

INDIAN UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION

LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO *THE TIMES OF INDIA*

ON

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S VINDICATION

OF ITS

RECOMMENDATIONS

BY

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BOMBAY

PRINTED AT THE "TIMES OF INDIA" PRESS

1903



## NOTE.

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“Accordingly, we appointed a Commission, under my Hon’ble colleague, Mr. Raleigh, to examine into the question of the Universities, and we consulted the Local Governments upon every other feature of our plans. Since then the public has had the best part of a year in which to expend its energies upon discussion—an opportunity by which no one can say that it has not profited. Whether Government has profited equally by these proceedings is open to doubt, for I observe that whereas a year and a half ago every one was agreed that education in India stood most urgently in need of reform, that it had got entirely into the wrong groove, and was going steadily down-hill, dispensing an imperfect education through imperfect instruments to imperfect products with imperfect results—a great many of the interested parties now meet together, and proclaim in injured tones that they stand in no need of reformation at all. Now let me say at once that this is not good business. I lay down as an absolute and unassailable proposition that our Educational systems in India are faulty in the extreme; and that, unless they are reformed, posterity will reproach us for the lost opportunity for generations to come. I remind the public that that proposition was most cordially endorsed by every shade of opinion  $\frac{1}{2}$  years ago. Since then we have shown a consideration for the interests of all concerned and a reluctance to act with precipitation that have been pushed almost to extremes, and have exposed us to the charge of timidity and irresolution. My object throughout has been to carry the public with us in our reforms, and to base them upon the popular assent. I am still hopeful that better counsels will prevail, and I shall spare no effort to attain this result. But if every reform proposed is to be overwhelmed with obloquy and criticism, because it touches some vested interest or affects some individual concern; if change of any kind is to be proscribed merely because it is change; if the appetite for reform, so strong two years ago, has now entirely died down, then I must point out that the educated community will have forfeited the greatest chance ever presented to them of assisting the Government to place the future education of this country upon a better footing, and Government will be left to pursue its task alone. I should be most reluctant to be driven to this course. I want to reform education in India, I will not say *omnium consensu*, because that may be an impossible aspiration; but with the good will and assent of reasonable and experienced men, and I have a right to

ask that, in so far as they are dissatisfied with the *status quo*, they shall render our course not more difficult, but more easy."

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"I would only say to the public—Do not be impatient, and do not be censorious. Do not impute dark conspiracies or assume that all the misguided men in the country are inside the Government, and all the enlightened outside it. What could be easier than for Government not to have taken up educational reform at all, or even now to drop it altogether? All the wild talk about killing Higher Education and putting education under the heel of Government merely obscures the issue, and paralyses action. Surely there are enough of us on both sides who care for education for education's sake, who are thinking not of party triumphs, but of the future of unborn generations, to combine together and carry the requisite changes through. I cannot imagine a worse reflection upon the educated classes in India, or a more crushing condemnation of the training that we have given them, than that they should band themselves together to stereotype existing conditions, or to defeat the first genuine attempt at reform that has been made for a quarter of a century." [Lord Curzon's speech on the Financial Statement, 25th March 1903.]

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His Excellency says that every one was, a year and a half ago, agreed that "education in India stood most urgently in need of reform; that it had got entirely into the wrong groove, and was going steadily down-hill, dispensing an imperfect education through imperfect instruments, to imperfect products, with imperfect results." He further says:—"I lay down, as an absolute and unassailable proposition, that our Educational Systems in India are faulty in the extreme; and that unless they are reformed, posterity will reproach us for the lost opportunity for generations to come." The Indian educated community, while it has always recognised that there is room for great improvement in certain directions in our system of education, has never agreed to such a complete condemnation of Indian education. Being not endowed with that trait of Anglo-Saxon character to which His Excellency referred in his Convocation Speech of 1899, *viz.*, the aptitude to be "loud in self-condemnation" and to "revel in the superior quality of their transgressions," the educated

Indians have consistently refused to "join in a wholesale condemnation, which is as extravagant as it is unjust," and have preferred to agree with the sentiments expressed by his Excellency in that Convocation Speech, when he said :—

"Though I am but a new-comer in this country, I am yet not so ignorant of its educational system as not to know that when I speak of my own connection with a University in England, I am speaking of something very different from the University system which prevails here. A residential teaching University, such as Oxford or Cambridge, with its venerable buildings, its historic associations, the crowded healthy competition of its life, its youthful friendships, its virile influence upon character, its *esprit de corps* cannot, either in Great Britain or in any country, be fairly compared with an examining, degree-giving University such as yours. They are alike in bearing the same name, in constituting parts of a machinery by which in civilised countries all peoples work for the same ideal, namely, the cultivation of the higher faculties of man, but they are profoundly unlike in the influence that they exert upon the pupil, and in the degree to which they affect not so much his profession as his character and his life. Nevertheless, inevitable and obvious as these differences are, there may yet be in an examining University—there is in such institutions in some parts of my own country, and still more abroad—an inherent influence inseparable from the curriculum through which the student has had to pass before he can take his degree, which is not without its effect upon character and morals, which inspires in him something more than a hungry appetite for a diploma, and which turns him out something better than a sort of phonographic automaton into which have been spoken the ideas and thoughts of other men. I ask myself, may such things be said with any truth of examining Universities of India? I know at first sight that it may appear that I shall be met with an overwhelming chorus of denial. I shall be told, for I read it in many newspapers and in the speeches of public men, that our system of higher education in India is a failure, that it has sacrificed the formation of character upon the altar of cram, and that Indian Universities turn out only a discontented horde of office-seekers, whom we have educated for places which are not in existence for them to fill. Gentlemen, may I venture to suggest to you that one defect of the Anglo-Saxon character is that it is apt to be a little loud both in self-praise and in self-condemnation? When we are contemplating our virtues we sometimes annoy other people by the almost pharisaical complacency of our transports; but, equally, I think, when we are diagnosing our faults are we apt almost to revel in the superior quality of our transgressions. There is, in fact, a certain cant of self-depreciation as well as of self-laudation. I say to myself, therefore, in the first place, is it possible, is it likely, that we have been for years teaching hundreds and thousands of young men, even if

the immediate object be the passing of an examination or the winning of a degree, a literature which contains invaluable lessons for character and for life, and science which is founded upon the reverent contemplation of nature and her truths, without leaving a permanent impress upon the moral as well as the intellectual being of many who have passed through this course? I then proceed to ask the able officials by whom I am surrounded, and whose trained assistance makes the labour of the Viceroy of India relaxation rather than toil: whether they have observed any reflection of this beneficent influence in the quality and character of the young men who entered the ranks of what is now known as the Provincial Service; and when I hear from them almost without dissent that there has been a marked upward trend in the honesty, the integrity, and the capacity of native officials in those departments of Government, then I decline altogether to dissociate cause from effect. I say that knowledge has not been altogether shamed by her children, grave as the defects of our system may be, and room though there may be for reform. I refuse to join in a wholesale condemnation which is as extravagant as it is unjust.       •       •       •       •       •       •

On the whole, I believe the present system to be faulty, but not rotten.

