachers? In fairness to such managements, Hindu parents must withdraw Hindu children from Xian schools so that Xian effort might be used for Xian Education.

A TEACHERS' COUNCIL

Mr. T. S. Krishnamurthi Aiyar, District Educational Officer, Madras, with his rich experience of factious schools in Coimbatore and Nilgris, has done a distinct service to

the cause of the Teaching profession by advocating recently the need for a Teachers' Council, on the lines of the Bar Council and the Medical Council. No arguments are necessary in respect of the proposal. Teachers wish to do service to the community and are prepared to rise above mere professionalism, if their status as a public service is statutorily recognised. That is why the S.I.T.U. Bill on Teachers' Service conditions insists upon a Teachers' Registry and Council on the lines of the Royal Society of Teachers in England.

THE RT. HON. SASTRI AND THE S. I. T. U. BILL

The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri's blessing of the S.I.T.U. Service Conditions Bill at the recent Coimbatore Teachers' Guild Conference on 28-4-'34 at Tiruppur is indeed welcome not only because it comes from an eminent teacher but also from a leading liberal politician in India. With his rich international experience, he has rightly commended the S.I.T.U.'s faith in the legislative measure and its instinct in trying to bring together the various teachers under different agencies. He has also, as a discerning teacher, found out that the surest way in securing sanctions for the bill is to educate those controlling teachers.

THE NEW S. S. L. C. BOARD

The constitution of the new S.S.L.C. Board seems to have already given rise to brisk canvassing. It would be in the fitness of things for the Director of Public Instruction to recognise the claims of organised Teaching opinion as voiced by the South India Teachers' Union to be officially represented on the new board either through its President or Secretary. Such a representation would go a great way to satisfy the large number of assistant masters who are kept out from the Senate and other Educational bodies. By such recognition of the Union, the Department would be securing the co-operation of the South India Teachers' Union.

THE AMENDED S. I. T. U. BILL

The amended bill as published in the April number of "The South Indian Teacher" differs from the original draft as referred by the XXV. Provincial Educational Conference to the expert committee in the following essential particulars.

Original bill.

(1) *Preamble* insisted on (a) control of all non-government institutions by a statutory Secondary Education Board.

(b) Unification of the Teaching service in such institutions.

(c) Regulating service condition on a uniform basis.

(d) Definition of obligations of educational employers and employees.

(e) Safeguarding the interests of both as partners in the work of Education.

Amended bill.

(1) *Preamble* agrees to a and e and omits b, c and d.

(2) *The bill.*

(a) Clause 4 omitted. "Unaided" institutions.

(b) Clause 5 referred to the repeal of Appendix 28 of the M. E. R. relating to contract.

(c) Clause 6 defined Teachers a "practising teachers" of all grades in colleges and schools.

(d) Clause 7 recognises rules framed by the Department of Education in consonance with the local governments' notification about the Provincial Board of Education.

The composition of the Board was to be of the D. P. I, 2 representatives for each University and representatives for each of the four employing agencies and Teaching services.

(e) The powers of the Board were defined in six clauses.

(f) The obligations of the authorities were defined, among other things, to cover reporting vacancies and choosing incumbents from the Register of the Provincial Board of Education.

(g) The clause relating to service conditions had the word "minimum" prefixed.

(h) In the clause relating to settlement of disputes, an appeal to the Board through the D. E. O. was provided.

(i) Unification under service cadres was provided for.

(j) The clause relating to transfers gave the absolute right of transfers in the interests of the smooth working of the act to the Provincial Board, without prejudice to the career of teachers.

(2) *The bill.*

(a) Clause 4 adds "unaided institutions" and their authorities as subject to the act.

(b) Clause 5 is omitted altogether.

(c) Teachers are defined as those "giving instruction in educational institutions."

(d) The local government is made the notifying and rule-making authority.

The composition of the Board is modified by reducing number of university representatives from 2 to 1 and by making the D. P I ex-officio President.

The duration of office of members is fixed as a quinquennium.

The appointment of a Salaried Secretary of the Board is contemplated.

