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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT

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18/8/37

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
16th August 1870.

Read the following papers :—

No. 99. From the Under Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, (Public,) to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated Simla, 30th June 1870, No. 3138.

I am directed to invite attention to the communication, dated 23rd April 1870, No. 2036, and to request an early reply thereto.

SUBJECT.—Requesting, with reference to the Proceedings of the Madras Government, Nos. 66 and 67, for the month of January last, to make some further inquiry as to the practice which prevails at Pondicherry of allowing Réunion coolies to disembark at that port on their return home—Bengal.

The Protector of Emigrants is requested to expedite the submission of the report called for in G. O., 14th May 1870, No. 613.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
12th July 1870.

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Under Secy. to Govt.

No. 100. From J. H. BLAIR, Esq., Protector of Emigrants, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Ootacamund, dated Madras, 14th July 1870, No. 64-W.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of letter from the Under Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, of June 30th, 1870, with your Under Secretary's endorsement requiring submission of the report called for in Government Order, 14th May 1870, No. 613.

2. In reply I beg to state that I entered into communication with the British Consular Agent at Pondicherry on the subject, but before receiving his answer Government Order of June 4th, 1870, No. 715, was sent to me.

3. On consideration thereof, I believed that the matter had been finally settled, as orders had been sent to the British Consul, Réunion, not to despatch any more Bengal emigrants, *via* Madras Presidency, and, therefore, did not report on the subject.

4. I was informed by the British Consular Agent, Pondicherry, that only two lots of Bengal emigrants had ever disembarked at Pondicherry. The first of thirty-three men from the *Anna* on the 2nd December, (regarding which I reported fully to Government.)*

* See letter of 6th Jan. 1870, No. 2, from Protector of Emigrants, to Chief Secy. to Govt., Fort St. George, in Procs. of Madras Govt., Pub. Dept., 11th Jan. 1870.

5. The second disembarkation of coolies was from the Ship *Formosa*, on April 18th, 1870. Sixteen men landed late in the evening, and the British Consular Agent states that, before he knew anything about them, they had left Pondicherry, the letter informing him that they were on board and would be landed, not having been delivered till after their departure.

6. No report was sent to me by the British Consular Agent, and no explanation has been given by him why he failed to report the landing of the emigrants; he certainly ought to have known they were on board, and should have inspected them on landing.

7. On the 5th July another batch of seventeen coolies (thirteen men and four women) were landed at Pondicherry from the French Ship P. A. J.; they were in good health, made no complaints, and left Pondicherry on the 5th instant, en route for Madras. They have not, however, appeared before me.

8. Copy of a letter from the British Consul, Réunion, is forwarded, giving his reasons for sending these coolies by the P. A. J.; this officer appears to have taken upon himself to disobey the orders of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, referred to in paragraph 3 of the Despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, quoted in Proceedings of Madras Government, Public Department, of June 4th, 1870.

9. I have only further to state my decided opinion, that no coolies belonging to the Bengal Presidency should be allowed to embark in ships calling at Madras Ports, on any pretence whatever.

No. 101. Despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council, dated India Office, London, 31st May 1870, No. 57, (Public):—

In continuation of my Despatch of the 10th of March last, No. 23, I forward, herewith, for the information of your Excellency in Council, and for communication to the Government of Madras, a copy of the further correspondence noted in the margin, which has taken place relative to the means and route of return of Bengal coolies to Bengal.

Extract from Despatch of Her Majesty's Consul at Réunion, to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated 25th January 1870.

"Paragraph 12. The system pursued by the Local Administration in affording *repatriement* to those immigrants who claim it, still leaves much to be desired, and the remarks on this head in my report for 1868 still apply.

13. During the past year, many Bengal coolies have been sent back to India, *via* Pondicherry, partly because they demanded their *repatriement*, and invariably preferred to take passage to India, in the first vessel that presented itself (regardless of the port to which she might be bound,) to the chance of remaining for an indefinite time in this country, and partly because there were no other means available.