His Excellency may, however, rest assured that the Indian educated community is to-day as keen about reforming higher education and putting it on a sound basis as it was a year and a half ago or at any time, and that its "appetite for reform" has not in the least abated. But what it objects to is any food, wholesome or unwholesome, being forced down its throat in order to satisfy that appetite. The proposals of the Commission have met with strong and growing opposition from the educated Indians, not because they are unreasonable enough to proscribe change of any kind "merely because it is a change," but because they are firmly convinced that the main changes proposed are entirely in the wrong direction, and will, instead of reforming higher education, prove detrimental to its best interests. What the Indian educated community feels is that, the Commission have absolutely failed to get at the real conditions that are responsible for the present unsatisfactory state, and that consequently the remedies proposed by them will not only entirely fail to secure the object in view, but will lead to positively mischievous results. They feel that no

changes in the constitution of the Universities, in the manner indicated by the Commission, will secure the desired result, and that no real reform is possible unless Government are prepared immediately to spend large sums on higher education and make their colleges really model institutions by adequately equipping and manning them. They do not want "to stereotype existing conditions," but they want reform to be begun at the right end, and refuse to be forced to accept a change "merely because it is a change." In Bombay, at any rate, the Indian educated classes have the satisfaction of having the support of European educational experts—Principals and Professors of Government as well as important private colleges—against whom at any rate the charge of unreasoning or interested opposition cannot be made. These principals and professors have cordially joined in resolving that certain recommendations of the Commission about the constitution of the Senate and the Syndicate will, if carried, "tend to impair the independence and thereby diminish the authority and usefulness of the University;" and that "the measures recommended by the Commission, which will have the result of narrowing the popular basis of higher education, would be highly detrimental to the best interests of the country." The utterance at the Senate meeting, when the report of the Committee was adopted, of the Lord Bishop of Bombay who has acquired a high place in the regard and esteem of the people of this Presidency, was hailed with great gratification as shewing how a man of English academic culture appreciated the attitude of the Senate in this matter.

An attempt is made in the letters collected here to examine the main recommendations of the Commission and shew their unsubstantial nature and to indicate the real directions in which reform should begin. These letters were originally published in the columns of the "Times of India" as a reply to the observations made in his Convocation Speech in February last by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Machichan, in vindication of the Report of the Commission of which he was a member.

They are now reproduced in this form, for, I venture to think that, they substantially represent and explain the view of the Indian educated community in this Presidency about the matter. The report of the Committee appointed by the Senate on the Commission's recommendations, which was unanimously adopted by the Senate, as well as the speech of the Hon'ble Mr. P. M. Mehta, who moved the adoption of the report, are also reproduced.

C. H. S.

May 1903.

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When so much is said of the huge failure of Indian methods of education and the terrible effects of cramming, it is interesting to see what Mr. R. C. Lehmann says in the *May Pall Mall Magazine* about the education of English youths :—

The English Public School boy, even after he has spent a year or two or has gone so far as to take a pass degree at a University, is one of the most profoundly ignorant creatures on the face of the earth. Try him in the most ordinary subjects. Of geography he knows only as much as he may have gathered by collecting postage-stamps; with English literature he is not even on terms of distant politeness; as often as not he refuses to submit to the conventions of spelling, and the style of composition of his letters would make a housemaid smile. . . . The modern history, whether of his own country or of the world in general, is a sealed book to him. Boys go through their schools, pass their examinations at Oxford or Cambridge by dint of cramming, and then they are on your hands like a steel blade of the finest temper but without either point or edge, and with this additional peculiarity, that the time is past when point and edge can be profitably added."

C. H. S.

May 1903.



# INDIAN UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION.

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## A REPLY TO DR. MACKICHAN.

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I

23rd Feb. 1903.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

SIR.—The great importance of the subject must be my excuse for asking you to give me space in your columns for some observations on the defence of the main recommendations of the Universities Commission made by the Vice-Chancellor on last Convocation day. It is a pity that the Vice-Chancellor did not utilise the opportunity which he undoubtedly possessed under the bye-laws at the recent meeting of the Senate over which he presided, and which met to consider the report of its Committee on the report of the Commission. It would have been fairer on all hands for the Vice-Chancellor to have promulgated his views on that occasion, so that his co-fellows of the Senate might have had an opportunity of considering and accepting or meeting his arguments. This course was the more incumbent upon the Vice-Chancellor, because, in that very hall some years ago, he had taken an active part in propounding views almost diametrically opposed to those that he now defends. The same course was, I venture to think, dictated by considerations of justice to himself, for he might have had an opportunity of explaining the reasons for his change of front. It is a remarkable fact that while the Vice-Chancellor admits that he was thoroughly acquainted with the shortcomings of the present University system thirteen years ago, not only did the remedy now proposed not occur to him then, but he thought it perfectly legitimate and consistent to publicly advocate that it would be detrimental to the best interests of education to alter, in the manner now proposed, the organisation of our Senates and Syndicates. Dr. Mackichan says "that the key to the understanding of the whole programme of the Commission is found in the sentence which begins the section on teaching, para. 81," which says, "in a rightly governed University, examination is subordinate to

teaching, in India teaching has been made subservient to examination." The learned Vice-Chancellor then proceeds to say that the evil can only be remedied by re-constituting the Senates and Syndicates in the manner proposed by the Commission. I will presently discuss whether the description given in the sentence from the Commission's report quoted above accurately depicts in its broad outlines a state of things with which, says the Vice-Chancellor, we are painfully familiar, and if it be so on whose shoulders rests the responsibility for such state of things; but if, as the Vice-Chancellor says, he held and publicly put forward the same views in substance thirteen years ago from the Vice-Chancellor's chair, it certainly does require explanation, even though it may not be a proof of his inconsistency, how it was that he within three years after, advocated a Senate composed of at least two hundred members and maintained against Mr. Birdwood that, the Syndicate should have no statutory recognition, and that he never dreamed of suggesting that either by statute or bye-law there should be a preponderance of educational experts on the Syndicate. It must be remembered that Dr. Mackichan was Vice-Chancellor from 1888 to 1890, and he was succeeded by Mr. Birdwood in the latter part of 1890. The ex-Vice-Chancellor served on the Select Committees appointed by the Senate for the purpose of reporting what new legislation should be sought to be obtained from the Government of India. He drafted the reports of the second and third Committees, and acted as Secretary to the last. He it was who moved the adoption of the report of the last Select Committee and secured for it the unanimous acquiescence of all parties. Now it is interesting to observe that with full knowledge as he himself now says, of the defect in our University system pointed out by the Commission, viz., that it subordinated teaching to examination, Dr. Mackichan drafted reports in which he refuted all the arguments of Mr. Birdwood for a lesser number than two hundred for fellows and for the statutory recognition of the Faculties and the Syndicate, though Mr. Birdwood had never gone so far as to propose that a statutory Syndicate should be composed of a majority of educational experts or that any professors or principals of Colleges should have ex-officio seats on it. In the two reports drafted by Dr. Mackichan, he carefully pointed out that the Committee considered the number 200 was "well chosen and well adapted to meet the practical requirements of the University." With regard to the Syndicate, one of the reports points out that "the specification of the faculties and the constitution of the Syndicate should not be stereotyped by enactment." The report goes on to say:—"It was

felt that the University was in a process of development which might render it most necessary for it to possess the power of adjusting these matters by bye-laws of the Senate without reference to the Legislative Council of India. Within the last few years important changes in regard to one of them have been introduced, and similar changes might at any future time become necessary. The Committee would prefer to see the entire control of these arrangements retained by the University in its own hands, and it is not prepared to advise the Senate to risk the chances of their modification at the hands of another assembly." It was on the eloquent and earnest recommendation of Dr. Mackichan, who moved the adoption of the report, that these views were unanimously accepted by the Senate. The records of the University show, in Dr. Mackichan's fine handwriting, that he pleaded most earnestly for the acceptance of these views by Government, saying, "to no subject has the Senate devoted more time and thought than it has bestowed upon the discussion of this Bill; it has exhausted all the means at its disposal by the appointment of Committees and by full and patient deliberation in largely attended meetings." There is something still more interesting than this. In the course of the discussions that took place between the University and the Governments of Bombay and India, it appeared that both Governments were very jealous as to the interference by the University with the independence of Colleges, their teaching and their courses of study. Dr. Mackichan now finds fault with the University for subordinating teaching to examination, but he seems to have forgotten that, if such was the fact, the blame lies not with the University, but with Government. In the long and elaborate speech in which Dr. Mackichan proposed the adoption of the Committee's report, he said:—"So jealous is the Government of Bombay of the independence of the affiliated Colleges that it recognises a danger even in the use of the words, 'courses of study.' Government fears that under this clause the University would be tempted to interfere with the mode of instruction in the affiliated Colleges. All that is meant by the clause is that the courses of study should be laid down as in the programme for the various degrees of the University." This was said by Dr. Mackichan on the 20th of April, 1891, and still Dr. Mackichan now ventures to say that it is the University which is to blame for subordinating teaching to examination. What had become of the views, he said the other day at the Convocation, that he entertained so far back as 1888 with regard to subordination of teaching to examination, when within three years after that he was one of the most prominent advocates of a report