The government is to provide funds from general revenues for the cost of administrations of the Board

(e) The powers of the Board are amplified by the addition of two more clauses—viz—holding of meetings and maintaining a list of persons employed as teachers or qualified to give instruction.

(f) These obligations are deleted.

(g) The word "minimum" is deleted.

(h) The appeal through the D. E. O. is replaced by an appeal in the manner prescribed by rules.

(i) The clause relating to unification is deleted.

(j) The Board, it is said, *may have* the power to facilitate exchange of teachers, provided the approval of the authority and the teacher is obtained before hand.

(3) *The statement of objects and reasons:—*

(a) The words, employers of intellectual labour and employees are used.

(a) The words "authority and teacher" are substituted.

(b) A clause regarding security of tenure of college teachers existed as under "which the university do not care to look after."

(b) This clause is omitted.

The changes in the bill and how they affect the substance of the bill in its original form require to be carefully studied, discussed and decided upon by the S. I. T. U.

SALEM EDUCATION WEEK.

It is regrettable that government should have disallowed the grant of Rs. 100 sanctioned by the Salem District Board to the Salem Education league towards the Education Week organised and successfully conducted by the league.

TEACHER'S AND CHILDREN'S CHARTERS.

The 9th All-India Educational Conference held at Karachi in December, 1933, and the Council of the All-India Federation of Educational Associations have appointed a Committee, with powers to co-opt to draw up two Charters, one for Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities, and another for the Children of India, on the lines of the American Charter for Children. The Committee requests all those who are actively engaged in any of the various branches of Education throughout India (British as well as Native States) to send their suggestions, recommendations, *draft charters to the Undersigned*, as soon as possible.

They will all be considered very carefully, while preparing the final drafts of the Charters to be presented before the Council of the Federation at the forthcoming Educational Conference at Delhi.

G. N. GOKHALE,

Convener,
Charters Committee
Principal,

N. E. D. Civil Engineering College, Karachi.

FROM OUR ASSOCIATIONS

GUNTUR DISTRICT TEACHERS' GUILD

The first meeting of the Guntur District Teachers' Guild for 1934 met in the premises of the Taluk High School, Tenali at 1 p.m., on Saturday the 14th instant. After prayer, and introductory remarks of the President Mr. C. Bhanumurthi Pantulu, B.A., L.T., resolutions expressing condolence on the demise of Mr. A Rangaswami Iyengar, B.A., B.L., Editor *The Hindu*, Ch Seshagiri Rao, B.A., Editor, *The Andhra Patrika* and Mr M. A. Candeth, M. A., Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Madras were put from the Chair and passed unanimously all standing. Then resolutions felicitating Hon'ble Sir Muhammad Usman on his appointment as the first Indian Governor of Madras, and Hon'ble Sir K. V. Reddi on his appointment as the Law Member of Madras Government were passed *nem con*. Then the Secretary of the Guild, S. S. Viswanadha Iyyer, B.A., L.T., addressed the assembled teachers on "Main Features of the Champion Scheme". The scheme has two fold aims of economy and efficiency in the matter of Elementary Education. As steps for securing the two aims Elementary Schools will be classified as (1) Central Schools, (2) Junior Schools. In every big village or populous part of the town a central school having classes containing pupil not less than thirty in number in each class will be the central place where boys' classes of all religions or communities and Girls' too of all communities will find accommodation. Each small village or street may have its junior school for pupils of first and second classes only. If the village is not big or populous to enable classes of 30 in each class it will get only a junior school. Pupils of classes three and above will have to go to villages with central schools. In its widest sense the central schools aim at becoming mixed, non-denominational and non-communal in their pupils. As a concession to local prejudices special classes for sex, religion or community may be kept in the central school itself. In urban areas it may be economic and efficient. But in rural areas pupils of Third class and above will have to go to other villages in the sun and in the rain. Then after due discussion the following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

1. *Revised S.S.L.C. (1937).*—That as the Revised scheme has been tried only two years the Guntur District Teachers' Guild requests the Director of Public Instruction to retain the present S.S L C. scheme and recommends the lightening of syllabuses in general knowledge subjects.

2. *Champion Scheme.*—The Guntur District Teacher's Guild requests the Director of Public Instruction to introduce the Champion Scheme as an experimental measure in a few urban areas for the present.

