

MADRAS

Press communique on secondary and
elementary educational policy.

Government of Madras

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1398, 26th June 1937

Education—Secondary and elementary—Policy—Press communiqué—Issued.

Order—No. 1398, Education, dated 26th June 1937.

The following press communiqué is issued :—

PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ.

Introduction.—The Government feel that the time is ripe for a pronouncement on their general policy in regard to the main branches and grades of education. In recent years in all provinces and administrations in India the question of a change of outlook in educational policy and the question of the improvement of the system of education, particularly the system of primary education, have been receiving the most earnest attention. The Government of India have themselves felt that the progress of education has become so fundamentally important that a united effort should be made with the close co-operation of leading educationalists in all provinces to frame a new policy of educational advancement at all stages and particularly to increase the rate of progress in the spread of mass education and of literacy. To this end, in 1935, the Government of India reconstituted the Central Advisory Board of Education which had been held in abeyance for reasons of retrenchment but which the Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission had strongly recommended should be reconstituted. Even before the reconstitution of the Central Advisory Board of Education almost all provinces in India had set up independent enquiries regarding the progress made in the various branches of education and regarding the best policy to be adopted for the improvement of education generally. In addition to these local enquiries, the Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission, though primarily appointed to enquire into the state of education in India in relation to an extension of the franchise, took the opportunity, the first opportunity afforded since the Hunter Committee of 1882, to survey the whole field of education. The report of this Committee published in 1929 formed an important document for the consideration of all Provincial Governments. Amongst its many findings the report of the committee drew prominent attention to the ineffectiveness of a large portion of the total expenditure on education, particularly in the sphere of mass education. Since then nearly all the provinces and administrations in India have been attempting to formulate a policy for mass education which will result in the more rapid production of literates and in the reduction of wasteful expenditure and wastage of material. The Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission also drew prominent attention to two other disquieting features of the state of education in India. They were the large numbers of unfit candidates which were finding their way into the colleges and higher educational institutions and the lack of flexibility in the system of secondary education. The latter feature, in the opinion of the Committee, was largely responsible for the absence of a diversion of pupils from purely arts courses into vocational courses and for the difficult and uneconomic position created by the existence of so large a number of educated unemployed. In the last few years much attention and much discussion has been focussed on these disquieting features and in this province Government have set up special committees and have ordered special enquiries to be undertaken. As a result, Government have considered a number of special reports including the report of the Committee on the reorganization of Secondary Education, the report on the progress of Elementary Education, the report of the Committee on the reorganization of Higher Elementary Education, the report on the financing of Secondary Education, the report of the Unemployment Committee, the report of the Physical Education Committee, the Muslim Education Committee's report, the report on the development of Women's Education, the Champion Report and the report on Agricultural bias in Middle Schools. Quite recently also the Education Committee of the Provincial Economic Council submitted an important report on mass education. Although Government have taken from time to time what appeared to be the most suitable action on these enquiries and reports, no general statement of the policy of Government in regard to the many problems facing educationalists in the Presidency of Madras has hitherto been issued. The Government, therefore, feel that the time has now come to publish for public information, and for constructive criticism and suggestion, a clear statement of the present position in each branch of education and of the objectives which Government believe should be

aimed at in each branch and an enumeration of the manner in which Government hope over a period of time to reach those objectives. It is not their intention that the proposals made in this resolution should be regarded as unalterable. In the light of changing conditions or in the light of helpful and responsible criticism changes may have to be made. It is, however, the intention of Government that they should form the basis not merely for discussion but for an attempt both to see more clearly the direction in which the various grades of education are progressing and for the formulation of a sound policy to obtain more satisfactory results and to eliminate waste of money and of material. The Government fully realize that the Government and the Education department cannot alone hope to bring about either the far-reaching changes suggested in this resolution or the rapid improvement which they hope will occur as the result of these changes without the co-operation of university authorities, local boards, large educational organizations, private managements, etc. The Government sincerely hope, however, that the resolution which reviews the position of education in this province will be helpful in giving a definite lead to all those who are working in the field of education and to all those who may be feeling that the present rate of progress and even the present structure of the educational system are not as satisfactory as they might be.