and a draft University Bill which deferred to, and acquiesced in, the strong attitude taken up by Government against the University meddling in any manner with the independence of Colleges or their "courses of study." One would have rather expected that in his present Convocation speech Dr. Mackichan would have waxed eloquent on the shortcomings of Government in this respect and defended the Senate against an unwarranted assumption and an unjust accusation. I am, however, quite prepared to admit that, in spite of the violent somersault that Dr. Mackichan has just executed, it may still be possible, even when convicting him of inconsistency, to vindicate the recommendations of the Commission with regard to the Senate and the Syndicate on their own merits. I will, therefore, now proceed to enter on the examination of the positive arguments brought forward by Dr. Mackichan to defend his action on the Commission. As, however, this letter has become too long, I will ask your permission to do so in another letter.

CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD.

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26th Feb. 1903.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

SIR,—Before I proceed to examine the thesis laid down by the Vice-Chancellor, as promised in my last letter, I cannot help giving expression to my regret that the Vice-Chancellor should have thought fit to follow the example of those who, while they protest against motives being assigned to them, do not hesitate to assign motives to their opponents, and should have attributed motives to the members of the Senate who had ventured by a unanimous vote to differ from him. He was very indignant that the public should have attributed to the Commission the political design of reducing the number of discontented graduates turned out by the Universities, who have in some quarters been designated as a menace to the empire. He was equally indignant that the public should think that the members of the Commission had received their orders beforehand, and that the report was a 'jo-hukum' report. I am not aware that the public or the press have ever put forward any such accusation, though, I believe that it is more than Dr. Mackichan himself can say that the President and other official members of the Commission were altogether ignorant of views on these subjects in the highest quarters, and

which are certainly fashionable among a certain class of Anglo-Indians. But while protesting against motives being assigned to himself, Dr. Mackichan has not been able to resist the temptation of sneering at the action of the Senate, by saying that their attitude was natural, or, to use his own words, that their reluctance to accept the conclusions of the Commission is "most natural," and that he sympathised with "the reluctance to accept these proposals, of those who imagined that they amount to a condemnation of their past services to the University." Was it the right thing for the Vice-Chancellor of the University to insinuate to its members that they were actuated by personal feelings in dissenting from the recommendations of the Commission? Surely we may argue the question without attributing motives on either side.

The Vice-Chancellor admirably sums up his own thesis in words which sound plausible and reasonable. Adopting the language of the report of the Commission, he says that "in a rightly governed University, examination is subordinate to teaching. In India teaching has been made subservient to examination." Dr. Mackichan proceeds to say that "the Commission has sought to shift the centre of gravity of the whole system from examination to teaching; hence the prominence which it has given to the efficiency of Colleges and to the framing of suitable courses of instruction." I venture to join issue upon all the essential points involved in this beautifully worded thesis. I respectfully undertake to say that it is inaccurate in its statements of facts, is unwarranted in its assumptions of both fact and reasoning, and is vitiated by a profuse use of that most insidious of fallacies—the fallacy of the ambiguous middle. In what sense does Dr. Mackichan use the word University when he says that in a rightly governed University examination is subordinate to teaching? What is the meaning that he here ascribes to the word University? Of what sort of University is he speaking? Does he use the word University in the same sense in the next sentence when he says, in India (meaning in Indian Universities) teaching has been made subservient to examination? Is not he in these two sentences confusing phenomena of a different character altogether? In the first sentence the word University can only apply to teaching Universities like Oxford and Cambridge. It does not accurately describe the situation in connection with an Indian University. He forgets that an Indian University is neither a teaching University like that of Oxford or Cambridge, nor is it a University in the sense of a mere machine for examination. Dr. Mackichan is

himself aware, how the Bombay Senate, composed of the materials, that he now decries, and unwieldy as he now calls it, has always pursued the sensible course of steering clear between futile attempts to bulge out, as it could not be in this country, a teaching University like Oxford or Cambridge, and becoming a mere examining machine which altogether subordinated teaching to examination. I think I cannot do better than let Dr. Mackichan himself speak on this point. As I stated in my first letter, the Governments of Bombay and India were very jealous of any encroachments on the part of the University on what they denominated the independence of Colleges. In the report of the Select Committee of the Senate drafted by Dr. Mackichan, the objections raised by Government were met in the following way. I give rather lengthy quotations from two paragraphs in that report, because they clearly show what has been the exact position occupied by the Bombay Senate as regards examining and teaching functions. Commenting on sections 20 and 21 of the draft bill, and the observations of Government thereon, the report says:--

“The only point regarding which there is an apparent divergence of opinion is that which refers to the prescription of a ‘course of instruction.’ The same requirement stands in the Act of Incorporation of 1857, section 8, in the Syndicate’s draft and in the Select Committee’s report and was accepted by the Senate as an essential part of the section. We can only understand the objection which the Government of India has raised, on the supposition that the expression, which is not free from a certain ambiguity, has been interpreted by the Government of India to mean something quite different from what the University has hitherto understood by it. The Government of India appears to interpret the clause as giving power to the University to regulate the instruction imparted in the Colleges beyond simply laying down the programme of subjects in which the students of the Colleges shall be examined by the University. The desire of the Government of India accepting the views of the Government of Bombay on this point, to jealously guard the Independence of the Colleges, has led it to suggest the omission of this clause, which, on the interpretation above suggested would be open to the objections which the Government of India brings forward. But as understood and interpreted in the original Act of Incorporation the clause merely empowers the University to prescribe the subjects of its various examinations, a function which it has always discharged and must continue to discharge as an examining body. There is then no real divergence of view in regard to this section and

the Select Committee feels assured that when the real scope of the clause is considered by the Government of India it will withdraw all objections to its enactment."

"Similar remarks apply to the criticism of the Government of India on section 24. This section, it may be pointed out, is substantially the same as section 12 of the present Act with the substitution of Syudicate for the Senate. The course of instruction referred to in this section is that given in the affiliated Colleges in accordance with the syllabus of studies prescribed by the University. The requirement of attendance at a recognised College, and the completion of a definite course of instruction, being a vital point in the administration of the University and one which has done much to preserve the high character of the degrees conferred by the University, the Select Committee cannot recommend that it be omitted from the provisions of the proposed Bill. If this condition were omitted, any candidate could demand examination, and, if successful, claim the University degree. It is true that the University is only an examining body, yet it has from the beginning sought to secure the full advantage of such a position by endeavouring to obtain for all its graduates the benefits of systematic study in connection with College life. The Select Committee is not prepared to recommend that it should now abandon that which has been a distinguishing feature in its administration, and one which is indispensable in the interests of a full culture."

It is a wonder to me that Dr. Mackichan above all others, after inditing the above two paragraphs, should not have enlightened his colleagues on the Commission by pointing out that it was altogether both inept and inaccurate to include the Bombay University in the accusation of subordinating teaching to examination. I think I have made it clear by the quotations above given, that when the Commission says that in all well-governed Universities examination is subordinate to teaching, the observation is irrelevant so far as the Bombay University is concerned, because, it was never intended from the first to make it a University of the nature of Oxford or Cambridge; when it says that in India teaching is made subservient to examination, it is inaccurate in its description, because the Bombay University, and I daresay all the other Indian Universities have done the same, made strenuous efforts to be something more than mere examining bodies, and have sought to secure the fullest advantage that their powers allowed to them, to obtain for all their graduates the benefits of systematic study in connection with College life.

