

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Rule 10 DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	8/9	Press Mis.
Dated	6-7	1968

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
6th July 1868.*

Read the following :—

No. 43. 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, 21st March 1868, No. 67.

I forward, herewith, copy of a letter* from the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, transmitting copies of reports relative to mortality among the immigrants in the Mauritius during the half-year ending 30th June 1867.

* Dated 10th March 1868.

2. I desire to draw the particular attention of your Excellency in Council to the statement in the last paragraph of the Under Secretary's letter, of the comparatively small ratio of mortality among the immigrants employed on estates.

From Sir FREDERIC ROGERS, Bart., Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the Under Secretary of State for India ; dated 10th March 1868.

I am directed by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos to transmit to you, for the consideration of Secretary Sir Stafford Northcote, in connexion with my letter of this day's date, enclosing an Ordinance passed by the Legislature of Mauritius for the consolidation and amendment of

* No. 324, 4th December.

certain laws relating to Indian immigrants, &c., a copy of a Despatch* from Sir H. Barkly, with the usual summary, by the Protector of Immigrants, of the reports received from the Stipendiary Magistrates in the Colony for the half-year ending 30th June 1867. I am also to enclose a copy of a report† upon these documents by the Emigration Commissioners.

† Land Board, 25th February 1868.

Sir Stafford Northcote will observe that the percentage of deaths amongst immigrants employed upon estates is much smaller than that among immigrants not so employed.

From Sir HENRY BARKLY, K. C. B., Governor of Mauritius, to His Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos ; dated 4th December 1867, No. 324.

I have the honor to transmit the usual summary, by the Protector of Immigrants, of the contents of the Stipendiary Magistrates' reports of their visitation of sugar estates during the first half of the present year. Mr. Beyts explains the cause of its having been deferred until so late a period.

2. The contents appear satisfactory on the whole, considering especially the terrible ordeal through which the Colony was at the time passing. I have given directions that the recommendations as to more specific information being furnished by the Magistrates, in certain respects, shall be attended to.

3. The condition of the camps and hospitals as reported exhibits, as will be seen, continuous improvement ; but one of the Medical Inspectors, Dr. Desjardins, having alleged that there was a disposition on the part of some of the Magistrates in his district not to enforce very strictly the provisions of Ordinance No. 29 of 1865, on the subject of the latter, I felt it my duty to call for explanations from these gentlemen, and to issue a circular pointing out that, whilst, during the height of the epidemic, some allowance might have been fairly claimed by the medical attendants of estates for irregularity in their visits, &c., I could no longer allow the law to become a dead letter, and should hold the Stipendiary Magistrates strictly responsible for the future, if they failed to exercise, on any occasion, the stringent powers vested in them.

4. Though this has led to some recrimination, in which the arbitrary language and want of discretion of the Medical Inspectors were complained of, perhaps not without some excuse, I have no doubt that it will eventually produce a good effect.

5. For an account of the sickness and mortality which occurred on the estates, the Protector refers to the Medical Inspectors. Their reports cannot, however, as explained in my Despatches of 5th April and 31st May, Nos. 74 and 130, be so complete or reliable as could be desired, owing to two out of the three having themselves been incapacitated for work during several months by the epidemic fever, as well as the inability of the estates' doctors, during the great pressure on their services, to keep the hospital registers in the manner prescribed.

6. Still, the general result of the returns undoubtedly tends to prove, as stated in the last of the Despatches above referred to, that even where the requirements of the new law were most imperfectly realized, the state of comparative preparedness in which the planters found themselves on the outbreak of the fever was productive of much good, and kept the ratio of mortality on the larger plantations far below what it was among the general population of the Colony.

7. It appears from the recapitulation appended by Dr. Desjardins to his report for the first quarter of the year that the deaths in his three districts—Pamplemousses, Rivieredu Rempart, and Flacy—on estates having 35,285 engaged laborers were, notwithstanding the prevalence of the epidemic, more or less, in all of them, only 239, or at the rate of under 2½ per cent. per annum. During the second quarter matters grew more serious, but even then, in Pamplemousses, the worst district, the mortality among estates' laborers did not exceed 1.75 per cent., or at the rate of 7 per cent. per annum; whilst, taking the whole of his district, including Moka (placed under his charge in consequence of Dr. Edwards invaliding), the deaths, out of 36,913, were 414, or at the rate of 4½ per cent. per annum.

