

the rare qualifications which marked both of them as the greatest premiers England can boast of, Pitt possessed that moral strength which Walpole lacked.

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THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS.

A writer in the November number of *Indian Education* calls attention in the following article to what appears to him to be some of the prominent defects of the regulations.

"THE promulgation of the New Regulations marks," in the language of the Government of India, "a notable advance in the movement for the extension and progressive development of the higher forms of education which was initiated by the Universities Commission." A careful study of these regulations leaves no doubt in the minds of all interested in the education of the country that the high expectations formed of them by the Government of India are likely to be fulfilled in time, if they are worked in a liberal and practical way, and the "loyal and hearty co-operation of all colleges and schools" on whose support the Government of India count with confidence fostered and developed by the University with a "judicious exercise of its influence and authority" in a true academic spirit. It is, therefore, in no mood of carping criticism but in a genuine spirit of "loyal and hearty co-operation" that I proceed to point out what appear to me to be the main defects of this otherwise most wholesome body of regulations.

I.

The new regulations so far as they relate to the preparation and publication of text-books have a tendency to degrade the University into a publishing concern having the sole monopoly in the preparation and publication of certain text-books and selections which will be prescribed by the University for the several University Examinations. Considering that the number of candidates for these examinations is very large and that the purchase of prescribed books will be compulsory, the sale of such books is likely to bring to the coffers of the University a good round sum annually, and from a commercial point of view the provision, no doubt, is very wise indeed, especially in view of the prospective large increase in the

expenditure of the University in the near future. But monopoly in trade tends as everybody knows to lower the quality of the articles on which the monopoly is held. It is not on abstract grounds alone, that this principle of monopoly is reprehensible, past experience is also against it. The English and Sanskrit Courses for the Entrance Examination have long been the property of the University and the products of this monopoly have become a bye-word for inefficiency, unsuitability, and inaccuracy. With past experience, therefore, to serve as a guide for the future, it is rather strange that the new regulations should have widened the range of monopoly, instead of restricting or altogether abolishing it.

The principle may, however, be sought to be defended on the ground of expediency; it may be contended in favour of the regulations that without them indifferent books will, perhaps, have to be prescribed. But when closely examined, this ground of expediency is found to be quite untenable. In the present advanced-state of literary education in Bengal, coupled with the fact that there are now in India several English publishing firms of great repute over and above those of indigenous growth, there need absolutely be no fear that good books would not be forthcoming if their preparation and publication were left quite free and open to competition. In several branches of study for each of the examinations, from the Matriculation upwards, elaborate syllabuses have been laid down to serve as guides to teachers and their pupils, but this plan has not been followed out consistently. For example, for the Matriculation, the University will prepare and prescribe a Reader and a Grammar in Sanskrit, a Reader and a Grammar in Arabic, a Reader in Persian, and a Reader on the present Administration of India; for the Intermediate Examination in Arts, a Grammar in Sanskrit, a Reader and a Grammar in Arabic, and a Reader in Persian; for the Bachelor of Arts Examination also, a Grammar in Sanskrit. Be it further understood that these books will all be the property of the University not by implication but by explicit and express regulations. Syllabuses might have been provided in these subjects as has been done in several others, or if that were not found possible for some initial difficulties involved in these subjects, the preparation of books in them might have been left free and open to competition, so that the University might choose in each subject one or a few of the very best books that would surely be the outcome of such competition. This

would serve the purpose of the University and at the same time save it from the undignified position of appearing to suppress fair competition in the field of publication. The policy underlying the regulations in question, whatever it might be, does not appear to be at all conducive to that healthy growth of good literature and sound education which the recent University legislation aims at.

II.

The next striking defect of the regulations is that nowhere in the whole course of University education has History been made a compulsory subject. It will now be possible for an Indian student to go through the whole University Course and get a Degree in literature without any acquaintance with even the elements of historical knowledge. History is a branch of study which has been very much neglected in this University in the past and bids fair under the New Regulations to be almost wholly neglected in the future. This is much to be deplored, as the Indian intellect is proverbially deficient in this branch of knowledge, and as such requires special cultivation and careful fostering. Further, literary education thus divorced from knowledge of history will fail to give that broad culture which is the aim of all University education. Besides, a sound knowledge of English literature which is the avowed basis of all University educations in India will never be secured without a good knowledge of history, especially English history. In this connection it is well-worthy of note that while in the M.A. Examination, in some subjects a provision has been made for research work taking the place of a part of the written examination in those subjects, history which pre-eminently affords scope for research work in India has been excluded from the operation of that wise provision. This defect might have been remedied by making history compulsory, if not at the Matriculation stage, at least at the higher stages, and bringing it within the operation of the provision for research work in the M. A. Examination in history.