I will now pass on to point out that when Dr. Mackichan goes on to gravely tell us that the Commission in their recommendations have sought to shift the centre of gravity from examination to teaching, he is unconsciously leading the public to imagine that, if their proposals were adopted, the Indian Universities would be transformed into teaching Universities. But one may go from one end of the report to the other, without finding that there is any proposal which would effect this wonderful change. The Colleges remain as they are, without being grouped into such nucleuses as the English organisations. I may at once admit here that such a transformation is not feasible in a country like India. Oxford and Cambridge became what they are through historical circumstances which cannot be reproduced. It is futile in the present day to talk of taking those great Universities as models for transplantation in India. It is true that the Commission do try, if I may be permitted to say so, to make a pretence of doing something in that direction. After stating, in para. 22 that "the phrase Teaching University, is usually taken to denote a University which makes direct provision for teaching by appointing its own professors and lecturers" and in para. 23 that "the question whether and how far the Universities are able to make direct provision for teaching is one of considerable difficulty," and that "there is no source from which the Universities can hope to obtain the funds which will be required for the entertainment of a Staff of University Professors in every branch of learning" and after pointing out that "the Colleges affiliated to each University are scattered over a large area and it is not easy to see how their students can be brought together to attend University lectures," they dwindle down in para. 24, into a suggestion of the most meagre character. "We think it expedient," say the Commission "that undergraduate students should be left in the main to the Colleges, but we suggest that the Universities may justify their existence as teaching bodies by making further and better provision for advanced courses of study." After talking somewhat big as to what might be done in the direction indicated, the only concrete proposal they make is for a Central School of Science. Now I venture to ask, whether there is any substantial reform proposed by the Commission in the direction of making our Indian Universities different from what they are. Stripped of all unnecessary verbiage, the Colleges remain in our educational system exactly in the same position in which they have hitherto been. The centre of gravity was to be shifted from an examining University to a teaching University. As



a matter of fact the Universities remain in exactly the same position as they are. The Commission in almost so many words admit this when they say "Inasmuch as the better Colleges already make adequate provision for the course of instruction leading up to the degrees of B.A. or B.Sc. it does not appear that the intervention of the University would be attended with good results." If then, the character of the University and of its affiliated Colleges practically remains as it was, at least up to the degree examinations, why and how is the centre of gravity to be shifted? Dr. Mackichan's conception of the shifting of the centre of gravity seems to end in only this, that everything should remain as it is but that the number of *Fellows* should be reduced and the Syndicate should have statutory recognition with a majority of educational experts on it. He was very indignant in his Convocation speech that, as the University was in some vague manner going to be a teaching University, the steering of the vessel should be in any hands but those of educational experts. He looked all over the world and could find no place where such a monstrous state of things existed, and still we find that his educational experts are to be created, as I have shewn, for no purpose whatever.

I should here like to say a word on the quiet assumption which pervades all arguments like that of Dr. Mackichan, that the concentration of authority in the hands of educational experts in Oxford and Cambridge has been an unmixed blessing. I venture to say that it has been no such thing. If we examine the history of both these institutions, we shall find that this concentration has led to mischief, in a number of directions, that it has led to a persistence in old and antiquated methods, that it has resisted all attempts at the most necessary reforms, and that it has made the Universities the strongholds of unreasoning prejudice and uncompromising conservatism. That these Universities have turned out great men is owing to very different causes, for which we must go deep into other historical circumstances than the mere concentration of authority in expert hands, and which it is not necessary in the present controversy to go into. As I am now passing on to another subject I will stop here, and will venture to seek your hospitality for the third and last time.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

SIR,—In my last letter I have endeavoured to point out that the recommendations of the Commission leave the relations of the University to the Colleges substantially untouched. But still Dr. Mackichan strangely confuses a teaching University with a teaching College and sometimes speaks as if he considered them one and the same thing. In his speech he has ventured to say that "teaching, not examining, being the central function of the University, the Syndicate to which the executive duties of the University are entrusted must in the main be a body of experts." I am surprised that Dr. Mackichan should resort to such a confusion of arguments. The University remains under the recommendations of the Commission, let me repeat again, the same examining body which it was, as so well described by Dr. Mackichan himself in the quotation I gave from the reports drafted by him. And yet it is quietly assumed, for the purpose of supporting the recommendations to alter the constitution of the Senate and the Syndicate, that some great change is to take place in the functions of the University. It is this confusion that pervades the whole of that portion of Dr. Mackichan's convocation speech which was a vindication of the Commission's proposals. In another part of his speech, he says that "the Commission has sought to shift the centre of gravity of the whole system from examining to teaching, hence the prominence which it has given to the efficiency of Colleges and to the framing of suitable courses of instruction." I really should like to know, why Dr. Mackichan so confuses a teaching University with a University essentially examining though with Colleges affiliated to it, albeit, the affiliated Colleges are efficient. He will pardon me for saying that he cannot help being conscious of the loose and illogical way in which he tries to vindicate the proposals of the Commission with regard to the reconstruction of the Senate and the Syndicate and is driven to seek refuge from a teaching University into an affiliated college. Even with affiliated efficient Colleges, the Bombay University must continue to perform the same functions which it has hitherto done. That those functions have been performed efficiently up to now Dr. Mackichan himself admits and I fail to see what are the "changed conditions" which require that the Senate and the Syndicate should be made a closer Government monopoly than ever before. I am afraid the only explanation of such retrograde proposals is one which I would have hesitated to recognise, were it not that, what I may

all almost a Government organ, the "Englishman" has let the cat out of the bag. In an article on the agitation against the Commission's report, the "Englishman" distinctly says that there need be no concealment about one of the main objects of the proposed reforms, which is that the direction of University education should henceforward be "under European control" and that the Universities should therefore be "under the domination of the Government through such a new constitution as may be established by legislation." I should like to know what Dr. Mackichan has to say to this blunt disclosure by a paper which even he will not deny is both largely official and Anglo-Indian.

Dr. Mackichan has admitted that the question of second-grade Colleges is "a question which scarcely touches a University like Ours, which has only one Second-grade College affiliated to it and which for a number of years and long before any Commission was heard of, has steadily discouraged the recognition of any College which does not reach up to the standard of a University degree." Dr. Mackichan has however tried to hint that the University has not done what it should have in the matter of affiliation. But before I go to that question, I should like to contravert what he has said about Second-grade Colleges in the Universities of the other Presidencies. He says that "there can be no doubt that a Second-grade College is, in many cases, only a high school enlarged, and in some cases a high school injured, and that such institutions cannot generally hope to satisfy the tests as to equipment and efficiency which are held to be necessary." I wonder if in saying this Dr. Mackichan remembered the history of the Colleges which take the highest rank in this Presidency. I wonder if he remembered that nearly all of them rose to their present station from enlarged, but I hope not injured, high schools. Elphinstone College arose by a separation in the year 1856 of the professorial element from the Elphinstone Institution, and the normal class attached to the High School became a separate College. St. Xavier's College owes its origin to the development and growth of the St. Mary's Institution and the St. Xavier's High School. The Deccan College also arose in the same way. Originally started in 1821 as a Sanskrit College out of the funds set apart for Dakshnas to Brahmins by the Peshwas, in 1837 some branches of Hindu learning were dropped, the study of the vernacular and of the English language was introduced, and after having been amalgamated with the English School in 1851 it arose in its present form in 1857 by a separation of the College division

