

INDIANS IN MAURITIUS

BY

Kalla Ramaswami Pydayya.



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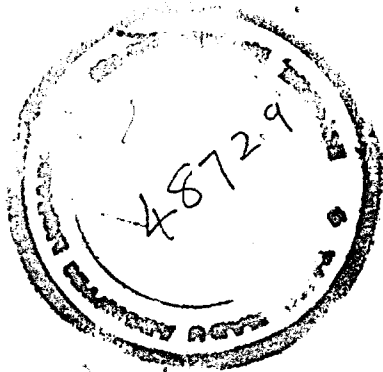
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PREFACE

In writing "A Short History of the Indians of Mauritius, with a special chapter on the Andhras", my main object has been to place before the Indian public and the Andhra public in particular, a faithful picture of the social, intellectual, political and economic condition of the thousands of Andhras domiciled in this distant colony of the British Empire. But what with their position here and there scattered in all the nine districts of the island and mixed up with the North-Indians, Tamils, Muslims, Creoles and Europeans, a booklet dealing with the Andhras would not be complete without reference to the various elements forming the Mauritius population and having interests closely linked up with those of the Andhras.

I have, in the first four chapters, dealt therefore with the discovery of Mauritius, its history, climatic condition, economic life and government. In Chapter VII and X, I have

sketched the great part played by North-Indians in the political field and the great progress achieved by them. It is in chapter VIII that I have dealt at length with the Andhras and their position here. Though much has already been written on the condition of the local Andhras in the columns of the valuable papers- "Trilinga" and "Andhra Patrika", yet I find that the Andhra public is not sufficiently acquainted with our life, conditions and difficulties in this Colony. In response to the appeal made through the medium of these papers for Andhra religious missionaries to Mauritius, I have received very many letters from prominent Andhras asking for details concerning this Colony. To avoid writing to them individually and yet to meet their demand, I decided to publish the present book.

The task of preparing a book on the Andhras is not an easy matter and if there had been an abler hand to undertake it, I should have been very glad indeed. Now, however, I have myself had to do it. I would point out that I am not a man of letters, but only a

layman who can advance no claim to higher education. Such as it is, I am sending out this booklet into the world with the earnest hope that Andhra will no longer be indifferent to her nationals abroad, but will feel keenly interested in their progress and welfare.

In Mauritius, the Andhras and other Indians largely follow the modes and manners of the country of their adoption. But in matters of religion, they are entirely Indian. Rabindranath Tagore was perfectly right, when speaking to Indians in Canada he said "you must remember you are guests in a new country and you have to observe the first law of hospitality which is to accommodate yourselves as far as possible and pay every consideration to the modes and manners of this new country where your own children are being born and where you yourselves have elected to live. This is a necessity in every country where people emigrate if goodwill and friendly feelings are to be preserved. This does not mean that you are to alter *all your good customs and manners of living*, but rather that you are to seek at every point to find a com-

mon meeting place where your own life and the life of Canada coincide. To put what I wish to say in two words, you should do your very best to prove yourselves "good Canadians".

Similarly the Rt. Hon'ble Sastri in a message to the Indians of Kenya said as follows :—"Be Indian in your outlook on life, be Indian as to the value of individual character, be Indian in your religious tendencies and in your spiritual aims. But in material circumstances, in outward ways, in adaptiveness to the new conditions there is no need at all why you should refuse to be moulded by your environments".

Our Andhra countrymen should for no reason be indifferent to their nationals abroad. And though, in material circumstances and in outward ways, we are leading a Mauritian life, yet our love for India is unbounded and our religion is the religion of the Vedas. Mr. M. K. Acharya in his "Open Letter" to Mahatma Gandhi published in *Federated India* of 25th February 1931 says...."I crave that hereafter you may pay more whole-hearted

attention to the preservation of our priceless spiritual heritage which, I presume, you value more than any soulless Government etc". We the Andhras of Mauritius may send forth a similar prayer to our Andhra countrymen in India and considering them as the custodians of our culture, we are of opinion that it is their bounden duty to see that it is preserved not in India alone, but wherever the Andhras may be. On going through the chapter on Andhras the reader will find that in Mauritius, our Andhra culture is un-stable and I emphatically declare that it is high time for all of us to co-operate and to see that it is preserved.

I desire to point out that had not Mr. Vavilla Venkatesvara Sastrulu, the esteemed and distinguished Editor of "Federated India", helped me by kindly agreeing to print the book, it would not have come to light so early. I would therefore pay my homage to him and also express my deep gratitude for his timely and invaluable help.

I am also indebted to Messrs Seetharamuloo Chinnaya, the Andhra Station Master and Rajgiri Narasimha Das who have largely

assisted me in reading and correcting the manuscript. In conclusion, I crave the indulgence of the readers for the numerous faults of omission and commission in the book and should a second edition be called forth, I shall endeavour to improve the work by adding photographs of leading Indians and Andhras in particular and of interesting places in the island.

ROSE BELLE,
MAURITIUS
24th August 32. } Kalla Ramaswami Pydayya.

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INDIANS IN MAURITIUS

CHAPTER I.

The Discovery of Mauritius and its early History.

Mauritius, now a British Colony, was first discovered about the year 1507 by a Portuguese navigator, by name Don Pedro Mascaregnas who gave it the name of "Cerney". His countrymen did not settle in the island but used it as only a half-way house. Finally they abandoned it in 1582. No European visited the place again till 1598 when a Dutch admiral, named Van Nek, took possession of it and gave it the name of Mauritius. The Dutch remained in the island till 1710 and then abandoned it. Many important public buildings like forts, barracks, ports, etc. were erected by them and slave-labourers from Madagascar were also introduced. In 1677, sugar-cane was for the first time planted in the Colony and the first sugar-factory was started by Wilhans Brothers.

Under the Dutch, the land was in a prosperous condition, but the treatment of slaves was very bad. At last, matters became so intolerable that the slaves set fire, on one occasion, to the many public buildings which were then constructed of wood. Violent hurricanes and floods also visited the island far too often and destroyed the plantations. In sheer despair, the Dutch abandoned the island finally in 1710.

Five years later, in 1715, the French took possession of it, giving it the name of "Ile de France". They introduced labourers from Bourbon, one of their colonies near Mauritius. In 1735, the government of the island was entrusted to a famous admiral, named Mahe' de Labourdonnais. This man has a history behind him and he played a very important part in the history of India. By 1746, the trade between France and India had proved so profitable to the former as to excite the envy of the British. A war between Britain and France presently followed and the French Government ordered Mahe' de Labourdonnais, Governor of Mauritius, to proceed immediately to India with all available troops to help Dupleix the French

Governor of Pondicherry. The British, on the other hand, sent a well equipped fleet to capture Pondicherry, but failed to do so, through the incapacity of their commander. Labourdonnais, however, inflicted a severe defeat on the British and finally took possession of Madras in 1746. In the treaty of capitulation that followed, he promised to return Madras to the British in consideration of a large ransom. But when the treaty was submitted to Dupleix as Governor-General for his signature, he denounced Labourdonnais as a traitor and refused to sign it. The French admiral was obliged to return to Mauritius and was subsequently recalled by the French Government and imprisoned for three years. After his release he lived only for three years.

Under his administration, Mauritius was improved on a large scale. The area under sugar-cane was considerably extended and the manufacture of cotton undertaken. Many buildings were erected in his time including sugar factories and a hospital, and commerce was in a flourishing condition. He was Governor of Mauritius for eleven years and to perpetuate

his memory for the great improvements effected by him in the Colony, a statue has been erected in front of the harbour of Port Louis. The harbour of Mahebourg upon which the ancient capital of the island was situated has up to now retained the name of Labourdonnais. French occupation continued up to 1810 when the British won the island after a severe fight. They changed the name from "Île de France" to Mauritius which was the name given by the Dutch. It is noteworthy to remember at this juncture that in the wars of 1810 the British had to suffer many reverses at the outset. And it was only when they brought sepoys from India that the gallant French soldiers who were strongly backed by the inhabitants of the island in their defence could be defeated. Since that year, Mauritius has remained a British colony.

In 1919, some European descendants set afoot a movement called the "Retrocession Movement" for the retransfer of the island to France. They carried on an extensive propaganda in Mauritius as well as in Britain and France but did not succeed. The Indians as a body and many Europeans opposed the transfer and

in fact, M. Adolpha Dullos C. M. G., K. C., a former member for Flecq Division wrote a book entitled "L'Evolution Mauritius" in which he opposed the transfer. In December 1920 the Legislative Council was dissolved and fresh elections took place. The main ticket on which the election campaign was conducted on both the sides was, so to say, retrocession. Those who were in favour of it carried on a vigorous propaganda but met with defeat. All the Indians and the bulk of the non-Indians were opposed to them. The leadership of the Indians was assumed by an young and notable writer by name Fakeer who was author of several books and editor of a daily news paper called the "Mauritius Indian Times". The retrocession move was only a ripple on the placid waters of Mauritian life. The island has made much progress under the British and no animosity now exists between the different communities inhabiting the island.

CHAPTER II.

Its Situation, Extent, Surface, etc.

Mauritius is situated in the Indian ocean just to the east of Africa. Travelling from Colombo direct to Mauritius, the Colony can be reached in ten days. British India steamers however sometimes arrive *via* Durban and of course take a longer time. The nearest islands to Mauritius are Madagascar, Bourbon and Seychelles. The distance from India is about 2,000 miles. The map of Mauritius resembles somewhat that of England. The total area of the island is about 716 square miles or about 460,000 acres. The greatest length is $38\frac{1}{2}$ miles and the greatest breadth $28\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The sea coast measures 135 miles.

Along the coast, it is not all rocky. There are flat stretches of land on which are planted with filas-trees and cocoanut trees. They are also sometimes used for pasturing cattle. In the island there are several ports and anchorages of minor importance, but the two principal

ones are Port Louis and Mahebourg. It is only at the former that big steamers from foreign countries anchor. The harbour there is deep, large and very safe; and on it is situated Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius. Formerly, the capital was at Mahebourg, a town situated in the south-east of the island, but Labourdonnais changed it to Port Louis. And yet, Mahebourg is the first and finest fishing port of the island. The coast scenery is very beautiful and the sand very fine. All round the island, there are numerous smaller islands the chief of which is "Fle de la Pass" situated in the harbour of Mahebourg. It was here that the great naval battle was fought in 1810 between the British and the French fleets which resulted subsequently in the British conquest of the island. To the north of Mauritius, about 30 miles from Port Louis, is an island called the "Flat Island" which is now used as a quarantine station.

There are three ranges of mountains in Mauritius with lofty peaks. The first is in the district of Moka, the second in the district of Black River and the third in the district of

Grand Port. The highest peak is called "Parasol" and its height is about 3000 feet. The range of mountains along the east coast is not very rocky. And its foot, on its valleys and farther towards the top, Indians grow vegetables throughout the year. A large part of the mountains is covered with dense forests in which abound deer and monkeys. Throughout the year, the island is well-watered, there being in all no less than 60 rivers and streams flowing in all directions. The course of the rivers is through deep ravines sometimes 150 feet below the surface, and their beds are covered with boulders and stones. The longest river is 34 kilometres and the broadest only 100 feet. None of them is navigable. They run very rapidly and any quantity of rain disappears into the sea in no time. When rains are heavy, water collects in damp places and causes great damage to plantations. But such occasions are rare. The sorts of fish found in Mauritius rivers are eels, shremps and golden fish. The depth of the rivers makes it sometimes difficult to get water from them for irrigation. The Government has

constructed large water-works (Basins) three or four miles in circumference which supply pure and filtered water to many towns and villages and irrigation water to many sugar-cane fields. Even for public fountains and private taps, there is no dearth of water here. For every locality of 50 souls in fact, there is a public fountain.

A good part of the land surface of Mauritius consists of valleys and plains. The valleys are mostly covered with forests which supply a large quantity of timber. The plains provide pastures for cattle while the greater part is planted with either sugar-cane or vegetables. There are here two very large lakes called "Mare aux Vacoas" and "Grand Basin". The latter is situated in the centre of the Island on an elevated place, surrounded by mountains all covered with forest trees and having no human habitation in its vicinity. Its depth is unknown. For Hindus especially for north Indians here known as "Calcuteeas" the Grand Basin is a place of pilgrimage. On Sivaratri day, they come here by the thousands from different parts of the island to bathe and

to take away quantities of water in their earthen vessels to be offered the next day to God Siva. Indians call it "Pari Talow".

The central part of the island is situated at a height of about 1800 feet above the sea. The climate there is excellent and many of the rich folk reside there. From the centre, the land on every side slopes towards the sea and even under the heaviest of rains there is no danger of the land remaining under water for more than a few hours. The other lake "Mare aux Vacoas" is very large, about 3 miles in circumference. Very important water works have been erected on it and it supplies about one million gallons of pure water every day for domestic purposes to the inhabitants of Plaines Wilhems and Port Louis. The scenery at "Mare aux Vacoas" is extraordinarily beautiful and is visited by lots of people.

