

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Indicine DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2038	Press ~~Mis.~~
131-133	
Dated 10 . 12. 1918	

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
10th December 1867.

Read the following papers :—

No. 131. From the Secretary to the Government of India, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George ; dated Simla, 31st October 1867, No. 6062.

Home Department.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, No. 1588, commenting on the serious mortality which occurred among the Madras convicts at Port Blair during July last.

2. In reply, I am desired to state, for the information of His Excellency the Governor in Council, that the subject had already occupied the attention of the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah and of the Government of India, and that remedial measures are at present under consideration, which it is hoped will be effectual.

3. The mortality is said to have been in great measure owing to climatic influences, resulting from the large quantity of jungle still existing uncleared, &c., and to the insufficient food purchased by the convicts, who receive a money allowance, and who deprive themselves of proper nutriment with a view to save money. But the specially heavy mortality among the Madras convicts is mainly attributed by the Port Blair authorities to the bad condition in which they arrive in the Settlement.

4. Extracts are herewith forwarded, for the information of the Government of Madras, from the reports of the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, the Superintendent, and the Senior Medical Officer of Port Blair, bearing upon the

Extract, paragraph 4, from Major Davies' letter of 25th September, No. 2129 P. B.-68R.
Extract, paragraph 7, from Colonel Ford's report.
Extract from Dr. Rean's remarks.

Madras convicts. I am to remark that the Port Mout gang of convicts referred to was not allowed to purchase food; but was brought under the messing system by Mr. Homfray.

5. The suggestion that the cause of death should be inserted in the casualty returns will be brought to the notice of the Superintendent of Port Blair, who will be asked to comply with it in future.

Extract from a letter from Major H. NELSON DAVIES, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, to E. C. BAYLEY, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Simla ; dated Rangoon, 25th September 1867, No. 2129 P. B.-68 R.

Paragraph 4. With reference to the remarks in paragraph 7, the observations made during the recent inspection bear out the assertion that the Madras convicts arrive in a low condition, which, it is understood, arises from convicts in the Madras Presidency receiving a lower scale of nutritious diet than in Bengal, Bombay, or Burmah ; but it will be borne in mind that the condition of the Madras prisoners who worked at Garden Hill under Mr. Homfray, and who were by far the best fed gang on the Settlement, were in decidedly the best condition of any of the prisoners. Dr. Rean states in his report that the men at Port Mout continue healthy, and that these prisoners have been more liberally dealt with, which is undoubtedly the fact, and quite accounts for their good condition ; nor is it less a fact that well fed convicts will be found in a good state of health in most of the stations, if not in all.

Extract from a report on the affairs of the Penal Settlement of Port Blair for the month of July 1867.

Paragraph 7. It will be noticed that Dr. Rean has observed that which attracted the attention of his predecessors and myself, namely, the low condition of health in which Madras

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Judicial Department,
10th December 1867.*

convicts arrive at this Settlement: the death rates are heavier from the newest occupied stations than on the oldest and longest cleared stations, being half that of the former.

Extract from Dr. Rean's Remarks.

The deaths amongst Madras convicts amounts to 4.9 per cent., and amongst all others 1.4 per cent.

The difference here is very great, and I am inclined to attribute it to change of climate, and partially to the men arriving in a lower condition of health than happens from other Presidencies; yet, on this latter point, I would speak with reserve, as I have not inspected any batch of convicts on their landing since I took charge, as the season for their deportation here had passed; but from the numbers of quite recent arrivals treated in hospital, with a scorbutic tendency chiefly from Madras, and the opinion of the Medical Subordinates, whose experience is very extensive, from their constant intercourse and acquaintance with the convicts, I believe there is much confidence to be placed in the opinion that the Madras convicts arrive in a poorer condition of health than others, and are consequently less able to withstand the inclemency of the monsoon. My predecessor wrote as follows regarding the last gang of Madras convicts, numbering 123 men, on the 23rd April:—"It is my duty to bring to your notice the wretched emaciated condition generally in which these prisoners arrived here. Allowing for depression of spirits, and, in some instances, "sea sickness, yet the whole seemed as if half-starved."

Analyzing still further the mortality for the month, I find that, at the oldest and longest cleared stations, the death rate has been 1.3 per cent.; at newly cleared, or those where extensive clearings have recently been made, 3.8 per cent.—the number on which the calculation is based being double as many at the old stations.

Referred to the Inspector General of Jails for report, with reference to the remarks on the diet of prisoners.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
18th November 1867.

(Signed) R. S. ELLIS,
Chief Secretary.

No. 132. From the Inspector General of Jails, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Kurnool, 30th November 1867, No. 138.

I have the honor to return the letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, No. 6062, with enclosures, which was referred to me for report with respect to the remarks regarding diet.

2. I believe that the dietary in force in the Madras Jails is ample, and that the unusual mortality which took place amongst the Madras convicts at Port Blair in July last was, in all probability, owing to the same cause to which that amongst those who remained in the Presidency may be principally attributed, viz., the great state of weakness from famine and disease from which they were suffering when received into Jail. The practice, heretofore, was to embark all convicts, unless they were too ill to stand the voyage; but the existence of old age, infirmity, or of chronic disease not immediately dangerous to life, was not permitted to interfere with the carrying out of sentences of transportation, and a number of convicts must necessarily have arrived at Port Blair in bad condition. This, however, is not likely again to happen, as orders have recently been issued to the effect that all convicts under sentence of transportation to the Andamans are to be examined prior to embarkation, and that those who are unfit for labor by reason of old age, disease, or infirmity, are not to be sent. Should the mortality still continue, it must then be put down to climatic influences, or to the other cause mentioned in paragraph 3 of

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the Secretary's letter, although the practice therein referred to is not common with Madras men. In Regiments of Native Infantry, it was well known that the Madras Sepoy did not willingly stint himself in the article of food, and he was rarely known to save, whereas it was quite the contrary in the case of Hindoostanees serving in Madras Regiments. However, this cause, if it does exist, may be removed by the introduction of the messing system, which is said to have been so successful at Port Mouat.

3. An enclosure from the Nellore Collector received along with the letter under reference is herewith returned.

No. 133. ORDER THEREON, 10th December 1867, No. 2035.

Ordered that a copy of the foregoing letter from the Inspector General of Jails be sent to the Government of India.

(True Extract).

Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of Jails.

Ed. J. H. Burns.

And said they both

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Security and Stability
Among the Brethren
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Feb. 26/77.

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John F. Kennedy

Dear Aunt Ellen & Mary Ann

19. 7. 1911

John H. Sawyer & Co.

will be asked to carefully read it in future. —

The Editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*

is inserted in the carefully selected suitable language.

the suggestion that the cause of death should

*Ergebenste Empfehlung
an die Herren*

affirmed to purchase good, but never brought under the

And the Post Master Genl of Canada referred to was not

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W. A. Harris

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John. Deane, Esq.

He is the Lord of the
The West India Company
of the India, the West India

Office of the

of the directors of the company of

year. Letter of the 1st March 1788, concerning the

with of the India, during July last

2. In reply I have desired to state, for the information

of the directors the Governor in Council, that the subject

has already occupied the attention of the West India Company

of the India, and of the Government of the West India

that several measures are at present under consideration

which it is hoped, will be successful

3. It is very true to say that in great measure

owing to the influence, resulting from the large

quantity of sugar, which is exported, the sugar

the West India Company, and the Government of the West India