3. *Minimum in Optional Subject.*—The Guntur District Teacher's Guild requests the Andhra University to fix a minimum of twenty-five per cent at least in the optional subject for purposes of eligibility.

4. *Cuts in Scales and Salaries.*—The Guntur District Teacher's Guild appoints the following committee:—

M.R.Ry. B. Ramachandrarao Pantulu Garu, M.A., L.T., of Guntur ;

M.R.Ry. C Bhanumurthi Pantulu Garu, B.A., L.T., (*President*);

M.R.Ry. M. Subrahmanyam, M.A, B.Ed., of Guntur ;

M.R.Ry. T Suryaprakasa Rao, M.A., L.T., of Guntur ;

M.R.Ry. S. S. Viswanadha Iyer, B.A., L.T., (*Secretary*) to wait in deputation on managements (a) to appeal to their generosity to refrain from cuts in contemplation, (b) to appeal to the managements to restore cuts, if already imposed, with effect from

1st April, 1934, (c) requesting the Headmasters to communicate to the District Teacher's Guild if there be any cuts in salaries or scales of their Staff.

5. *Fee Concession.*—The District Teacher's Guild, Guntur, requests the Government to extend the privilege of exemption of school fees to the children of clerks and menial servants of schools recognised.

With a vote of thanks to the Management, Taluk High School, Tenali, the members assembled and to the President the meeting came to a close.

TEACHER'S ASSOCIATION, MUNICIPAL HIGH SCHOOL, VILLUPURAM

The Annual Day was celebrated on 23-4-'34 under the presidency of Mr. V. Venkataramana Ayyar, Retired High Court Assistant Registrar. The proceedings commenced with a welcome to Messrs. M. S. Sabhesa Ayyar, Secretary, S. I. T. U., and Mr. M. K. Ramamurthy, Secretary, S.I.T.U.P.F., extended by the President Mr. V. Jayaramier who adverted to the steady and earnest rise of Mr. Sabhesa Ayyar to the present leading position in the field of education and spoke in praise of his talks which are always made instructive and impressive with the results of his researching nature and unequivocal and emphatic declarations. He welcomed Mr. Ramamurthy as the needed propagandist and organiser for the Fund. Next Mr. R. Mahadeva Ayyar, Secretary, read the report. (Extracts from the report will be published in the next issue).

Mr. M. S. Sabhesan, in his address, largely dwelt upon the need for teachers and organisations to pull up to a business-like level. The besetting weaknesses are, they take inordinate time in responding to queries; vainly run after busy non-educationists for conference Presidencies, do not bring about a full solidarity and *esprit de corps*, suicidally absorb themselves in petty wranglings, sometimes owing to distrust of each other the Headmaster and Assistants. He stressed on the need for master's Association, being the only association for all purposes and itself including all members of the staff with no exception.

Mr. M. K. Ramamurthy spoke on the recent changes in the Fund and appealed for support both to the Fund and the Journal.

The Chairman, concluding, observed that harmony could subsist where there was generous attitude on the part of the Headmaster and respect and obedience on the part of the assistants.

With a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. R. Mahadeva Ayyar, the Secretary, the function came to a close successfully.

BOARD HIGH SCHOOL, VRIDDHACHALAM

The "School Day" and the "Pupils' Association Day" of the above School came off on the 29th April when Mr. T. V. Apparasundara Mudaliar, M.A., L.T., M.Ed. (Leeds), District Educational Officer, S. Arcot, presided. After the presentation of the reports of the School and the Pupils' Association, Mr. C. S. Srinivasachariar of the Annamalai University delivered an interesting address on 'Students and Citizenship'. The President in his concluding remarks exhorted the students to "Work hard, play hard and play up the Game." He pleaded for a greater interest in the Scout Movement.

TINDIVANAM--PARENTS' DAY

On Saturday, the 21st April, all the Elementary Schools in Tindivanam observed the Parents' Day. Invitations and handbills in Tamil were sent to the Parents. A procession of all the school children was held in the morning. From 9 a.m. the schools received the parents who were then given an opportunity to see their children at work in the class-rooms. In the afternoon, meetings were held when the necessity for Parents' co-operation was fully explained. The success of the Day was largely due to Mr. P. Ranganathan, B.A., L.T., Senior Deputy Inspector of Schools, Tindivanam.