14. The Madras Government, however, have raised objections to their being sent back by that route, on the ground of expense, and the Government of India now direct their being returned, *via* Mauritius.

15. It appears, however, that the objections raised by the Madras Government apply equally to the route proposed by the Government of India.

16. The preliminary expense of their passage by steamer to the latter Colony, and the subsequent charge for their support, whilst in the Government dépôt there, waiting for transport, cause objections to be raised by this Colony and Mauritius, as well as by Madras.

17. It appears to me that the only satisfactory and efficient solution to the difficulty is to call upon the French Government to fulfil the engagements which they have contracted, and for the due performance of which the British Government is responsible to the coolie.

18. These men were shipped at Calcutta, under an engagement to be returned to that port at the expiration of their five years' service if they desired it.

19. If the Local Government is unable to find them passage hence to Calcutta, let them be sent to Pondicherry; but let it be understood that their responsibility does not end there, and that the expense of their further passage is to be defrayed by the French Government."

From B. SEGRAVE, Esq., to the Earl of CLARENDON, &c., &c., dated Réunion, 9th February 1870, No. 6.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Spring Rice's Despatch, No. 7, of the 22nd December last, covering a Despatch from the Government of India, with reference to the return of Bengal coolies from this Colony to India, *via* Pondicherry and Madras.

2. I have the honour, herewith, to transmit to your Lordship Extracts from Despatches addressed by me to the Protector of Immigrants at Mauritius and the Governor of this Colony, from which your Lordship will perceive that the objections raised by the Madras Government on the ground of expense are equally made by the Governments of Mauritius and Réunion.

3. I have also been informed that, as a general rule, masters of ships refuse to call at this place for return immigrants unless they are ensured at least 100 passengers, which it will be quite impossible for this Government to do.

4. I would beg to submit to your Lordship that the simplest and most effectual solution of the difficulty would be to call upon the French Government to fulfil the engagements made with the Bengal coolies recruited at Calcutta, viz., to give them a free return passage to that port. If they are unable to do so directly, they can always be consigned to the French authorities at Pondicherry, with instructions that the cost of their further passage to Bengal is to be defrayed by the French Government.

5. The Consular Agent at the latter port might be instructed to see that no unnecessary delay took place in forwarding them to their destination.

Extract from a Note from the Hon. H. BEYTS, Protector of Emigrants, Mauritius, to Her Majesty's Consul, Réunion, dated 14th January 1870.

All I could do to assist you in sending your coolies back to India, would be to charter ships for you, if you desire it, or to receive your coolies and forward them. This, however, would probably be too expensive: there would be the passage from Réunion to this, and the keeping of the coolies here until the ship be ready. The other plan, that of chartering vessels for you, either wholly or partially, would be more practicable. We might supply a certain number of the passengers, and leave you to make up the complement.

Extract of a Despatch from His Excellency the Governor of Réunion, to Her Majesty's Consul, dated St. Denis, 2nd February 1870.

Quant à l'avenir, et jusqu'à décision concertée entre nos deux Gouvernements, nous continuerons à procéder comme par le passé, c'est à dire, à profiter de toutes les occasions qui se présenteront, soit pour Pondichéry, soit pour Calcutta, et j'ajoute que si des navires partant de Maurice pour cette dernière destination consentiront à venir faire escale à la Réunion sans qu'il en résulte une notable augmentation des frais de passage, nous ne manquerons pas de leur donner tous les cochenes qui seraient à repatrier pour Bengale.

