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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1151	Press ~~Mis.~~
Dated	16-9-1867	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
16th September 1867.*

Read the following :—

No. 143. 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, 9th July 1867, No. 85.

I herewith forward, for the information and guidance of your Excellency in Council, a copy of a correspondence which has taken place between this Department and the Foreign Office, relative to the disposal of property of Indian immigrants dying in the colony of French Guiana.

From E. HAMMOND, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, India Office; dated Foreign Office, 4th December 1866.

I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a letter* from the French Ambassador at this Court, upon the subject of claims made upon the property of Indian coolies dying in French Guiana; and I

* 30th November.

am to request that, in laying this letter before Lord Cranborne, you will move His Lordship to cause Lord Stanley to be informed what answer should be returned to Prince de la Tour D'Auvergne.

LONDRES,
30 Novembre. 1866.

A Son Excellence LORD STANLEY, M. P.

M. LE MINISTRE,

Parmi les travailleurs recrutés dans l'Inde, et qui ont été expédiés à la Guyane Française, plusieurs sont morts laissant des successions généralement d'une médiocre importance, qui sont quelques fois réclamées par d'autres émigrans qui invoquent leur qualité de parents.

L'administration coloniale n'a, pour contrôler leurs déclarations, que les renseignemens contenus sur les listes nominatives dressées lors du recrutement; et où sont souvent mentionnés les liens de parenté existant entre les émigrans.

En droit, ces renseignemens manquent du caractère d'authenticité nécessaire pour faire foi et, d'un autre côté, l'insuffisance habituelle de ces successions ne comporte pas les frais qu'entraînerait la recherche d'informations plus positives. Les intérêts à sauvegarder étant ceux des sujets anglais, le Gouvernement de l'Empereur a pensé qu'il était nécessaire de s'entendre avec celui de la Reine sur les dispositions à prendre pour arriver, par des moyens simples et pratiques, à une attribution régulière des successions dont il s'agit. Je serais très reconnaissant à Votre Excellence de vouloir bien me faire connaître les propositions qu'elle croirait devoir faire pour atteindre ce but et donner satisfaction aux intérêts des travailleurs anglais recrutés dans l'Inde ou de leurs héritiers.

Veillez agréer, &c.,
(Signé) P. DE LA TOUR D'AUVERGNE.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; dated India Office, 18th December 1866.

I have laid before the Secretary of State for India in Council your letter, dated the 4th instant, enclosing a copy of a letter from the French Ambassador at this Court, on the subject of the disposal of the property of Indian immigrant laborers dying in French Guiana; and requesting to be informed what answer should, in the opinion of Viscount Cranborne, be returned to the Prince de la Tour D'Auvergne.

2. In reply, I am directed to state that, in conformity with the practice which prevails in the British colonies, the British Consul in each French colony receiving Indian laborers should be charged with the duty of receiving charge of the property of deceased Indian immigrants. In the event of any immigrant leaving a wife or child in the colony, the money would naturally be made

over to them. In the event of there being no relations of the deceased on the spot, the Consul would communicate with the Protector of Emigrants at the port in India from which the immigrant had come, with a view to his relations being traced out; and on their discovery, the money would be remitted by the Consul to the Protector for delivery to the rightful claimant or claimants.

From J. MURRAY, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, India Office; dated Foreign Office, 24th December 1866.

I am directed by Lord Stanley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, suggesting that Her Majesty's Consul in French Guiana should take charge of the property of Indian immigrants dying in French Guiana; but I am to state to you, in reply, for the information of Viscount Cranborne, that there is no British Consul in French Guiana, and that some other course would appear to be necessary in order to meet the views of the French Government in this matter.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office; dated India Office, 10th January 1867.

I have laid before the Secretary of State for India in Council Mr. Murray's letter of the 24th ultimo, stating that there is no British Consul in French Guiana, and that some arrangement for the disposal of the property of Indian immigrants dying in that colony would seem to be necessarily different from that pointed out in my letter of the 28th December last.

2. In reply, I am directed to remark that, when the Convention with France of the 1st July 1861 was under discussion, there was a distinct understanding that a British Consul would be maintained at every French colony to which Indian laborers were to be taken. All the provisions in the Convention, relating to the care of the interests of the immigrants when they should have reached the colonies, were based on this understanding: and it is perfectly clear from the 24th Article, not only that French Guiana was one of the colonies to which the Convention was immediately to apply, but that the ground on which it should so apply was that a British Consul either was, or was to be, stationed there.