Mass education.—The primary object of the State in providing a system of elementary education is to ensure that the masses of the country are gradually made permanently literate. A limited number of children are made permanently literate in secondary schools, special schools at home or by institutions not recognized by or provided by the State; but the elementary school system, approved and controlled by the State, is the main channel through which it can be expected that in course of time the whole population will be made literate. Looking back over a period of thirty years in this province it will be seen that there have been very considerable developments in the field of elementary education. There has been a large increase in total expenditure, a large increase in the total number of students enrolled and a large increase in the number of schools provided. In 1905-06 the total enrolment in the first five standards of elementary schools for both boys and girls was 711,674, in 1934-35 the total enrolment was 2,715,005; in 1905-06 the total expenditure from all sources on elementary schools was Rs. 28.50 lakhs; the corresponding figure for 1934-35 was Rs. 235.41 lakhs. In 1905-06 the total number of elementary schools for boys and girls was 21,399; in 1934-35 the figure was 49,123. In addition to these large statistical increases Government have passed legislation for the introduction of compulsion and have introduced compulsion in a number of areas, particularly municipal areas. Government have also by legislation insisted on the raising of an educational cess to be used, with its equivalent Government contribution, by local boards, for the furtherance of elementary education. Government have in addition considerably increased the provision for the training of teachers and the percentage of untrained teachers working in elementary schools has fallen from 73.91 in 1905-06 to 30.33 in 1934-35. Viewed from these aspects it would appear as if progress had been satisfactory. A careful analysis of the existing position, particularly of the relationship between the strength of elementary school standards and the increase in literacy of the population, reveals however the fact that, while it is satisfactory that there has been a very large increase in the enrolment of elementary schools, the large increases have not resulted in anything like a proportionate increase in the duration of school life and consequently in the production of permanent literates. The figures for literacy for the last three censuses show that the rate of increase in the percentage of the literates of the population is moving extremely slowly. The increase in the percentage of male literates only increased by 1.4 per cent in the decade 1911-21 and only increased by 0.9 per cent in the decade 1921-31. The increases in the percentages of female literates were only 0.8 for the decade 1911-21 and only 0.5 for the decade 1921-31. It will be seen that actually the rate of increase has fallen between 1921 and 1931. It seems obvious that in spite of all that has been accomplished in the field of mass education there is little relationship between increased total enrolment and the production of literates from the elementary school system. While there has been an increase of over two million pupils in total enrolment in the first five standards during the last thirty years, the increases in the percentage of literates to the total population have only been fractional. Since the 1911 census the increase in the total number of male literates has only been 900,000 and the increase in the female literates only 329,000. It is not difficult to explain the causes for these facts. The main difficulty which has always faced the Education department is the difficulty of retaining children in school long enough to make them permanently literate and the large increases in expenditure, total number of pupils and total number of schools have not succeeded in increasing the duration of school life. In fact, viewed in terms of percentages, the huge increase in enrolment, particularly in the I standard, has resulted in a decrease in the percentage of the number of pupils in the V standard to the number in the I standard. While it is satisfactory that the total number of pupils reading in the V standard, for example, has risen from 45,522 to 118,477, it is equally disquieting that these figures should form a smaller percentage of the total enrolment in the I standard than

was the case thirty years ago. Similarly, the percentage of pupils admitted into the I standard in 1905-06 who reappeared in the V standard in 1909-10 is considerably higher than the percentage of pupils admitted into the I standard in 1930-31 who reappeared five years later in standard V. In technical language "wastage" and "stagnation" have not only continued but increased and Government have seriously to consider what steps should now be taken to prevent what, from a financial point of view, is in reality an ineffective expenditure of very large sums of public money. It may be safely stated, as was indicated in the Report of the Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission, that with rare exceptions money spent on the education of children who do not proceed beyond the III standard is almost totally wasted and from the figures given it is not difficult to calculate what large sums of money have been spent almost without any return to the State. Actual figures for the five years 1930-31 to 1934-35 show that out of 1,369,833 pupils enrolled in the I standard in 1930-31 only 303,931 survived to the IV standard in 1933-34 and only 118,477 survived to the V standard in 1934-35. The wastage between standards I and II still remains enormous. Out of 1,369,833 pupils enrolled in the I standard in 1930-31 only 527,414 were found in standard II in the following year, there being a drop of 850,000 pupils between I and II standards in one year.

Apart from the reluctance of certain classes of parents to keep their children in school and the economic necessity for many children, particularly of the poorer classes, to be occupied in domestic, agricultural and industrial work, the Government believe that the main reason for the abnormal wastage in elementary schools lies in the schools themselves. Large numbers of schools do not by their structure provide for a complete primary course and many such schools have remained incomplete and ineffective for a long period of time. In addition, there are many schools which, by reason of their uneconomic strength, their incompleteness and the adequacy of the other school provision in the local area, do not deserve to continue in existence. (Further, a very large proportion of the total number of schools are single-teacher schools in which obviously one teacher engaging several standards and sections of standards cannot, unassisted and inadequately supervised, be expected to give proper education and adequate instruction to the pupils in his charge.) This applies particularly in the case of the large number of very young children in the lowest standards amongst whom there is the greatest tendency to wastage and stagnation and for whom a whole-time well-equipped teacher, preferably a well-trained woman teacher, is an absolute necessity. (Large numbers of under-aged pupils attend the I standard occupying much needed school places and using the school practically as a crèche. This greatly handicaps the work of the I standard and Government have decided to exclude all boys of under 5½ and all girls of under 5 from school, except in the case of kindergarten, nursery or model schools. (Although in recent years Government have made serious endeavours to procure more trained and more highly qualified teachers, many schools, particularly aided schools, still employ unqualified and untrained teachers. The limited capacity of these teachers makes it impossible for them to ensure that the pupils in their charge move rapidly up the elementary school course and emerge as permanent literates.) The existence of so many incomplete, under-staffed and improperly equipped schools has resulted not only in high wastage but in stagnation as the result of which pupils even when they are successfully retained in school remain in the lowest standards for a number of years and never secure any education of real value. The incomplete structure of lower elementary schools is revealed in the following figures. (Out of a total of 42,574 lower elementary schools, only 7,159 are complete schools with 5 standards, 27,142 have only 4 standards, 6,147 have only 3 standards, 1,757 have only 2 standards and 369 have only 1 standard.) Had these schools adequate staffs, even though they were incomplete in structure, better education and less wastage might have been obtained, but (out of the total number of lower elementary schools as many as 18,639 schools have only one teacher.) Of this total 284 are 5 standard schools, 12,714 are 4 standard schools, 4,046 are 3 standard schools and 1,295 are 2 standard schools. The inability of a single teacher to handle these schools satisfactorily is further emphasized when it is remembered that many of the standards in these schools are divided into more than one section. In addition to the impossibility of a single teacher satisfactorily handling a number of classes in complete and incomplete schools, the staff of the remaining schools is in many cases insufficient, as many as 1,891 schools with 5 standards having only two teachers and as many as 9,537 schools with 4 standards having only two teachers. The inefficiency of many uneconomic schools is illustrated by the fact that of the total number of lower elementary schools as many as 11,819 are working with less than thirty pupils on the rolls and a much smaller number than that in actual attendance. The following figures reveal the extent to which there is still need for improving the quality of the staff in elementary schools. There are in boys' and girls' elementary schools at present as many as 33,630 untrained teachers of which as many as 13,822 are untrained teachers of the lower elementary grade. * Although Government have initiated the policy of eliminating the lower elementary teacher altogether, there are still, in boys' and girls' elementary schools, as many as 32,095 trained teachers of the lower elementary grade.