from the School division. But above all, what is the history of the Wilson College over which the Vice-Chancellor so worthily presides now? It began life as the school designated the Free General Assembly's Institution and in 1861, says our University Calendar, the higher section was affiliated to the University and the institution was recognised as teaching the entire Arts course. Its old habitation was in the somewhat unhealthy district of Khetwadi and it was only in 1882 that Dr. Mackichan being on furlough was authorised to obtain subscriptions towards the erection of a building for the College department which would be separately known as Wilson College. The present site in Chowpatty and a grant of Rs. 85,000 from Government enabled him to complete the present College buildings which were formally opened by Lord Reay in 1889. The history of the other Arts Colleges in the Presidency, the Gujrat College, the Baroda College, the Rajaram College, the Fergusson College is the same. The history of the Dayaram Jethmal Sindh College is specially instructive. A large committee of public-spirited Indians succeeded by hard canvassing in raising a sum of Rs. 1,00,000 besides promises of Rs. 28,000 towards the annual income of the College, to which Government agreed to contribute Rs. 10,000, Sind Municipalities Rs. 11,000, and Sindh Local Boards Rs. 7,000. Even then, it could be opened only and was recognised up to the First B.A. Examination only. What a misfortune it would have been for Sindh, so detached from the rest of the Presidency, had the promoters of the College waited till they had raised funds for such a fully equipped First-grade College as the Commission have now fallen in love with? I venture to say that, it is through Second-grade Colleges that the benefits of full First-grade Colleges have been realised for the Presidency and it would be an evil hour for the progress of education in this Presidency, if the possibilities of such development were closed for ever. A little less of the talk about efficiency and a great and more of practical recognition of the practical necessities of a progressive country, would have enabled the Commission to see what immense mischief would result from their proposals about secondary Colleges. I do not deny that in allowing free growth to Second-grade Colleges a door may be opened to the establishment of cheap and comparatively inefficient institutions, but the check on them should arise, not from their abolition but from a system of well-regulated University examinations; and after all I am not ashamed to advocate as wide an expanse of knowledge, if I may use the words of the Educational despatch of 1854, though not of the highest order.

I now come back to the question of affiliation. How has the Bombay University performed its function in that respect? A correspondent in your paper who has chosen to remain anonymous, has dragged Mr. Selby in this controversy. He says that Mr. Selby informed the Commission that "of late the Senate has been very lax in the matter of affiliation and has given affiliation to any body who takes the trouble to ask for it." We have all the highest respect for Mr. Selby and nobody is more admired for his sturdy liberalism. I am sure that your correspondent is labouring under some misapprehension. The facts are absolutely otherwise. Leaving Elphinstone, Deccan, St. Xavier and Wilson Colleges alone as being recognised before 1870, the dates of the recognition of the remaining Colleges are as follows:—Gujrat College in 1879, Rajaram College in 1880, Baroda College in 1881, Fergusson College in 1884, Samaldas College in 1885, Dayaram Jethmal College in 1887, and Bahudin College in 1901. The Samaldas, Baroda, Rajaram and Bahudin Colleges are Colleges in Native States and I may mention that the Bahudin College was formally opened by H. E. Lord Curzon on the 3rd of November, 1900. The Gujrat and Sindh Colleges were Colleges of which the affiliation was actively promoted by Government. It would be seen that, with the exception of the Bahudin College no College has been recognised by the Bombay University since 1887. It is true that temporary recognition was given to the Maharashtra and Maratha Colleges as a trial in 1897 but it was not renewed. So also temporary recognition was given to what was called the Collegiate Institution. But the remarkable fact about the recognition of that institution was that it was the educational experts on the Syndicate who supported it, while I know that some of the native non-educational syndics were strongly against its affiliation and it was owing to their absence from Bombay that opposition was not offered to such affiliation. It was, however, disaffiliated within a very short time and I may be permitted to overcome my modesty so far as to say that, I myself either moved or seconded a resolution in the Senate in that behalf. I think a review of these facts entitles me to say that the Senate has administered its functions of affiliation with great care and caution and, not a little of the credit for promoting such action belongs to the much decried non-experts serving on the Senate and Syndicate. I do not think Dr. Mackichan can fortify his defence of the report of the Commission in this respect by proof of any shortcomings of the Senate of the Bombay University. I am afraid I find myself again in the position

of the theatrical manager who has to plead for the very last farewell performance after announcing a farewell one. I must crave permission to trouble you with one more letter which I trust may be the very last.

CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD.

IV

11th Mar. 1905.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

SIR.—I have reserved for this letter the strongest and most interesting instance of the careful and circumspect manner in which the Bombay University has discharged its function of affiliation. In 1898 the Taylor High School of Poona applied for its recognition in Arts for the purpose of the Previous and Intermediate Examinations, and one of the two fellows who had to countersign the application was no other than the Rev. Dr. Mackichan. In the Syndicate, Dr. Mackichan recommended recognition up to the Previous, but in spite of his support the Syndicate refused to make the necessary recommendation to the Senate. I cite this instance to show that, in relying upon educational experts to steer the University carefully it is not at all improbable that the reed would prove a broken one.

With regard to courses of Study, I am sure Dr. Mackichan will admit that up till now both the Syndicate and the Senate have always employed the best expert authority at their disposal to frame them. I think he will also admit that in appointing committees for this purpose, the Syndicate has several times been obliged to invoke the assistance of fellows not in the educational line, in consequence of the dirth of educational experts with the necessary qualifications. I myself remember how more than once we had to press into our service the late Mr. Justice Ranade, in spite of failing health, the pressure of his judicial duties and his multifarious engagements.

Up till now I have been striving to show that, whatever the defects of our educational system and however imperfect its products, the blame cannot rest upon that part of the system which forms the constitution of the Senate and the Syndicate. But, assuming for a moment that there was any validity in the objection about the unwieldy character of the Senate and the non-expert character of the Syndicate which it elects, it is a wonder to me why, even then, legislation is thought necessary except on a supposition which, I am told, no Indian has a right to entertain. It must not be forgotten

that under the present law the Senates are the product of the exercise of the judgment and discretion of his Excellency the Governor-in-Council, and if any body is responsible for bringing about a state of things which is now decried as terrible, it is Government and Government alone. Is the new legislation then meant to wrest from Government the freedom of action which till now was left to it? Is it meant that Government have for once been tried and found wanting? Is it meant that Government must be deprived of the power of selection hitherto left to their judgment and discretion, and that the only remedy is to tie their hands by legislation? We have been always told in our Legislative Councils, whenever we have opposed the resort to the judgment and discretion of the executive Government and demanded legislative instructions that, it was monstrous to suggest any doubt as to the fitness of Government in that respect. I remember that, in the Supreme Legislative Council, Lord Curzon, on one occasion, denounced as ungenerous an insinuation that the Indian Government and its officials could not be trusted to exercise properly any discretion which the law might vest in them. Are the Government of India themselves now going to say that the heads of the different local Governments could not be trusted to fulfil adequately the power of nominating fellows within a wise limit. If that be so, and if it is the local Governments that have broken down in properly discharging the trusts reposed in them, surely it might be well argued that the same reasons militate against making over to them the Universities bound hand and foot, for, no impartial person will deny, that the inevitable tendency of the recommendations of the Commission is to strengthen the control of Government and make the University practically a department of Government. If it be argued that the Indian Government do not admit any distrust of the local Governments, then surely no legislation is required even for the purpose of reducing the present number of fellows as much as may be desirable. Government have only to abstain from filling up vacancies for some time, and they can reduce the number to whatever limit they wish.

I do not propose to speak at any length as to how the Bombay University has discharged its functions of prescribing courses of studies and standards of examination. This is a subject on which infinite diversity of opinion has always prevailed and will always prevail, and it would be a most mischievous reform which would endeavour to set one pattern for all India. They must change according to change of thought and requirements at different times. I

see the President of the Commission himself now disclaims all idea of stereotyping courses of study throughout the country. However that may be, I think everybody who has any close or intimate knowledge of the working of our Syndicate, is perfectly aware that it is not with courses of study and standards of examination there is any reason to find fault. I make bold to say that, so far as this University is concerned, they have always been well considered and all reasonable changes have been introduced in them which the progress of the time required. But the maintenance of the standards of examination is a thing which does not depend upon programmes of studies but is largely swayed by the character of the students who are presented for examination. I am quite willing to admit that the character of the standards has depreciated from time to time, and that attempts to raise it have been occasionally frustrated. But those who are aware of the real facts are thoroughly cognisant that the blame of this lies on the officials and the authorities of Colleges. It is they who have come over and over again before the Senate against the strictness of examinations and against alterations of standards. If it is remembered that the Colleges in the Presidency are competitive bodies, if it is remembered that there is a natural desire in the principal and professors of every College to find a favourable place for their own College in the lists of successful candidates, it will be realised that this is no unnatural phenomenon. The truth of the whole matter is that it is because the Colleges are not equipped to rise to higher standards that the efforts of the University to raise the standards have proved futile.