3. It is obviously impossible that the intentions of the Convention, with regard to the protection which it has been considered essential to secure for the Natives of India when they leave their own country to labor in distant countries, can be fulfilled unless, as contemplated by the Convention, a British Consul is on the spot to attend to their interests. Entirely irrespective, therefore, of the immediate question on which the present correspondence originated, I am directed by Viscount Cranborne to request that Lord Stanley may be moved to take such steps as he may deem suitable for affording to the Indian immigrants in French Guiana, the benefit of that Consular support and protection which it was originally intended that they should enjoy in common with the Indian laborers in the other French colonies.

From J. MURRAY, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, India Office; dated Foreign Office, 19th January 1867.

I have laid before Lord Stanley your letter of the 10th instant, relative to Consular protection to Indian immigrants in French Guiana, and I am directed by His Lordship to request that you will call Viscount Cranborne's attention to a letter from this office of the 22nd May 1862, enclosing a report from the gentleman who was sent in that year as Consul to Cayenne, from which report it appeared that coolie immigration had been abandoned, and that the necessity for coolie labor did not exist.

2. Mr. Consul Perry sent a further report, which appears by inadvertence not to have been sent to the India Office, but a copy of which I now enclose.

3. It appears that, on the receipt of these papers, Her Majesty's Government felt that they would not be justified in continuing the expense of maintaining a Consul in French Guiana, and he was therefore withdrawn: and, considering that no British imperial interests require the presence of a Consul at Cayenne, Lord Stanley feels, and Lord Cranborne will probably concur with

him, that, in view of the facts detailed by Mr. Perry, he could not properly apply to Parliament for a grant of a Consular salary for that district.

4. His Lordship would suggest that the interests of the few coolies remaining in French Guiana might, perhaps, be attended to by the Governor of the neighbouring colony of British Guiana.

From G. R. PERRY, Esq., Her Majesty's Consul for French Guiana, to the Earl RUSSELL, K. G., &c., &c.; dated British Consulate, French Guiana, Cayenne, 1st May 1862, No. 3.

I have the honor to inform your Lordship that, on the 11th ultimo, I had my first official interview with the Governor of this colony, M. le Comte Louis Tardy de Montravel, who received me kindly and politely, but at the same time with surprise, as His Excellency (at first) could not understand why a British Agent had been appointed to French Guiana, there not being a single British subject (white or black) in the whole colony, or any trade with Great Britain or its colonies. I, however, explained that the principal duty I had been charged with was to watch the interests of such British subjects who might be engaged to serve as laborers under the Convention concluded between Her Majesty and the Emperor of the French at Paris on the 1st July last, and which will come into force on the 1st July next.

2. In my Despatch No. 2 of the 17th ultimo, I stated that the importation of coolies into this colony had been suppressed, and that I would endeavor by this mail to furnish your Lordship with the various reasons why the colonists of French Guiana had come to this determination.

3. Since 1855, three cargoes of coolies have been introduced into this colony from Pondicherry.

4. The first cargo came in a ship bound for Martinique, but which, through mismanagement, was wrecked on this coast; and as at that time there was no favorable opportunity of sending the coolies on to their destination, they were detained in the colony. At least one-half of these unfortunate creatures died, and it was found necessary, directly an occasion presented itself, to send the survivors to Martinique and Guadeloupe.

5. The second cargo arrived in 1855. It is supposed the majority have died, and that the remainder are dispersed about the various small sugar estates.

6. The third cargo arrived off Cayenne in 1860; but the inhabitants begged they might not be allowed to land, so the Governor was forced to send them on to Guadeloupe, with the exception of some 200, who were retained to act as household servants in the town of Cayenne.

7. The total number of coolies in the colony now is between five and six hundred, counting women and children.

8. The Governor and other persons inform me they now have more coolies in French Guiana than they know what to do with; indeed, the only large landed proprietor here, M. Goynera, states that he would be only too delighted to get rid of those he has already in his employ, as he finds them quite useless.

9. M. de Montravel has addressed a communication to the French Colonial Office, stating that the colonists were quite unable to find employment for emigrants from India; and that it would be some years, *if ever*, before the colony could be in a position to find work for them. I think it very creditable both to the authorities and colonists of French Guiana that they have arrived at this determination, as the mortality amongst the coolies has been fearful, and would be still greater were their numbers augmented. They would actually die of starvation if from nothing else.

