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Government of Madras.

EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

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G.O. No. 770, 4th November 1911.

Indian students in England.

Recording letter from the Government of India forwarding a note written by Kunwar Maharej Singh regarding —.

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT.

Order—No. 770, Educational, dated 4th November 1911.

Recorded.

(True Extract.)

L. DAVIDSON,
Ag. Secretary to Government.

NOTES CONNECTED WITH G.O. No. 770, EDUCATIONAL, DATED
4TH NOVEMBER 1911.

[SUBJECT.—*Note by Kunwar Maharaj Singh on Indian students in England.*]

Devis-official—from the Hon'ble Mr. H. SHARP, Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education.

To—the Hon'ble Mr. L. DAVIDSON, I.C.S., Acting Secretary to the Government of Madras, Educational Department.

Dated—Simla, the 10th October 1911.

No—559, Education.

I am desired to forward, for your information, a note written by Kunwar Maharaj Singh. It is possible that the Government of India will further address local Governments upon this subject.

ENCLOSURE.

Note by Kunwar Maharaj Singh.

The position of Indian students in England has without doubt deteriorated during the last decade. When my brother and I went to Harrow about 20 years ago, not only was there not an atom of prejudice against us, but the sympathies of masters and boys were actually in our favour; and even at Oxford, where in my time there were about a dozen Indians in all, I found no trace of antipathy. One was accepted on one's merits irrespective of race or creed.

2. That this happy state of affairs has disappeared is largely due to the increased number of Indians in English institutions, which makes them content to associate with their own countrymen and to form themselves into a separate and somewhat exclusive class. The financial difficulties of some, the extreme political views of others, the commencement of anarchic crime in India and England, the hostility towards students of a certain section of the Press in both countries have contributed to the same result, and I think the presence of larger numbers of Colonial students in England has also added to their unpopularity.

3. The problem does not admit of an easy solution and though many of the suggestions contained in the report of the committee of 1907 are admirable and the formation of a Bureau of Information in England and of Advisory Committees there and in India are all to the good, I do not think that any measures can or will ever make Indians as a class popular in England any more than Russians or Jews or Germans are as a class liked in that country.

But I am of opinion that their position could be ameliorated by a reasonable attitude on both sides and in both countries.

4. I am of course opposed to all artificial restrictions such as differential standards of examinations, etc. It is my experience that differential treatment in such matters creates greater resentment than any inconvenience which is common to all. And even if such restrictions reduced the number of Indians in England, they would undoubtedly increase their flow to America, Japan, Germany, etc., with disastrous political results.

5. Indirectly, however, the number might be reduced by equalizing the privileges of vakils of certain standing with barristers in this country (a measure which, though a barrister, I consider, would be both just and popular) and by an extended recruitment in this country of Indians for the higher appointments. The social status of Indian students at the Inns of Court is generally lower than that of those at the universities or hospitals and a saving of the expenses of a three years' residence in England would be a great boon to many parents.

6. In England the policy should be one of diffusion, not segregation. Schemes for separate clubs, hostels, habitations are highly undesirable. What is wanted is a more even distribution of Indian students. I would, for instance, limit their numbers in each institution in the interests both of the students themselves and of the institutions which are primarily intended for Englishmen and which are already being flooded by colonials and foreigners of all descriptions.

At the same time steps might be taken by the India Office to induce certain establishments (*e.g.*, a few colleges at Oxford and Cambridge) to remove disqualifications against Indians *qui* Indians. Fifty or sixty Indians (*i.e.*, two or three in each college) would be enough at Oxford and Cambridge, and the surplus candidates should be recommended to go to the newer and smaller universities at Birmingham, Manchester, etc., where their restricted numbers would ensure a warmer welcome and where in any case, their expenses would be smaller.

7. Very great advantage would also accrue to Indians by participation in English home life, whose influence would do more to create a feeling of affection towards the people of England than any number of formal At Homes and garden parties.

The Advisory Committee in London were, I know, fully alive to this, but the staff at their disposal was quite inadequate and the selection of families was at first made without care and circumspection. Although recently three assistants have been provided for Mr. Arnold, existing arrangements are still inadequate. I doubt whether the present staff is sufficient, inasmuch as important centres for Indian students such as Edinburgh are, I believe, still neglected.

Students of course do not require high society, most of them not having sufficient means, but very careful selection of families is of vital importance and for this purpose an adequate staff of active young men is required.

8. Then there is the question of guardianship to which, having myself had a guardian for 15 years in England, I attach the greatest importance. It is highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary, that every student should be under guardianship in England. And I do not think that in this matter we need lay so much importance as the committee did on the views of Indian students actually resident in England. It is only natural that the latter should resent any interference with a freedom hitherto enjoyed. But in such matters and until a student becomes financially independent, the parents' point of view (which is very properly regarded as all-important) should be considered; and I venture to say that there are few parents who would not be glad to secure such guardianship. The newly-arrived student in England would also have no objection and the majority in after years would, I feel sure, appreciate its advantages.