CHAPTER III.

Climate, Production and Commerce.

Mauritius has an excellent climate which attracts annually tourists from America, Africa, France, Madagascar and Bourbon. Those who come from India will find the climate of the island very agreeable; but Mauritians cannot remain in India without feeling the effect of heat. Immigrants from India who have lived in Mauritius, for a long time have not felt like remaining in India on their repatriation but have longed to come back to this island. And we find that when Indo-Mauritians return from short visits to India, their complexion is quite changed and they speak in no flattering terms about the Indian climate.

The hot parts of the island are the low plains round the coast while the centre region is generally cool all through the year. Winter begins here from April and lasts till July and at this time, the rich generally go to the sea-shore.

Summer which is a very fine season begins in the month of September and ends in April. From January to April, hurricanes are of frequent occurrence. In April 1892 a terrible cyclone devastated the island, causing damage to life and property in the case of thousands. In 1931 also, from March 5th to 8th another cyclone visited the island, which though 4 points less than its predecessors of 1892, caused much more damage and suffering. At the beginning of 1930, a great inundation took place which affected many houses and bridges. The town of Port Louis was under water for a few days and immense loss was inflicted by the unusual calamity. There was no wind but only rain which fell continuously for five days.

The soil of the island is very fertile. Sugar-cane grows all over the island and in addition to it, vanilla, tobacco, tea, aloe and cotton are grown. The aloe tree grows abundantly and its fibre is largely manufactured and exported. Many fruits have been introduced into the island from many parts of the world and are grown abundantly here. The chief

of them are mango, letchi, peach, guava, pine-apple, date, jack, loquat, plum, sugar-apples, Indian date, oranges, mandarines, lemon, jamelon, longane, custard apple etc. The climate is good for grapes also but wine is not made. There are however some distilleries for rum which is the only drink made on the island. It is prepared either from the fermented syrup of the sugar-cane or from the pine-apple. All over the island, it is sold at Rs. 3/ per litre.

Out of the total area of the island which is 460,000 acres about 203,198 acres are under cultivation. Forest and crown lands occupy 105,000 acres.

The following table will show the area under different crops in the island,

Sugar cane	...	170,000 acres.
Aloe-fibre	...	20,000
Indigo and beans	...	3,708
Maize	...	1,000
Rice	...	1,000
Ground-nut		1,000
Tobacco	...	1,000
Bananas	...	1,500

Mamoc	...	1,400
Sweet potatoes	...	500
Potatoes		200
Vanilla	...	250
Tea		200

A large variety of vegetables including tomatoes, cabbages, pumpkins, lettuce, beans, cauliflowers, melons etc are also cultivated on an extensive area of about 4,000 acres.

Sugar manufacture is the most important industry in the island and is carried on in all districts except Port Louis. The yearly yield varies from 200,000 to 250,000 tons. Till 1919, the industry was normally happy; but 1920 saw a boom. Never in the history of Mauritius was sugar sold at such high prices; people called it the golden year and many Indians constructed large houses then out of their enormous profits. But in 1921 began the reaction. Prices began to fall till to-day they are even lower than the pre-war level. Fortunately, from March 1931 commodity prices also began to fall and the distress of the sugar-cane cultivators has thus been mitigated to a certain extent. Nevertheless their lot is unhappy. In 1926 and 1927,

they were granted millions of rupees as loans by the government. But last year, a terrible cyclone visited the island and destroyed the sugar cane crops, private houses, government buildings etc., on a large scale. Distress was thereby rendered acute and representations were accordingly made to the Imperial Government for assistance. And fortunately, it authorised the grant of £ 750,000 to help the industry.

To relieve economic distress, the government of Mauritius has been granting subsidies to secondary industries such as rice-cultivation, pineapples, maize etc. For the last two years or more, cigarettes and matches are also being locally manufactured, the government encouraging the industry by enhancing the import duty on tobacco and imported matches. Domestic animals such as sheep, goats, cattle and poultry are everywhere reared especially by Indians. Horses, mules and ponies are imported from Australia. Deer, hare and wild bears are found in large numbers in forests and deer-hunting is allowed by the government though only for three months in the year from the first of June to the end of August. There are many

Indians who are great sportsmen. The whites and Indians jointly organise hunting parties, while sometimes Indians alone do it. Many Indians are proprietors of thousands of acres of hunting land. The flesh of deer, costs from 25 cents to 40 per pound and he-goats cost from 5 to 15 rupees each. A hen costs anything from 75 cents to 1.50 cents and eggs 4 to 8 cents each. Prices in Port Louis are somewhat high. Rats and mongoose abound everywhere the latter especially doing much havoc to the poultry. The government pays 25 cents for the destruction of each mongoose whose tail should be handed over to the police. Happily there are no ferocious animals or poisonous snakes in the island.

Mauritius has trade relations with all parts of the world, but chiefly with India. India supplies the island with rice, wheat, briews tea, grams, cotton-goods, hardware etc. Ammunition, cutlery, arms, chemicals etc., come from Britain, America, France, Germany etc. During the last four years, motor buses, motor cars and motor-lorries are coming in large quantities from America, Britain and France. The

following table shows the countries of origin for the bulk of the Mauritian imports.

	1931	1930
The United Kingdom	Rs. 7,245,989	Rs. 10,188,161
India	„ 11,531,368	„ 13,911,526
France	„ 1,718,550	„ 2,454,653
U. S. A.	„ 1,759,795	„ 1,806,047
South Africa	„ 1,014,766	„ 1,361,929
Madagascar	„ 576,201	„ 630,577
All other countries	„ 7,611,768	„ 8,302,414
	Rs. 31,488,437	Rs. 38,655,307

The exports from Mauritius largely consist of sugar, aloe-fibre, rums, coconut-oil. etc. Sugar is almost exclusively exported to Britain, India and Seychelles. It is to be remarked here that for the last few years, India has not been importing as much sugar from us as before, but is preferring the article from Cuba and Java. While these countries do not purchase anything from India, Mauritius imports a vast quantity of articles from her; and it is but right that she should, in return, take her sugar from our island.

Apart from trade relations between Mauritius and the other parts of the world,

there are many passengers regularly travelling by steamers between the island on the one hand and on the other England, France, Madagascar, Africa and India. Steamers from France call at Marseilles, Suez, Aden, Zanzibar, Madagascar and Bourbon. Steamers from England call at the principal ports of South Africa, while British Indian steamers call at the chief ports of India and at Colombo. At Colombo also, steamers from the United Kingdom sometimes tranship goods to Mauritius. Sailing vessels of varying tonnage frequently arrive from Australia, U.S.A., South Africa, China, in short, from all important countries of the world. Mauritius is a very good landing station for vessels and occupies a very strategic position. During the Great War, the Germans attempted to attack the colony but were prevented by British men of war on the high seas. Mauritius has no steamers of her own to export her goods in; but those that carry goods to her, also carry on their return the exports of the island to their respective countries. There are, however, small steamers used as pilots for

the purpose of steering the larger ships; and coasters and fishing boats abound.

Four banks exist in the island all situated in the town of Port Louis, viz., The Mercantile Bank of India, Limited, the Mauritius Commercial Bank, the National Bank of South Africa Ltd., and the African Trust and Banking Company. In addition there is the great Savings Bank with nine branches in the nine district courts of the island. Again, there are 36 co-operative credit societies or agricultural banks exclusively managed by small Indian planters under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. The Government Savings Bank is the only institution which accepts deposits and pays interest at 3 per cent per annum. Irrespective of colour or race, persons with money give loans freely on mortgage at 7 to 12 per cent per annum.

CHAPTER IV.

The Government of Mauritius.

The island of Mauritius is divided into nine districts viz., Port Louis, River du Ramport, Pamplémousses, Flacq, Grand Port, Savanne, Black River, Plains Wilherms and Moka. Its administration is in the hands of a Governor appointed by the Colonial Office for five years. and he is assisted by a Legislative Council and an Executive Council, over both of which he presides. The former consists of 28 members, 10 being elected, 12 being officials who are the heads of departments and 6 being nominated members who represent commerce, agriculture and communal interests. The Governor's title is "Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Mauritius and its Dependencies" the dependencies being Rodrigues with a population 4829, Diogo Garcia with 517 people, Agalega with 415 people, Peros Bamhoer with 309 people, Solomon Islands, etc. The Governor is responsible to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in Britain, while next to him in the

island is the Colonial Secretary who acts, in the absence the Governor, as "the Officer administering the Government of Mauritius." The Civil Service of Mauritius of which the Governor is the head, is divided into several departments, Colonial Secretariat, Government Treasury, Public Works Department, Custom House, Post and Telegraph Department, Poor Law and Immigration, Registry and Transcription, Railways, Law, Agriculture, Police, Inland Revenue, Medical and Health, and the Education Departments. All these departments have their head offices at Port Louis.

The Colonial Secretariat is the "Government House" and is situated opposite the harbour of Port Louis. In the House also sit the Legislative and the Executive Councils. The system of government is highly centralised and every departmental detail passes through the Colonial Secretariat which also issues a weekly Government Gazette and prepares the civil list. Close to the Government House are situated the Government Treasury, the Government Savings Bank, and the Audit

Department. The Treasury, besides receiving Government monies and effecting payments to all departments also issues revenue and postage stamps. The Savings Bank which receives monies from the public has branches all over the island. The maximum that can be deposited by a person there is Rs. 4,000 and the rate of interest allowed is 3 per cent. In the prosperous days of 1920-21, the total amount standing to the credit of the Indians in the Bank was about Rs 2,200,000. Railways were introduced into Mauritius for the first time in 1864 and are very cheap and safe. The entire island can be traversed round in just a single day. There are two main lines only, the Midland line and the North line. The former is about 86 miles from Port Louis to Mahebourg and runs through the centre of the Island. The North line is 31 miles from Port Louis to Grand River, south east. There are besides four branch lines between 11 and 27 miles in length, all connected with the two main ones. Many Indians are working as station masters, assistant station masters and clerks. No distinctions are made in accomodation. In

1924 the total revenue of this department was about Rs. 5,600,000 and the normal expenditure about Rs. 6,900,200. Since 1927, railways have been running at an enormous loss on account of bus competition. In 1930-31, the revenue was Rs. 1,996,500 and expenditure Rs. 2,511,559. The loss was thus enormous. At the entrance to the Custom House in Port Louis is the Post Office which was itself established on 1810 while the district offices were established in 1847. By 1858 their number was only 16, while to-day it is no less than 600. Post and telegraph offices are both generally located at the railway stations. The telegraph and telephone system of the island is, for its size, one of the busiest in the world. Presiding over the Postal Department is the Colonial Post Master with a large staff consisting, among others, of many Indians, some working in responsible positions. Letters and newspapers from foreign countries are delivered on the same day even in the remotest corners of the island.

The Inspector-General of Police is the head not only of the Police Department, but

also of prisons and of the Reformatory. The two principal prisons of the island are at Port Louis and Beau Bassin. Under-age prisoners are given industrial and moral education and taught kitchen-gardening, carpentry, etc. No distinctions are observed in the treatment of prisoners. Every district is in charge of an Inspector of Police, aided by a Sub-Inspector. Almost every town or village has also a police station in charge of a Sergeant. At present only the Inspector-General and two or three Inspectors are Europeans, the rest of the staff being Creoles and Indians. The relations between the public and the police are very friendly. To-day there are two Inspectors and some sub-Inspectors who are Indians; but there are many Indian sergeants, corporals and constables. The starting salary of a constable is Rs. 65/-per mensem with uniform, while an Inspector get Rs. 500/-.

The Public Works Department, under the Director of Public Works and Surveys, looks after bridges, irrigation works, water-works, etc. The towns and villages of the colony are all paved with good roads. For the last three

years, the tarring of roads is also going on. Communications are indeed so good that bus competition with railways has become serious of late. The Government has also provided all towns and villages with water-taps and public fountains.

The Education Department has two branches, the Royal College and the Schools Department. Till 1923 both these departments were under the control of the Director of Public Instruction. But that post was then abolished. The Royal College is now managed by a Rector, assisted by a Royal College Committee. It is situated at Curepipe in the centre of the island and is the only institution where higher education is given up to the stage of the Senior Cambridge Examination. During the last five years the demands for admission into it have been so great that a number of applications had to be rejected. Through the intervention of the Hon'ble Dr. Louissant, Government have now opened a branch of the College in the town of Port Louis. Admission to the College is open for all, irrespective of their nationality and religion. Every year, two of the best boys

of the College are awarded scholarships entitling the holder to an annual allowance for four years of £250/- with a further allowance of £75/- each way to England and back. These coveted prizes have so far been won only by two Indians, namely, Hassan Joomaye, a Mussalman and Rampershad Neerajan, a Hindu. The former won the scholarship in 1923 and returned from England as a doctor and the latter got it in 1926 and has come out as a barrister of the Middle Temple. But several Indians who have passed through the College have gone to England and France at their own expense and returned as barristers, dentists, doctors, etc. The College has about 12 schools affiliated to it and the languages taught in it are English and French with Latin and Greek as special subjects.

