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Legislative Council.  
FIJI.

COUNCIL PAPER No. 22.

**EDUCATION**

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO—IN CONTINUATION OF COUNCIL PAPER NO. 30 OF 1910).

*Laid on the Table, 3 April, 1914.*

SCHEDULE.

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## APPENDIX I.

## LETTER FROM MISS GRIFFEN TO MR. MAYHEW.

(see Section D, para 10.)

## EDUCATION OF INDIAN GIRLS IN FIJI.

According to the census recently taken, the number of Indian Children between the ages of 5 and 15 years has increased from something over 13,000 to 23,608. The following figures give an idea of the number of Indian children whose education needs to be catered for:—

Total Boys 5-15 years—12,177; of these, 4,130 (34 per cent.) at school.

Girls 5-15 years—11,431; of these, 1,371 (12 per cent.) at school.

The number of boys at school cannot be considered satisfactory, and that of the girls much less so.

To make it possible for these children to receive a primary education—of which the aim is good citizenship—there is need for—

- (a) an adequate supply of efficient teachers;
- (b) an adequate number of schools.

These two needs apply to both girls and boys, but in the attempt to bring in a universal education of girls many extra problems present themselves.

Very few Indian girls are allowed to attend schools where boys of all ages are catered for—and only very little girls are allowed to attend. This means that there must be for some time to come separate schools for girls, taught by women teachers. If it were possible for a European woman to be in charge of each school there would still be need for many Indian teachers as assistants. This is even so an impossible plan if all girls are to receive the chance of attending a school sufficiently near. Some plan must be evolved that will produce an ever-increasing number of Indian women teachers who can teach not only in large centres but in outlying districts.

One of the greatest difficulties is going to arise because very few Indian girls stay at school after Class V. The following table will give an idea of the material possible to draw from within the next four years:—

Total number of girls at school	1,371
Girls over 11 years of age	253 (18%)

Of these, 76 are in Class VI or higher, *i.e.*, 70 per cent. have not reached Class VI which is where they should be if they attended regularly from the age of six years.

Class VI (all ages), 40; Class VII, 22; Class VIII, 19; total, 81.

In Class VI or over—

Over 16 years	9 girls	Over 11 years	15 girls
15	10	10	4
14	13	9	1
13	14		—
12	15		81

There is still a strong feeling among some Indians in Fiji against the education of their girls, but this will decrease more rapidly than in India.

The early legal age for marriage (13) and of consent (14) are further stumbling blocks. Almost all Indian girls are married before they are 15, and are usually withdrawn from school before the age of 11 to prepare for this; and because much of the household work seems to be done by the young girl.

One of the reasons given by Indian parents here for early marriage is that it is not safe for an Indian girl to remain unmarried. She will disgrace the family, and of course the blame is attached chiefly to her. No thought is given to the fact that she has no healthy mental interests, or games, or interesting occupations such as sewing, singing, &c. She has not been taught to think and to discriminate. Except for the instruction given by a very ignorant mother or other illiterate adult, she can learn little of the world beyond her family.

There may not be "purdah" as understood in India, but a girl's horizon, if she does not attend school, is very narrow indeed.

There needs to be encouragement of the parents to send and keep a girl at school. If the girl has at 12, 13 or 14 reached Class VII she herself will make great efforts to stay. If she can then begin training with the prospect of being soon able to add even a probationer's salary to the family fund her parents will not hurry marriage. The girl will be happily busy, and be able to give several years of service—as a single and after as a married woman. This has already been proved true of a few Hindu, Arya and Muslim girls, as well as of Christian girls.

I should like to see some system whereby suitable girls could be brought in from outlying districts and given several years of preparation in schools that can prepare them for entrance into a training school.

The schools which have produced the majority of Indian women teachers can be seen from the following figures—

Group 1:—Total number of registered certificated Indian women teachers at present:—Grade 3, 3; Grade 4, 5; Grade 5, 10; total, 18. Of these, 14 have come from the three Methodist Mission Schools:—Lautoka, 2; Dilkusha, 5; Suva, 7.

*Group II.*—Of the 16 Probationers, Partial Passes and Students who have reached the required standard, 14 are from the same schools. (These girls have had or are receiving training, not simply tuition).

Of all certificated registered teachers four are from other Christian schools, and of the second group 1, which means of a total 34—28 are from Methodist Schools, 6 from other Christian Schools, *i.e.* all of the 34 are from Christian Schools. There are other teachers, but their standard of education is low and they have received no training as teachers.

