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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1619	Press ~~Mis~~
Dated	25-10-1871.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 140. Read the following letter from A. O. HUME, Esq., C.B., Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce (Emigration), to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, dated Simla, 13th October 1871, No. 58 :—

I am directed to forward, herewith, copy of a Despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 61, dated 15th August last, with enclosures, and to invite attention to the remarks made by the Agent-General of Immigrants in Trinidad in the 9th Section of his report, regarding the want of care displayed by recruiters in selecting men really accustomed to agricultural work, and the want of clear understanding on the part of intending labourers as to the rate of wages to be received by them.

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, 15th August 1871, No. 61 (Public).

In continuation of my despatches of the 23rd June and 28th July 1870, Nos. 68 and 83,

* 19th May 1871, No. 91.

† February 1871, No. 32.

‡ 23rd June 1871.

I forward, herewith, for the information of your Excellency in Council, copy of a despatch* addressed by the Governor of Trinidad, to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering the report† for the year 1870 of the Agent-General of Immigrants in that Colony. I also forward copy of a letter‡

from the Chairman of the Emigration Board reviewing that report.

2. I am glad to perceive that the mortality rate is low and seems to be gradually decreasing. This result is attributed to the system recently introduced of giving rations in lieu of wages to newly-arrived immigrants, a subject to which the attention of your Lordship's Government was called in my despatch of the 15th of June last, No. 48, transmitting the report on immigrants at Grenada during the year 1870.

3. The Governor of Trinidad, your Excellency in Council will observe, is prepared strictly to enforce the rule prohibiting the allotment of coolies to estates where the mortality exceeds seven per cent., a restriction which has already had good effect.

4. It is evidence of the general prosperity of the immigrants that large numbers of them have accepted grants of land in lieu of the return-passages to India to which they are entitled, whilst others amongst them have purchased land, and settled in the Colony.

5. It will be seen that Governor Longden suggests the grant by the Colony, in consideration of a four years' service under indenture, of a return-passages to India to coolies who, having served their time in other Colonies, have come to Trinidad without a claim to such return-passages. The Emigration Board is in favour of the plan, and the question having arisen in another Colony, the Earl of Kimberley is considering the expediency of establishing uniformity of practice in this matter.

From Governor J. R. LONGDEN, to the Right Honourable the Earl of Kimberley, &c., &c., &c., dated Trinidad, the 19th May 1871, No. 91.

I have the honour to forward, herewith, six printed copies of the report of the Agent-General of Immigrants for the year 1870.

2. During the season terminating on the 1st October 1870, 2,933 immigrants were embarked in India for Trinidad, of whom 52 died on the voyage, and 2,881 landed in the Colony, the mortality being on the whole only 1·7 per cent.

3. The rate of mortality among newly-arrived immigrants in the first year of their residence has, according to Dr. Mitchell's tables, been annually reduced from eight per cent. in 1866 to 3·4 per cent. in 1870. This reduction is attributed, I think, justly to the system of rationing the

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newly-arrived immigrants. It is a little startling to find that the mortality among the immigrants introduced in the season of 1868-69 was only 4.1 per cent. in their first year while being rationed, but rose to 10.7 per cent. in their second year when the rationing was discontinued. This is the highest rate of mortality recorded in the enclosed tables, and appears to be exceptional. So far as the mortality may have resulted from the too early discontinuance of rations, all danger of a recurrence of it is removed by the provisions of the Ordinance No. XIII. of 1870, Sections 26 and 28 of which require employers to furnish their indentured labourers with rations for the first two years of their residence, unless otherwise ordered, on the application of the immigrants themselves, by the Agent-General. I shall watch carefully the effect of the working of the law in this respect.

4. After the first two years of residence, the mortality among the population of East Indian origin appears to be scarcely as great as that among the other races.

5. In connexion with the question of mortality among the Indian Immigrants is the prohibition placed upon the allotment of immigrants to estates on which the mortality has exceeded seven per cent. by the 67th Clause of the Immigration Ordinance which is referred to in your Lordship's Circular Despatch of the 16th of March last. I have in my Despatches, Nos. 8 and 20 of this year, reported the number of estates which became disqualified to receive immigrants under this rule.