Taking all things into consideration, Government feel strongly that the most urgent need in mass education at the moment is to eliminate ineffective and inefficient schools and to build up in their places a system of complete, economically well-filled, well-staffed, five standard primary schools; schools which in effect, by their structure and equipment, should give manifest assurances of adding to the literacy of the population. To this end Government have recently taken steps to see that in future and after a due warning grant-in-aid and subsidies are given only for the maintenance of (1) complete and properly staffed schools, (2) feeder schools capable of proving that they are regularly passing on their pupils to the higher standards of complete schools, and (3) single-teacher or two-teacher schools in isolated areas where the children of school-age are few in number and where plural class teaching must necessarily be adopted. Government have also taken steps to prohibit as early as possible the employment of inadequately qualified and untrained teachers. Government, however, recognize that even a qualified and trained teacher cannot obtain the best results if his conditions of service are unsatisfactory, his pay inadequate and irregular and his status insufficiently recognized. They have, therefore, undertaken an enquiry into the conditions of service of teachers in elementary schools and have recently devised means for gradually securing suitable improvements in the conditions of service of the elementary school teacher.

Government further consider that one of the causes of unsatisfactory progress is the unsuitability of the curriculum in elementary schools and the absence in many cases of proper methods of teaching. The scheme of studies for elementary schools is not sufficiently related to the life and surroundings of both parents and pupils. This is particularly so in the case of rural elementary schools. If the village school is to be of real value to the village children and to the surrounding rural life generally the teaching imparted in the school must be directly related to the realities of life in its environment. The stereotyped methods now generally employed by schoolmasters, many of whom do not belong to rural areas, tend to make study in the school something foreign and extraneous and therefore something difficult and uninteresting to the majority of the pupils. The teaching of nature study, for example, from a text-book without its being in any way related to the actual life in and around the school is of no practical value. There is little or no training in the powers of observation, hardly any practical work, and no interest is taken in gardening. The teacher usually tends to divorce the pupil from village life and hereditary occupations rather than help to train up better villagers. [The unsuitability of the present curriculum is also evinced by the fact that the most important subjects such as hygiene, civics and practical instruction are now only optional subjects.] The reorganization of the courses of study in elementary schools naturally necessitates a reorganization of the work done in the training schools. What is especially required is that educated villagers should be trained in rural bias so as to make the imparting of knowledge a living thing in relation to everyday happenings in village life. In this connexion Government believe that it is probable that the project method of teaching in elementary schools is the best suited, particularly for rural schools. In order to frame a curriculum more suitable for elementary schools, Government have recently set up a special committee competent to draft detailed syllabuses for each standard of elementary schools. Formal and uninspiring teaching from text-books has been partly caused by the use of an excessive number of text-books and Government have recently passed orders largely reducing the number of text-books permitted to be used in elementary schools. In order to ensure a greater correlation between the training course in training schools and the work, particularly of the village teacher, Government have also ordered that the courses in training schools should be fundamentally revised.

Government further consider that one of the reasons why the village teacher is unable to adopt suitable methods of teaching and also unable to make the village school function as the centre point of rural reconstruction work, is that the teacher, trained long ago probably in antiquated methods, does not receive any further instruction in up-to-date methods throughout his service. They therefore propose at an early date to institute a widespread system of refresher courses in training for elementary school teachers.

As already indicated, there are large numbers of elementary schools whose working is unsatisfactory and in consequence of which much of the money spent upon them can only be regarded as waste. There is a wide difference between the reported number on the rolls of many schools and the reported number in daily attendance. If this is so as shown in the actual reports from the schools themselves, there is unfortunately every reason to believe that the actual difference in daily practice is much larger than what is reported. There is also every reason to believe that many of the schools work very irregularly. [Owing to inadequate supervision, schools, particularly those in rural areas, have little fear of a surprise visit or other visits on more than one or two days in the year. This must necessarily result in the schools, if they are not under well-organized managements, being irregular in their working and in some cases actually bogus in their existence. Government have recognized the need, therefore, for a strong inspectorate.] In order to strengthen the inspectorate during times of rapid development, Government adopted the policy of having a District