In India a large proportion of the Indian women teachers are Christian and from Christian families, and it looks as if this is to be the case here. The reasons being:—

- (a) early marriage in non-Christian denominations;
- (b) the greater freedom given to a Christian girl;
- (c) the fact that Christian girls have an increasingly greater freedom in agreeing or refusing to marry.

Also, can it not also be expected that a Christian girl trained in Christian ideals will develop a character that will give her ideals of service and make her able to keep her self-respect. This may not be true in every case, but should be so with the majority.

If the three Methodist schools have already thus contributed so many of the few teachers (28 out of 34), should not efforts be made to help them to continue and increase. This twofold work of—

- (a) preparing girls to reach the standard required for entering a training school;—
- (b) training the suitable girls so that as soon as possible they may be able to take positions as certificated teachers.

#### SCHOOLS PREPARING GIRLS TO ENTER A TRAINING SCHOOL.

If these schools are to do their first work, and at a reasonable age enable girls to reach the required standard, the schools need to be staffed with certificated teachers, not students or probationers. The latter form of staffing results in two evils—

- (a) the girls of the school do not advance from class to class as they should, *i.e.*, are retarded;
- (b) students and probationers who are teaching all day have very little time, and that at the end of a tiring school day, for their own study and for training in the art of teaching. They take several years to get even the lowest certificate. I consider this a real injustice to a girl who intends to teach, especially as often her ability to earn is the price of her freedom and independence. Besides this, if a school is poorly staffed, the head mistress has an almost impossible and often a very disappointing job.

In order to keep the girls long enough at school the age for girls at these schools financed by Government should be raised to 16.

Scholarships, boarding and otherwise, could be granted to girls from other districts so that supplies of teachers for these districts be begun.

The training school itself should be so staffed that the tutorial needs and the training in practical teaching is properly done.

It is desirable at present that girls of 15 (if at the right standard of education) be admitted for training. Such young students need much guidance and supervision. Great care needs to be taken that the children who are used to practise on, do not suffer. The best of Indian teachers are needed as part of the staff to be responsible for the work of the classes taught by the students, and to give demonstration lessons. Needless to say the building and equipment should be sufficient to allow the best possible work to be done.

Schools in towns will not find it difficult to procure staff, as girls will be able to live at home. It is the school in the outlying district that is the problem.

Girls from districts requiring girls' schools should be encouraged in every way to get their training.

Where female teachers have mothers or aunts who can go with them, houses near the school need to be provided.

Buses can be used to convey groups of teachers from their homes in towns to outlying villages, the girls living at home.

The fact must be faced that an Indian girl or young woman cannot be expected to go and board in a village as in European countries.

Hostels with a matron in charge might be opened in some large centres, to supply a district with teachers.

I feel I cannot too strongly plead for the education of the Indian girl in Fiji. I feel she has a great possible future and a tremendous need.

Every girls' school I know of has this year pleaded for staff. Let us hasten to fulfil their need, and then what of the 400 and more teachers required for the 11,431 Indian girls if we allow four teachers to 100 children.

The figures given were obtained from the Inspector of Indian Schools recently.