The Schools Department is managed by a Superintendent of Schools who is assisted by a Schools Committee. There are two Indians on that committee, Hon'ble Mamode Danoji Atchia and Mr. Biesan Gajadhar. There are in all 140 schools consisting of 50 Government schools and 90 aided schools in which

education is given free to all irrespective of creed or nationality. Out of the 90 aided schools, 9 are Indian in which are taught Hindi, Tamil, Urdu, English and French. The largest Indian school aided by the Government is the "Aryan Vedic School" conducted by the Arya Samaj and attended by hundreds of pupils of all creeds and races including Creoles and White pupils. Out of the 31,000 pupils in the island, no less than 18000 are Indians. There are also many Indian head teachers, assistant head teachers and teachers. There is one Indian Inspector of Schools. The teachers' examination is held every year at Port Louis and candidates appear for it from all parts of the island. There are three grades of examinations, the Monitors', the 2nd Class Teachers' and the 3rd Class Teachers'. The bulk of the candidates are Indians. *This is the only department in which teachers and pupils who are Indians are in the largest number.* No distinction whatever is made in these schools; Creoles, Whites and Indians all sit side by side and learn. All the towns and villages of the island have these schools. Government expenditure on

education comes to 15.55 to 25.92 per pupil per year. In the primary and aided schools, education is given until the VII standard only which means a study of 6 or 7 years. Bursary classes are also established after the VII standard examination, entitling the successful candidates to scholarships for prosecution of higher studies at the Royal College free of cost. Unsuccessful candidates also study at the Royal College but they pay their fees and travelling expenses.

The Law Department is divided into two branches, *viz.*, the "Procurer-General's" Department and the Supreme Court of Mauritius. The former is the legal adviser to the Crown and is the head of 10 Magistrates who administer justice in the nine districts of the island. He also supervises all the ministerial officers. The Supreme Court which is the final court has a Chief Judge, two Puisne Judges, a Master and a Registrar. It decides criminal cases and civil actions involving more than Rs. 1000/—. It also decides civil and criminal appeals from the districts. It employs three interpreters who are Indians

while every district court has also one Indian interpreter to translate Indian languages into English or French. No distinctions are observed in the administration of justice. Cases of murder, man-slaughter, rape, arson, homicide, etc., are tried at the special sessions held at the Supreme Court with the help of nine jurymen.

The Emigration and Poor Law Departments were formerly separate but are now amalgamated into one. It is managed by an officer called the Protector of Immigrants and Poor Law Commissioner. In his former capacity he has not much to do, since the radical change made in the Labour Law in 1923 at the instance of the Indian Government; service under contract and all penal clauses in regard to immigrants have been abolished and the officer now looks only after repatriation. As the Poor Law Commissioner, he directs and controls the administration of relief to the poor and establishes alms-houses, asylums, work-houses and infirmaries irrespective of race or nationality. All paupers who, through advanced age or infirmity of mind or body, are

unable to work for their livelihood and have no relatives to support them, are given relief by Government. The Commissioner also gives work to poor boys who have no parents. In the districts, the medical officers are empowered to distribute relief to paupers in their areas.

Medicine and Health are both under the control of a single Director. The Medical Department looks after hospitals, dispensaries, asylums etc. While the Health department looks after sanitation in the island, including anti-malarial work, plague-prevention, inspection of buildings, etc. To fight malaria, the Government distributes quinine free to all. There are in all 10 large hospitals in the island in charge of District Medical officers and about 35 dispensaries. In these institutions treatment is free to the poor while those who can afford are required to pay something per day if admitted as in-patients. Special treatment is afforded in hook-worm cases which are widely prevalent among Indians living on estates. The pit-latrines system is enforced all over and every house is bound to have such a latrine about 8 feet deep. In damp places pale-latrine

exist and they are cleaned by a special set of men. Every house owner is obliged to construct a latrine in his premises. The total expenditure per annum on this department is about Rs. 2,000,000.

The Department of Agriculture under a Director looks after experimental investigations in regard to the principal crop, sugar-cane, and also to subsidiary industries, agricultural education, cattle-breeding etc. It also trains agricultural apprentices and gives lectures on agricultural subjects to elementary school teachers. In 1923, an agricultural college was opened at a place called "Rduit" for teaching Chemistry, Physics, Botany, and Sugar Technology, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Science, Surveying and Book-keeping. To the best students of the colleges, scholarships and medals and prizes are also distributed annually. And a Laureate-ship of two years duration is also offered for competition which enables the holder to study some branch of Agricultural Technology in foreign countries for a period of two years. The Department maintains a stock farm containing purebred animals for improving the

local strains. For this purpose, bullocks, cows, goats and sheep have been imported from India, principally from Mysore and Sindh. There is also a dairy supplying pure milk to public institutions. A beetle known as the *Phytalus smithi* is doing immense harm to the sugar-crops by eating into their roots and the Government is fighting against its ravages very determinedly.

Co-operation is in charge of the Directors of Agriculture. There are about 36 agricultural societies in the island and they are entirely in Indian hands. The Inspector of Co-operative Credit Societies is an Indian, Mr. Mohabier Barranchowbay. Before his appointment, there were many frauds; but since then things have largely improved. Co-operative Credit societies were started hereby. Mr. Wilberforce was sent by the Government of India in 1913; and Mr. Jaigopal who also came from India was appointed Registrar of Co-operative Societies on account of his wide experience of co-operation. He left Mauritius in 1915 and since then the Director of Agriculture is also the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

The Registrar-General looks after the registration and transcription of all deeds and contracts made either privately or in the presence of notaries, for which service he charges a small amount which depends on the nature of the deed registered. His department also looks after the levy of succession dues which are collected when declarations of succession are made. It also looks after proportional dues which are paid on the value of the property left by the deceased; and lastly it supervises the civil status officers who record births, deaths and marriages.

The Colony has a huge observatory known as the "Royal Alfred Observatory" for the purpose of observing meteorological, magnetical and seismological phenomena. It is fitted with wireless apparatus and can communicate with steamers 600 miles away in the sea. Besides, it forewarns the public of events in Bourbon Seychelles and Madagascar and in particular is very useful during the hurricane season when it issues prompt storm telegrams. In the village of Rose Belle there is also a huge wireless station which takes foreign news when anything happens to Reuter's communications.

The Harbour and Customs Department is managed by an officer called the Harbour Master and Collector of Customs. The warehouse is a very fine and huge building. Recently a deep-water quay and a gangway were constructed at enormous cost in the face of strong public opinion. Only now does the Government repent of the huge waste of money that the project involved. The Harbour of Port Louis is about a mile in length from the Custom House and it is well guarded on three sides by strong forts. Being deep, wide and safe, it is the only port where vessels from different parts of the world can safely anchor. British Indian steamers are irregular; but those from Durban, France and England come every fortnight and even every week.

CHAPTER V.

Towns and Villages.

Port Louis, the capital of the island, is situated in the north-west and is the seat of the Government. It was founded by Mahede Labourdonnais in 1736 and is the best built and most populous town on the island with a population of 50,307 persons. On one side, the town faces the sea while on the others, it is surrounded by mountains. It is well-guarded by strong fortifications. The Government House and other important public buildings and trading houses are all here and in appearance the town is European. Rich persons do not reside here, but in the higher parts of the island which are cooler, like Curepipe, Beau Bassin, Bise Bill, Moka and Vacoas. For business, they come to Port Louis every morning and go back in the evening. The town is the commercial centre of the island. Just within two hours it can be reached from the remotest parts of the island either by train or by bus. Consequently trains and buses are always plying to and from

Port Louis. The town contains Indians in very large numbers. There is a large race course which attracts thousands of persons among whom Indians predominate. The races are held between May and September every year. In 1929, a special racing season was held in honour of the Duke and Duchess of York who visited the island and stayed for three days. The Hon'ble Rajkoomar Gajadhar has three or four race horses which he sends even to Calcutta where they have often won prizes. Mr. Ramdoor Singh and other Indians have also a number of race horses. The largest market of the island is also in Port Louis where all kinds of fruits and vegetables are available. The Public Library here is open every day between 8 A. M. and 4 P. M. and admission is free to all. Other important buildings are the Municipal Buildings, the Jumma Masjid. The Hindu Maha Sabha Hall, Vishnu Vandi, Dayanand Dharamsala, Kylasam Temple, the Chinese pagoda and St. James Cathedral.

Next to Port Louis in importance is Curepipe, a town situated in the district of

Plains Wilhelms in the centre of Mauritius at a height of 1800 feet above the sea-level and sloping on all sides towards the sea. It is a health resort and a place of residence for rich men. Among its fine buildings in modern style are the Royal College, the Carnegie Library, the Town Hall, the Market, etc. The town may be reached from Port Louis in half an hour by train or by bus. Among villages in this district is Vacoas where till 1914 there was a sepoy regiment which was disbanded that year. Here is also located an Arya School and a large number of Aryas live in this place. The race course of Vacoas is well known.

In the district of Grand Port is found the village of Mahebourg situated on the harbour of the same name. During the time of the French rule, this was the capital of the island and it was here that the decisive naval battle took place between the French and the British which gave the island to the latter in 1810. The village is within two hours run from Port Louis by train or bus; but cars take only an hour, the distance being but 30 miles. Regatta performances are organised here with great

splendour and thousands of Indians take part in them. For some time they were abandoned ; but when Mr. Dhanpath Lallah, a Hindu Attorney-at-Law, was elected as representative of the district for the period 1925-30, he revived them and they now take place in all vigour. All officials, Indians, Whites and Chinese take part in these rejoicings. The large market of the place is held on two days of the week, Mondays and Fridays ; and it is entirely in Indian hands. Rose Belle is noted as being mainly inhabited by Indians. There are four big temples in it. At Beau Vallon Rooscoot there is an Andhra Temple. L' Escaller contains a Tamilian Dharmasala erected by Mr. Coomaraswamy Marudanayagam who also donated Rs. 100,000 in 1921 for the erection of a Tamil Dharmasala at Port Louis.

In the district of PampleMousses, the principal village is Pample Mousses itself. It was for a long time the abode of many rich people, but is now deserted on account of malarial fever. During the summer, its heat is unbearable. It contains many important places visited by tourists such as the Botanical Gardens,

the Royal Alfred Observatory and a very old Roman Catholic Church. The Botanical Gardens were founded by Labourdonnais about 1740. They cover about 90 acres and contain all sorts of plants, flowers, ferns and forest trees from all parts of the world. The gardens have several very fine lakes and are indeed the third largest garden in the world. It is said that an enclosure bought by Mr. Poivre from the East India Company in 1768 is still to be found in the garden. Picnic parties are frequently arranged there. The Royal Alfred Observatory had its foundation stone laid by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit in 1870.

In the district of Flacq the principal village is Grand River South-East, which is a place of historical importance. It was here that the Portuguese resided during their occupation and even now, ruins of the buildings and fortifications of their period are to be seen. The Railway terminus of the North-East line is in this District. Very many Andhras live here.

In the district of Savanne, one important village is Bay du Cap which is a very

interesting place. The coast line here is a high mountain and the public road which passes all round the sea coast ends on both the sides of that mountain. Some ten years ago, the Government undertook the work of boring a tunnel through the mountain and opening a passage. And now cars and motor buses can easily pass through it from one end of the public road to the other.

In the district of the Black River, Tamarin is famous for having a deep water-fall, quite unique in a way. At Case Nayale there are colors of earth. And Petite Reviere contains a large water-work for storing irrigation water.

In the Moka district, "Reduit" is noteworthy as containing the residence of the Governor and it is very cool. Saint Pierre has the first and the largest Andhra temple built entirely of concrete.

CHAPTER VI.

Population - Non-Indians.

On landing at Mauritius, a stranger cannot fail to be struck with the variety of human types he meets with. There are the British, the French, Arabs, Indians, Chinese, Natives of Madagascar, African Blacks and Creoles to be seen. And all these work together harmoniously whether in Government service, in commerce or on sugar-estates.

For the size of the island which is only 716 sq. miles the population is very thick. According to the census of 1921 the figure was 375,000, out of which 265,000 were Indians. There has been an increase since then in the population, the Government estimate in 1930 being 401,519, out of which number, 280,998 were Indians. The number of Indians being large, a special chapter will be devoted to them later.

