

Education And Examinations

A wit once said, 'In examinations the foolish ask questions that the wise cannot answer'. Though that doesn't quite cover the inadequacies of present educational systems there is little doubt that they leave much to be desired. For that purpose a committee has been formed of educationists and others to submit their recommendations to the government by the end of March 1986. The first meeting of the committee was held on 12 October, last Saturday.

Presided over by the former Foreign Minister, Professor Huq, he said that the present system depended on memory and was no help to the growth of knowledge in students. We most heartily endorse this view. The frantic memorisation of facts, dates and figures, can be no criteria to assessing a student's knowledge. It is a tribute only to his powers of memory. There is little doubt that after the examination is over he will forget all that he memorised by rote, and be as lacking in true learning as he was before. There will, of course, always be conflicting views as to how examinations should be conducted, but it is hoped that the suggestions put forward by this committee will be the most productive of the best results.

There have been many suggestions in the past one of which is that a student's prowess should be gauged on weekly reports and the system of examination, as known at present, abolished altogether. Among those suggested by this committee is the semester system and the introduction of the gradation system of marking papers, rather than the division system at present in use.

Perhaps there never will be a hundred per cent satisfactory answer to this vexatious question, but there is plenty of scope for improvement. Students have got to be made to feel that they have been dealt with fairly and not discriminated against, as can occur when different examiners give different marks for the same set of answer papers. Learning is something in which both teachers and students should participate. When this is fully realised the whole system of examinations will radically change for the better.