THE TEACHERS' BOOKSHELF

Modern Geography of the World for High Schools. By B. V. Narasinga Rao and N. Subba Rao. Published by P. N. Chidambara Mudaliar Bros. Madras.

This book which is written to suit the requirements of the A. Group Geography syllabus has been published in three parts. The first part deals with the Southern Continents, the second with North America and Eurasia and the third with India and the World Regions. The book has a foreword by Sir K. V. Reddi. In the foreword Sir K. V. Reddi observes that this work should serve as a very useful text book since the continents are proportionately dealt with and the life and activities of the people in every country are well brought out.

It is really a pity that at a time when teachers who are actually engaged in teaching the subject in the class room bring out books suitable to the standard the whole scheme of studies should be changed. The book under review has a number of useful illustrations and tables of climatic statistics. It is well pointed.

OBITUARY

LATE MR. S. V. RAMASWAMY IYENGAR, B.A., L.T., TIRUCHENGODU.

Mr. K. S. Chengalvarayan, writes from Krishnagiri:—

It is with deep regret that I record the death of Mr S. V. Ramaswami Ayyengar, B.A., L.T., Headmaster, Board High School, Tiruchengodu, Salem District, at the early age of 42 immediately after the close for the summer vacation after a stroke of paralysis lasting for a week.

After graduating two decades back he secured a footing in the Local Board Service in his native district. He was for a long time an assistant in the Dharmapuri Board High School and was two years back made the Head Master of the Board High School, Tiruchengodu. Both as Assistant and Headmaster he was uniformly sympathetic towards students and always on good terms with his colleagues and his Assistants. He took keen interest in extra educational and other activities and was for a long time an active member of the Salem District Teachers' Guild and a keen and willing co-operator. His loss will be keenly felt in the Educational Associations and the co-operative activities of the District. The remarkable success of the Students' Co-operative Stores at Tiruchengodu is in no small measure due to the parental care that he bestowed.

We offer our sincere condolences to the members of the bereaved family and especially to Mr. A. Ramaswami Ayyengar, Pleader, Salem, who brought him up and was mainly responsible for his education and to whom the death of the son-in-law is a great shock in his advanced age.

TWELVE REASONS!

Why you should prefer

THE

NEW ERA ENGLISH READERS

First and Second Primer, As. 5 & 6

(Fully Illustrated.)

Approved by the Text-Book Committee, Madras.

EDITED BY

H. CHAMPION, M.A., I.E.S.

BY

M. S. SUNDARESWARAN, M.A., L.T.

AND

A. S. VENKATARAMAN, B.A., L.T.

In many respects the *New Era English Readers* strike out a new path in the principles of Foreign Language Teaching. They have many commendable features, only a few of which are mentioned here.

(1) The latest principles accepted and advocated by authorities on Modern Language Learning have been followed.

(2) The problem of English Teaching in India being very largely the problem of the beginners' stage, emphasis has been laid on the linguistics, 'the facts of language' and the language units which are not always the single words, but the phrases and idioms which enrich the English language.

(3) The aims of the series embrace, not only an ability to read, but also an ability to speak and write English.

(4) The subject-matter of the lessons is the out-come of a judicious combination of scenes of Indian life and Western life, and the approach to Western knowledge and culture is made through familiar matter in a new garb, most of the English Readers being rendered unsuitable to Indian Schools because of their treatment of exclusively English Scenes.

(5) Interest in the lessons is sought to be stimulated by adapting the subject-matter to the ages, temperament and tastes of Indian children.

(6) The lessons are carefully graded, from the point of view of a word and phrase scheme, and a grammar scheme. The principle, "From the known to the unknown" has been adopted.

(7) Corresponding to a passive stage in the acquisition of a mother-tongue by a child, there must be a passive stage in a foreign language study and this has been duly recognised in Primer I.