I venture to say that the Universities Commission has tried to put the saddle on the wrong horse. It is not the Senate and the Syndicate that require to be reformed, it is not the number of fellows which has done any mischief, it is not the noisy native fellows as they have been denominated, that have been to blame, but, if I may be permitted to speak out openly and frankly, it is Government that have failed in doing their obvious duty in supplying well-equipped model Colleges. Of the Colleges affiliated to the Bombay Universities, there is only one Government Arts College in Bombay and one in Poona, the Deccan. They take the first rank in the Presidency, and still how inadequately equipped they are. It is true that, now and then, they have by chance obtained the services of some first class men like Sir Alexander Grant, Professor Wordsworth, Professor Selby, &c. I am willing to acknowledge that there are some really good



men now. But with insufficient number and with inadequate specialisation, they have been treated as maids of all work, and Government have not hesitated to over and over again play shuttlecock with them in history, logic, mathematics and other subjects. Then, with regard to the Gujrat and the Sindh Colleges which were meant to serve the provinces of Gujrat and Sindh with the assistance of Government, how miserably they have been endowed and how utterly they are underequipped. The attention of Government was frequently called to their obvious duty, in giving more adequate and substantial help to make these Colleges what they should be, but Government have always turned a deaf ear to all applications of that sort. Surely, if they did nothing else, Government ought to have long ago developed these four Colleges into the models, well managed, well equipped, and well furnished such as the Commission thinks the Colleges in India should be. Is it then wonderful that the products of these Colleges do not turn out as well as may be desired. I strongly maintain that if only Government had done their duty in this respect, if they had provided models furnishing standards of efficiency, the other private and aided Colleges in the Presidency might be safely left to be dealt with by the University as they do now and still with the same courses of study and standards of examination, the University with its present constitution of the Senate and the Syndicate would have done even more beneficial work than it has done. It is not the University that requires reform. It is the Government Colleges that require it. A good deal is talked about the prevalence of cram. It has often been pointed out that there is a good deal of cant about this complaint of cram and the mischief of cram is largely exaggerated. But admitting that it should be checked to a certain extent, it is not the University that is responsible for its prevalence. In this Presidency a strong effort was made to apply the only remedy which can do away with the necessity of cram and turn out our graduates better masters of some if not of all subjects than they are now. The much decried Bombay Senate did its duty manfully in this respect, and in spite of abuse and opposition, carried resolutions for instituting what are called examinations by compartments. The movement was headed by men like the late Mr. Justice Ranade and thoughtfully supported by all the fellows who are conversant with the conditions and circumstances of the education of Indian boys. But, again, it is Government that is responsible for barring the way to a reform which would have to a very great extent dealt with the mischief that is said to

cour from cram. Some of the educational experts on the Senate and the Syndicate were unable to accept their defeat and even resorted to imputations of personal motives in the press and ultimately led Government to refuse sanction to the proposals. A more mischievous and more disastrous piece of obstruction was never perpetrated than this strangling of a project which had been carefully devised to raise the status of the graduates turned out by the University. In Madras the system of examinations by compartments of a more radical character than the one proposed in this Presidency, has been working for some time. When the Madras Senate met together to consider the recommendations of the Commission, including their pronouncement against examination by compartments, the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Miller who presided, without question one of the most able, eminent and experienced educationists in all India, deliberately left his chair to raise his voice as emphatically as possible against a measure which he pronounced to be utterly retrograde, and fraught with the heaviest mischief to the cause of education in the Madras Presidency. It is not likely that a gentleman like Dr. Miller would speak out against the abolition of examination by compartments if the system was one calculated as some of the educational experts in this Presidency were never tired of repeating, of leading to a depreciated degree. I was a careful observer of the arguments brought forward on that occasion, and I keenly followed all the discussion that took place in regard to it, and I have never still heard an argument which constituted a sound objection to the introduction of examination by compartments. I remember Father Dreckman being hard pressed by one of the Indian Syndics to formulate any really serious argument against the proposal, when, the only reply that could be elicited from him was that its acceptance would disorganise their Colleges and upset all their existing arrangements with regard to classes. It was upon this that he met with the retort that your correspondent Indian referred to in his letter that, then you suppose that the University is made for the Colleges. It will be seen that your correspondent has absolutely misunderstood the drift of this retort. Surely, the colleges ought to be able to adapt themselves to all such regulations as the University may consider essential for the development of sound collegiate education. In this sense it is monstrous to say that the University exists for the Colleges, that is to say, to adapt itself to the inadequate and inefficient equipments of the existing Colleges.

This brings me to the last observation with which I wish to close this correspondence, Nothing will be more disastrous in a

country like India than to entrust its educational destinies in the hands of a close educational autocracy—an autocracy which must for years be essentially European. In America, in England and on the Continent, it may be left with a pretty amount of safety to educational experts to steer the vessel of higher education, although I fully agree with the view expressed by Mr. Sydney Webb in his article in the *Nineteenth Century* on the London University, about the dangers of doing so even there. Because the educational experts there must be of the country and must be of the people with whom they have to deal. In India it is absolutely otherwise. The very best and the most sympathetic Europeans cannot hope to possess that intimate knowledge of the capacity, the acquirements, the circumstances of the Indian youth which Indian educated graduates can possess intuitively and from close experience. Europeans can never adjust the educational system to their needs and requirements. In India, therefore, it is absolutely natural that the Senates should possess preponderating numbers of its own educated classes, with enough of European expert element to just serve them for guidance. It is also to be remembered that experience has taught us that the University in the hands of educational experts employed in the work of education in the Presidency in the circumstances in which it exists, will be liable to perpetual demoralisation and to lead to that depreciated degree which is so unjustly imputed to Indian reformers. The educational institutions over which they preside are competitive institutions, and, as I have said before, it is only natural that they should run a race for successful achievement. An expert Syndicate and an expert Senate will lead to the evils of expert examiners even more than it is now, and expert examiners of that character are apt to reduce the standards and course of study to pass their students in as large numbers as possible. There have been brilliant exceptions to such a tendency, but taking the average as it has been in India, I am not prophesying too much when I say that there would be steady demoralisation of the kind I indicate. My last word is that the recommendations of the Commission be assigned to the capacious pigeon-holes which Government possess in such numbers, let them improve their model colleges, bring out the best available educational talent from England, and the problem they have set themselves to solve will be solved more efficaciously and more truly than if the whole report of the Commission was transferred into a legislative Act.



# APPENDIX I.

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## BOMBAY UNIVERSITY SENATE.

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### UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION REPORT.

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#### THE HON. MR. P. M. MEHTA'S SPEECH.

(SENATE MEETING 14TH FEBRUARY, 1903.)