6. Although the Trinidad rule is very stringent, and the enforcement of it will seriously depreciate the value of the estates which are affected by it, I think that, on the whole, its operation is likely to be very beneficial in compelling the owners of estates, in defence of their own personal interests, to use every means in their power to secure the well-being of the labourers. If, as may sometimes be unfortunately the case, the estates are so situate relatively to undrained morasses, or other unhealthy districts, that despite all care, the rate of mortality cannot be reduced, the allotment of immigrants to such places must cease, although it should even cause the abandonment of the property; for it would not be just to the immigrants to send them to such places. On the other hand, if the rate of mortality on all or most estates were in any year swelled beyond the prescribed limit by an epidemic, which affected coolie and creole alike, it might hardly be fair to maintain the rule in all its strictness.

7. I desire to draw your Lordship's attention to Dr. Mitchell's remarks on the acceptance by coolies of land in lieu of return-passages. I recently reported on this subject in my Despatch, No. 61, of the 13th ultimo. Up to this time 188 immigrants have commuted their passages, and the number appears to be gradually increasing.

8. Besides those who have commuted their right to a return-passage for a free grant of land, several coolies have purchased land either from the Crown or from private persons and settled here. From a return furnished by the Sub-Intendant, it appears that 96 coolies have purchased among them 910 acres of Crown land at the ordinary price of £1 per acre, besides village lots. It will be seen that on an average each coolie has purchased nearly ten acres for himself.

9. The general conduct of the indentured coolies during the year is reported favourably upon by Dr. Mitchell, the only grave exception being the savage but unpremeditated murder of an African Overseer on an estate by two coolies, reported in my Despatch, No. 1, of the 3rd of January last.

10. Under the head of "Labour supply from other Colonies," Dr. Mitchell notes that 2,641 people arrived during the year, and 910 left. Among those who remained were a few coolies who had terminated their industrial residence in other Colonies, but were not entitled by the terms of their agreement to a free passage back to India (i.e., from the second Colony). Some of these people have applied to know whether this Colony would provide them with a free passage if they agreed to be indentured for a certain term of years. To this question I have deferred giving any answer until I shall learn whether your Lordship would be disposed to sanction such an arrangement.

11. Under the Ordinance of 1870, No. XIII. (Clause 48), a free passage is given to immigrants brought from India, after an indenture of five years and a residence of five more, making ten years in all. In these cases the Colony has incurred the whole cost of bringing the immigrants from

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India. In the case now under consideration the coolies arrive in the Colony without cost to the Colony. It would of course be necessary, before such an arrangement could be permitted, that the immigrants should produce satisfactory proof that they had complied with the conditions on which they were brought from India to the West Indies (i.e., to their first Colony), and were legally entitled to depart from the Colony to which they had been at first carried. Subject to this proviso, I do not think there would be any objection to a compliance with the request of the immigrants on such terms as might be considered equitable between the Colony and the coolie. The rate at which a coolie is by law allowed to purchase the last year of his indenture is £3 per annum (Immigration Ordinance, Clause 72); and if the return-passage be reckoned at £12, it would be paid for by a four years' indenture, if at £15, by a five years' indenture. I am inclined to think a four years' indenture would, under the circumstances, be sufficiently favourable to the Colony.

From H. MITCHELL, Esq., Agent-General of Immigrants, to the Hon. J. S. BUSHE, Colonial Secretary, dated Trinidad, the 22nd February 1871, No. 32.

I have the honour to enclose, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, some explanatory remarks on the tabulated extracts from the quarterly returns for the year 1870 already submitted to Council, together with such incidental suggestions on the subject of immigration as appear worthy of record.

I.—Arrivals of Immigrants and Mortality at Sea during the Season terminating 1st October 1870.

