

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Judicial DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	2036	Press
		~~Mis.~~
Dated	10 . 12 . 19-1867	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

4/5

No. 2036.

FROM.

R. S. ELLIS, Esq., C. B.,

Chief Secretary to the Government of Fort Saint George,

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

HOME DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter dated the 31st October last, No. 6062, and its enclosure, I am directed by the Governor in Council to transmit the annexed copy of a letter* from the Inspector General of Jails in this Presidency, stating that the dietary in force in the Jails under his supervision is ample, and that the unusual mortality which occurred amongst the Madras convicts at Port Blair in July last was probably owing to the same cause which affected the convicts in this Presidency—extreme state of weakness, occasioned by famine and disease, when they were received into Jail.

* 30th November 1867, No. 133.

2. It will be seen that the practice has been to embark all convicts sentenced to transportation, unless they were absolutely ill and unable to proceed on the voyage to Port Blair, but, under recent instructions from Government, those convicts who are unfitted to labor by reason of old age, disease, or infirmity, will not be sent in future.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

FORT SAINT GEORGE,

10th December 1867.

Chief Secretary.

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

Sept 18/67

No 2036- Judicial Department

The Secretary to the Government of India -
Armi Department

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the Inspector General
of Prisons in this Presidency
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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 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.

23d Nov/67. No 138.

N.
W. H. Burns

Exd. J. H. Burns.

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J. St George }
10th Decr. 1867 }

Induced by Dr. Smith
1845-1846
The Secretary to the
Board of Agriculture
1846-1847
Dated 10th November 1846