(8) All modern methods of teaching are meant to exercise the self-activity of children and the emphasis, therefore, has been shifted from *teaching* to *learning* a foreign language. With this end in view, exercises on the use of English have been given to enable the pupils to master the new language form in every lesson.

(9) Few instructions have been given to the teacher for the reason that the use of the Readers is self-explanatory.

(10) The use of the vernacular in explanations is not taboo.

(11) Language learning being a matter of habit, memorizing certain forms of expression is encouraged.

(12) The illustrations are meant to illuminate a situation more than the single words.

Specimen copies will be sent on application.

B. G. PAUL & CO. Educational Publishers

12, Francis Joseph Street, Madras

EDITORIAL

NEED FOR ACTION

The cause of the *vernacular medium* has never suffered for lack of opinion from influential quarters. Now it is Sir M. Ismail, the Dewan of Mysore, that makes an appeal to educationists for the adoption of the vernacular medium. The responsible position as Dewan he holds in the premier Indian State and the opportunities of foreign travel which he has enjoyed should make us consider more seriously the need for action. While inaugurating at Bangalore the Vacation Course of Lectures and the Book Exhibition, he made certain general observations which might be treated as having a more than local interest. Very often, persons who are opposed to the adoption of the vernacular medium go on arguing that English, the *lingua franca*, will leave the field. There is absolutely no foundation for this assumption and we are glad that Sir Ismail has explained the position clearly as follows: "I am not suggesting that either English on the one hand or Sanskrit and other classical languages on the other, should be banished. Their importance is great and undeniable and is bound to remain so for as long a time as we need concern ourselves about. English has become the *lingua franca*, so to say, of not only India but of, perhaps, the largest area of the world; and neither on the national nor the international plane of intercourse can we afford to dispense with the use of this most useful and powerful instrument. . . . But we have, at the same time, to think of the clamant needs of our masses. We have to think of the easiest and the speediest way of educating and equipping them for life. No country can afford to neglect its own language. Only those who keep intact the bond of unity with their own people are capable of exercising any sound influence amongst them. Let our pupils, then, not neglect their vernacular. It is desirable that they should learn through the medium of their own vernacular." The advocates of the vernacular medium will be glad to know from Sir Ismail that the Exhibition and Lectures bear ample testimony to the fitness of Kannada to become the medium of communication on all subjects of interest to the modern world. The time has come for the administrator to act. And the teaching profession which should always stand for proper methods of teaching should urge the need for immediate action. There will be critics who will go on counting the difficulties one after the other but will never lift their little finger to get rid of any of the difficulties and the problem of vernacularisation has never been seriously tackled. We hope that the State of Mysore will give the right lead in respect of this question and conditions are certainly favourable in that State for this experiment. The paucity of books is often cited as an obstacle in the way but this is only a lame excuse. There are a good number of books available in the market and it should not be an impossible task for the educational authorities to get ready suitable books in every subject. If they come out with a definite policy and show a determination to adhere to the programme, the publishing world will not keep quiet. This cry of want of books was raised when the subject of *Elementary Science* was given special importance. Within a few years the market has come to be flooded with books on *Elementary Science* both in English and vernacular, and there is a wide field for choice. There is one other argument to which we should make a reference. The feeling is strong that the adoption of the vernacular medium in non-language subjects may affect adversely the proficiency in English. It is not necessary to go into the

merits of this argument. The real question is "what should be the point of view in our education." If "proficiency in English" alone be the objective, there may appear to be a strong case for the foreign medium. We doubt very much whether even a single person will be found to maintain that the objective in our education is the proficiency in English to the exclusion of other considerations. To continue to adopt the foreign medium in regard to non-language subjects solely with the object of acquiring proficiency in English is unsound from an educational standpoint and reduces instruction in every subject to a language lesson. That the language difficulty should never be allowed to act as a handicap is clearly admitted in the newly introduced "Specimen Questions." There is a welcome change in the outlook of the examiner and the answers in non-language subjects will not be judged from the point of view of language. Proficiency in English must depend upon proper methods of teaching English. The adoption of the vernacular medium in respect of non-language subjects is the only proper course for schools to follow since it would, in the words of Sir Ismail, enable pupils "to assimilate their new knowledge and pass it on."