Educational Officer for every district of the Presidency. Government also appointed a number of Junior Deputy Inspectors and recently agreed to the appointment of a Special Deputy Director for Elementary Education. Government have, however, found in practice that even the adoption of these measures has not been sufficient to ensure adequate supervision, more frequent visits to schools and the prevention of waste of public funds. District Educational Officers, Deputy Inspectors of Schools and Junior Deputy Inspectors, Inspectresses of Girls' Schools and Sub-Assistant Inspectresses are concerned with the routine work of and the inspection of over 50,000 institutions in this Presidency and the Special Deputy Director for Elementary Education is concerned with the administration and control of the whole of mass education in all its aspects throughout the Presidency. It is not, therefore, surprising that there is still need for more adequate supervision and control. The total expenditure on primary education in this province amounts to Rs. 2.35 crores, of which Rs. 1.37 crores are met from Government funds and Rs. 53.47 lakhs are met from local body funds. [The total amount spent by Government on the inspecting agency for all Indian schools is approximately Rs. 16.7 lakhs or only 7.1 per cent of the total expenditure on elementary education and the total amount spent by Government on the inspection and administration of all classes of educational institutions in the province amounts to only Rs. 18.92 lakhs or 7.5 per cent of the total Government expenditure on education.] In consideration of the fact that such very large sums of money are being spent on elementary schools and that such a large percentage, over 50 per cent of the total Government expenditure on education, is spent on elementary schools and in view also of the fact that the figures given in this resolution indicate large waste of public funds owing to the ineffectiveness of much of the education imparted, Government have decided that sound policy dictates that a further strengthening of the inspectorate should be undertaken without delay. [Under existing conditions it has been found that in most areas large numbers of schools can only be visited for a formal inspection once in the year and that even assuming greater efforts are put forth no schools other than the schools located in headquarters or large urban centres can in any case be visited more than twice a year. This the Government consider to be wholly inadequate supervision.] Government have, therefore, sanctioned the appointment of a considerably increased number of Junior Deputy Inspectors with a view to ensuring that all elementary schools are more frequently visited and their work more adequately supervised. At the same time Government appreciate the need for strengthening also the superior controlling establishment. [The working of District Educational Councils and the working of local bodies in relation to elementary education needs in Government's view greater supervision and control than the Director of Public Instruction and his head office staff can at present exercise.] Government have, therefore, sanctioned the appointment of four Divisional Inspectors as recommended in "the Report on the Development of Elementary Education of the Madras Presidency, with proposals for the reorganization of the controlling Agencies" submitted to Government as the result of a survey made by an officer placed on special duty for the purpose.

While agreeing to increase the inspectorate, Government feel that other agencies also should be utilized to counteract the existence of bogus schools and the irregular working of lower elementary schools. To this end, other departments interested in rural welfare and represented on the District Economic Councils have been asked to encourage their subordinate officers to visit elementary schools. The Revenue department in particular have been asked to co-operate and by enlisting the aid of village headmen Government hope that much improvement may take place.

Compulsion.—The Government as far back as the year 1920 legislated by an Elementary Education Act for the introduction of compulsion under certain conditions for both boys and girls and compulsion has since been introduced in 32 municipalities and in 7 rural areas. In 1934 Government again introduced legislation so as to amend the Act of 1920 to enable them to take steps not only to introduce compulsion generally for all children of school-age but to compel a parent who had once admitted his child to school to continue that child in school until the child had completed the elementary course or had passed out of the age-limit for compulsion. [An examination of the statistics for the existing compulsory areas indicates that the success or failure of compulsion has considerably varied in the different localities in which it has been operating, but statistics clearly reveal that in no area has the application of compulsion succeeded in eliminating wastage or in obtaining a proper distribution of pupils between standard and standard. After a careful investigation Government have come to the conclusion that in many cases insufficient preparation for the introduction of compulsion was made by way of the provision of the required number of school places, the provision of adequate staff and equipment and more particularly the provision of complete five standard schools. Government now feel that the improvement of the schools generally as indicated in the earlier chapters of this resolution is of more immediate importance than a rapid extension of compulsion and in any case they feel strongly that the provision of complete, properly

staffed and adequately accommodated schools must in every case in future be an essential precursor to the introduction of compulsion. To start compulsion in any local area without having a sufficient number of school places, without having schools with the complete structure of five standards and without having adequate staff and equipment must necessarily render the proper working of the scheme impossible. In several areas where compulsion has been working the arrangements made for legally applying compulsion have been altogether inadequate, but it is obvious that even if rigid legal steps are taken there is not much gained by compelling children to attend schools which are not so organized as to be able to give them a complete primary school course and turn them out as permanent literates. When however steps have been taken as indicated in this resolution to improve and build up the average elementary school, Government are prepared to adopt the policy of gradually extending compulsion in the presidency with adequate provision in the rules for making sure that compulsion will be legally enforced. Government, however, are not satisfied that under present conditions compulsion is being applied to the areas in which there is the greatest difficulty in attracting children to school and retaining them in the school. Most of the existing schemes of compulsion are applied to municipal areas and an examination of the figures for school attendance and literacy show that it is in the rural areas particularly, in which are located groups of backward and depressed class communities, that the enforcement of compulsion is likely to be the only ultimate means of ensuring that children in those areas actually attend and remain at school for the full primary course. Government consider therefore that future schemes for compulsion should include a much larger extension of compulsion in rural areas. Similarly Government consider that with any extension of compulsion the position of girls should necessarily as a matter of broad policy receive greater attention than it has received in the past. The wide divergence between the literacy figures for women and the literacy figures for men and the equally wide divergence between the figures in the number of girls reading in the IV and V standards of elementary schools compared with the corresponding figures for boys indicate, in the opinion of Government, that schemes for the compulsion of girls are at the moment even more important than schemes for the compulsion of boys. Government realize also in this connexion that from a much wider point of view the education of women in India is to-day more important than the education of men since it has been acknowledged that if the mother in the home is educated there is far more likelihood of the more rapid spread of education amongst the children of both sexes. Government further attach considerable importance to another aspect of the application of compulsion. An examination of the age-group figures by standards in elementary schools has revealed the fact that the present age distribution between standard and standard is extremely unsatisfactory, that is to say, that very large numbers of over-aged children are reading in standards the school places of which should normally be occupied by children of lesser age. In a perfect distribution of children of school-age between the standards, children aged between 6 and 7, for example, would be in standard I, children of 7 to 8 in standard II, children of 8 to 9 in standard III, children of 9 to 10 in standard IV and children of 10 to 11 in standard V. The actual figures for the pupils at present reading in the five standards of elementary schools show that there are over 600,000 pupils aged other than 6 to 7 in standard I, over 300,000 pupils aged other than 7 to 8 in standard II, over 250,000 pupils aged other than 8 to 9 in standard III, over 200,000 pupils aged other than 9 to 10 in standard IV and over 75,000 pupils aged other than 10 to 11 in standard V. The application of compulsion to children so distributed would mean that large numbers of pupils would cease to come under compulsion after reading only in standard I, that large numbers of pupils now in standard I would cease to come under compulsion after reaching standard II and that similarly large numbers of pupils now reading in standard II would cease to come under compulsion after reaching only standard III. Government believe that a surer way of obtaining immediately beneficial results from compulsion would be to compel only all children of the lowest age group to attend school and to continue in school until they pass out of the school-age limits or reach the V standard and then in successive years apply the same form of compulsion until all children of the right age groups are reading in the five standards of elementary schools. Government consider that if compulsion each year is applied only to pupils who can be made literate within the school-age limits and within a five-year period better results will be obtained than by continuing to compel thousands of children to read in school until they have reached the school-age limit who, owing to the age at which they started and the low standard to which they can possibly reach within the age-limit, have no hope of being made permanently literate. Government have therefore under contemplation a further modification in the light of these facts of the method of compulsion statutorily permitted by the Elementary Education Amending Act of 1934.