III.

The regulations about the science examinations which have been drawn up evidently with a view to making science teaching and science examination both thorough and practical will, no doubt, meet with the approval of all sound educationists. It will not be possible in future for a Graduate in science to present to the world the sorry spectacle of a "speculative" scientist without ever "meddling" with any practical part in it. With all my admiration for these regulations it makes me sad to think that their immediate effect

will be to practically abolish science teaching in most of our Colleges. The first examination in science under the New Regulations will be held in 1909, so that the Matriculates and F. As. of the next year (1907), will have to take up the new courses in science from June 1907. From August 11th, 1906, the date on which the regulations have been published to June 1907, when the Matriculates and F. As. will have to begin the new courses, a period of barely eleven months is given to the Colleges to adapt themselves to the wholly altered circumstances, a period which I consider to be quite inadequate for the Colleges to meet the requirements of the regulations with regard to building accommodation, lecture theatres, practical classes and appliances; which last, be it remembered, have mostly to be indented from abroad. I need only mention the vital question of funds, because, I believe, most of the Colleges which have no funds at their back will split on that rock, unless extraneous aid comes to their help, be it in the form of University grant, Government aid or public endowment. The report of the College Inspection committee, which is now before the public, fully bears out the last statement: “

IV.

Again, while the Matriculation has been very much simplified and made thorough as far as it goes—a feature of the new regulations which must meet with unqualified approval of all practical teachers and educationists—the courses for the higher examinations have been widened and the syllabuses much too overloaded. Space will not permit me to dwell on this point at any length, I would therefore refer the readers to the pages of the Regulations.

V.

The Universities Act and the Regulations provide no doubt for the partial conversion of the University into a teaching body, but decades must yet elapse before this longed-for reform will be brought into the region of practical politics. For a long time to come therefore, our University will remain as before, “merely an examining body, and its well-being will depend mainly on the way in which the work of examination will be conducted. It is an open secret that in the past the system of examination was inefficient, unsound and gave unsatisfactory and unreliable results. The autocracy of the Syndicate in the matter of examinations was responsible for the old state of things, and although the old order has now changed, the old autocracy of the Syndicate in this matter has not only been retained but further strengthened and armed with statutory powers. Unless this autocracy is broken down, there is very little hope or scope for reform in examinations, without which, be it clearly understood, all other reforms, however salutary, will end in being mere paper reforms. remembering that teaching in colleges and schools, as past experience shows, invariably takes

after the examination, and if the latter is unsound, the former is bound to follow suit, hundreds of wise regulations for teaching notwithstanding. Regulations for examinations somewhat in the lines of the Allahabad University regulations are wanted in Calcutta and readers are referred to the pages of the Calendar of that University.

VI.

The regulations for teaching science subjects and the equipment of science departments of colleges err in the direction of overfulness and overstringency, which is bound to act injuriously on that healthy and gradual development of colleges which undoubtedly the regulations aim at. Colleges working under such inelastic and overstringent conditions will, like hot house plants, never attain their normal size and proportion. Conditions of study in affiliated colleges, which are painfully elaborate and attempt to regulate even the minimum number of lectures to be delivered in each subject and the minimum number of minutes to which every lecture, class exercise or practical work must extend, have a tendency to hamper colleges unnecessarily. They betray want of true perception of what constitutes college teaching and lecturing. These rigid rules and detailed conditions of study require in the true interests of education to be considerably relaxed and worked with great discretion.

VII.

A point, though not quite relevant, may not be considered wholly out of place to mention here. The creation of a Faculty of agriculture was recommended by the Senate, but the Government of India did not find their way to accept this recommendation. But considering that agriculture is the main industry in India, that on it depend nearly 90 per cent. of the population for their living, that it is now in the same backward state as it was centuries ago, and that its recognition by the University was likely to have directed the application of science to it, which by the way is the only means of making two blades of grass grow where one grew before, the decision of the Government of India on this point is much to be deplored, especially when there are now in the country already a few schools and colleges of agriculture ready at hand to be affiliated to the University.

I must plead the importance of the subject as an apology for the length of this letter, for it will be disastrous to the cause of University education if the regulations are not modified, relaxed and worked in a generous and practical spirit, somewhat on the lines indicated above.

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