

To the Editor of the *Mathematical Gazette*

DEAR SIR,

I wish to bring to your notice a statement, in the Presidential address to the Mathematical Association, April 1958, by W J Langford [*Math. Gazette* October 1958], which needs re-examination. Speaking on the place of Mathematics in Secondary School Curriculum he said, "Only rarely is a deliberate distinction made between girls and boys; in Denmark's real-klasse Mathematics is compulsory for the boys and optional for girls, *while in India the girls are required to study only Arithmetic*",

Through correspondence with my friends in various parts of India I have gathered the following information. There are certain states (in India) where no distinction is made between girls and boys in the matter of mathematical curriculum. In some States (in India) Mathematics is compulsory for the boys and optional for girls; and in those States girls who take Mathematics have to Study the same curriculum as the boys. I have not been able to locate any State in India where girls are required to study only Arithmetic.

Yours etc., S. PARAMESWARAN

Kerala University, Trivandrum, India.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to Professor Parameswaran's query about my statement concerning Mathematical education in India, I can do no more than quote my source of information.

In 1956 I attended a Conference of the International Bureau of Education in Geneva and all delegates were given a printed document containing the replies from Ministries to certain questions related to Mathematical education in secondary schools. In the Indian report occurs the following:

"Secondary education generally comprises a three-year "Middle School" stage (the 6th to the 8th year of schooling, pupils of 11 to 14 years old) and a two-year or three-year "High School" stage (the 9th to the 10th or 11th year of schooling, pupils of 14 to 16 or 17 years old).

Mathematics is taught throughout both these stages. It is designated arithmetic, algebra and geometry, but in some states also includes elementary mechanics and trigonometry in the upper classes. It is compulsory for boys in all years; for girls, arithmetic is compulsory, but algebra, geometry, etc., are optional".

Yours etc., W J. LANGFORD

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