Higher Elementary Education.—The system of higher elementary schools set up in this province was originally intended to be a post-primary course with standards VI, VII and VIII, a course more or less complete in itself but making provision for the passage of students in limited numbers into secondary schools. A recent investigation has shown that

while the number of students who proceed from higher elementary schools for further study in secondary schools has not largely increased, the schools themselves have in many cases not conformed to the type of school which was in mind when they were set up and this in spite of repeated pronouncements that the schools should be kept distinctive and not gradually become subordinate to the needs of students who desire to pass over into the secondary educational system. The report on the recent investigation shows that large numbers of higher elementary schools are functioning as imitation secondary schools, although their staff and equipment fall far below the requirements of a secondary school. In such schools also the courses of study in many cases are practically the same as the syllabuses and subjects of study in middle schools. Further, many of the existing higher elementary schools functioning as imitations of middle schools are alongside of and in direct rivalry with middle schools. It has also been shown that in a number of cases schools which were middle schools have been transmuted into higher elementary schools thus coming under rules which require lower standards and which enable in many cases the managements to earn higher grant-in-aid. Government consider the present state of affairs to be unsatisfactory from several points of view. Post-primary elementary schools should have entirely distinctive aims and courses radically different in character from the aims and courses of secondary schools. It is essential, for example, that particularly the schools in rural areas should, like the lower elementary schools, have syllabuses and courses of study which are in keeping with the surrounding area whether agricultural or industrial. Government have, therefore, decided to reorganize the existing higher elementary schools in such a manner as to prohibit them from functioning as imitation middle schools and so as to prevent the existing unnatural rivalry between the higher elementary schools and the secondary schools. In the reorganized schools Government propose to introduce an entirely new curriculum. The proposed changes will stress in particular the desirability of several of the optional subjects under the Elementary Education Act which deal with nature study, hygiene, civics, etc., being transferred to the compulsory group. The new courses now under preparation will include a large amount of pre-vocational instruction and practical work, including gardening work which will be compulsory for all rural schools. The standard of English instruction will be reduced and the standard of vernacular instruction considerably increased. As in the lower elementary schools new methods of instruction including particularly the project method will be experimented with in the lower standards and training in practical work will be insisted upon in the higher standards. The requirements of the reorganized higher elementary schools will necessitate consequential changes in the scheme of work in training schools. These changes will be mainly concerned with the greater importance given to vocational instruction, an improvement in the methods of teaching the vernaculars, instruction in the project method, the revision of the syllabus in nature study so as to make it a more live and applied subject and the provision of suitable gardens for use in practical work in all training schools. In order to make the new course in higher elementary schools complete in itself and in order to give a definite objective for students to complete the course, Government further propose to establish a uniform Elementary School Final Examination at the end of the VIII standard, the examination being conducted for each district or for groups of districts. Government hope that the new courses proposed for higher elementary schools, and in particular the various types of pre-vocational and practical work with which the students will occupy much of their time, will help to make the courses less literary than they are at present and enable a considerable number of students to prepare themselves for various classes of cottage industries and occupations which they may turn to after leaving school. The new courses may in any case enable a student after leaving school to develop a subsidiary occupation if manual labour is to be his main occupation.

District Educational Councils.—Government have recently had under review the working of the District Educational Councils set up by the Madras Elementary Education Act of 1920. In that Act important duties and functions were assigned to District Educational Councils including the grant of recognition to schools, the sanction and disbursement of grants to aided elementary schools and the preparation of schemes for the extension of elementary education. Under the Act District Educational Councils have also to maintain registers of all elementary schools and the number of elementary school places, to frame estimates for the existing provision for elementary education and of the further provision necessary to place elementary education within the reach of all children of school-age, to maintain registers of all trained and certificated teachers employed in elementary schools, to make proposals for increasing the supply of trained and certificated teachers and to furnish the Director of Public Instruction with a number of annual returns giving accurate statistical information regarding the progress of education in each district. Government have come to the conclusion that with rare exceptions District Educational Councils for varying reasons have been unable to carry out a number of these functions and duties and