10. The coolies, my Lord, generally die from fever brought on by the unhealthiness of the climate, or from a small insect called the "chigue," which gets into the feet of persons who do not wear shoes. This insect, if not taken out immediately, produces great irritation and fever; besides which, their filthy habits, bad blood, poor food, and utter helplessness when sick, tend to carry them off very rapidly.

16th September 1867.

11. This vast colony is *totally uncultivated*, and it stands to reason no employment can be found for the coolies. The few persons here, who *pretend* to cultivate small estates, have no capital, and therefore can only pay very few laborers.

12. It is strange, my Lord, there should be such a vast difference between French and British Guiana. In British Guiana (Demerara) there are no less than 30,000 coolies, 20,000 Chinese and 5000 Portuguese, employed in raising sugar, cacao, &c. &c.; whereas in French Guiana not sufficient produce is raised even for the consumption of this small town. The very cattle come from the Brazils in English schooners; indeed, every article of consumption is *imported* either direct from France or the United States, and absolutely nothing is exported, except a few ship-loads of wood.

13. The town of Cayenne (the only town in French Guiana) is entirely supported by the Government employés (naval and military), kept here to guard the convicts; and were they to be removed to-morrow, I doubt if the creole population would amount to above 3000 souls, of which 2500 are liberated slaves.

14. Cayenne is in a most disgraceful state, even the small fortification would do discredit to a South American Republic. I should have imagined the French authorities would keep the houses and streets in good repair, considering they have no less than 6000 convicts maintained at the expense of the French Government; but, strange to say, such is not the case. I believe it costs the Government 2,000,000 Francs yearly to support the convicts, and the naval and military forces stationed here to prevent their escaping.

15. Some convicts are imprisoned off the town in hulks; others at small stations on the coast; and the best behaved at a place called Marone—one day's sail from Cayenne.

16. Here the convicts are allowed to cultivate small pieces of land; but what can a single arm do in a country where the weeds grow faster than they can be plucked out! At Marone the convicts are also permitted to marry with the female convicts. Fifty women were married a short time back, 48 of whom had been transported for infanticide.

17. In one instance, the woman had murdered her husband, and the man his wife.

18. The Superintendent of Marone assured me these marriages answered admirably, and that the convicts seemed, comparatively speaking, happy.

19. I cannot pretend to give your Lordship information with regard to the convict system pursued here, as I find the employés not very ready to enter into conversation on the subject; and I have thought it more prudent, under the circumstances, to abstain from asking any questions.

20. Having endeavored in a few words to explain why, under existing circumstances, it became a matter of necessity for discontinuing the importation of coolies into this colony.

From J. MURRAY, Esq., to H. MERIVALE, Esq., C.B., &c., &c.; dated Foreign Office, 22nd May 1862.

I am directed by Earl Russell to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for India in Council, a copy of a Despatch* from Her Majesty's Consul at Cayenne, reporting that the importation of coolies into French Guiana has been abandoned.

* No. 2, dated 17th April 1862.

From G. R. PERRY, Esq., to the Earl RUSSELL, K.G., &c., &c.; dated Cayenne, 17th April 1862, No. 2.

To my astonishment I find that the system for cultivating the lands of this colony by the importation of coolies from Pondicherry and British India, has been completely abandoned.

2. In order to make your Lordship thoroughly acquainted with the various reasons why the colonists of French Guiana refuse to employ emigrants from India, I must obtain further information. Therefore I will delay addressing your Lordship a further Despatch on this subject until the 1st of next month, by which time I trust to be better informed in reference to this matter than I am at present.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office; dated India Office, 15th February 1867.

I have laid before the Secretary of State for India in Council your letter, dated the 19th ultimo, stating the reasons which led Lord Stanley to think it inexpedient to appoint a British Consul in French Guiana; and suggesting that the Governor of British Guiana may be requested to take charge of the interests of the few Indian coolies remaining in that colony.

2. In reply, I am directed to state that Viscount Cranborne agrees in the opinion of Lord Stanley, that it is not necessary, under existing circumstances, that a British Consul should be appointed to French Guiana, and that it will be sufficient if the Governor of British Guiana be requested to look after the interests of the coolies now in the colony.

3. Lord Cranborne has to request that the Governor may be directed in carrying out this commission, in the first instance, to ascertain the number of the coolies and their general condition, and to ascertain whether any of them are desirous of returning to India; and whether the colonial authorities are willing to consent to their departure, and to bear the expense of the return passage.

From E. C. EGERTON, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State, India Office; dated Foreign Office, 17th June 1867.