8. Dr. Gouly, as Medical Inspector of the Plaives Wilhelms District, where the fever also prevailed so extensively that the cases of sickness were 102 per cent. of the number engaged, summarizes the mortality of the six months on 27 estates employing 7,160 men at 78, or about 2½ per cent. per annum.

Unfortunately the statistics of the adjoining district of Black River (which he took over from Dr. Edwards) tell a very different tale; for it was there, as often mentioned, that the epidemic began, and from first to last committed the greatest ravages. The figures given show that out of 4,049 laborers engaged on 20 estates, no less than 401, or nearly 10 per cent. (9.903) died in the course of six months; whilst, among the women, out of 1,042 cases of sickness, 264 died, and among the children, sad to say, out of 751 no less than 264. The total number of women and children on the estates could not be correctly ascertained.

9. Such rates of mortality are heart-rending to contemplate; but when it is considered that the only medical man resident in the district was struck down at the very commencement, that no other could for a long time be obtained, that the planters themselves, their families, and their overseers were all equally suffering, and that for a long time not a grain of quinine was procurable for money, it will probably appear more extraordinary that less than 800 deaths occurred among the Indians on estates, than that a far larger number did not fall victims. At any rate, there can be no question that the proportion of deaths among the unengaged population of the district was far heavier.

10. In strange contrast to this picture come Dr. Gouly's returns on the Grand Port and Savaune Districts, which wholly escaped the epidemic. In the former, out of 12,104 men employed on 31 estates, the deaths were but 77, or 0.636 per cent., for the six months; in the latter, out of 9,178 men employed on 28 estates, the deaths were 84, or 0.915 per cent.—the mean of the two being at the rate of 1½ per annum.

11. On the whole, it may be gathered from these returns that, although the mortality during the epidemic was fearfully heavy on sugar estates in some parts of the Island, yet that, taking the average of deaths among the seventy thousand and odd Indian immigrants referred to by the Protector as employed by proprietors of such estates throughout the Colony, did not exceed 1½ per cent. for the six months included in his report, and I trust, as the public health has subsequently improved, will fall considerably short of 3 per cent. per annum.

12. I think this fact speaks strongly for the care and humanity of the planters, and I would respectfully suggest that it might not be unadvisable to communicate it to the Government of

India, as exaggerated and ill-natured articles on the subject of the epidemic in Mauritius have not been wanting in the Press of that country.

13. Among other things, it has been stated by a leading journal (the *Friend of India*) that the mortality in the Immigration Depot at Port Louis was enormous. I enclose a Statement from the Protector, showing that the number of deaths during the six months was 18 out of upwards of 3,000 Indians, chiefly return immigrants who passed through it.

14. The mis-statement, no doubt, is founded on the circumstance of my having taken, during the height of the epidemic, some buildings pertaining to the depot, but separated from the rest by the line of Railway, as a convalescent ward for patients from the civil hospital, to which latter establishment, however, the deaths were assigned in every return published.

From H. N. D. BEYTS, Esq., Protector of Immigrants, to the Colonial Secretary, Mauritius; dated 30th November 1867, No. 181-69A.

I have been unable until now to submit observations on the reports of the Stipendiary Magistrates for the half-year ended 30th June last, in consequence of my not having received the report of the Stipendiary Magistrate of Savaune till the 7th instant, and of my having since had to apply for various explanations which were indispensable. The tardy reception of the report from Savaune was probably due to the present Stipendiary Magistrate's having only taken charge of his district on the 1st July last.

2. The total number of sugar estates has undergone a still further reduction: it was 248 in June 1866, 241 in December 1866, and 288 in June 1867. One estate was abandoned, and two incorporated with the neighbouring ones, during the half-year ended 30th June last.

3. The total number of male laborers employed by proprietors of sugar estates decreased from 76,486 in December 1866, to 70,722 in June 1867. This decrease is attributable to 3 causes: first, to increased mortality; secondly, to the stoppage of immigration; thirdly, to an increase in departures.

4. The number of women employed on estates rose from 57 in December 1866 to 244 in June 1867.

5. A reduction of upwards of 50 per cent. took place in the number of laborers employed by job contractors.

	Number employed.
December 1866	3,477
June 1867	1,396

I believe this to be chiefly the result of the great fall which took place in the rates of wages during the latter half-year. Old immigrants, in many instances, engaged themselves for wages lower than those established by the Government scale for new immigrants.