Ship's Name.	Date of arrival.	Number embarked					Died at Sea.					Number landed.				
		M.	W.	B.	G.	I.	M.	W.	B.	G.	I.	M.	W.	B.	G.	I.
Beaumaris Castle...	3rd Nov. 1869.	193	143	73	34	43	3	3	...	1	3	137	133	73	33	40
Varuna	8th " "	273	109	43	19	13	6	4	3	1	3	267	105	40	18	15
Wiltshire	20th Dec. 1870.	317	310	77	56	37	...	4	1	1	5	217	206	76	55	53
Atlanta	24th Feb. "	183	118	43	24	23	1	2	...	...	...	185	116	43	23	26
Cochin	7th April "	238	178	35	18	37	3	...	...	...	...	238	118	35	16	23
Java	4th May "	279	124	35	34	30	...	1	4	...	...	279	123	34	34	30

By this table it appears that, on 2,933 souls embarked, the deaths at sea were 52 equal to 1.7 per cent., or about 1 per cent. on the adult passengers. The births on board were 22, considerably over the average.

In the annual report for 1869 the mortality at sea was 63 on 2,264, or 2.7 per cent., being the lowest rate recorded up to that date.

The fortunate results of the season 1870 are due, no doubt, in great measure, to careful selection and assiduous care on the part of the Surgeon Superintendent and others in charge, but I fear it would only lead to disappointment were similar results expected in future from any arrangements, however judicious or systematic. The present low rate of mortality is exceptional, and seems to have depended much on the reigning medical constitution when the ships left Calcutta, and the unusually favourable weather experienced when at sea—factors which are unlikely to concur in any future season.

II.—Rate of Mortality among Indentured Indian Immigrants.

The sum total under this heading is complicated with the varying years of residence. To be a reliable exponent, it must be analysed so far as to show the mortality of each year within at least the limits of the five years of industrial residence, as well as the death-rate on all indentured, including those under bounty and those who are re-paying the time lost during their contract.

1,518 boys, 1,216 girls	=	2,734
2,755 men and 1,201 women, who have served out their contracts and remained in this Colony for periods varying from 6 to 26 years	=	3,956
These have not re-engaged, but work where they please.		
2,330 bounty coolies, who have terminated their original contracts and are at present working out fresh annual engagements		2,330
7,888, who are in various periods of their five years' contract from the first to the fifth year		7,888
Total		<u>16,908</u>

Arrival and Mortality for each of the years 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, and 1870.

The table gives a death-rate of 359 on 8,236 = 4·3 as against 4·7 per cent. during the preceding year. This diminution, although small, is as much as might have been expected from the unusual vicissitudes of the season. A reference to last year's immigration report will show that there was some reason to apprehend heavy rates for 1870. The apprehension was verified, but not in the manner anticipated by a gradual extension of the rate over all classes; for the figures in the table show that, while there has been a marked decrease of deaths among the newly-arrived in their first year, and while, being rationed, the rate has more than doubled among those in their second year of residence, who also, in 1869, presented a similar immunity when under rations; in other words, the advantage from the low death-rate due to the rationing in 1869 has been counterbalanced by throwing these same immigrants on their own resources and paying them entirely in money during the second year, so much that their mean death-rate for 1869 and 1870

has been $4.1 + 10.7 \div 2 = 7.8$, a little over the average of the two first years of the arrivals in 1866, 1867, and 1868. This result, unless it can be otherwise explained, shows the propriety of the 26th Clause of the Ordinance, No. XIII. of 1860, extending the feeding of new immigrants over the first two years, except where it shall be otherwise ordered after the first twelve months on the personal inspection of the Agent-General or other authorized officers, who, when satisfied that particular immigrants can earn their livelihood, may draught them from rations to full money wages.

It is but fair to the Trinidad planting interest to state that, by the Indian Mails of 17th December, the mortality, as given by the Sanitary Commissioner, for 1870, in most of the larger towns of the Punjab, was 10 per cent., fever being prevalent.