Of the 124,551 non-Indians, the number of the French and the English is very small; the

Chinese are about 6,820 persons and the rest are Creoles mostly formed by the legitimate or illegitimate unions of two or more races on the island. Continual mingling of races has gone so far indeed that it is difficult at times to distinguish a pure white from a colored Creole. It is noteworthy that the offspring of Europeans and Indians are far more intelligent than the off-spring of Europeans and Creoles. Many of the political leaders of the colored classes come from the former category. Europeans and their descendants are mostly rich planters, merchants, brokers, lawyers, government officials, etc. Some Creoles are high up in Government service, but the bulk of them are working as masons, carpenters, cabinet-makers, etc.

Till 1920, there were five or six workshops in the Colony making the machinery needed for sugar manufacture and providing work for a large number of Creoles. But since then, mill-owners have begun to import their plant from Britain, the import duties on such goods being also low. And the result is that large numbers of Creoles have been thrown out of their work and are now working as ordinary labourers and competing with Indians seriously.

The Chinese are mostly traders who do retail business in almost all the villages and towns of Mauritius. They purchase goods in bulk from the Parsee or Muslim merchants of Port Louis and transport them to their places of business by train or bus. They deal in rice, sugar, ghee, etc, in fact, in all the articles of daily consumption. They have become very rich and have many pagodas, private clubs and associations in Port Louis. They are also very honest and enterprising and have large dealings with Indians to whom they give goods on credit. They do not, however, like the Creoles who are bad payers. Their manners and customs are those of their mother-countries and they have a branch of the "Kuomintang Society". In politics, they are all Nationalists, (i.e) Southerners. About twenty years ago, they were very conservative, wearing their hair long and putting on oil-skin coats. But now they put on European costume and send their children to schools and colleges. At present they have two doctors among them and some are in the civil service. The principal registered society of theirs is the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. They are also much liked by the

Europeans and many of them have become Christians.

The Whites have here many societies, clubs and associations. And generally speaking, they are not unfriendly to Indians and their progress. The prevailing religion is Roman Catholic; and every town or village has a church, built in some cases more than 100 years ago during the French occupation. In particular, the French and nearly all the Creoles are Catholic. The Colony has about 60 priests at the head of whom is the Bishop of Port Louis. About 100 Sisters of Charity conduct alms-houses, orphanages, etc, into which are admitted persons of all creeds and Communities.

Protestantism is professed mainly by the British. Among Indians, there are both Protestants and Catholics, but more Protestants than Catholics. A dozen Indians are working as "padres" (priests). The head of the Protestant Church is known as the Lord Bishop of Mauritius. The Christian Church is here maintained by the Government. And recently a move was made to have Hindu priests also paid; but it failed for want of proper organisation and of qualified priests.

Formerly Indians were rapidly becoming Christians, but since the establishment of the Arya Samaj, such conversions have stopped. On the contrary, instances occur often of Indian Christians returning to the Hindu fold. The relations between the different religious communities are friendly and no aggressive propaganda is carried on by any sect. The Catholics, the Protestants and the Hindus, especially the Tamils, the Aryas and the Sanatanists all organise prayers and processions in the towns and villages very often.

CHAPTER VII.

The Indian population and its occupations.

As said in the last chapter, the population of Mauritius was estimated in 1930 at 4,05,549 of whom 2,80,998 were Indians. The following table shows that in nearly all the districts of the island except Port Louis, they are in a vast majority.

Districts.	Area in acres.	General population.	Non-Indians.	Indians.
Port Louis ...	9,445	54147	31096	23051
Pample Mousses	44,158	37550	6517	31033
River on Rainpart	35,777	34501	6192	28309
Flaeq ...	73,275	55078	11033	44045
Moka ...	56,958	51963	13799	38164
Plains Wilhelms	49,861	35282	7902	27380
Grand Port ...	64,502	89336	36772	52614
Savanne ...	59,839	33605	5978	27627
Black River ...	64,839	14087	5312	8775
		405549	124551	280998

In the town of Port Louis is situated the largest market of the island in which are sold almost all commodities of ordinary consumption. It is in the hands of Indians exclusively, in

particular the Tamils, the Calcutteas and the Muslims. It is planned in European style and is under the management of the Municipality. There are besides many large shops owned by Europeans, Chinese, Muslims, Parsées, etc. Indians dress in European costume but also wear national dress and sometimes, a mixture of the two. Motor buses and cars plying for hire mostly belong to Indians. Hindu hotels kept by Calcutteas and Tamils provide "poories" (bread cooked in ghee) cakes, rice, curree, chutnee, etc. Here no difference is observed between castes and creeds. In a word, a stranger, observing Port Louis can easily mistake it to be one of the towns of India.

The Indian population of Mauritius is divided into two parts; one consisting of the Indians proper (*i. e.*) of those born in India, their number being 17,506; and the other group comprising of the Indo-Mauritians (*i. e.*) of those born in Mauritius, totalling 263,492. Both the groups are known as Indians and the different names are given in Government statistics only for the purpose of distinguishing

one group from the other. It was in 1834 that the first batch of Indians came here as immigrants, some 75 in number. Since then hundreds have poured in so that they form the majority of the population to-day. Till 1870 the indenture system prevailed in the case of the Indian immigrants here and they were treated by their European employers very badly. Most of them worked on sugar plantations; but in 1870, a German traveller Plerity who visited the island saw the inhuman treatment meted out to the Indians here by their white employers. He wrote a book describing the evils and condemning them. Its publication caused a great sensation both in the colony and in England. In consequence a Royal Commission was appointed consisting of Messrs. William Frere and Victor Alexander Williamson to report on the condition of the sugar plantation workers. It remained in the colony from the 7th April 1872 to October 1873 and in 1875 published its report in which a series of protective measures were proposed in favour of the Indian labourers. In 1877, Sir Arthur Frere, K. C. S. I., C. B., an Officer of the Indian Government was

appointed Governor of Mauritius and immediately after his arrival, he passed a series of ordinances directing the construction of good houses, the payment of higher wages, etc. These measures brought considerable improvement in the lot of the Indians.

In 1907, Dr. Manilal, M.A., LL. D., of Fiji fame, came here and being a barrister of the Middle Temple could easily have his name inscribed in the Registry as a legal practitioner in the Island. Soon he built up a very lucrative practice and won fame as a great criminal lawyer. He founded a journal called the "Hindustan" and entrusted the editorship to Mr. B. Honniss at the outset, then to Mr. Narasimha Das and later to Pandit Ramanadh Sarma. It was the first paper started in the Colony on behalf of the Indians; and on many occasions, it was prosecuted for libel. In the social field, he did more work than in politics, for in the latter sphere there was not much for him to do. Indians were already enjoying the full civic and political rights that the rest of the inhabitants did. But he contributed largely to the

foundation of several social organisations such as the Arya Paropakarini Sabha and the Young Men's Hindu Association. These two organisations are to-day running schools which are aided by the Government. Besides, he fought for and secured many rights for the Indians. For instance, he got the "double cut" system abolished on the sugar estates. A labourer on the sugar plantations here gets about 2 measures of rice (locally called gamels) per week, (*i. e.*,) about 14 lbs. But if he absented himself for a single day, one full measure (gamel) was deducted from his wages and he got only 7 lbs of rice after 6 days work. Dr. Manilal got this system abolished. The local laws hold that only those marriages are valid which are celebrated by "Government civil status officers." Thus Indian religious marriages as well as non-Indian ones went without validity. Dr. Manilal however obtained power for only qualified Hindu priests to celebrate the civil marriage in the domicile of the contracting parties after solemnisation of the "religious marriage". He also strove to improve the lot of the labourers in regard

to housing, medical attendance and other facilities. At his instance again, the import duties on ghee, flour and rice were reduced and prisoners got the privilege of having their food cooked by men of their own nationality and of retaining the top-knot or the "choorkey" (in the case of the Hindus) and the beard (in the case of the Muslims). The first Indian barrister also to appear in court with the pagree or turban on was, again, Dr. Manilal. In 1908, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the conditions of labour. Dr. Manilal was here at the time and through his paper "The Hindustan" he made strong representations to the Commission regarding the grievances of the plantation labourers. Further, he led evidence before them and in the result, the Commission did make a series of recommendations calculated to better the workers' lot. On the political side, the Commission held that "no decision can be thought authoritative so long as it does not carry the consent of the Indians who form the great majority of the population." In 1909 Dr. Manilal left Mauritius for South Africa to take

the place of Mr. Gandhi who had left for India. There he suffered imprisonment (?) He returned to Mauritius again in 1911 but after a few years again left to the great regret of us all. Dr. Manilal acquired many friends and admirers even among non-Indians here. And his short stay yielded a number of beneficial results to us. On his departure he took with him Mr. Ramkhelawon Boodan who returned to the colony in 1916 as a barrister of the Middle Temple. In 1924 Mr. Kunwar Maharaj Singh came to the Colony to report on the condition of the labourers in the capacity of the Government Agent. Indian labourers on their arrival were first employed on sugar estates and in sugar factories. Their terms of service according to the Labour Laws of 1877 were for fixed periods, one, two or three years, after which their contracts were renewed before a magistrate. The certificate of engagement contained the name and the surname of the labourer, his place of birth, the name of the estate on which he was engaged and the period of his engagement. Later, he gave to the manager of his estate or other employer, the

name of the sardar under whom he would work. The sardar then gave him a bonus (bakshish) of Rs. 12/—for one year's contract, Rs. 20/—for two years, Rs. 30/—for three years and so on. Besides, the labourers also took loans from the sardars or from the employers on the guarantee of the sardar for purchasing land or cows or for marriage. These they paid back by monthly instalments. For his part, the sardar got his rations, one rupee per month capitation fee, *plus* wages for supervising the gang.

At the request of the Government of India, the labour laws of 1877 were amended in 1922 and the indenture system was abolished. In consequence many Indians left the estates and those that remained continued to work for wages, the difference being that now they were free men and could leave service with 15 days notice. Penal clauses have all been abolished.

The sugar estates are very helpful to the labourer in the way of giving loans for the purchase of lands, cows, etc., all of which mean extra income to them. They begin

work usually at 6 A. M. and finish by noon. During the crop season, factory workers generally labour from 6 A. M. to 5 P. M. Night work is paid for at a special rate. All the workers are classified into two gangs or grades, locally known as "Grand Band" and the "Small Band." In the first, a person gets daily 12 annas *plus* weekly rations of rice, dal, oil, free housing etc. In the latter, the income is Rs. 8/—plus rations etc. These are the normal wages. But in the *peak* days of 1920 wages rose very high and remained high also till 1924 since when they have gradually fallen. Now they are at the pre-war level.

With the abolition of the indenture system, a number of Indians left the estates. But even before that, large numbers had done so to live in villages or towns as agriculturists or as merchants. Before 1922, an estate could easily employ thousands of labourers; but now there are found only about 200; on some, there are indeed only fifty, the bulk of the labour being casual. Labourers once working on estates have now become peasant proprietors of land varying from one to 20 acres in area

under a system of purchase locally known as "Morcellment." The system involves that estates are parcelled out into bits and sold out, the purchaser giving a written guarantee to cultivate the area with sugar-cane and pay capital and interest usually at 9% in 6 yearly instalments. In this way many labourers have been enabled to purchase their own lands and to construct their own houses. But this "Morcellment" system has proved ruinous in some cases. Dishonest planters after receiving a large part of the price agreed upon have on occasions sold away the lands to other persons for cash and then declared themselves insolvent. The Indian therefore prefers nowadays to purchase land by paying in cash straight away. As noted above, free labourers form the majority working on estates now. And their number will be specially great during the crop season from September to December. Their daily wages are as follows:—During the crop season men get Re. 1/—to 1-8-0, women Rs. 0-12-0 to Re. 1/—and boys 6 annas to 8 annas. Out of the crop season, men get from 10 annas to Re. 1/—, women from 8 annas

to 12 annas and boys from 4 annas to 6 annas. Wages were much higher during the prosperous period from 1920 to 1924. Women were never engaged, but were always free labourers. There was no law also regarding child labour.

To-day about 49.9 per cent of the whole area under sugar is in the hands of Indians. Thus from the barrister to the labourer every Indian has some land in his name planted with sugar. Between 1920 and 1925, 50,000 acres of land were purchased by Indians. But their position has deteriorated since then with the fall in the price of sugar. Many of them have closed down their factories, while others are practically ruined with debts in spite of vast sums given by the Government as loans. In 1926, the loan granted by the government was Rs. 12,000,000 and in 1928 it was Rs. 6,000,000. In 1931 the planters were thinking of approaching the Home Government for another loan when a terrible cyclone unparalleled in the annals of Mauritius swept the island. It lasted from the 5th to 8th March and inflicted heavy losses on the people. The Government granted an immediate loan of Rs. 10,500,000.