6. The condition of the camps and hospitals, relatively to what it was at the end of the previous half-year, will appear by the following Statement:—

		CAMPS.			
		December 1866.		June 1867.	
Very good	...	5	...	188	
Good	...	175	...	39	
Passable	...	42	...	11	
Bad	...	16	...		
Very bad	...	1	...		
		HOSPITALS.			
Very good	...	10	...	8	
Good	...	203	...	214	
Passable	...	8	...	10	
Bad	...	1	...	1	
Very bad	...	nil	...		

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6th July 1868.*

There is little doubt that the dwellings of laborers are being gradually improved, and that, in respect of medical care, their condition is also far better now than it used to be some years ago.

7. The sickness and mortality which occurred on the estates have been left to be reported by the Medical Inspectors.

8. The mean daily percentage of absentees fell from 9.2 in December 1866, to 5.6 in June 1867.

9. But the number of deserters again increased from 2,384 in December 1866, to 2,943 in June 1867, although 489 deserters had been recaptured during the last half year. I think it may be fully hoped that the new Ordinance regarding the labor of immigrants, which has just passed through the Legislative Council, will throw effectual impediments in the way of desertions, and lead laborers to carry out their engagements with greater regularity.

10. Seven thousand four hundred and fifty more laborers were stated by the planters to be required on their estates. Requisitions have been forwarded to Calcutta for 275, who may be expected to arrive in January next. I have since received a requisition for 25 men, and several applications which indicate that the necessity of introducing fresh labor is again beginning to be felt. But I think that a limited immigration would suffice to satisfy all requirements for some time hence.

11. Fifteen estates owed four months' wages, eight owed five months, and seven owed six months or more. I have ascertained that those arrears have all been paid up since.

12. The Stipendiary Magistrates do not state whether any complaints were made to them, either by the laborers or their employers. I think it would be well to call upon them to mention in each report whether any complaints were made to them or not during their inspections.

13. I recommend that they be also requested to report the changes which occur amongst the estates, and to mention those which become merged into others, or abandoned, or placed under new names.

14. I enclose a Statement in which the particulars given in the Stipendiary Magistrates' reports for the half-year ended 30th June last are produced in a condensed form.

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Recapitulation of the Returns of the Stipendiary Magistrates for the half-year 30th June 1867.

Districts.	Number of male laborers employed by Proprietors.						Number of women		Number of laborers employed by Sub-Contractors.						Camps.						Hospitals.				Daily percentage of absentees.		Number of deserters.		Number of laborers still stated to be required.		Estates which owed arrears of wages when visited by Magistrates.			Remarks.
	Immigrants.			Creoles.			Total.	Employed.	Not employed.	Immigrants.	Creoles.		Total.	Very good.	Good.	Tolerable.	Bad.	Very bad.	Very good.	Good.	Tolerable.	In need of attention.	Bad.	Very bad.	Remaining unrecaptured.	Recaptured during the half-year.	Four months.	Five months.	Six months or more.					
	Old.	New.	Of Indian origin.	Of African origin.	Of Indian origin.	Of African origin.																												
Pamplounesse...	44	6,706	1,987	201	...	8,894	...	2,068	...	187	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Rivier du Rempart.	27	4,561	3,584	96	169	8,404	22	2,371	...	291	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Flacq.....	41	1,666	4,758	197	...	15,631	17	5,169	...	340	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Grand Port.....	31	7,553	4,743	227	24	12,557	19	3,993	...	97	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Black River.....	17	2,838	537	63	45	3,502	2	1,184	...	79	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Plaines Wilhelms....	32	5,519	1,876	90	41	7,566	4	2,629	...	65	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Moka.....	15	3,706	965	90	4	4,832	...	1,672	...	143	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Savanne.....	21	6,757	2,372	125	182	9,346	180	2,724	...	288	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			
Total...	238	48,305	20,722	1,033	465	147,723	244	23,694	...	1,367	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...			

(Signed) H. B.

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Total Number of deaths which have occurred in the Immigration Depôt from the 1st January to 5th December 1867.