While the importance of the vernacular medium can never be questioned, it may be advisable to make statistical studies on the use of the mother tongue in relation to the achievement of the pupil. We heartily commend to our readers Mr. R. M. Savur's article. The time cannot be more opportune for an investigation since the Director of Public Instruction himself has felt the need for it. Mr. R. M. Savur has been carrying on an investigation and conducting an experiment, the results of which are eagerly awaited. His views on the vernacular medium are characteristic of a scientific mind and are bound to command our acceptance. Had he been given a chance, he would have utilized it for an investigation of the 100 or odd schools where the vernacular medium has been adopted, for the question at issue or the real problem is, how the marks of pupils taught and examined in a vernacular medium compare with the marks of pupils on the English medium. It is beside the point to argue that because the girls' schools do better than boys' schools or South Kanara pupils do better than Madura pupils, the medium of instruction is neither the sole cause or there are other causes at least as important. We would be only complicating the issues, where clarification is imperative. There is need for an inquiry so as to collate and compare the results in schools on a vernacular medium vis-a-vis the English medium.

In an investigation conducted by Mr. M. R. Paranjpe of Poona, it has been proved that the median values of mother tongue group are higher than the English group in History. But this is based on an analysis of the Matriculation results for only one year, i.e., 1929 and it is hoped that it may serve as a basis for further investigation.

We would respectfully urge on the Director of Public Instruction the urgency of a statistical inquiry of the problem and commend the suggestion of Mr. R. M. Savur regarding the constitution of the new S. S. L. C. Board.

WHITHER !

We view with grave concern the alleged happenings in some aided institutions under the Protestant Mission Bodies. Our attention has been drawn to the termination of the services of several Non-Christian teachers who have to their credit a long period of loyal service. In some cases the

teachers have been told that such a step has become necessary in view of a change in their policy which has come to be known as "Christianisation of the staff" In a few institutions the termination of services is sought to be explained away as a measure of retrenchment. This is difficult to understand when teachers are likely to be recruited afresh for these places left vacant. We do not propose to deal with this latter question. It is necessary for us to express our view in regard to the former question.

The Mission Bodies are pleased to admit that the Non-Christian teachers who have been served with notice have done meritorious work and served the institution loyally. They propose to send away these teachers, perhaps much against their own will and this step is necessitated by the Christianisation policy. It is not for the teaching profession to examine the circumstances which have led to this change in the policy. But we shall not be serving the cause of the profession if we fail to bring to the notice of the mission authorities and the public the implications and repercussions of this new orientation. We trust we shall not be understood by our Christian comrades in the profession that we are intent on depriving them of their opportunities for employment in schools. What is happening today in respect of one group of teachers belonging to one religious persuasion may happen to another group and the question must be judged on its own merits. Let us imagine that, some years later, Christian teachers of a particular section, say the Wesleyan or the Lutheran are alone to be permitted to serve. There will be certainly a commotion if, in pursuance of such a change in policy, teachers of approved service belonging to other sections be sent away.

There are two chief points arising for our consideration. (1) How far can this change in policy be used with justification to send away the existing teachers and (2) whether this new policy is justifiable in our country? We are more particularly concerned with the first point. Under the existing educational policy of *State-aided* education, it is competent for the management to have its own rules for recruitment provided that they take care to satisfy the departmental regulations governing qualifications. But it is also competent for the State which also contributes funds towards the maintenance of these schools and should therefore exercise a careful watch over the educational progress, to guarantee to the teacher security of tenure of service so long as he does his work to the satisfaction of the management. The cause of public instruction will suffer a serious set back if frequent changes in the staff be made for no valid reason. The need for some measure of departmental support should be obvious from the *Model Agreement* now enforced by the Department. We have been pointing out very often that the contract now in force does not go far enough since a sincere and efficient teacher can be sent away for no fault of his. We have been contending that the termination of service should be for exceptional reasons such as insubordination, grave moral misconduct and so on. An alarming situation will arise in the teaching profession if the Government should keep quiet and give a free hand to the management in regard to the termination of services on altogether extra-academic grounds. The implications of the policy of *State-aided* education should be understood and borne in mind both by the Government and the management. The teacher who works in a recognised aided school is, in the words of the Rt. Hon'ble Fisher, doing national work and hence, the conditions of his service in privately managed schools should be regulated by the Government in national interests. As for the management which looks to the State for recognition and financial support, it is under an obligation to see that extra-academic considerations resulting in frequent migrations or turn-

over of teachers are not allowed to affect adversely the instructions given in the institutions under their control.