Si vous pensez qu'il soit possible de nouer quelque opération dans ce sens, je ne ferai aucune difficulté à m'y prêter, car j'estime que la solution pratique de la question reside dans une

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combinaison de ce genre; autrement, nous agirons à l'aventure, en quel sort, en envoyant à Maurice les Indiens que nous avons à repatrier sans savoir quand, ou comment, ou à quelles conditions de séjour et de passage, ils seraient reconduits dans l'Inde.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., Under Secretary of State for India, to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, dated India Office, 5th May 1870.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Spring Rice's letter of the 19th of March last, forwarding a Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Réunion, with its accompanying communications from the Protector of Immigrants at Mauritius and the Governor of Réunion, on the subject of the return of Bengal coolies from that Colony to India. Mr. Spring Rice also states that the Earl of Clarendon desires to be furnished with any observations which the Duke of Argyll may have to offer on this question.

In reply, I am to request that you will state to Lord Clarendon that the Duke of Argyll, having had under his consideration in Council these papers and the previous correspondence which has taken place upon the subject to which they relate, is of opinion that it is necessary, in the interests of Her Majesty's Indian subjects, that the attention of the French Government should be called to the difficulties still attending the return to their homes of Bengal coolies whose contracts of service at Réunion have expired, and that the same Government be requested, in fulfilment of the engagements contained in the Coolie Convention of 1861, to issue to their Administration at Réunion the necessary instructions for assuring to the Bengalee immigrants a return free of expense to their own country. His Grace considers it should be added that, in cases in which these coolies cannot be sent direct to Calcutta, the port from which they were taken, the British Government would request that they may be despatched to Pondicherry and thence to Calcutta at the expense of the French Government.

The enclosures to Mr. Spring Rice's letter under reply are herewith returned, as requested.

From ARTHUR OTWAY, Esq., to the Under Secretary of State for India, dated 21st May 1870.

With reference to your letter of the 5th instant, suggesting the nature of the representations that should be made to the French Government regarding the means of providing for the return to India of Bengal coolies whose engagements in Réunion have expired, I am directed by the Earl of Clarendon to enclose, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for India in Council, a copy of a further Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Réunion upon this subject, and I am to state that, before he acts upon your previous letter, Lord Clarendon would be glad to know whether Mr. Segrave's later Despatch will involve any alteration in the communication to the French Government suggested in that letter.

From B. SEGRAVE, Esq., to the Earl of CLARENDON, &c., &c., dated Réunion, 29th March 1870, No. 16.

Referring to my Despatch, No. 6, of 9th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a Despatch which I have received from the Government of Mauritius, detailing the terms on which the Government of that Colony is prepared to receive time-expired Bengal coolies from Réunion, with a view to providing them with passage to Calcutta. These terms appeared to me to be so fair towards the administration to employers of labour in this Colony, and at the same time so well calculated to carry out the views of Her Majesty's Government, that a copy of the Despatch was transmitted to the Government, and I took the liberty of inviting His Excellency to accede to the proposed arrangement.

I have the honour, herewith, to transmit the reply which I have received, from which your Lordship will perceive that M. de Lornel declines to entertain the proposals contained in Sir H. Barkly's Despatch on the grounds of the increase, and (in consequence of possible detention in the dépôt) uncertainty of the expense.

16th August 1870.

I have not much confidence in the success of the plan which His Excellency proposes to adopt as a substitute, viz., that vessels from Mauritius should call here for coolie passengers on their way to Calcutta.

In the first place, Réunion is out of the course of ships bound from Port Louis to Calcutta, and the calling here would prolong the voyage at least a week, a matter for consideration with Masters and Owners of ships, when they have a large number of passengers to be subsisted during the delay.

It appears, moreover, from Sir H. Barkly's Despatch that the average cost of passage from Mauritius to Calcutta is £4, whereas, I am informed, that the highest rate generally paid from Réunion to Calcutta is 80 francs or £3-4-0, hence there may possibly arise difficulties as to whether the sum offered by the Local Administration would be *suffisamment rémunératrice*.

From Sir H. BARKLY, Governor of Mauritius, to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, Réunion, dated Government House, Mauritius, 4th March 1870.