Causes.	M.	W.	B.	G.	Total.
Pulmonic Affection.	1	.....	.....	.....	1
Intermit. or Remit. Fever.	4	.....	1	1	6
Exhaustion (after Fever).	2	.....	1	1	4
General Debility.	2	.....	.....	.....	2
Diarrhoea. . . . .	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Dysentery. . . . .	.....	.....	1	1	2
Unknown.	1	.....	.....	1	2
Total.	10	.....	4	4	18

IMMIGRATION OFFICE,
5th December 1867.

(Signed) H. N. D. BEYTS,
Protector of Immigrants.

From J. W. C. MURDOCH, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Emigration, to Sir F. ROGERS, Bart., Under Secretary of State for the Colonies; dated 25th February 1868.

I have to acknowledge your letter of 19th instant, with a Despatch from the Governor of Mauritius, transmitting and analyzing the usual summary of the Protector of Immigrants, of the reports received from the Stipendiary Magistrates for the half-year ending 30th June 1867.

2. Sir H. Barkly's Despatch gives so clear an explanation of the effect of the summary, that it will be sufficient to state the result very briefly. During the six months ending with June last, the epidemic, which has been so disastrous in Mauritius, was raging in full intensity. It might naturally be expected that, under these circumstances, the immigrant population would suffer very much. This, however, as far as regards those on estates, was the case only in one district. That district, Black River, was the district in which the epidemic first began, and where it was throughout most severe. In Black River the mortality in six months, among 4049 laborers, was 401, or 9.90 per cent.; while, of 1042 cases of sickness among the women, 264 terminated fatally, and of 751 among the children no less than 264. In the Pamplémousses, Rivière du Rempart, and Flacé Districts, the mortality during the first three months, among 35,285 laborers, was at the rate of only 2½ per cent. per annum, and though it increased during the second quarter in Pamplémousses, it did not exceed in the three districts 4½ per cent. per annum. In the Plaives Wilhelms District, where the epidemic also prevailed, the mortality among 7160 immigrants was at the rate of only 2½ per cent.; while in the Grand Port and Savaune Districts which escaped the epidemic, the deaths were only 161 out of 21,282 laborers, or at the rate of 1.50 per cent. per annum. The whole mortality among upwards of 70,000 immigrants employed on estates did not exceed, in the six months, 1½ per cent.

3. These results contrast very favorably with the mortality which is said to have prevailed among the immigrant population not on estates, and must be accepted as proof that the immigrants employed on estates have been carefully treated, and have been placed in circumstances conducive to health. Sir H. Barkly suggests that it should be communicated to the Government of India as an answer to some exaggerated articles that have appeared in the Indian papers on the subject of the epidemic. There can, of course, be no objection, but the contrary, to communicate the information to the Government of India; but I am not aware of any reason why Sir H. Barkly should not have done so at once without reference to the Secretary of State.

4. From the report of the Protector, enclosed in Sir H. Barkly's Despatch, it appears that there is an improvement in the camps and hospitals on estates: only eleven of the former and one of the latter being now classed as "bad." The daily percentage of "absentees" had fallen from 9.2 in December 1866 to 5.6 in June 1867, but this was counter-balanced by an increase in the number of deserters from 2384 to 2943. The Protector looks to the Ordinance now under the consideration of the Duke of Buckingham to correct this evil. The whole number of

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men employed on estates was 70,722, of women 244. The number of men employed by job contractors was 1396. The number of unemployed women on estates was 22,694.

5. There is nothing in these reports to require any action on the part of the Secretary of State, unless His Grace should think it right to communicate to the Secretary of State for India the facts above enumerated, in respect to the mortality of immigrants on estates. They have an obvious bearing on the Immigration Consolidation Ordinance, on which I have to-day submitted a separate report.

No. 2552.

Copy forwarded to the Government of Madras.

By Order, &c.,

(Signed) J. GEOGHEGAN,

Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

HOME DEPT., PUBLIC,
SIMLA, 15th June 1868.

No. 44.

ORDER THEREON, 6th July 1868, No. 812.

Communicated to the Protector of Emigrants.

(True Extract).

R. S. ELLIS,

Chief Secretary.

To the Protector of Emigrants.

Ed. J. H. Burns.

7 (5)

6. July 1868 No. 812.

Communicated to the
Protector of Emigrants.

Am

Wm N. J.

To the Protector of Emigrants