Among prominent Indians of the present time are the following:—

Mr. Laxman Ram, owner of "Le Vol" Estate with a big factory.	1632 acres
„ Landee Singh Parampet "Industry Estate"	532 „
„ Landee Singh Parampet "Anse Jonchee"	1632 „
„ Coomarasawmy Mardanayagam "Grande Rotraite"	854 „
„ Coomarasamy Mardanayagam "La Sourdine"	
"Chamouny" and "Bonne Source"	1200 „
„ Dabeedeen Reetoo "Samit Julieu"	900 „
„ Parsad Bhawaneedeen "Astroea"	600 „
„ Sayad Hussain "Palma Estate"	800 „
„ Hussain Bannoo "Melrose Estate"	200 „
„ Seewoosambah Rama "Chamouny Estate"	1000 „
„ Venkatasawmy Ramayya "Bel Vue"	460 „
„ Ramiah Sardar "Bagatalle" Estate	400 „
„ Sandragassen Coomarasawmy "New grove"	600 „
„ Ahlaman Sahawen "Colmor Estate"	800 „

All these gentlemen and others whose losses I cannot estimate are well known in Mauritius as old planters. And they have lost their properties only since 1925. The same is the case with the white men also.

There are other planters among Indians who have resisted the effects of all in prices more or less successfully and are even purchasing properties to-day. Among them are worth mention the following:—

Hon'ble Rajcoomar Gajadhar "Mon Loisir" and "Union"	
Estates	4000 acres
Hon'ble Rajcoomar Gajadhar "Unite" "Schoenfield"	
etc.,	2750 ..
Mr. Sookun Boodhan "Mon Choisy"	2350 ..
Mr. Sambooraya Rama "Ean Blue"	950 ..
Mr. Dookie Gangah "Gros Bois" "Astroca" and "New Grove"	2800 ..
Mr. Rambhajan Singh "Bell isle"	250 ..
Mr. Cotapah Narsimloo "Beau Fond"	400 ..
Mr. Carrim Tally "Henrietta"	300 ..

Many of the Indians now well to-do or their forefathers came here only as labourers and their present position is due solely to their habits of thrift and honesty. They are sending their children to the nearest schools, education in which will fit them for the posts of writers, overseers, etc. Those who can afford read up till the Senior Cambridge and even go to Britain or France for qualifying themselves as doctors, barristers, etc.

Among the Indian barristers at law are the following: Ramkhelawan Boodan (ex-Member, Legislative Council), Noor Mahommad Osman (acting as District Magistrate), Dheerajlal Seetulsing, Sulaiman Rattea, Ramparshad Niranjana, Messrs. Atchia, Seegobin Ellam and others were expected to arrive from London by the end of 1931. Mr. Osman is the first

and the only Indian to occupy the post of Magistrate in a Crown colony.)

Among Attorneys - at - law are Messrs. Dhanpath Lallah, ex - Member, Legislative Council, Rajboo Ramlal, Mamode Kasim, Sivanarayan Gorunsingh, Sulaiman Mahabub, Ramlochan Lala, Jeypal Niranjana, L. Nandoochand. Other Indo-Mauritians are today serving as clerks of attorneys etc.

Among doctors in medicine are Dr. Jubboo, Dr. Sinna Thambo, Dr. Jugroo Seegobin, Dr. Lakshmayya, Dr. J. Jetoo, Dr. Joomaye, Dr. Edahrow Rama, Dr. Kessa Row Rama, Dr. Bhagirathy, Dr. Rajbaly, Dr. Tilakdhary, Dr. Lakhee Narain. There are several students now studying medicine in England and France.

Among sworn land-surveyors are Messrs. Beny Madhoo, Ramgathan Hamaldar, Beni Lala, M. C. Naidu, and C. Nuckcheddy. Mr. Bissanath Seesaram, is a notary public. Among the Indian papers published are "The Mauritius Mitra" a Daily and "The Mauritius Arya Patrika" and "Arya Vir", both religious weeklies.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Andhras and their Position.

This chapter will be of special interest to all Andhras, as I shall try to go into the details of Andhra life in Mauritius. It has been observed earlier that the Indian population in this island in 1930 was about 2,80,000 consisting of North Indians, Andhras, Tamils, etc. Unfortunately there are no statistics showing the composition of the Indian population according to provinces or communities. But the following estimate is not far from correct. North Indians 1,05,993, Andhras 55,000, Tamils 50,000, Muslims 47,000, Mahrattas and Bengalis 23,000, total 2,80,000.

In my letters to the *Trilinga* and the *Andhra Patrika* in 1929, I depended for my figures on the census Report of 1929 and gave the total Indian population as being 2,65,000. I also divided the figure as follows: North Indians 90,000, 55,000 Andhras; 50,000 Tamils,

47,000 Muslims and 23,000 Mahrattas and Bengalis. The figure for North Indians was considered by some of my friends to be too low and it was suggested that the figures for Andhras and Tamils should each be reduced by 10,000, the 20,000 thus gained being added to the figure of the North Indians thus bringing it up to 1,10,000. In my present estimate, I have not done this. Instead I have added the increase of Indian population since 1921 (*i. e.*) 15,998 souls *en bloc* to North Indians, instead of distributing it pro rata among the different communities. And thus the figures I have given above. In order to discover the name of the first Andhra immigrant and the year, I indented on the assistance of Mr. Rajabally, the Assistant Protector of Immigrants. But I have not succeeded. Having seen therefore Andhras born on the island who are 60 or 70 years old, I should conclude that their first batch arrived here about 1860 or so. The non-Andhras here generally call them Coringees but the better sort call them Telugus. The Andhras resent being called Coringees for that means coolies.

and reminds them of the indenture system which has been abolished long since. And they enjoy all the civic rights that are enjoyed by the other communities at present. Sjts Narasimha Das and Appala Swami Jogannah has held several protest meetings on this point and it is to be expected that with more propaganda, the word Coringee will have a decent burial. Similarly, the North Indians and others were being called Malabaris once upon a time but as a result of strong protests, that has ceased to be now.

Like the other Indians here, the Andhras are widely scattered, very few live in towns like Port Louis and some hundreds live in villages. But the vast bulk resides on sugar estates. In towns they are either traders or domestic servants and in villages, peasant-proprietors or agricultural labourers. On sugar estates, they construct houses for themselves or for tenants, put up stables for cows or bullocks and even own bullock carts for conveying sugar-cane to the market. Cane is sold either direct to the factory-owner or to traders on contract, be they Indian or not

There are also Andhras living on sugar estates as labourers, mill-drivers, boilers sardars etc. The labour conditions, status and treatment of the Andhras do not differ from those of the others.

Though the Andhras have been living here for nearly half a century, it is unfortunate that there is not a single school here in which Telugu is taught. Night schools are often started here and they teach up to the stage of Pedda Balasiksha but soon they close down as the course is over. The teachers besides are not qualified but are only those who have similarly learnt a little of Telugu. The mother tongue is preserved in no other way here. And the object in learning it is merely to be able to take part in Bhajans or Telugu *satakams*. Large Telugu schools are not possible for most of the Andhras prefer to teach their children either English or French so that jobs may be easily procured. And the vernacular is studied only for the sake of being able to read the sacred books etc. This is the case with the North Indians also.

At the age of six Andhra children attend the Government primary schools in which English and French are taught to all till the VI standard. Then the standard certificate is granted to them and formerly that used to enable them to get jobs easily. But during the last six or seven years, unemployment among the educated is so rife here that thousands of standard certificate holders are roaming about for want of jobs. Most of the Andhras being poor read only up to the VI standard but a few read up to Senior Cambridge. But to-day hundreds of the latter also are in want of jobs. A few of the certificate holders however are employed as tailors, traders, domestic servants, etc.

Those who could go to the Royal college of Mauritius among the Andhras are very few. Messrs. Sitaramulu Narasimhulu, Venkateswarulu Narasimhulu, Brahmadu Narasimhulu, Purushottam Narasayya, Balachandra Joganna, Balasubrayulu Naidu, Pyndaya Latchmayya, Sunnassa Lakshmayya, Appanna Lakshmayya and Dr. Latchmayya. The four Latchmayya brothers were the first to enter

the *Alma Mater* and they are very intelligent and influential. All of them are occupying high posts in the Government service here. Mr. Pydiah Lakshmayya was for a long time the Chief Interpreter to the Supreme Court of Mauritius and on leaving Government service, he took up the work of developing co-operative credit societies among the Indians here. He has visited England and India to study co-operation and while formerly there were many irregularities in the movement here, now many of them have been put down. Two other Lakshmayya brothers are employed as chief clerks in two important departments of government while the last brother Dr. Lakshmayya for some time a civil servant is now a Doctor in Medicine. After studies in France, he returned to Mauritius in 1927, but went to France in 1929. Though the brothers have become Protestant Christians, they are all very sympathetic to the Andhras.

In 1927 some educated Andhras formed an association by name "the Mauritius Telugu Association" for the uplift of the local Andhras. The first meeting was held in Rose Hill and

soon about a hundred members joined. But it had soon to dissolve as its Hindu and Christian members could not get on well together in social and religious matters, though the number of the latter is not large. Subsequently all the Hindu members of the Association were formed into "the Mauritius Andhra Sabha" by Messrs. Narasimha Das and Ramasawmy Pydiah.

Andhras are employed here in various capacities, as station masters and as head teachers. The post of writers on sugar estates and of sardars is mostly offered to Andhras who have also among them a number of planters. To-day Sjt Cotapah Narasimhulu is the richest Andhra here. But till 1925, Sjt. Venkatasawmy Ramayya was the richer. In that year however, the sudden fall of prices in sugar completely ruined him and overwhelmed him with loss. He died in 1930. His son Purushottama Ramayya has joined government service. Sjt V. Ramayya was well known for his charities to all alike. Next, the name of Sjt Rajgiri Narasimhadas is well known here. This gentleman, now about 50

years of age, is a scholar in Hindi and Telugu besides knowing English and French. When 18 years ago, Dr. Manilal came here to work for Indians, he chose Mr. Narasimhadas as his assistant and entrusted him with the editorship of the paper "Hindustani" which was then started. It had soon to be closed down, however; but before that, it had built up a good name. Mr. Narasimha Das has a good reputation even otherwise as a scholar. On the occasion of Sastrarths held formerly between Arya Samajists and Sanatana Dharmists, Mr. Das used to be the spokesman for the latter but such occasions to-day are rare. But even now, when a "Bhagavat Katha" or a "Valmiki Katha" is organised, Mr. Das is always invited. He has two sons and seven daughters and is now devoting all his to the preparation of Telugu books on religious subjects. Mr. Chattapalli Appalaswami Joghiah's name is very closely associated with the construction of a temple known as the "Vishnu Mandir" at St. Pierre. The anniversary of the temple is regularly celebrated with great pomp and many non-Andhras and non-Indians also take part in it

Mr. Jogiah's son, Mr. Balachandra, has formed a Sabha at St. Pierre known as the Janananda Sabha. He has visited India in 1926, his photograph appearing in the Telugu Samachar.

The name of Sitannah Appadu is well known here in connection with the Andhra Mandir at Beau Vallon, the first anniversary of which was celebrated in 1926. Sjts. S. Ramjogy Sardar and Rajgiri Naidu Parshoram are also well known. They are both employed here as the chief Sardar and a writer on the Beauchamp Estate and enjoy very great power. They are empowered to call a meeting of all the Andhra labourers on the estate and to submit any quarrels for its decision which was to be final. But if a member did not abide by the decision and went to the police he would be removed from the estate. Such a meeting was known as the Panchayat Sabha. North Indians have their own Sabha. Now that Andhras have left estate-service largely, such Sabhas have practically ceased to exist and cases are going to courts very often. Sjt. Rajgiri Naidu Parshoram is a nephew of Mr. Narasimha Das and was sub-editor of the "Hindustani".

Sjt Barhmadoo Narasimhula is also well known here. His father, a very religious old man, died only last year at the great age of ninety. It would be tedious and invidious to mention the names of all other Andhras who are in some way prominent here. But mention must be made of Krishnamah Kamayya who is the Secretary of the Hindu Benevolent Society and the President of the Hindu Paropakarini Sangham. Messrs. Ramannah and Krishnamma are also the President and Vice-President respectively of a benevolent society at Curepipe.

