

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	1036	Press ~~Mis.~~
	(171-172)	
Dated	22-8-	1967.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,

22nd August 1867.

Read the following :—

No. 171. Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor General of India in Council ; dated India Office, London, 14th June 1867, No. 72.

With reference to Sir Charles Wood's Despatch of the 24th of March 1864,

No. 34, I forward herewith a copy of a Despatch* from the Governor of Ceylon, which has been transmitted to

* 6th March 1867, No. 57.

this Department from the Colonial Office, reporting upon the condition of Indian laborers employed on the plantations in Ceylon.

Despatch from Sir H. G. R. ROBINSON, Governor of Ceylon, to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies ; dated Ceylon, 6th March 1867, No. 57.

Miscellaneous.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Secretary Cardwell's Despatch, No. 101, of the 23rd March last, transmitting a copy of a letter from the India Office, on the subject of the Ordinance No. 11 of 1865, entitled "An Ordinance to consolidate and amend the law relating to servants, laborers, &c.," and calling, as suggested by the Secretary of State for India, for half-yearly reports on the condition of Indian laborers employed on the plantations in Ceylon.

I now beg to submit such information on the points referred to in that Despatch, as it has been in my power to obtain.

Number.—The number of immigrant coolies employed at the end of the past half-year upon the estates in the various districts of the Colony was, as nearly as can be ascertained, 105,000.

These men, after working for one or two years in Ceylon, generally return to their country, with the savings of their wages, after the coffee crop is gathered, and come back to Ceylon before the next crop is ripe, so that they are constantly going over to, and returning from, India. In various parts of the Island, however, many, who originally came over to work on the estates, have become settlers and have acquired landed property.

The following is a Statement of the arrivals and departures during the half-years ended the 30th June and the 31st December 1866 :—

First half-year.		Second half-year.		Total.	
Arrivals.	Departures.	Arrivals.	Departures.	Arrivals.	Departures.
48,315	39,543	40,213	9,686	88,528	49,229

Births and Deaths.—The number of births and deaths it has been impossible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy : but in those districts where information on this point has been obtained, it would appear that the average number of births is about 2 per cent., and that of deaths very nearly the same.

Wages.—Adult males earn from 7*d.* to 9*d.* a day, the amount varying in different districts. Female laborers and boys are paid at rates ranging from 4½*d.* to 7*d.*

Number of working days.—On an average each laborer works for five days during the week.

Complaints.—The most frequent causes of complaints by managers of estates are desertion, and coffee-stealing ; and, on the other hand, complaints are occasionally made of harsh treatment of coolies by their masters ; but such cases are rare. On the whole, the relation between the employer and the employed may be considered very satisfactory.

Public.
No. 72.

INDIA OFFICE;
London, the 14th June 1867.

To His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Governor General of India in Council.

SIR,

WITH reference to Sir Charles Wood's Despatch of the 24th of March 1864, No. 34, I forward herewith a copy of a Despatch* from the Governor of Ceylon, which has been transmitted to this Department from the Colonial Office, reporting upon the condition of Indian laborers employed on the plantations in Ceylon.

* 6th March 1867, No. 57.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) STAFFORD H. NORTHCOTE.

Miscellaneous.
No. 57.

NEWARA ELIZA;
Ceylon, the 6th March 1867.

Governor SIR H. ROBINSON, to LORD CARNARVON.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Secretary Cardwell's Despatch No. 101 of the 23rd March last, transmitting a copy of a letter from the India Office on the subject of the Ordinance No. 11 of 1865, entitled "An Ordinance to consolidate and amend the law relating to servants, laborers, &c.," and calling, as suggested by the Secretary of State for India, for half-yearly reports on the condition of Indian laborers employed on the plantations in Ceylon.

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Complaints.—The most frequent causes of complaints by managers of estates are desertion, and coffee-stealing; and, on the other hand, complaints are occasionally made of harsh treatment of coolies by their masters; but such cases are rare. On the whole, the relation between the employer and the employed may be considered very satisfactory.

Education.—There are few, if any, schools on the estates, so that it may almost be said that immigrant coolies receive no secular instruction. In some districts clergymen and catechists are in the habit of visiting the estates, but the good result of their teaching is generally reported to be scarcely appreciable.

Condition.—As a rule, coolies have good accommodation, being housed in well built "lines," which are clean and comfortable. They are supplied with rice, which is their staple food, at a price much below the market rate; the loss on this issue of rice being borne by the proprietors.

In cases of slight sickness coolies are treated by the Superintendents of estates, who are supplied with the necessary remedies; but when seriously ill, or when accidents occur, the coolies are sent to one of the Government Civil Hospitals, where they are properly attended to at a cost of 6d. a-day each, which sum is paid by the owners of the estates.

The agents of the Government in the several Provinces of the Island are unanimous in reporting that it is believed that the coolies are better fed, housed, and generally better cared for here than in their own country.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) HERCULES G. R. ROBINSON.

No. 2706

Copy forwarded to the Government of *Port of George* with reference to communication thence No. *734. Dated 29th Jan. 1864.*

By Order, &c.,

HOME DEPARTMENT;
SIMLA,
The 26th July 1867.

Ad. Harington
Offy. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

Pro 29th June/1867-1868/35-

2706/87
21/10/87

In the 1867 West
22 Aug 87
Under Secy. of India
21/10/87

6 June 1867

Copy sent to the
Commissioner of the
Police, Calcutta, with
the condition of the
22nd August 1867/1868
JP. D. 1867/1868
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