The present case before us is a clear one. A change in policy cannot be regarded as a sufficient justification for the termination of the services of teachers of a certain faith. Just pause to consider the number of teachers that are likely to be thrown out on this ground of a change in policy on the part of the Mission Bodies. It is too much to expect the concerned teachers as well as the Teachers' Associations to remain silent. They will not be doing anything improper if they should appeal to public men to look into the question. They will have a very good case to place before the Government and the members of the Legislative Council and it is likely that the educational policy itself may have to be revised in the light of the attitude adopted by the management. We do not deny that the immediate effect of the Mission policy will help the Mission management to give employment to a number of unemployed Christians. But the question of Mission education should be considered primarily from a true liberal educational aspect and anything which is likely to militate against the extension of its real usefulness and service in the true Christian spirit should be avoided. This action of the Mission Bodies will prove infectious in a short time. What will be the situation if an Indian management begins to send away groups of teachers on the ground that it has decided to keep in schools under its control only Aiyars or Aiyangars or Mudaliars or Chettiers. Is it possible to contend that such a policy has become imperative in the interest of the education of the children? We would therefore appeal to the Mission Bodies to reconsider their decision and maintain their reputation for justice and foresight.

Now for the second point. It is not denied that the management is at liberty to draw their recruits from any section. But no management that is anxious to let the institution fulfil the purpose for which it has been founded can afford to shut its eyes to the consequences arising out of a short-sighted policy. Aided institutions depend upon the *Fee-income* and the *Government grants* for their existence.

The early history of education in South India is a history of competition, sometimes unhealthy and objectionable, between Mission and Non-Mission institutions. It was not unusual that institutions often adopted devices of a questionable nature in the struggle for existence. Fortunately for South India, the situation began to change and the rival institutions have forgotten old quarrels and have begun to shake hands. At the present moment all institutions are cherishing a feeling that they are partners in the great enterprise of education. A clear proof of this is found in the unqualified acknowledgement by our public men in the Legislative Council and elsewhere of the valuable part the missionary bodies have been playing in the sphere of education. Any application to the Government for grant or financial help from the Mission Bodies usually receives prompt attention at the hands of Ministers who happen to be non-Christians. This is what it should be and it is essential that this good understanding should not be spoiled if education should make rapid progress. We are afraid that this new policy will have serious repercussions. It is not a spirit of intimidation or bluff that makes us offer certain remarks. This new policy is sure to alienate the sympathy of the public which will seriously affect the fee-income so necessary for the running of the school. Look at the number of non-Christian pupils in all grades of Mission institutions and the conclusion will be startling. Over 50% of the pupils in Mission schools happen to be non-Christians. Our

Mission authorities should not forget that they are living in 1934 under a constitution which can be used with good effect by our public men. They should be prepared to meet with great opposition from the authorities in regard to the disbursement of grants. The pressure on public men which the army of good teachers thrown out of employment can bring to bear will begin to tell at least in course of time and it will become very difficult for the Minister for Education even to attempt a defence of the Mission policy. We do not know whether it is the intention of the Mission Bodies to face those consequences. A cut in salaries is even now in force in several Mission schools and teachers are told that the continuance of the cut is necessary in view of the reduced grants from the Home Board and the Government. What will be the situation if, as the result of the new policy, parents choose to withdraw their children from the Mission institutions and send them to non-Mission schools and the Government also be compelled to cut down the teaching grants? The very existence of the Mission schools which have a glorious tradition and history behind them and which have made a substantial contribution to the cause of education will be seriously threatened.