A. M. GRIFFEN,  
Dudley House School, Methodist Mission,  
Toorak, Suva.

## APPENDIX II.

## FIJI DIARY.

- 27th August.*—Arrived Suva 5 p.m. Dinner Government House.
- 28th August.*—Suva:—Interviews—Colonial Secretary; Secretary for Native Affairs; Secretary for Indian Affairs; Treasurer; Director of Medical Services; Acting Director of Public Works. Indian Schools—Arya Samaj Girls'; Government Boys' School.
- 29th August.*—Suva:—Inspected Office of Director of Education; read documents and records; visited Suva Museum; met Committee of Teachers' Association.
- 30th August.*—Suva:—Indian Schools—Government Girls' School; Methodist Mission Girls' School and Training School; Methodist Mission Mixed English Boys' School. Interviews—Director of Agriculture; Head Mistress, Girls' Grammar School; two Organising School Masters. Dinner—Archdeacon of Fiji.
- 1st September.*—From Suva to Victoria School, Nasinu—inspected (5 miles); on to Provincial Fijian School, Sawani (9 miles)—inspected. Back to Suva. Met Government Officers and European members of Legislative Council at party.
- 2nd September.*—From Suva to Ndavuilevu (12 miles). Inspected Methodist Mission Technical School (Fijian); Training Institution (Indian and Fijian); Practising School. On to Nausori (1 mile). Met Committee of Fijian Primary School (Yanggona Ceremony); on to Navuso (3 miles). Inspected Methodist Mission Farm School (Fijian); back to Suva.
- 3rd September.*—From Suva to Mbau (20 miles); Inspected Fijian Primary School; back to Suva—Inspected on road: Arya Samaj Boys' School; Local Committee School and Mission Girls' School—Indian.
- 4th September.*—From Suva to Nandarivatu (145 miles). Inspected on road Fijian Primary School, Tavua (Yanggona Ceremony); Indian Committee Primary School, Wairuku.
- 5th September.*—Nandarivatu:—Interview with Provincial Commissioner (Reay); Assistant Commissioner (Bernacchi); Head Master, Fijian School.
- 6th September (Sunday).*—From Nandarivatu to Mba (50 miles). Interview with Provincial Commissioner (Windrum); Manager, Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Mill (Allen); on to Lautoka (30 miles); on road inspected site and building of Government Indian School (Boys); interview with Provincial Commissioner (Caldwell); Manager, Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Mill (Robertson); inspected site and discussed plans of proposed Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Farm School (Fijian).
- 7th September.*—From Lautoka to Sambeto (5 miles). Inspected Indian Committee Boys' School; interview with Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Overseer (Knox), manager of above; inspected Fijian Primary School; on to Nandi (7 miles); inspected Government Boys' School; Committee Indian Boys' School; Provincial Fijian School (Namaka); return to Lautoka—on road interview with Colonial Sugar Refining Company's School Manager (Fenner); Principal, Natambua School.
- 8th September.*—Natambua:—Inspected Government Indian Secondary School; Government Training Institution (Indian and Fijian); Government Practising School (Indian). Lautoka: Inspected Roman Catholic Mixed English School (Boys); Indian School (Boys); European Girls' School; interview with Reverend Mother; on to Mba—further interviews with Provincial Commissioner and Colonial Sugar Refining Company's Manager; interview with Mr. H. Ragg, M.L.C.
- 9th September.*—Inspected Roman Catholic English School; Fijian Girls' School; visited buildings of Indian Committee Boys' School; Methodist Mission Fijian Girls' School (lady Superintendent not at home); from Mba to Emperor Gold Mine, Tavua (40 miles); discussed with Manager site and plans for European and Fijian Schools; on to Vunindawa (90 miles), Yanggona Ceremony in Fijian village; interview with Provincial Commissioner, Tailevu (Baker).
- 10th September.*—Vunindawa:—Inspected Fijian Primary School; back to Suva (55 miles); on road interview with General Manager, Colonial Sugar Refining Company, at Nausori. Suva:—Interview with Head Master, Levuka School (Usher); Head Master, Provincial School, Kandavu (Sharp).
- 11th September.*—Suva:—Inspected Roman Catholic Mixed English School (Boys); Roman Catholic European School (Boys); Roman Catholic Mixed English School (Girls); Roman Catholic European School (Girls); interview with Brother Alphonsus; inspected Ballantyne Memorial School (Girls, Fijian); Training School (Girls, Fijian).
- 12th September.*—Suva:—Lecture to Managers and Teachers; interviews with deputation of Indians from Suva; Roman Catholic Bishop of Fiji; left Suva in H.M.C.S. "Pioneer."
- 13th September (Sunday).*—Arrived Savu Savu in Vanua Levu; interviews with representatives of local half-caste community and Major Willoughby Tottenham in Savu Savu and Nakama; inspected buildings and records of Government School for half-castes and Committee School for half-castes; interviews with staffs of Schools; visited Roman Catholic Boarding Schools for Fijian boys and girls; left Savu Savu in H.M.C.S. "Pioneer."
- 14th September.*—Arrived Levuka; inspected Roman Catholic Boarding Schools (Girls and Boys) Thawathi; Roman Catholic Training School (Fijians); Methodist Mission Girls' School (Fijian); Government School for Half-castes; interview with Provincial Commissioner; Reverend Mother, Roman Catholic Convent; Representatives of Levuka Town; left Levuka in H.M.C.S. "Pioneer."

*15th September.*—Arrived Suva; interview with Dr. Lambert (Rockefeller Foundation); visited Central Medical School, Suva; interview with Mrs Hoodless (Correspondence Classes).

*16th September.*—Interview with representatives, Methodist Mission; inspected European Grammar School (Boys); European Grammar School (Girls); interview with Museum Committee; gave broadcast lecture.

*17th September.*—Interview with His Excellency the Governor, Colonial Secretary and Director of Education; Board of Education; Representatives of Seventh Day Adventists Mission; Indian deputation; dinner on H.M.S. "Wellington."

*18th September.*—Interview with Director of Education; Anglican Bishop in Polynesia Major Willoughby Tottenham, M.L.C., Mr. K. B. Singh, M.L.C.

*19th September.*—Interview with Mr. Kodanda Rao (Servants of India Society); Dr. Lambert; left Fiji in R.M.S. "Niagara."

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