The Andhras on sugar estates generally celebrate Natakams during the New Year holidays which they get from the 1st January to the 7th every year. The Natakams organised are Rama Natakam, Virabhadra Natakam, etc. Nowadays the practice of organising singing parties with harmonium, tabla, etc. is getting common. But many Andhras are following the tenets of the North Indians and the Tamils. The common festivals observed are Krishna Jananamu, Rama Navami, Dipavali, etc.; but these are celebrated with greater pomp by the North Indians than by the Andhras. Andhra

marriages here are officiated by North Indian Brahmins who are locally known as Calcutta Brahmins. But the "Vidhi" (*i. e.*) the rites and ceremonies followed are strictly Andhra. The marriages here take place generally at night time except among the Tamils and the Arya Samajists who celebrate them during the day. The marriageable age is generally above 14 for the girls and above 20 for the boys. Caste restrictions are generally observed on this point, though in regard to eating and social intercourse, they are not. Till 1926, an Andhra gentleman was officiating as the priest in Andhra marriages; but in that year he died.

The general language used by Andhras here is Hindi though they understand Telugu all right. The reason is that the number of North Indians here is very large and their influence therefore is great. The common language of the island however is the Creole language which is understood by all and is used in government offices, commercial offices, etc. In origin, it seems to be the original French language spoken by the French to their labourers. It is a matter for gratification that

Andhra women wear their own national dress and ornaments, as the Tamils do. The men, especially of the younger generation, wear coats and trousers. The head dress is either a turban or hat or a big handkerchief. All the North Indian women wear gowns but the Telugu, Tamil and the Mahratta women wear the saree. Andhras who are in Government employ or in other offices wear European dress, but others wear the usual dhoti, shirt coat and turban. The bulk of the Moslems here wear coats, trousers and Muhammadan caps. As for their women, very few indeed observe gosha.

If the Andhras here have thus given up their languages, their dress, their priests and their habits in many respects, the reason is, of course, the absence of religious leaders in the Island. The North Indians have many Brahmins among them; but it is unfortunate that there are no Andhra Brahmins here to guide the Andhra community. The Arya Samaj is doing some conversion work and it has a large body of sympathisers among the Andhras. It has also trained two preachers who go about the country

and preach especially among the Andhras. But if there should be an orthodox religious teacher amongst us here, we should be much happier. As it is, we are like a flock of sheep without a shepherd.

CHAPTER VIII.

Andhras and their Occupations.

The present condition of the Andhras here has exercised my mind considerably for a long time and I have come to the conclusion that it could be improved by organising a society for their spiritual and moral advancement and by introducing some Andhra Brahmins. Accordingly in 1929 I addressed several public letters to Messrs. V. Venkateswara Sastrulu and K. Nāgeswara Rao, the distinguished editors of the *Trilinga* and the *Andhrapatrika* respectively, both of whom kindly published my letters in their papers. I appealed therein to the Andhra leaders to send out to us here religious missionaries; and in response I received very many letters from various well-known societies and influential public men. Mostly they advised me to form a society here and through that to introduce Pandits from India.

In Mauritius itself there was considerable encouragement for the formation of a society among the Andhras. I was able to convene a general meeting of about 800 of them at Port Louis on 16-2-1930. Andhras from various parts of the Island attended the meeting. Sriman Rajagiri Narasimhadas who presided, explained in his opening speech how the other sections of the Indian population of the Island had given a good account of themselves in respect of organisation and how the Andhras were apathetic and indifferent. He appealed for the formation of a society among them and the introduction of Andhra Brahmins from India. On the motion of Mr. Ramaswami Pydiah, the organiser of the meeting a committee of 30 members was then formed with power to prepare the rules and regulations of the proposed society. Mr. Narasimhadas was the appointed President, Mr. Lakshminarayadu Secretary and Mr. Ramarish Narasimhadas, Treasurer. The Committee consisted of very influential men from all parts of the Island. The next step that was taken was to hold meetings all over the country to popularise the

movement and the first meeting was held at Rose Belle. About 400 attended. Other meetings also took place which were attended by large numbers including North Indians. The last meeting was on 18th May 1930 at Dayananda Dharmasala, Port Louis, under the Presidency of Swamy Vijayananda an Arya missionary who pointed out how necessary a Dharmasala for the Telugus was.

From May 1930 till March 1931, meetings could not be held owing to the general elections to the Legislative Council in February 1931 and also owing to the terrible cyclone of March 31. The electoral campaign opened even as early as the 1930 July. A large number of Andhras living on the estates were also elected; and we did not want them to have any meetings lest it should be thought that they were out to support Indian candidates as against European ones, many of whom were their employers. Therefore, our work suffered for nearly one year. On the other hand advices reached us from India to postpone the request for missionaries in view of the political unrest there due to the Civil Disobedience movement.

Efforts will have to be renewed when matters should have quieted down a little.

Andhras in Mauritius are scattered all over the nine districts of the island and mixed up with the North Indians, Mussalmans, Tamils, Creoles and Whites. To form societies among them is therefore a very difficult job. In particular they need Brahmin priests to perform, poojas, marriages, etc, and preferably also to deliver public lectures on Hindu philosophy, Poetry, etc. The North Indian Brahmins render such service to-day to all castes and similar service could be rendered also by educated Andhra Brahmans who may settle down in Mauritius if they care to. Besides, they can give higher education in Telugu to the Mauritius Andhras. As I have already pointed out education in Telugu in Mauritius is very poorly provided for. In this connection I must state that the Andhras in India would do well to copy the example of the Arya Samajists in Mauritius who send out some Mauritian students year after year to the Gurukula at Kangri. There they are admitted free and taught free. On return to Mauritius

they of course take to social and religious work. Similar work is also done by Sanathana Non-Andhra Hindus and by Mohamadans; but the Andhras are lagging deplorably behind.

CHAPTER IX.

Religion.

The majority of the Hindus here are Sanatanists but the younger generation is tending to sympathise with the Arya Samaj. The North Indians have several temples and Dharmasalas in the Island. The largest temples being at Rose Belle and Triolet. The former are four, Siva Mandir, Parvathi Mandir, Radhakrishna Mandir and Hanuman Mandir. Every Sunday people go to them, and perform "puja". During festivals thousands of people congregate at them and Northern Indian Brahmins organise religious lectures and conferences. The chief festivals observed are Sivarathri, Ramanavami, Sri Krishna Janmashtami and Deepavali.

On the eve of the Sivarathri day large processions are organised which go on pilgrimage to a lake called Grand Bassin situated in the central part of the Island.

They are accompanied by music and bhajan parties. They take some water from the lake in earthen vessels on their return journey and offer it to God Siva, the next day. Sivarathri is the biggest festival celebrated by Northern Indians here. Attempts made recently to proclaim it a public holiday did not succeed; but sugar estates and private concerns all grant holidays to their Hindu employees on that day. The Government New Year holidays are the 1st and 2nd of January on which occasion sugar estates grant holidays for a week. They also give a bonus to their labourers in the shape of sugar, flour, wine and salted fish. The Deepavali festival is also celebrated by all the Hindus each in his peculiar manner while Durgapuja is performed by a few who sacrifice goats and fowls on the occasion.

The North Indians have hundreds of Brahmin families amongst them. The illiterate Brahmins perform any field, factory or menial work like other Hindus. But the educated Brahmins do the work of priests for all Hindus. For their services they get their fees for each ceremony. Their numbers however are so many

that a considerable portion enjoys in commerce, agriculture, etc. Srimad Bhagavadkatha is often arranged for by rich Hindus or by public bodies. Valmiki katha is also celebrated on some occasions. Recently a Gita Pracharak Mandal has been established with branches all over the Island, the site on which its building is constructed being the gift of Srijut Dooke Gorgah. The North Indians here have several social and political organisations as well as schools in which Hindi is taught. The rich and generous among them like Sjt. Gorgah contribute large sums for the maintenance of temples, schools and Dharmasalas.

It must be said however that the religious fabric of the North Indians is ill-organised. The younger generation is disgusted with the many false Brahmins who do not know the meaning of four words and yet claim to know the four Vedas. Such Brahmins are naturally the targets of attack for the Arya Samajists. In Port Louis there is a great Dharmasala of the Sanathana Hindus called the Hindu Maha Sabha which is a large building offered by the Honourable Raj Kumar Gajadhar. Any

stranger may find shelter there. Religious preachers from India also visit the Island at the invitation of the North Indians occasionally. Thus in 1929, Pandit Rama Govind Vedanta Sastry came here and stayed for one full year. During that period he delivered several religious lectures and also founded the Gita Pracharak Mandal. On his return to India in 1930 he founded a Hindi newspaper called the "Ganga" at Bhagalpur. Among other religious teachers that came here must be mentioned Pandit Ramacharan Sarma and Pandit Banshi Rama Sarma. Both of them were sent by the Sanathana Dharma Sabha of Haridwar. On the other hand Brahmins born in the Colony also go to India for study now and then.

The Tamils have several temples in the Island and their chief festivals are walking on Fire, Kavadi, Sankranti and Deepavali. The first two attract thousands of people including sometimes even Creoles. In almost all the estates there is a temple or two built by Tamils. On the occasion of Sankranti the Tamils close all their shops for two or three days in Port Louis

and elsewhere. Their religious and social organisations are doing good work while several schools exist which teach Tamil. Among public benefactors of Tamil origin may be mentioned Sjt. Kumaraswamy Marudanayakam who donated Rs. 100,000 for founding a large Sangham. And Sjt. Ganapathi is another such. The chief temple of the Maharashtras is at Coss Cavell, close to which there is also a Mahratta School. Both the buildings were constructed by Raghuje Pawar. The Mahrattas celebrate with great pomp Ganapathi Puja and *bhajans*. Their Brahmin priest is called Pandit Atmaram who is a very intelligent man and the author of several Hindi works on Mauritius.

The Arya Samaj started work here in 1909; but it has already a hundred branch societies with the headquarters at Dayananda Dharma-sala in Port Louis. The Aryas carry on intensive propaganda all over the Island by means of lectures and their two weekly papers called the *Arya Vira* and the *Arya Patrika*. A dozen preachers are also engaged who go from village to village teaching the Arya cult; and as

the result, many conversions have taken place even from among Creoles. Sometimes the Samaj sends young men to India to the Gurukul at Kangri for study and they return to Mauritius to serve the Society. Besides, preachers have come from India, the last of them being Swami Vijayanada who came about 1928 and left in January 1932. Among other names may be mentioned those of Swami Swatantrananda, and Dr. Bharadwaja. The Samaj conducts several schools in the District with the occasional aid of Government.

The Muhammadans have several mosques in the Island, the chief one being the Jumma Musjid in Port Louis. The Head Moulvi known as Pesh Imam comes from Mecca once in every five years. But there are other Moulvis also, each one in charge of a mosque; and every village has a mosque. The Muharram festival is celebrated here with great *eclat* and non-Muhammadans also participate in the games connected with it, like wrestling, dancing, etc. The Muslims are the best organised community here. A Muslim school is attached to each mosque and a large college

also exists where English, French and Urdu are taught. There are very many merchants and planters in the community, most of the big merchants of Port Louis being Muhammadans. The relations between Musalmans and Hindus here are very cordial, the latter taking out processions in front of mosques without any hindrance.

The Andhras have no festivals peculiar to themselves and for purposes of *bhajana* and prayer halls have been erected for them on several estates sometimes at the cost of the proprietors themselves. The Chinese here are Buddhists mostly, though some have turned Christian and also have married Creole girls. Their chief festivals are the Chinese New Year which falls on February 15th., Dr. Sun Yat Sen's death anniversary and the Independence Day. Though dressed in European costumes, they generally speak Chinese among themselves. They have many clubs and societies, the chief of them being the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

Mauritius contains a very heterogeneous population with different religions, customs and

languages; but all the communities live happily together. Hindus and Christians participate in Muslim festivals and *vice versa*. Even so, the whites help the coloured in the latter's religious observances. One thing is noteworthy with regard to Indians. Their love for India remains unabated and the Hindu section of them very eagerly purchase all the books on religion published in English or French.

CHAPTER X.

The Political Constitution of Mauritius.

Mauritius has at the head of its Government a Governor appointed by the Colonial Office for five years. The Executive Council consists of six members all of whom are officials and the Legislative Council has 12 officials, 10 elected members and 6 nominated members. The present constitution dates from 1886 from which date it has remained unchanged. In 1920 an agitation for constitutional changes was set up by some non-Indians and in 1925 a Reform Scheme was passed through the Legislative Council. According to the Scheme (a) the number of elected members was to be raised from 10 to 12; (b) nominated members were to be given freedom to vote; (c) the decision of the majority was to be accepted except where the Governor thought otherwise; (d) the initiative in financial matters was to be left to the Governor; and (e) the shareholders in a company were to be given the right to vote.

The reform of the constitution thus suggested was not, however, put into effect as the Indians did not support it. At that time there was no Indian on the Legislative Council and Indians were not consulted in the matter at all. They in fact opposed the scheme through a young journalist, named Fakir, who was the editor of "Mauritius Indian Times". In view of this fact, Britain put aside this scheme and allowed matters to stand as they were. Such a decision on her part was clearly in keeping with the recommendation of a Royal Commission that came here twenty years ago which said in its Report, that "no decision can be thought authoritative so long as it does not carry the consent of the Indians who form the majority of the population". The truth is that Indians are not opposed to reforms, but only insist that they should be consulted in the reforms. In 1931 after the general election, the question of constitutional reform was again mooted in the local press and something was expected out of this move.