In reply to your letter of the 14th instant, No. 7, reporting that you have received instructions from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that for the future Bengal coolies whose terms of service in Réunion may have expired, are to be sent back to their homes in India, *via* Mauritius, and inquiring what arrangements can be made for their reception, the average cost of return passage, &c., I have the honour to inform you that the return coolies in question can be admitted into our dépôt, and allowed to take advantage of the ships engaged for our time-expired immigrants.

That the cost of their maintenance whilst awaiting embarkation would amount to 6d. per day for each adult, and that the average rate of the passages of coolies returning hence to Calcutta is £4.

Before, however, proposing to receive these men, I should be glad to learn the number that would probably be despatched.

From His Excellency the Governor of Réunion, to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, dated St. Denis, 22nd March 1870.

J'ai l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre du 13 du courant, No. 30, et de la copie de la lettre du Gouverneur de l'Île Maurice qui y était annexée.

Ces deux communications sont relatives au repatriement des Indiens originaires du Bengale par voie de Maurice.

Je ne puis que confirmer à ce sujet ma lettre du 2 Février dernier, No. 27. La solution pratique de cette question réside dans la relache à la Réunion de navires de Maurice allant au Bengale; nous ne pouvons en effet diriger à l'aventure ces immigrants sur l'île voisine sans savoir quand il s'y présentera un navire partant pour Calcutta, ou combien de temps les immigrants envoyés à Maurice y resteront au dépôt.

L'inconnu de la dépense serait dans ce cas, et indépendamment de son chiffre élevé, incompatible avec le mode de paiement qui est imposé à l'administration par les contrats passés avec les négociants.

Cependant l'administration fera tout ce qui sera en son pouvoir pour assurer le retour à Calcutta des Indiens du Bengale. Elle est disposée à payer aux capitaines qui accepteraient de enir prendre nos immigrants à repatrier, une somme suffisamment rémunérative, et j'écris au Consul de France à Maurice pour qu'il cherche à traiter avec le consignataire d'un bâtiment retournant dans l'Inde pour le repatriement des 52 Indiens originaires de cette Présidence que nous avons renvoyer dans leur pays.

J'espère que cette négociation aboutira, et dans ce cas nous suivrons la même marche chaque fois que nous aurons à repatrier un nombre suffisant d'Indiens de la même origine.

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16th August 1870.

From H. MERIVALE, Esq., Under Secretary of State for India, to the Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, dated India Office, London, 31st May 1870.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, forwarding, for his consideration, a copy of a further Despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Réunion, with accompaniments, regarding the means and mode of return from that Colony to their own country of time-expired Bengal coolies; and requesting that the Earl of Clarendon may be informed whether the above Despatch involves any alteration in the communication requested in my letter of the 5th instant, to be addressed to the French Government on the subject.

In reply, I am to state, for the information of Lord Clarendon, that the Duke of Argyll, having considered in Council Mr. Segrave's present Despatch and its enclosures, is of opinion that no alteration need be made in the communication proposed in my letter above cited to be made to the French Government.

His Grace presumes that Lord Clarendon will make Mr. Segrave acquainted with that communication which will be to a great extent in the sense suggested by that officer in his Despatch of the 9th of February last, No. 6, forwarded to this office in Mr. Spring Rice's letter of the 9th of March.

No. 3405.

Copy forwarded to the Government of Fort Saint George for information, in continuation of this office endorsement, No. 2445, dated the 20th May last.

(By order of the Governor-General in Council,)

HOME DEPARTMENT, PUBLIC,
SIMLA, 18th July 1870.

(Signed) W. M. SOUTTAR,
Offg. Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

No. 102. ORDER THEREON, 16th August 1870, No. 1035.

Ordered that the following letter be addressed to the Government of India, and that a copy of the same be communicated to the Protector of Emigrants for his information.

2. Mr. Blair will issue such instructions as may be necessary to the Consular Agent at Pondicherry for the protection of the interests of the Bengal coolies who may from time to time be landed at Pondicherry.