9. I think, therefore, that another function of the English Advisory Committee might be to select suitable guardians for the sons of parents who wished it. Such men need not necessarily be officially connected with the Bureau or Advisory Committee. For the official adviser is by his position and want of leisure precluded from coming into close touch with the student. In some cases they might be the heads of families in which the student was placed, in others a college don, a country clergyman or a schoolmaster could be secured on reasonable remuneration, while occasionally an Indian gentleman permanently resident in England or a retired Anglo-Indian would be suitable.

Very careful selection would of course be essential, but once appointed, the guardian should keep the purse and exercise a mild general control over the student's life. He should communicate direct with the parent and should not ordinarily be charged without the latter's consent. I am aware that one objection to the proposal for guardians and families will be the additional expenditure involved. If, however, as I have suggested, the guardian is to control the funds, in the long run economy will be effected. For we all know of the unnecessary demands which are often successfully made on an ignorant parents' funds by an infortunate son six thousand miles away and of the unduly prolonged stays in England, and their attendant expenses. Further, since the guardian could be entrusted with the supervision of several students, the charge per student should be

relatively small (ordinarily not more than £30 per head per annum) and would not be grudged by the ordinary parent, least of all those who had themselves been to England. If, however, the parent could not afford this, he could always fall back on the free guardianship of the official adviser.

10. Though the whole scheme should be voluntary and no parent should be compelled to place his son under guardianship, yet I think one of the main functions of the Provincial Advisory Committees in India should be to diffuse information on the desirability of supervision for every student in England during the holidays as well as in term time and to undertake to provide guardians should parents so desire. For this and other purposes I consider the work of these committees in some provinces is at present too centralised and that local committees in large educational centres such as Lucknow, Agra and Delhi are desirable.

But I would deprecate any tendency to compel students to proceed to England through the committee. The success of the scheme to my mind depends on its voluntary character. Compulsion would not only be politically undesirable but would be manifestly unfair to England-returned parents, who could often themselves make suitable arrangements and to recognized institutions such as the Aligarh and Benares Colleges which in addition to the advantage of a residential system have their own committees or agents in England. No doubt English institutions themselves would in time come to recognize the value of these committees as parents are beginning to do in India.

11. Another useful function of the Indian committees would be to publish a small and up-to-date handbook of information giving details of the conditions of English student life, expenses, and terms of admittance into English institutions, etc. Public ignorance in these matters is still great and much correspondence would be saved by the publication of such a manual.

12. I consider that a certificate granted by Provincial Advisory Committees should be valid for the purpose of admittance into the Inns of Court. But I would, at the same time, retain the Collector's certificate leaving it optional to a student to go to the committee or the Collector. There are many places, for instance, where no member of a Provincial Committee resides and where it would be more convenient for the Collector to be approached. In cases of refusal by either (and these are bound to be very rare) information should be sent to the other, and I think in such cases an appeal should lie to the local Government.

13. I would also draw attention to a point which appears to have been overlooked in the report of the committee of 1907. It is only half the battle to attempt to secure better treatment for Indians in England and greater cordiality in their relations with Englishmen. The real problem is to improve the social relations of Indians with Englishmen in this country. The remarks of Mr. D. N. Banerjee on page 102 of the report represent a very prevalent feeling among the educated classes. "He considered there was no advantage in Indians receiving courtesies in England which would be denied them by English officials when they got back to India. Indians on return to India felt keenly the absence of the courteous treatment to which they had become accustomed in England with the result that their last state was worse than the first. He would prefer that Indians should receive uniformly courteous treatment in both countries rather than any excessive show of affability in one country."

I think this point of view deserves consideration and that the state of affairs depicted is in part responsible for the *anti*-English feeling displayed by students in England of which the report unfortunately gives ample evidence.

It is for consideration whether a copy of the note by Kunwar Maharaj Singh may be communicated to the Madras Students' Advisory Committee.

T.R.—26-10-11.

K. RANGASWAMI AYYANGAR—27-10-11.

I think so, without waiting for any further communication from India.

L. DAVIDSON—30-10-11.

Yes. Send a copy confidentially to the Students' Advisory Committee. It is a very sensible paper.

M. H[AMMICK]—1-11-11.

A copy of the note has been sent to the Secretary, Students' Advisory Committee. The paper may, it is submitted, be recorded, pending receipt of the further communication from India.

A draft is for approval.

R. SUNDARAM AIYAR—4-11-11.

M. S. MASCARENHAS—4-11-11.

Demi-official—from the Hon'ble Mr. L. DAVIDSON, I.C.S., Acting Secretary to Government, Educational Department.

To—A. DAVIES, Esq., M.A. (Barrister-at-Law), Secretary, Madras Students' Advisory Committee.

Dated—the 3rd November 1911.
No.—2550-1.

I am sending you with this, for the information of the Students' Advisory Committee, a copy of a valuable note written by Kunwar Maharaj Singh on the position of Indian students in England.

[G.O. No. 770, Educational, dated 4th November 1911.]

$$\left[\frac{E. \& L.}{76.} \right]$$

DEPARTMENT.

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READ ALSO:—

C. No. 2550, From the Govt of India, No. 559, dated 10.10.1901

[illegible]

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