The Colony is divided into nine administrative and electoral districts, each of which

elects one representative, except Port Louis which elects two. The elections of these members are based on a common franchise at the general election which take place every five years. Any person, irrespective of race and nationality, having the necessary qualifications can stand as a candidate, in any district, for the Legislative Council. All have the same civic rights. Segregation or any other unjust legislation is unknown. Any person irrespective of race or creed has the right to vote, if (1) he is a British subject of 21 years and has no legal incapacity, (2) owns immoveable property worth Rs. 3000 or yields annually Rs. 300, (3) pays license fees of Rs. 200 per annum or pays or receives rent of Rs. 25/-per month or draws a salary of Rs. 50 a month, or (4) is husband of a wife or the eldest son of a widow having any of the property or rental qualifications noted above. Indians have acquired vast properties during the last ten years and they thus constitute the bulk of the voters. In 3 or 4 districts indeed they form the majority; but as they are employed on sugar estates, they generally vote for the non-Indian owners thereof. In

other places they are indifferent about elections; otherwise they could easily capture more than half the council seats.

From 1920 to 1925 Mr. Ramkhelawon Boodham, a Hindu Barrister at Law, and Dr. Hassan Saki, a Muhamedan medical man, sat in the Legislative Council as nominated members. In the general elections of 1926, 3 Indians sought election namely Mr. Ibrahim Bi Bi Jan, Mr. Rajkumar Gajadhar and Mr. Dhunpat Lala. Mr. Bi Bi Jan was defeated by a white planter, though a majority of the voters were Indians; but the other two succeeded. Thus from 1926 to 1930 two elected Indian members have sat in the Council. The nomination of Messrs. Boodham and Saki was not renewed; but in their place a gentleman by name Gulam Mahomad Dawoodji Atchaiya was nominated.

In the general election of 1931 four Indians sought election, but they were all defeated at the polls, a fact which considerably depressed the Indian population here. The reasons for their defeat are hard to find. But two may be mentioned as being very probable. The

whites are rich and are supported by all the sugar estate owners. They have in their employ a vast number of Indian voters who can be easily influenced at the polls. Secondly, the social relations of the whites and the coloured are very happy. So the white candidates canvass as busily as the others for the votes of the Indians. No wonder therefore they have great advantages at election.

After the elections as it was felt that Indians had to be present on the Council, Messrs. Mahmood Dawoodji Achaiya and Rajkumar Gajadhar were nominated as members. This fact carried political significance with it as it clearly showed that without Indian Representatives the Council could not get on. As an elected member from 1926 to 1930 Mr. Gajadhar had done excellent work and his nomination to the council was widely appreciated. There were some non-Indians also in the council who were very friendly to Indians. Dr. Edgar Laurent being one of them. The position is that even if all the non-Indian elected members vote against the Indians, the 12 officials and the 6 nominated members will together have a

majority of 8 over the 10 elected members and thus they will be able to defeat any measure. At the next stage besides; there is the Secretary of State for the Colonies who can veto any bill which he considers to be prejudicial to the Indians. It is a happy feature that there are no peculiar disabilities placed on the Indians as a community in Mauritius; for instance, no revolting measures like the Class Areas Bill, the Land Tenure Bill, etc., which are heard of in South Africa are contemplated here. After the defeat in the elections of 1931 of all the Indian candidates, this is what the "Mauritius Mitra", the only political organ of the Indian community here, wrote on the point. "We Indians do not complain about the results of the election. Our own people did not support Indian candidates.....until our electoral system is revised it will ever be thus.....Meanwhile the Indo-Mauritian community will watch with interest the efforts to champion the Indian cause which the newly elected element will put forward". This is indeed a commendable sportsmanly spirit.

In each district of the Island except Port Louis, there is a Board to look after the roads, foot-paths, water-supply, drains, etc. It consists of 10 members: 3 *ex-officio* and 7 appointed by the Governor. The President of the Board is the elected member of the District, every District Board containing one or two Indians. In Port Louis, however, there is a municipality, the only one in the Island, established in 1850. Elections to it take place once in three years, the number of seats being 12. A Mayor and a Deputy Mayor are also chosen for one year from among the Councillors. For the last 15 or 20 years one or two Indians generally secured election and more than once an Indian has been chosen Deputy Mayor. In 1931 Mr. Dawoodji Achaiya was proposed for the Mayorship; but by the casting vote of the retiring Mayor, Mr. Dawoodji was defeated. When subsequently the ex-Mayor stood for the Legislative Council the Mahomadans in revenge voted solidly against him, thus bringing about his defeat. Municipal elections are based on the common franchise, the franchise being the same as for the

Legislative Council. Port Louis has 54,147 people of whom 23,000 and odd are Indians and the rest non-Indians. It is the only district in which Indians are in a minority and as there are no sugar factories in it, the elections are held freely and without pressure.

CHAPTER XI.

Re-opening of Indian Emigration.

In 1920 the price of sugar was high, but next year it fell very low, as labourers refused to work for lower wages. Factory owners complained to Government about shortage of labour and the Government in turn approached India for introducing fresh labourers. In 1923 a Mauritian deputation met the Emigration Standing Committee of the Indian Legislature at Delhi. It consisted among others of the Hon'ble Mr. A. Walter, Protector of Emigrants and Mr. Rajkumar Gajadhar. On the Indian side, the Chairman of the Standing Committee was Sir B. N. Sarma; and among the members were the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri; Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas and Mr. N. M. Joshi. The call for emigration was that in Mauritius the members of old and infirm Indians had considerably increased, that Creoles and Indo-Mauritians did not take to manual labour, that Indians were fast becoming peasant-proprietors

and there was consequently no loose labour available and there was enough money and work to support many more Indians. Of the above reasons, not all are true; for instance, there is plenty of labour here but there was shortage only of cheap labour which factory owners wanted. The bulk of the Indians here were opposed to further immigration and they were supported by the "Mauritius Indian Times" in their opposition. The grounds for this attitude were that labour was abundant, that pauperism and vagrancy were already excessive, that the scale of wages had already been reduced too low and that the imported labourers would not be able to earn high wages for any appreciable length of time. The Mauritian Government sent a deputation to India at enormous cost only to please some planters. The discussions between the Standing Committee on Emigration and the deputation continued for several days and finally the Committee resolved to permit a maximum of 1,500 adult labourers to emigrate on the condition that the penal laws of Mauritius relating to labour should be abolished and that emigrants if unable to

obtain Rs. 2/-per day and able to satisfy the Indian Agent to that effect would be given repatriation charges. Further a report was to be submitted at the end of one year by an Indian Agent, after considering which the question of further emigration would be taken up. The Standing Committee on Emigration submitted its report in due course to the Indian Legislature which approved of it. Accordingly about the end of 1923 several batches of emigrants arrived from India; and it is amusing that among them were many who were disabled, or too young or lazy and sickly. Hardly had they remained here for a month when they wanted to go back to India and asked for repatriation charges. The Government of Mauritius was greatly disappointed and sought to lay the blame on the Recruiting Agent at Calcutta.

At the end of 1924, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Emigration Standing Committee, the Government of India sent Kunwar Maharaj Singh, C. I. E., the Commissioner of Allahabad, to enquire into the condition of labourers here. He toured extensively round the Island and sent up a

valuable report in which he strongly opposed any further emigration. , 'He pointed out that Indians were receiving in India, Ceylon and the adjacent countries wages equal to or exceeding the amount which they got in Mauritius. He also recommended the construction of better houses for labourers here.

It is noteworthy that when the Indians long settled here found their opposition to the introduction of fresh labour from India unavailing, they wrote many private letters to gentlemen in India and to the press. Among those were Mr. Banarsidas Chaturvedi, the Rev. Andrews, Mr. Polak, Mahatma Gandhi, etc. The Indian Press also wrote strong articles there condemning the move so much so that one of the Indian members of the Mauritian deputation, Mr. Gajadhar proceeded for libel against the "Bengalee." The direct result of the opposition as seen above was nothing; but the indirect results were very valuable. In particular the penal laws against labour which had been in existence for nearly half a century were all repealed. To-day, on account of over-population in the island, emigration is definitely closed.

CHAPTER XII.

The Disastrous Cyclone of March 1931.

A terrible cyclone, unprecedented in the history of the island, visited it from the 5th March 1931 to 8th March 1931. It was accompanied by torrential rains and attained a velocity of 70 to 80 miles per hour. The damage it did was extensive and is calculated at 12 millions. Huge buildings collapsed in hundreds and crops were ruined entirely. Many Indians lost their all.

Immediately after the cyclone, the Legislative Council, the Municipal Council and the District Boards as well as the members of commercial and industrial bodies held meetings to discuss the situation. The Lord Bishop of Port Louis and the Lord Bishop of Mauritius both joined in opening a Relief Fund and in a few months Rs. 1,35,500 were collected. The Government of Mauritius gave Rs. 75,000/- and that of Madagascar about Rs. 27,000/-; subscriptions gave more than

Rs. 33,000/-. And the whole amount was utilised in affording relief, especially to the poor in repairing their damaged dwellings. Further, on request from the Mauritian Government, the Home Government also granted a loan of Rs. 8,000,000/- to repair plantations etc. But the terms on which this money was offered were so unfavourable that many planters refused the help. In this connection, the aid given by the rice merchants of Port Louis can never be forgotten. Both Hindus and Musalmans among them subscribed over a thousand bags of rice, dhal, etc., and distributed them among the poor. The Government also did likewise. Lady Wilfrid Jackson, the wife of the Governor, launched an appeal for old and new clothing, building material and money; and these, when collected, were also distributed. It is unfortunate that the cyclone came at a time when on account of the low prices prevailing for sugar, the planters were in a very bad plight.

About the only thing that saved the island from the full effects of its calamitous cyclone was the sudden fall in the price of foodstuffs.

Rice, dhal etc., are now sold at pre-war rates. But in 1932 also, another cyclone visited us. Fortunately however, it was of a very mild type the damage being estimated at not more than 25%. Besides, on 20th April 1932, Britain gave a preference of 1 sh. per cwt. to Mauritian sugar.

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CHAPTER XIII.

The Financial Commission and its recommendations

In 1931, the Home Government appointed a Financial Commission, composed of Messrs. Loughman and Elliot, to inquire into the present financial condition of the island and the measures needed to balance its budget. The Commission was here from October 1931 to January 1932 and its report came out in April 1932. It recommended drastic retrenchment and increased taxation. Thus the Inland Revenue Department was abolished and its work distributed between the Police and Customs. Similarly the Forest Department was done away with and its work was given to the Police and to Agricultural Officers. The Railways which were running at a heavy loss on account of competition with road traffic were subjected to rigid cuts, nearly 600 small employees being sent out. A reduction in salaries from 21½% to 10% was also proposed

as well as the levy of income tax on all incomes above Rs. 1,500/- of 5% to 10%. Increased taxation was recommended on bankers, owners of docks, estates, etc.,. These monied classes protested very strongly but in vain. A very important recommendation was the abolition of the house-tax, water-rate and nightsoil fees. Since 1908 Government was collecting a tax of 1% on the value of all houses. But out of the 54,000 houses paying the tax no less than 87% or 47,000 were worth less than Rs. 1,000/- each and belonged to the poor. The Committee's recommendation for abolishing this tax was not, however, accepted by the Government which put down the exemption minimum at Rs. 500/-. Even this is a great relief. The nightsoil fee is a monthly tax of 75 cents in villages and of Rs. 2/- in towns. Up to now, the Government has given effect to only a few of the recommendations. The non-official members of the Legislative Council, dissatisfied with the Report have decided to send a deputation to England to meet the Secretary of State for the Colonies and they are strongly supported by the local press.

The members of the deputation are the Hon'bles Edgar Laurent, Philip Rafray, Jules Leccazio, Rajman Gajadhar and Captain Hitchcocks. According to present plans, the delegation was to have left by the end of October 1932, for England. We hope it will be successful.

APPENDIX

Downing Street,
17 April, 1933.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Memorandum submitted by you on behalf of the Muslim Community of Mauritius, by whom you were sent to this country to submit to the Secretary of State their views on the general affairs of the Colony and the Muslim interests. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister regrets that he was not able, owing to pressure of other engagements, to see you himself, but you were received on the 16th of December by the Earl of Plymouth, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, on his behalf, and various matters of detail have since been discussed with members of the Colonial Office. I am now directed to confirm the replies Lord Plymouth made to you on the various points in the memorandum submitted.