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

No. 102-A. To the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, dated Ootacamund, 16th August 1870, No. 1035-A.

I am desired to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 23rd April 1870, No. 2036, requesting that further inquiry should be made regarding the practice which appeared to prevail at Pondicherry of allowing Réunion coolies, belonging to the Bengal Presidency, to disembark at that port on their return home. I am also to acknowledge docket, No. 2445, dated 20th May last, and docket, No. 3405, dated 18th July last, communicating further correspondence on the same subject.

2. In reply, I am to submit, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter from the Protector of Emigrants at Madras, furnishing the inform-

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ation required. It would appear that three parties of Bengal returning emigrants have disembarked at Pondicherry. In two of these cases the coolies seem to have left Pondicherry by land, without the knowledge of the Consular Agent, and without making any claim to be forwarded to Calcutta.

3. From the recent correspondence forwarded under docket, No. 3405, it appears that the French Government have been moved by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to issue to their Administration at Réunion the necessary instructions for assuring to the Bengalee emigrants a return free of expense to their own country. In cases where the coolies cannot be sent direct to Calcutta, the port from which they were taken, Her Majesty's Government request that they may be despatched to Pondicherry and thence to Calcutta at the expense of the French Government.

4. It seems, therefore, probable that returning Bengalee coolies may occasionally still be landed at Pondicherry, and the necessary instructions have, therefore, been issued by the Madras Government to the Consular Agent at that port to watch carefully the arrival of vessels at Pondicherry with Bengalee coolies, so as to secure for these the advantage to which they are entitled of being forwarded from Pondicherry to Calcutta with the least possible delay, and at the expense of the French Government. The Government consider, however, that it is very desirable that the disembarkation of coolies belonging to the Bengal Presidency, at Pondicherry, should, if possible, entirely cease, as there will almost always be difficulties and irregularities in forwarding these coolies from Pondicherry to Calcutta.

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

(True Copy)

Under Secretary.

To The Protector of Emigrants.

Encl. J. Wright.

Home 1870 Dep.

From Government of
Fort St. George.

Dated 16th Augt. 1870. No.
R. Enclosures
Spare copies

D No. D.
L. No. 1035-A. Procs. No.

AUGUST.
Nos. 99-102-A.

Furnishing further particulars regarding the
practice prevailing at Pondicherry of allowing
Réunion coolies belonging to the Bengal Presi-
dency, to land at that port on their return home.

No. 50.

British Consulate
Réunion 13th June 1870

To

The British Consular Agent
Pondicherry

Sir

I have the honor to inform you
that 17 Bengal Coolies (13 Men and 4 Women)
have this day embarked on board the French
Ship "P. A. J." for Pondicherry. I have not
considered myself justified in detaining
these people, as they each individually and
separately declared before me, not only that
they wished to go to Madras, but that they
went there from choice and in preference
to going to Calcutta

I have &c

[Signed] G. F. Leprieux

(True Copy)

[Signed] B. T. Norfor

British Consular Agent

True Copy

[Signed] H. Blair

Protector of Emigrants

No. 3/38

To *The Secretary to
the Government of
Madras. —*

I AM directed to invite attention to the communication, marginally noted,* and to request an early reply thereto.

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

Wm. Lawrence
Under Secy. to the Govt. of India.

- Subject.
 Requesting with
 reference to the
 Proceedings of the
 Madras Council of 1864
 for the month of Jan-
 uary last to make some
 further enquiry as to
 the practice which
 prevails at Pondicherry
 & elsewhere. Please on
 copies to be sent back at
 least that on this return some-thing
 • No. 2036 dated 23rd April 1870
 subsequent reminder
 No. _____ dated _____

Pondicherry for the protection
of the interests of the
Nagel Coole's who may
from time to time be
landed at Pondicherry.

/ Her signature /
M

To the Protector of Emigrants.