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Mr. Vice-Chancellor and Gentlemen of the Senate,—I have been a Fellow of the University for over thirty-five years, being one of the young men, fresh from College, whom Sir Alexander Grant—Principal of the Elphinstone College, Director of Public Instruction, and Vice-Chancellor of the University—thought might be usefully associated in participating in the work of the University which had manufactured them. During this long period I do not remember a more momentous matter brought for the consideration of the Senate than the one which had been referred to us for our opinion by the Local and Imperial Governments. Of all the measures inaugurated by the great statesmen responsible for the consolidation of British rule in India, none has been so fruitful of blessings both to England and this country as the gift of education—blessing them that gave and them that took. It has conduced in innumerable ways, direct and indirect, to the welfare, progress, and development of the country, and at the same time it has contributed in no small measure to strengthen the foundations of the Empire, giving them both stability and permanence. These beneficial results were achieved by the operation of the policy and principles laid down in the famous Educational Despatch of 1854, our Educational Magna Charta, leading (among other things) in 1857 to the establishment of the three Universities of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. In the letter of the Government of India of 24th October, 1902, now before us, the Governor-General-in-Council has “considered it desirable to disclaim emphatically any intention of receding from the policy set forth in this Despatch, that it is important to encourage private enterprise in the

matter of education," and to declare that "their adherence to it remains unshaken." I respectfully wish that the Government of India had equally emphasised another principle laid down in the Despatch, of equal, if not greater efficiency.

#### PROMOTION OF GENERAL EDUCATION.

In endeavouring to determine "the mode in which the assistance of Government should be afforded to the more extended and systematic promotion of general education in India," the Despatch, noting with satisfaction the attainments of some of the natives of India in English literature and European science, proceeds to observe:—"But this success has been confined to but a small number of persons, and we are desirous of extending far more widely the means of acquiring general European knowledge 'of a less high order,' but of such a character as may be practically useful to the people of India in their different spheres of life, and 'to extend the means of imparting this knowledge' must be the object of any general system of education." I venture to think that in no portion of the Despatch are the sagacity and statesmanship of its authors more conspicuous than in this. They laid down no misleading 'efficiency' test to narrow and restrict the wide spread of education—to erect a solitary minaret rising in a vast desert—but they deliberately preferred a wide expanse of general knowledge even though not of the highest order. They clearly understood that in the circumstances of a country like India, it was necessary to expand the popular basis of higher education as fraught with better promises to the welfare and progress of the country. When the University Commission moralise in the concluding paragraphs of their report that "efficiency must be the first and paramount consideration" and that "it is better for India that a comparatively small number of young men should receive a sound liberal education than that a large number should be passed through an inadequate course of instruction leading to a depreciated degree," they approach the problem, not from a statesman's but from the point of view of a pedagogue. Proverbs and maxims are now recognised to be more misleading than true, and the worst of its kind is the proverb that "little knowledge is a dangerous thing." All knowledge is little when you compare it with higher, but little is better than no knowledge at all. The logical consequence of the proverb would be to discredit primary education altogether, and to abolish all secondary schools unless they led perforce to Colleges. The wisdom of the authors of the Despatch of 1854, recognising the utility of expanding the popular basis of higher education, has

been amply justified by the results. It is now admitted by all dispassionate observers that the work of the Universities established in pursuance of it has tended more and more to raise and purify public life and public administration throughout the country by turning out a large body of doctors, engineers, lawyers, judges and magistrates.

#### SPLENDID OUTBURSTS OF LOYALTY.

It was the fashion at one time to say—and perhaps the fashion is lingering still—that this education was creating seditious discontent. It is now emphatically proved that such an accusation was the outcome only of passion and prejudice. I shall never be tired of pointing out that the splendid outbursts of loyalty, sincere and spontaneous, that signalled recent occasions, the death of the revered Queen-Empress and the accession of his present Majesty,—that still follows, with enthusiastic affection, the tour of T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, are the direct outcome of the spread of higher education on a popular basis, filtering its influence from strata to strata of Indian society. As I have had occasion to say elsewhere, it is true the soldier is abroad, preserving peace and tranquility throughout the realm, but it is equally true that his task has become easy because the humble schoolmaster has also been abroad, transferring the feeling of gratitude for the maintenance and preservation of peace into a sentiment of earnest, devoted and enlightened loyalty such as has amazed and astonished the advocates of the sedition theory. A policy and a system which has worked so beneficially in all directions, is one which ought not to be disturbed without a careful, cautious and thorough examination. I wish to speak with all respect of the able and accomplished men who composed the Indian Universities Commission, but I am not aware that they are men who possessed any special or commanding qualifications for the task entrusted to them. Unfortunately they have not considered it necessary to base or fortify their conclusions upon the evidence which they collected in a hurry as they rushed from place to place. They have chosen to exercise, as they put it, “an independent judgment on the mass of material: at (their) our disposal, and to select for examination those proposals which appear to be of an immediately practical nature.” The great importance of the subject, I venture to think, demanded a different treatment, and it can be no matter for complaint if the recommendations of the Commission have no more weight attached to them than those of any other seven men throughout the Kingdom of equivalent qualifications, of whom there are hundreds, on subjects on which the most eminent men of English and Continental Universities are not yet agreed,

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION.

I do not propose to go into a detailed discussion of the recommendations of the Commission which, as the Government of India say in their letter, outline a comprehensive scheme of administrative and legislative reform. I confess that the way in which they arrive at their recommendations about what may be described as the constitutional portion of them is most disappointing. They admit that they "are not disposed to confirm the sweeping condemnation which has sometimes been passed upon our University system," but they proceed to add that "while we consider many of the criticisms passed on the Indian Universities are not deserved, we have come to the conclusion that in many directions there is scope for improvement." Nobody will deny that there are many errors and shortcomings in our educational system. But the Commission do not care to show, except in the briefest and most superficial manner, how the most serious of these faults will be remedied by their proposals. They lay them down 'ex cathedra,' but they have neither shown that these faults have proceeded from any defect in the present constitution of the University, nor that the changes they propose are likely to set them right. The burden of proof rests on those who impeach the working and utility of the present system, and it is not enough to say that some other theoretic arrangements will work better. I have always been told that the genius of the English people has always abhorred the academic manufacture of constitutions and systems in the manner of the Abbe Sieyes, and that the secret of their success in peaceful progress has lain in dealing only with the offending or corrupted parts. Now it is curious that in the lengthened discussions which took place a few years ago in the Senate and its Select Committees led by many of the most cultured and accomplished men who have illustrated this University by their labours—and I may mention that you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, were not the least prominent amongst them, and that you acted as Secretary of the last Select Committee on the subject—there was substantial and almost overwhelming agreement that the present Bombay University system had worked admirably; that the maximum number of fellows should be 200, exclusive of ex-officio fellows; that the Syndicate should have no statutory recognition except as at present through the bye-laws; that the Senate should have full control and power; that the Syndicate should be its executive committee of management, and that any changes in its constitution should be left to be worked out by the Senate through the power of framing bye-laws.



## THE NOMINATION OF FELLOWS.

The only reform that was strongly advocated was a generous introduction of the elective principle in the nomination of Fellows. Nothing has been brought out by the Commission which can induce us to alter the conclusions to which we—and I include you, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in the number—then arrived. To my mind, there is no occasion to tinker our present constitution. The fact is that the Commission has missed to give adequate and emphatic prominence to the great remedy for all the defects and shortcomings of our educational system for higher education. It was pointed out years ago by Sir Alexander Grant and Sir Raymond West and by many of us in later times. No Commission was required to tell Government that before any other reform was taken in hand it was most essential to put the Government high Schools and Colleges intended to serve as models of such institutions, in a fit condition to do their full work. As Sir Raymond West more than once pointed out, our present Schools and Colleges are grossly insufficiently equipped and grossly insufficiently provided with necessary appliances and materials. I appreciate as well as any other person the importance of elevating educational ideals, but this object can be secured, without impairing the popular basis, by providing well-equipped and well-supplied models. Whatever there is of unsatisfactory in the turnout of our University system is mainly due to the default of Government in this respect. So far back as the sixties, Sir Alexander Grant put his finger on this weak point: "Were but two per cent. on the Presidential revenues allowed to Bombay, the whole aspect of the Department and the Universities might, in my opinion," he pathetically pleaded, "be speedily changed for the better." I will venture to say that if Government would be pleased to spend the needful moneys on fully and properly equipping our high Schools and Colleges, we may safely leave, as they are, our Senates though said to be unwieldy, and our Syndicates though not statutory. In the evidence I gave before the Commission I took the liberty of pointing out, with the aid of tables of Fellows prepared by my friend Mr. Setalvad, that there was more talk than substance in the complaint about the unwieldy and non-expert character of our Senate. I confess I saw with surprise that our Vice-Chancellor had joined in the insinuations contained in the 42nd para of the Commission's Report, where they say that their reformed Senate will be, in the main, a body of experts, and it will be protected against the incursion of voters who are brought together in large numbers only by the prospect of an election or "by a debate

on some question which has been agitated out of doors." On behalf of this Senate I repel the observation as inaccurate, as illiberal, and as intolerant, leaving alone the charitable side of the question.