With reference to your letter of the 15th February last, I am directed by Lord Stanley to transmit to you, for the information of the Secretary of State for India, copies of a correspondence* with the French Ambassador at this

* To, 2nd April 1867.
From, 13th June 1867.

Court, from which it appears that the French Government concur in the proposed arrangements for providing for the proper disposal of property left by Indian coolies dying in French Guiana, and have sent instructions accordingly to the Governor of French Guiana.

2. I am to add that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been requested to send corresponding instructions to the Governor of British Guiana.

From LORD STANLEY, to LE PRINCE DE LA TOUR D'AUVERGNE, &c., &c.; dated Foreign Office, 2nd April 1867.

I have not failed to give due consideration to your Excellency's note of the 30th November last, suggesting that some arrangement should be come to between the Governments of France and Great Britain, with a view to the adoption of some simple and practical measures for providing for the proper disposal of property left by Indian coolies dying in French Guiana.

2. After communicating with the Secretaries of State for the Colonial and Indian Departments on the subject, I beg leave to state to your Excellency that, as there is no British Consul in French Guiana, and as the Government of British Guiana is too far removed to afford efficient assistance in this matter, Her Majesty's Government would suggest to the Government of His Imperial Majesty that the Governor of French Guiana should, if possible, be instructed to pursue the course adopted in similar cases in the British Colonies, *viz.*, when there is any suspicion or doubt concerning claims advanced by alleged relatives of the deceased coolies, to communicate with the Emigration Agent by whom the coolies were collected in India, and with the Protector at the port from which they were despatched, in order to obtain the assistance of these officials in tracing the real relatives of the deceased coolies.

3. I beg leave to add that, if the French Government should agree to adopt this course, the Governor of British Guiana will be instructed to render every assistance to the authorities in French Guiana in remitting to its proper destination the money due to the relatives of deceased coolies, in cases where those authorities may find any difficulty in doing so.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
16th September 1867.*

LONDRES,
13 Juin 1867.

A Son Excellence LORD STANLEY, M. P.

M. LE MINISTRE,

Je me suis empressé de communiquer au Gouvernement de l'Empereur les mesures proposées par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique concernant les successions des coolies à la Guyane Française, et qui faisaient l'objet de la lettre que Votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser à la date du 2 Avril dernier. D'après la combinaison suggérée par l'administration anglaise, le Gouvernement de la Guyane Française, en cas de doute sur l'attribution de ces successions, réclamerait les renseignements nécessaires de l'agent qui a recruté les coolies décédés, ou du "Protector" dans le port où ils ont été embarqués. M. le Marquis de Moustier me fait savoir, aujourd'hui, que M. le Ministre de la Marine considère lui-même les mesures proposées par le Cabinet de Londres comme étant les plus pratiques, et qu'il leur donne son adhésion. Des instructions dans ce sens ont été, en conséquence, transmises à M. le Gouverneur de la Guyane Française.

Veillez agréer, &c.,

(Signé) P. DE LA TOUR D'AUVERGNE.

No. 3817.

Copy forwarded to the Government of Fort Saint George for information.

By Order, &c.

HOME DEPARTMENT, SIMLA,

23rd August 1867.

(Signed) A. H. HARRINGTON,

Offg. Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 144.

ORDER THEREON, 16th September 1867, No. 1151.

Communicated to the Protector of Emigrants.

(True Extract).

A. J. ARBUTHNOT,

Chief Secretary.

To the Protector of Emigrants.

is too far removed to afford efficient assistance in this matter, Her Majesty's Government would suggest to the Government of His Imperial Majesty that the Governor of French Guiana should, if possible, be instructed to pursue the course adopted in similar cases in the British Colonies, viz., when there is any suspicion or doubt concerning claims advanced by alleged relatives of the deceased coolies, to communicate with the Emigration Agent by whom the coolies were collected in India, and with the Protector at the port from which they were despatched, in order to obtain the assistance of these officials in tracing the real relatives of the deceased coolies.

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I have, &c.,

(Signed) STANLEY.

LONDRES,
13 Juin 1867.

A Son Excellence LORD STANLEY, M. P.

M. LE MINISTRE,

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Veillez agréer, &c.,

(Signé) PRINCE DE LA TOUR D'AUVERGNE.

No. 1151.

COPY forwarded to the Government of
for information.

By Order, &c.,

HOME DEPARTMENT,

SIMLA,

The 12th August 1867.

Offg. Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

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