We believe that the Mission Bodies are keen on affording facilities for higher education not only for its own sake but also as a means of promoting Christian thought, spirit and conduct in South India. Where is the chance for this work if the non-Christian pupils are persuaded to leave the Mission institutions? They will be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs if they should allow themselves to be diverted from the straight and proper path by minor considerations. It rests with the leaders of the Mission Bodies to take a long view of things and to allay the feeling of alarm. We hope that they will rise equal to the occasion and continue the time-honoured policy which has won the confidence and goodwill of the public.

THE VOICE OF ELDERS

Rt. Hon. Sastriar and Sir Muhammad Habibullah have expressed their views on certain important questions that are engaging the attention of the country to-day. While opening the Coimbatore District Teachers' Guild Conference, Rt. Hon. Sastriar could not help remarking that the educational world seemed to be immobile. He was surprised to see the Teachers' Associations still discussing the same old questions that used to be considered in the latter half of the nineteenth century. We do not know whether the responsibility for this state of affairs should be laid at the door of the Government, or public men, or the teaching profession. Teachers and their problems stand where they stood in 1870. They do not seem to be tired of passing the same resolutions regarding Salaries, Security of tenure, Vernacularisation and Representation in the educational boards or committees. The Government which is aware of the serious defects of the system seems to be convinced that a solution can never be possible. Hence the Grant-in-aid Code which is admitted to be defective remains unaltered. As for our public men, they are more concerned with the distribution of loaves and fishes and they never feel worried about the sound education of their own children. The Union is grateful to the Rt. Hon. Sastriar for the support he extended to the principles of the Service Conditions Bill. The need for the co-ordination of the work of the different agencies that very often pull in different directions and may even adopt steps prejudicial to the progress of education is clearly emphasised. He is of opinion that it is not relevant to know what other countries have done in regard to the conditions of service and we hope that our public men and

authorities will give due weight to the opinion of a gentleman who is competent by his wide experience to point to a wise line of action.

Sir Muhammad makes an eloquent appeal to young men that they should not think of *black coated jobs* alone. He has frankly advised them not to pursue a collegiate course if they be not fit for it. He is anxious that the young men should be diverted sufficiently early to courses which will fit them better for life. The country should be grateful to him for emphasising the view that he, as Dewan, is bound to look after the welfare of all communities. It is good that our Ministers try to understand the significance of this observation and adopt a policy which is likely to contribute to the rapid progress of the country in general.

THE INTER-UNIVERSITY BOARD, INDIA : ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1933-34

The Secretary of the Board, Prof. A. R. Wadia of the Mysore University, deserves to be congratulated on the excellent report about the working of the Inter-University Board which he has been able to bring out so soon after the closing of the year. It consists of two main parts, the Annual Report with a number of appendices containing in detail the views of the different Universities on the many points referred to them and the Minutes of a meeting of the Board held at Delhi on the 3rd and 5th of March last. This meeting had a strenuous time of it and considered as many as 65 subjects. It is a great pity that with regard to many of the previous resolutions of the Board which were referred to various constituent Universities for necessary action the University of Madras replies, "No action is proposed to be taken on the resolutions."

The Viceroy, in opening the Inter-University Conference at Delhi, regretted that the activities of this Board are not so well-known in India as they deserve to be and we hope the Secretary will try his best to improve this state of affairs by giving due publicity to the activities of the Board in as many educational journals of India as possible. We assure him that the Editorial Board of this journal are ready to extend to him their active sympathies and fullest co-operation.

THE IX ALL-INDIA EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE KARACHI.

The Reception Committee of the above Conference deserve to be congratulated on their publishing the proceedings of the Conference so soon after the sessions last Christmas. There is a general introduction giving a connected and chronological account of the various events that constituted the Conference. The speeches of the Chairman of the Reception Committee and of the President of the Conference and a number of papers read at the Conference are given *in extenso*. There are brief reports of the various sectional Conferences and useful abstracts of papers read at them. The exhibition is described fully and the speeches delivered on that occasion are also given. Those who had not the good fortune to be present at the Conference and take part in the proceedings will do well to go through this lucid and reliable account of the proceedings. The observations of the Secretary based upon personal experience regarding the appointment in time of responsible workers and Finance deserve to be specially noted. The book deserves to find a place in every school library.

S. K. Y.