that the councils have not been altogether successful in the manner of their carrying out the other functions and duties assigned to them. In the matter of granting recognition and disbursing aid many instances have come to the notice of Government of irregularities committed by the District Educational Councils and owing to the difficulty prevailing in persuading the District Educational Councils to follow the legitimate recommendations of the Education department, Government have already in their Amending Act of 1934 and by rules framed under the Act taken power further to control the actions of the District Educational Councils. Government, however, consider that it is not possible satisfactorily to carry out a uniform, strong and effective policy in regard to the improvement of elementary education for the Presidency as a whole so long as the powers of granting recognition and of awarding aid vest in the District Educational Councils. By the award of grants to undeserving schools, by the award of increased grants to improperly working schools and by the grant of recognition to unsatisfactory or unnecessary schools the District Educational Councils have in many cases ignored the necessity for conserving public funds and have made the carrying out of a wide and sound policy in elementary education extremely difficult or in some cases altogether impossible. Government have, therefore, come to the conclusion that there is no justification for the continuance of the District Educational Councils as at present constituted. They have in consequence under consideration the reconstitution of District Educational Councils or the substitution in their place of bodies or authorities more fitted to do the important work hitherto assigned to them. Government, however, realize that the reconstitution of the District Educational Councils involving as it does a legislative enactment cannot be undertaken until the Reformed Councils begin to function normally. In the meanwhile, therefore, Government have taken steps, by new rules framed under the Elementary Education Act, to tighten control over the existing District Educational Councils and to lessen the scope for the irregularities in regard to recognition and grant now not infrequently brought to the notice of Government. Government through the District Educational Councils annually distribute a sum of over Rs. 55 lakhs and Government consider that owing to the large waste involved and the ineffectiveness of much of the expenditure it is incumbent upon Government to place greater restrictions on the freedom of action now enjoyed by District Educational Councils. The large sums of Government money distributed by District Educational Councils form, however, only a portion of the large amounts expended by Government on elementary schools and Government are, therefore, simultaneously framing rules which will help to eliminate the waste which is found in the unnecessary maintenance of certain classes of board schools and the irregular working of large numbers of elementary schools under municipal councils and district boards.

Secondary and Higher Education.—The need for a reconstruction of the secondary school system has been recognized all over India and both the Government of India and the other provinces in India have under consideration large changes in the structure and courses of secondary schools. In this province criticism of the secondary course has mainly taken the form of a strong objection to its domination by university requirements. The Government feel that there is considerable justification for this criticism, since at present there is practically no secondary course complete in itself independent of a preparation for university entrance and leading to vocational training or direct occupation. Government are in general agreement with the recent resolution of the Central Advisory Board of Education in regard to the length of the middle school course and in regard to the need for a bifurcation at the high school stage. Having fully considered the whole position, Government feel that there are three changes of immediate urgency required in the secondary school system—

- (1) The alteration and improvement of the general education course at the middle school stage.
- (2) The provision of a variety of courses at the high school stage.
- (3) A definite restriction of the number of secondary school students preparing for university entrance.

In this connexion Government consider that, as a course of general education preparing both for pre-university classes and for a variety of other post-middle school training, the present middle school course is too short, Government also consider that the present high school course providing as it does little or no alternatives for students who either do not desire to prepare for the university or who are unfitted for higher literary study needs radical alteration. Every education committee of any prominence in recent years in India has recognized the fact that neither the universities in India nor the students attending them are benefited by the increasingly large numbers of students who press their way after repeated failures at the School Final and Intermediate stages into the degree classes. Government have also come to the conclusion that unfortunately the very class of student who is least fitted for higher literary education is the class of student whose parents find

the greatest difficulty in financing their children at the university stage. It is economically unsound both for the country and for the individuals concerned that a student whose performance both at school and college proves his lack of capacity to cope with a particular type of higher education and to benefit from it should reduce his family to poverty and should lower his own earning capacity by pressing on through a course for which he is not fitted and which gives him a very slender chance of employment even if he successfully completes the course. Government are aware that any steps taken to restrict admission to higher education will not be popular but they are convinced that the best interests of the country can only be served by facing the problem frankly and if necessary by taking what may be regarded in some quarters as drastic action. Further, Government consider that the waste and tragedy involved in educated unemployment is greater and more distressing at the post-university stage than at any other stage of education. It is well known that large numbers of students who come from families with hereditary earning capacity in what may be termed minor employment become completely unfitted to return to those employments after receiving higher education. Since there is only a limited field for employment of university graduates such students in many cases have lost their potential earning capacity by the time they have passed out of the universities. One of the reasons for the steady upward flow of high school students into the universities is the fact that practically all high schools in the province prepare for a university matriculation. In the early stages of educational development this was not altogether undesirable since higher education attracted comparatively few students and clerical and professional employment absorbed the products of higher education. To-day, however, the continued existence of a rigid single type of secondary school cannot be justified. In other countries where education has spread rapidly various grades of secondary schools catering to the needs of various classes of pupils with different futures before them have come into existence and Government feel strongly that a similar line of development is now called for in this province. That the universities in India themselves have realized the dangers and difficulties of the present position and the need for reorganization along the lines suggested is made clear by the unanimous resolution of the Universities Conference of 1934 which stated "a practical solution of the problem of unemployment can only be found in a radical readjustment of the present system in schools in such a way that a large number of pupils shall be diverted at the completion of their secondary education either to occupations or to separate vocational institutions. This will enable universities to improve their standard of admission." Taking all things into consideration, Government have come to the conclusion that it is desirable to institute in this province a post-primary four-year middle school course followed on the one hand by a three-year selective pre-university course and on the other hand by bifurcated courses of varying types and length. As a corollary to these proposals Government contemplate the setting up of a public examination at the end of the IV Form. This examination will have a dual function and dual standards. On the results of the examination pupils will be carefully selected for admission into the pre-university classes and pupils will also be selected with a different standard to enter the post-middle school vocational classes. It is thus intended to divert students from progress upwards towards the university considerably before the matriculation stage and to encourage large groups of students to select courses of study not leading to university entrance but preparing for types of employment which do not necessarily require university degrees. The main objection which is likely to be raised against this procedure is the objection that students from backward and poor communities may not find a place in the suggested pre-university classes. In this connexion Government want to make it perfectly clear that no student of whatever community will by reason of poverty alone be prohibited from being selected for pre-university education and Government are anxious that, by a system of scholarships and fee remissions, really clever students from backward and poor communities who show early signs of being able to benefit by higher education should be given the encouragement and opportunity necessary to compete with other students of well-to-do and forward communities. Government, however, consider that there is no justification for encouraging students from poor and backward communities to proceed to the universities when they manifestly do not possess those particular qualities and abilities which are necessary for making the fullest use of higher education. It is fairer to such students and economically sounder to divert them into types of training and types of employment for which they are obviously more fitted.