2. As regards the question of the reform of the Constitution of Mauritius, you have already been informed of the reply which was returned by Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister to the representations of the

deputation of Unofficial Members of the Council of Government. It is hoped that the changes to which the Secretary of State then agreed may be brought into operation at an early date. The Secretary of State understands that, in addition to supporting the representations made jointly by the Deputation, you also concurred in the additional representations made by Dr. Laurent, but not supported by the other members of the deputation, regarding the desirability of increasing the representation of Port Louis and Plaines Wilhelms by one member each; and furthermore, that you favoured the immediate revision of the franchise for the election of members of the Council of Government. You were informed by Lord Plymouth of the reply given to Dr. Laurent, in which the Secretary of State expressed his readiness to consider Dr. Laurent's proposals, if and when satisfied that they had general support in the Colony, but suggested that the matter should be raised in the first place by resolution in the Council of Government, and that a similar procedure should be adopted as regards proposals for the revision of the franchise.

3. As regards the questions of currency, trade and exchange, raised in the memorandum, you attended a meeting of the Colonial Office Currency Committee at which the currency of Mauritius came

under discussion, and had an opportunity of stating your views in detail. The conclusions then reached by the Currency Committee have since been submitted to the Secretary of State, and a further expression of opinion has been obtained from the deputation of Unofficial Members of the Council of Government in regard to certain points. The Officer Administering the Government has now been authorised by the Secretary of State to proceed as follows :—

The restrictions on exchange imposed last year, including the embargo on the export of silver, are to be removed immediately and preparations are to be made for the establishment of a sterling exchange standard after a period of six months, if the results of the freedom from control during that period are found satisfactory. A careful watch on the situation is to be kept during this period, and for that purpose the Officer Administering the Government is being requested to telegraph monthly reports on the situation.

4. Suggestions were made in the memorandum for the reform of the constitutions of the Municipality of Port Louis, and of the Local Boards of Curepipe, Quatre Bornes, and Beau Bassin and Rose Hill.

Lord Plymouth explained to you that these were essentially local matters for decision by the local legislature. In any case, the attitude of the local Government towards the proposals for reform put forward could not be decided until the views of the Municipality and the Local Boards and other interested persons had been heard. Lord Plymouth informed you, however, that the Officer Administering the Government had been requested to inform the Secretary of State of his views on the proposals when he has had an opportunity of consulting with the various interests concerned.

5. The question of the health of the Colony was also dealt with in the memorandum. Lord Plymouth informed you of the supplementary representations on this subject submitted by the deputation of Unofficial Members, and of the discussions which had taken place between them and Dr. Stanton, the Secretary of State's Chief Medical Adviser. A letter summarising the Secretary of State's views on the question has since been addressed to Dr. Laurent, as representing the deputation. I enclose a copy of this letter for your information. The memorandum mentioned particularly the desirability of employing a Lady Medical Officer from India for maternity work among the Indian women. It was suggested to you that this

matter might be taken up with the local Medical Department, and it was intimated that the Secretary of State would be prepared to give sympathetic consideration to any recommendations on the subject that the local Government might see their way to make.

6. A suggestion was made in the memorandum that special legislation should be passed extending recognition to Mohammedan law in certain matters, e. g., marriages and inheritance. As intimated to you by Lord Plymouth, the Secretary of State could reach no decision on this subject without prior reference to the local legal authorities. It is suggested that you and your co-religionists, if you wish to pursue the matter, should submit to the Colonial Government a memorandum showing, in as much detail as possible, the changes which you recommend, in order that the whole case may be submitted to the Secretary of State with the observations of the Colonial Government's legal advisers.

7. Various other questions concerning the position and treatment of the Muslims in Mauritius were referred to in the memorandum. These appeared to belong primarily to the sphere of local administration, over which the Secretary of State could not undertake to exercise a detailed contro-

It has been assumed that these points were put forward merely as illustrative of the disabilities to which the Muslims in Mauritius regard themselves as exposed, and of the desirability that they should be given greater influence in the government of the Colony. I am to repeat the assurance given by Lord Plymouth that these considerations will be borne in mind, and that nothing in the nature of unfair discrimination against the Muslims need be apprehended.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
(Sd) S. CAINE

Downing Street,
13th March, 1933.

94018/32.

Sir,

I am directed by Secretary Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister to refer to the letter from this Department 94018/32 of the 14th December 1932 acknowledging receipt of the memorandum submitted by the Deputation of Unofficial Members of the Council of Government in Mauritius on the subject of health and sanitation in the Colony.

The questions raised in this memorandum together with other matters relating to the health and

sanitation of Mauritius have been discussed by you and your colleagues at two meetings with the Secretary of State's Chief Medical Adviser, Dr. A. T. Stanton, and the Medical Secretary of the Colonial Medical Advisory Committee, Dr. A. J. R. O'Brien. At the second meeting Dr. J. B. Kirk, Director of the Medical Department of Mauritius was also present. The information given by you has confirmed the views already formed by the Secretary of State and his advisers on the representations made by the Governor both in despatches and verbally during his leave in this country as to the state of health conditions in Mauritius and the necessity for remedial measures, particularly in the prevention and treatment of malaria and ankylostomiasis.

As to the first disease, which is recognised to be the most important, Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister is disposed to agree with the view of the Deputation that it might be desirable that an expert in anti-malarial work should be engaged to review the whole position in Mauritius in the light of recent developments of knowledge on the subject and to consider what remedial measures can be taken. He is also disposed to agree that such an enquiry, to be effective, would have to be prolonged and that the proposed expert, if engaged, should remain in the Colony for some considerable period, say five years,

in order that he might have ample time for investigation, and might there-after himself supervise the carrying out of whatever measures he may recommend as necessary. It will be realised, however, that although the initial expenditure in connection with the appointment of such an expert may be comparatively small, eventually the cost may be large, and it is not at present possible to commit the Government of Mauritius to any considerable additional expenditure on medical matters. Enquiries are, therefore, now being pursued as to the possibility of securing assistance for this work from other sources.

Financial considerations may similarly prevent the present adoption of other proposals in the medical sphere which are recognised to be desirable. It is, not possible, therefore, to give any undertaking as to definite action arising out of the representations made by the Deputation. They may rest assured, however, that the importance of the health problem is fully realised by the Secretary of State and his advisers, including the Colonial Advisory Medical Committee to whom the representations of the Deputation have been reported. Opportunity is being taken of the presence of Dr. Kirk in this country to discuss with him various matters both of broad policy and of detail, and every endeavour will

be made to carry out such improvements in the health provision of the Colony as financial circumstances may permit. In the consideration of such measures, the information supplied by the Deputation and the views expressed by them will be continuously borne in mind and will be of great assistance.

To I am, etc.,
Dr. E. LAURENT. (Sgd.) H. R. COWELL.

2, Richmond Terrace,
Whitehall, S. W. I.
13th March, 1933.

Dear Mr. ATCHIA,

I ought to have written to you before to thank you for your amendments and additions to the record of our talk. They have been duly noted and placed officially on record. I take this opportunity of thanking you for the information which you have so liberally given. It will be of great use to the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies if and when the Secretary of State refers to them any proposals relating to Mauritius.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) ARTHUR MAYHEW.

Secretary, Advisory Committee on
Education in Colonies

*Notes of a talk with Mr. Goolam Mahomed**Dawjee Atchia regarding Education in Mauritius*

Mr. Atchia explained that he had come to England as a representative of the Moslem community in Mauritius, in connection with the Mauritius delegation, but not as a member of that delegation. The Moslem population comprised about 1/8th of the population of the colony and was occupied in the various professions and in commerce. He was a member of the Schools Committee and Manager of two Moslem schools, one of which received aid from public funds.

There were altogether three aided Moslem schools. An increase in the number was unlikely, as the need for more schools had not been established. In fact, the present policy was one of consolidation. In these aided Moslem schools, Urdu and Arabic were taught by teachers paid entirely from the management's funds, their salaries not being met, as were the salaries of other teachers, from grants-in-aid. For Urdu and Arabic instruction only half-an-hour daily was allowed. Consequently most of the work in these languages was done out of school hours.

In villages where there are no other schools most of the Moslem school-going population was attending Christian denominational schools. Though

attendance at religious instruction was voluntary, the general atmosphere was distinctively Christian, and even if children did not receive religious instruction they were generally present when it was being given. The Schools Committee was predominantly Roman Catholic. In no aided school was instruction in Hindustani or Arabic compulsory. As it was not a regular school subject or included in the public examinations, very little interest was taken in it. There was no strong demand at present for greater facilities for Indian languages, possibly owing to the withholding of such facilities for so long.

There was no separate school for Mohammedan girls, who, under existing arrangements usually left school at or before the age of twelve. He thought that there should be more provision for women teachers if separate girls' schools were found impossible. Better provision for Indian languages would increase the schools' attractiveness for girls. He would like also to see zenana classes established. Moslem women in the island were not kept strictly in purdah as a rule.

He advocated a separate secondary Government school for girls on the grounds that there was sometimes a difficulty in getting admission for Indian or coloured girls in the aided or secondary girls' schools.

Referring to the Royal College, he pointed out that there were no Indian members of the College Committee, and that no provision was made in the College for the teaching of Indian languages.

The remaining remarks of Mr. Atchia referred to education generally without special reference to the Moslem community.

As regards the Royal College, he regretted the abolition of external examinations below the stage of the school certificate, on the grounds that there was no public confidence in the result of examinations conducted by the school authorities. There was a general impression that school examinations involved favouritism. There was complete confidence in the Cambridge Junior and Preliminary Examinations.

He had recommend to the Finance Commission a reduction of expenditure on the Royal College by reduction of teaching staff and was glad that some attention had been paid to his recommendations.

He thought the superannuation rules of the College were too strict, not making enough allowance for backward pupils.

He agreed that the award of scholarships for study in England played for too important a part in Mauritius education and thought that admission to

the Civil Service should depend on the obtaining of a diploma irrespective of results in the examination for the English scholarships. In the award of such a diploma commercial subjects should receive attention.

As regards primary schools, he drew attention to the recommendations of the recent Commission on aided education, with which he was generally in agreement. He would like to see an increase in the number of Government schools. The salaries of the primary school teachers were too low. There was a general feeling that the primary school course was too ambitious.

He regretted the closure of the Training College for primary school teachers, and thought that it should have been possible to maintain it on a more economical basis. He regretted also the closure of the technical and trade schools. He strongly deprecated any attempt to divert pupils from the higher stages of general education at too early an age in the vocational courses of study.

, 112, Gower Street, W. C. I.

London, 23rd February 1933.

Dear Mr. MAYHEW,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 21st inst. with enclosed notes on our recent talk on educational matters in Mauritius.

I shall suggest a few amendments, viz:—

10. Paragraph 1 page one.

I am manager of two Moslem schools, one of which is a grant-in-aid school.

20. Paragraph 3.

In villages where there are no other schools Moslem children attend the Christian aided schools.

30. Paragraph 2 page two.

I consider it advisable to have a Government secondary school for girls. So far as the primary schools are concerned there is no difficulty for admission.

40. Paragraph 1, page three,

I wanted to say that Diplomas obtained in the Commercial Classes at the Royal College School, Port Louis, the examinations of which are, I understand, to be conducted by the London Chamber of Commerce, be considered as a qualification for admission to the Civil Service of the Colony, provided that the holders have also passed in English & French.

As regards the English Scholarship Examination it would be better to substitute in its place, an examination with a recognised diploma. I was given to understand that the other Members of the

Delegation and more particularly Dr. E. Laurent & Mr. Philippe Raffray gave their views on the subject. Suggestions were made in Mauritius that the Examinations should be below the B. A., or B. Sc. standard, but not inferior to the Intermediate. In addition to the above may I beg to ask whether your Committee would consider it favourably and recommend that a grant-in-aid be given to a Moslem High School, say in Port-Louis, where Urdu and Arabic could be taught along with English, French & other subjects even if the said School had a curriculum of its own.

The fact is that if we are compelled to follow the programme of the Primary or Secondary Schools as prepared by the Schools' Committee, we shall be handicapped in teaching properly the Oriental languages. The way to obtain the best result would be to have a curriculum of our own.

The need for such a school is keenly felt by the Muslim community of Mauritius. I might be allowed to add in support of such a grant that the Government of the Colony do not contribute in any way towards the maintenance of our religious institutions, whereas provision is made annually in the estimates for the Roman Catholic, Church of England and Presbyterian creeds. This should be

taken as an observation on my part and not as criticism.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing herewith a printed Report issued by the Muslim Educational Society of Mauritius and I most respectfully and most earnestly pray that you would be pleased to peruse same.

Requesting your kind consideration and support and with my best thanks.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) G. M. D. ATCHIA.

To

Arthur Mayhew Esquire,

Jt. Secretary,

Advisory Education Committee.

Whitehall S. W. I.