A MATTER OF INTENSE WONDER.

With regard to the administrative reforms recommended by the Commission, it has never ceased to me to be a matter of intense wonder that the seven accomplished gentlemen composing the Commission should have seriously set to work to recommend for all time courses of study for the Arts and Science degrees. These are matters in regard to which infinite diversity of opinion prevails among the most eminent men of Europe and America, and I do not think that any seven men among the most distinguished in India could be allowed to dogmatise on what the courses of teaching should be in all the Indian Universities. I should have judged that the work could only be properly left to the constituted bodies in each University to arrange from time to time in the light of increasing experience and in consonance with local circumstances, conditions and requirements. I think it would be a calamity to lay down one pattern for the whole country. I wonder what would be said if the Universities of England and Scotland and Ireland,—Oxford and Cambridge, Edinburgh and Glasgow and Dublin—were invited to conform to a pattern of courses of teaching and studies arranged by a roving Commission even of the best seven men of the three kingdoms. So far from conforming to one pattern, it is of great advantage in this country that we have local Universities in the different Presidencies who can carry out their own valuable experiments in the light of local experiences. (Applause.)

## APPENDIX II.

### **Report of the Committee appointed by the Senate to consider and report on the letters from the Government of Bombay communicating the observations of the Governor-General in Council on certain points dealt with in the Report of the Indian Universities Commission.**

After a very careful discussion and consideration of all the points on which the Government of Bombay invite the Senate to state their views, the Committee recommend to the Senate, for adoption, the following propositions :—

1. That the Senate, being of opinion that the Senate as at present constituted has on the whole worked well and that the various necessary elements, and especially educational and Government interests, are adequately represented on it, disapproves of the recommendation to abolish the present Senate and appoint a new one consisting of 100 members. That the Senate, however, recommends that the number of Fellows be limited to 200, exclusive of *ex-officio* Fellows, as was proposed in the draft Bill prepared by Sir Raymond West, the reduction to be made in the following manner : only one-half of the vacancies occurring in every year should be filled till the number is reduced to 200, and after the reduction is effected no more nominations should be made than there are vacancies.

2. That the Senate recommends that a liberal proportion, say one-half of the Fellowships to be filled in each year, should be filled by election by graduates, and approves of the recommendation that election by graduates should have Statutory recognition. That provision should be made, as far as possible, for a proportionate representation of the different Faculties.

3. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation to make Fellowships tenable for five years, and is of opinion that it will, besides, to a certain extent, marring the independence of Fellows, entail the loss of some very useful members who will not be prepared to undertake the trouble of standing for election at the end of every five years. That the Senate is of opinion that the tenure of a Fellowship should as at present be for life, but that a Fellow not attending any meeting of the Senate for a period to be fixed in that behalf should by reason of such absence lose his Fellowship.

4. That the Senate is of opinion that the Bombay Syndicate of 15 members as at present constituted has worked well, and that the present Bombay system should be substantially maintained.

5. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendations (i) to ensure a Statutory majority of College Professors in the Syndicate, and (ii) to make the Director of Public Instruction an *ex-officio* member and Vice-Chairman of the Syndicate. That the Senate is of opinion that certain recommendations of the Commission regarding the constitution of the Senate and the Syndicate, if carried out, will tend to impair the independence and thereby diminish the authority and usefulness of the University.

6. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation that the power to affiliate and disaffiliate colleges should rest entirely with the Syndicate and Government, irrespective of the Senate, and is of opinion that the rules for recognition of Institutions should be based on the lines of the present regulations of the Bombay University in that behalf.

7. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation that the Syndicate should prescribe a minimum rate of fees for affiliated colleges.

8. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation that no second grade colleges should be affiliated in future and that the present second grade colleges should either be turned into full colleges or cease to exist. That the Senate agrees with the Government of India that, if the requirements of efficiency are satisfied, there is no reason why second grade colleges should be refused affiliation.

9. That the Senate is unable to approve of the recommendation that only such schools should be recognised as are recommended by the Educational Department, and it is of opinion that the question of the recognition of schools should be left to the uncontrolled decision of the University.

10. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation to make the appointment of Registrar subject to the approval of Government, and prefers the system of appointing a biennial half-time Registrar working with the assistance of a whole time Assistant Registrar, to the proposal of a whole time Registrar.

11. That the Senate is strongly of opinion that each University should have full power and liberty to lay down and settle its own courses of studies and examinations according to local needs and circumstances, and that it should have such power and liberty specially in reference to matters contained in Sections 117, 119, 133 (as summarised in (5) Medicine, page 68), 162 (as summarised in (2) Matriculation, page 69), 166 (as summarised in (1) Private Students, page 69) and 174 of the Commission's Report.

12. That the Senate is unable to approve of (i) the exclusion of History and Political Economy from the compulsory Arts Course ; (ii) the exclusion of French as an alternative for a classical language except for female students ; and that the Senate is of opinion that Elementary Science should be retained in the Matriculation Examination.

13. That as regards the question of the Previous Examination, the Senate, as has already been stated in proposition 11, is of opinion that all such questions must be determined by the local University, but so far as the present Senate is concerned, it thinks that in a four-years' course the abolition of the Previous Examination is most undesirable.

14. That the Senate is of opinion that there should be no minimum age limit for appearance at the Matriculation Examination, but that, if there is to be a limit, it should be 15 years as recommended by the Commission.

15. That the Senate disapproves of the recommendation to have a central College of Law and to give it the monopoly of legal education.

16. That the Senate is of opinion that the test of efficiency propounded by the Commission is misleading, and it strongly thinks that the measures recommended by the Commission, which will have the result of narrowing the popular basis of higher education, would be highly detrimental to the best interests of this country.

With regard to proposition 4, the undermentioned members of the Committee hold the opinion that at least one-half of the Syndicate should consist of members who are or have been actually connected with colleges, or that, in the alternative, Principals of a certain number of colleges at the centre of the University should be *ex-officio* members :—

Lieutenant-Colonel H. P. Dimmock, M.D., Mr. Principal M. Macmillan, B.A., the Rev. F. Dreckmann, S.J., the Rev. R. Scott, M.A., Professor O. V. Muller, M.A., and Dr. Sorab K. Nariman, M.D.

PHEROZESHAH M. MEHTA, M.A.  
 M. MACMILLAN, B.A. (Principal, Elphinstone College).  
 SORAB K. NARIMAN, M.D.  
 VASUDEV J. KIRTIKAR.  
 D. G. PADHYE, M.A.  
 BHALCHANDRA KRISHNA, L.M.  
 SHAMRAO VITHAL.  
 H. P. DIMMOCK (Principal, Grant Medical College).  
 CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD, B.A., LL.B.  
 M. H. HAKIM.  
 H. M. MASINA, F.R.C.S.  
 GOKULDAS K. PARAKH, B.A., LL.B.  
 F. DRECKMANN, S.J. (Principal, St. Xavier's College).  
 R. SCOTT, M.A. (Professor, Wilson's College).  
 OSVALD V. MULLER, B.A. (Professor, Elphinstone College).  
 RUSTAM K. R. CAMA, B.A., LL.B.  
 H. S. DIKSHIT, B.A., LL.B.  
 DAJI ABAJI KHARE, B.A., LL.B.  
 JAMIETRAM NANABHAI, B.A., LL.B.