The setting up of these pre-university classes involves the lengthening of the high school course by one year and Government consider that this can best be achieved by abolishing the existing intermediate classes in the universities, adding the junior intermediate class as the final year of the pre-university high school course and adding the senior intermediate class as the first year of a three-year degree course. In this connexion Government recommend that the universities should establish their own matriculation examination to select students for university admission at the end of what will become the

VII Form of the high school course. Government are aware that much controversy has centred round the question of the removal of intermediate classes from the university course and from the control of the university, but Government have come to the conclusion that the arguments are all in favour of the course which they have suggested. The present junior intermediate course is both from the point of view of the standards attained in it and from the point of view of the average age of the students in it, essentially more a school class than a university class. While the addition of the extra year to the pre-university school course is in the opinion of Government by itself essential in their scheme for the reorganization of secondary education, they feel that it is undesirable on other grounds that young and immature students should pass at too early a stage from the comparative discipline of secondary schools to the comparative freedom of university life. The mixing of school boys with older and more mature university students proper is unsatisfactory both from the point of view of university standards and from the point of view of school standards. Government hope that the university authorities will give these proposals the most serious and sympathetic consideration and that they will assist in this essential reorganization of education at the secondary stage by agreeing to the lengthening of the degree courses and the abolition of the intermediate stage as such. If these proposals are accepted, a secondary school pupil anxious to proceed for higher studies will in practice be faced by a public examination at the end of the IV Form, a university examination at the end of the VII Form and a degree examination not earlier than the end of three years' study in a university.

The alternative courses to be provided at the end of the IV Form need careful planning and consideration and Government do not intend within this resolution to give a detailed account of the possibilities in this direction. They may include courses especially designed to meet the needs of those who desire to qualify for the lower clerical and other ranks of Government service and courses especially designed to meet the need of those who seek business openings. Courses in shorthand, typewriting, accountancy, business methods and the like would thus find a place. They may also include vocational courses in agriculture, industrial arts, woodwork, metal-work, etc. The alternative courses to be offered need not necessarily be opened in the high schools themselves, but may also be offered in post-middle special schools, trade schools, technical schools, commercial schools, agricultural schools, industrial schools, etc. Government have given the most careful consideration to the question of recruitment to the lower ranks of Government service and they have come to the conclusion that the present arrangements are not altogether satisfactory. At the present moment although a separate examination is held for the recruitment of clerical establishment and although recommendations have been made that candidates with lower qualifications than university graduates and candidates with secretarial qualifications will be preferred in actual practice, large numbers of graduates and persons with higher qualifications than graduates appear for the examination and in many cases are chosen in preference to candidates with lower qualifications. Further, the age-limit for recruitment to Government service even to these ranks is 25. This fact leads to the inevitable result that candidates who are anxious to obtain even comparatively low positions in Government service feel that it is necessary to pursue courses of study up to a degree standard or higher in order to compete successfully for recruitment to Government service. In effect, this has resulted in youthful candidates, who might have early qualified themselves in business methods, particularly suited to their future work as clerks under Government, pursue a course of studies at a university in no way particularly suited to improve their work as Government clerks and in doing so have not been able to qualify themselves satisfactorily on the secretarial side. These criticisms Government consider are equally applicable to the many students who seek employment in business firms. Selection at an earlier age and a suitable training for work in business houses is in the opinion of Government better than the attainment of a university degree often unrelated to the type of work in business which the students subsequently seek for. From the point of view of parents and public and also employees the present position is unsatisfactory also in so far as a young man has to spend considerable sums of money in qualifying himself at a university, to obtain a type of employment which with further training in business methods he was better fitted for at a considerably earlier age. A young student passing from the vocational classes or from the S.S.L.C. course is actually a more suitable candidate for a certain type of clerical employment than an Honours degree holder who had really, by his greater expenditure of time and money spent in higher education, made himself almost less fit for this particular type of employment. Government feel, therefore, that a reduction in the maximum age-limit for certain classes of Government employment and the provision of a different system of recruitment will not only avoid the considerable waste of money and material which now exists but will help both to raise the standards in the universities by the exclusion of a large class of students and to some extent, however limited, avoid the unhappiness and disappointment with which so many graduates are constantly faced to-day. The type of alternative

courses newly to be instituted and their length will ultimately determine the age-limits which Government may fix for recruitment to certain classes of Government service but they feel that it is likely that the upper age-limit for recruitment may be reduced to an age as low as 18.

There is another important aspect of the institution of these alternative courses which Government have under careful consideration and that is that they are fully aware that it would be unwise to launch into a new scheme of alternative courses in high schools or separate institutions without taking into consideration the special needs of business houses of all types, industrial undertakings, banks, commerce, railways, etc. Constant and repeated complaints have been received that the present School Final candidate, Intermediate candidate, and University graduates are not able by their training and by their almost purely literary bent, to make successful subordinates, let alone successful pioneers, in business undertakings. The unwillingness of most of such students to do what is essentially at the beginning of any business career, viz., to apprentice themselves to a hard, and often manual, training is largely responsible for their frequent failure to succeed in business concerns. Government feel therefore that all business organizations should be consulted with regard to the type of training which these young men may be put through before they become suitable recruits for business employment. There are certain classes of employment which will require further training in professional institutions and some students may pass direct after the IV Form examination to such institutions or may receive further vocational instruction in school until they are ready for admission into professional institutions, but Government consider that in any case the alternative courses should in part be designed on the advice of business men who are best fitted to dictate the type of training which will be most helpful to students in their after-careers. In this connexion Government are investigating, in consultation with heads of industry, the possibility which has been suggested outside this province of combining a system of school pre-vocational training with actual apprenticeship in industrial firms and factories. Under such a system a student while reading in the alternative high school classes would be accepted for portions of the year as an actual apprentice in an industrial firm or factory and, if such a student showed satisfactory progress both as an apprentice and as a school student, it may safely be assumed that future work in firms and factories would be comparatively assured to him. Government realize that the large alteration in the school courses suggested above will take time by adjustment to be brought into completion, but, however difficult the adjustments may be in actual practice, they feel strongly that the time has come not merely to discuss and debate over the alterations possible in the secondary school course, but to take active steps gradually to bring these alterations into practical effect. The transitional period may be one of considerable difficulty, but Government sincerely hope that the resulting benefits of these changes to the life of the community and in particular to the thousands of young men who under present circumstances find it increasingly difficult to secure reasonable employment, will compensate for the immediate difficulties involved in large changes.

One result of the proposed changes will be that all high schools will probably not be able to provide both pre-university classes and post-middle school vocational classes. Government, however, consider that it will be advantageous if some schools specialize in the provision of pre-university classes, while other schools specialize in the provision of vocational classes, a limited number of schools, including former intermediate colleges, providing for both classes.

Owing to the intimate connexion between the courses at the secondary stage and the university courses, the reorganization of the school courses must necessitate large alterations in the structure of university courses.

Government recognize that any scheme for the reorganization of collegiate education is largely a matter for the universities themselves to initiate but Government are hopeful that the universities whose representatives at the Universities Conference of 1934 unanimously demanded changes not unlike those proposed in this resolution will realize first that radical changes are necessary and secondly that the reconstruction of secondary education is interdependent on considerable alterations at the university stage. Apart however from the interrelationship of the changes proposed at the secondary stage with the present structure of collegiate education, Government feel that the universities themselves stand to benefit largely by radical changes within the universities themselves. The reduction in the number of students now pressing into universities, the heightening of standards, the greater attention to be paid to quality rather than to quantity, the introduction of a three years degree course and the abolition of the Intermediate are all in the opinion of Government proposals which will do much to improve the standard of university education.

While Government have under consideration, as already indicated, measures to change the inelasticity of the present secondary school course in order to widen the basis of secondary education and also prepare students for a larger number of avenues of employment, they hope that the universities will also recognize that it is their concern particularly to see that the universities themselves provide for a greater variety of degree and diploma courses, particularly those which are vocational and practical in character. Government not only believe that there is room for a greater variety of courses leading possibly to new channels of employment in the existing universities but they also consider that the opening of new courses and in some cases the replacement of old courses by new courses may help to do away with the overlapping provision particularly of arts courses now in existence in this province. There is a marked similarity of courses in almost all the colleges throughout the province and the opening of new universities, such as the Andhra University and the Annamalai University, has not to any considerable extent, except in applied technology, provided for new courses of instruction. Other universities in the Empire, even the older universities, have developed courses designed to suit the social, industrial and technical needs not only of the areas which they serve but of the country in general and they have made a wide provision for social, commercial, technical and technological branches of study. Government feel that the needs of this province should gradually be more adequately met by the provision of such courses within the province itself. Increasing need is being felt for industrial and technological experts, Marine Engineers, Sanitary Engineers, Civic Engineers, Aviation Engineers, Architects and for trained experts in civic management for such posts as municipal commissioners and district board officers. Diploma courses in social organization and public service, secretarial subjects, public health training, journalism and domestic science and also higher courses in the fine arts appear to Government to be suitable subjects for the consideration of the universities and Government generally consider that insufficient attention has hitherto been paid to the possibility of the introduction of a larger number of new courses, accompanied possibly with the suppression of a number of arts courses which now represent overlapping of effort and which do not enable the students taking them to find suitable channels of employment. In this connexion Government are reviewing the position of the colleges in this Province directly managed by Government. Owing to the coming into existence of a large number of new colleges the costly continuance by Government of these colleges has become of doubtful value and Government have several times in recent years considered the possibility of withdrawing, except in a few cases, from the direct management of colleges. The Government colleges are however in some cases old and well-established colleges and local feeling has been strongly set against their closure. Government hope, however, with the co-operation of the universities concerned to consider the advisability of closing some of the arts courses in these colleges and of replacing such courses by new courses more especially designed to prepare the students directly for employment and to meet needs of public service, business, industries, engineering, etc., not hitherto catered for.

The universities in this province have already been asked to give their opinion on the proposals for the reconstruction of education suggested both by the Central Advisory Board and the Inter-Universities Conference and Government sincerely hope that they will consider the proposals made in this resolution and endeavour to carry out such changes as they may find practicable and acceptable.

(By order of His Excellency the Governor)

C. H. MASTERMAN,
Secretary to Government.

- To the Director of Public Instruction. ✓
 „ Superintendent, Government Press (for publication in the Gazette),
 „ Senior Translator to Government.
 „ Presidents of District Boards.
 „ Presidents of District Educational Councils.
 „ Commissioner, Corporation of Madras (through the Mayor).
 „ Executive Authorities of Municipal Councils.
 „ Examiner of Local Fund Accounts.
 „ Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards.
 „ Local Self-Government Department*
 „ Development Department.
 „ Public Works Department.
 „ Public (Services) Department.
 „ Revenue Department.
 „ Finance Department.
 „ Registrars of Universities.