Of these there are now 309 as against 351 in the previous year, and the decrease is in rapid proportion as regards the later arrivals :—

Thus 9,052 arrived since 1866, inclusive, declare 116 absent or 1·2 per cent., showing, by the first column, how much this favourable result is due to the system of rationing recently adopted. Deducting 116 from the the total absent, 309, there remain 193 introduced at periods anterior to the last five years, but who are unlikely to reappear and claim the privilege of serving out their former lost time. These may be written off to profit and loss. The whole statement contrasts favourably with the return so late as 1864, when the absentees under indenture were 599.

To this must be added the fact that, on many estates, the only parties who owe for rations are the delicate or weakly, who must have perished without them, while the returns in many instances, show a larger amount of labour by the rationed than the unrationed immigrant. Were it shown by objectors to the system of rationing that the imported labourer cannot, as a rule, earn eight pents. while in health to repay the cost of his daily ration, it would be time to inquire somewhat more closely into the merits of the system. No doubt the labourer himself would prefer his labour, however small, to be repaid entirely in money, but experience shows that the result of such a system is to double the mortality in the seasoning years. The women are more difficult to deal with than the men in the matter of refusing to work sufficiently to repay their rations, and this employers generally attribute to their comparative immunity from the penal clauses of the Ordinance. Yet the free women work, as a rule,

more regularly than the men. Perhaps their capricious behaviour might be successfully met by an indenture without rations, which simply bound them to an industrial residence on the same estate as their husbands; but, leaving them at perfect liberty to work or not as they choose, the probability is that, under such circumstances, they would prove more regularly industrious than at present. Opinions, however, are divided on this point, and some gentlemen, whose experience is entitled to great consideration, think the plan would not work well, but lead to greater license than at present; but, on the other hand, it may be expected that the want of rations and the influence of their husbands would lead them to some little exertion. Where women arrived burthened with young children, the latter should of course be fed.

IV.—Return Immigrants.

In the *Atalanta*, 950 tons, Ballingall Master, which sailed from this on the 26th August, were embarked for Calcutta 215 men, 98 women, 39 boys, 37 girls, and 12 infants = 401 souls = 351 adults. These Indians had all but two completed their industrial residence, exclusive of the children, 88 in number, who were natives of the island. This large proportion under the age of ten years may be perhaps accepted as a fairer index of the parents' domestic status than the comparative wealth they transmitted to India: 238 adults having deposited for that purpose in the treasury £10,139, being, on an average, more than £40 each. As averages, however, are at the best but uncertain guides, it may be well to state, for the information of those who doubt the practical advantage of these Indians seeking to better their circumstances by a ten years' contract in the West Indies, that, of the 238 depositors above mentioned, 214 were ordinary labourers, and that the amount of their earnings, or rather of their savings, was £32,784. This sum is no doubt small when compared with the traffic gains of the petty tradesman, but it must be borne in mind that these latter had to serve their five years' industrial contract before they amassed the wherewithal to start in trade. Of late years, bankruptcy from over-speculation is of frequent occurrence among the Indian traders, while, on the whole, the savings of the labouring classes, especially after the termination of their contracts, appear to increase. The large proportion of females on board the *Atalanta*, together with the equality of the sexes among the children, resemble colonising more than emigration statistics. The *Atalanta* arrived at Calcutta with a loss of 3.2 per cent.

Since her departure upwards of 100 coolies entitled to return have registered their names for that purpose.

V.—Commutation of Return-passage.

Against this heavy loss of seasoned labour there is to be chronicled on the other hand the fact, and a cheering one it is to all who know the almost ineradicable adherence of the Indian to his traditions, that, during the last year, more than 120 immigrants who had served their industrial contract, have, instead of a return-passage, commuted that privilege for grants of 10 acres of land each. These 10-acre lots lie in blocks together selected so as to allow the new settlers to alternate the clearing and planting of their own lands with labouring for hire on the adjoining estates. This so far successful movement of settling a certain number of Indians, has, particularly in the Upper Couva and Montserrat, been accompanied by the transformation of numerous squatters into peasant proprietors with fixed tenure of lands. These in their turn have found labour to spare for the neighbouring larger cultivation in a proportion that has greatly relieved the owners from the risk of employing unseasoned Indian labourers in localities or labour injurious to their health.

A reference to late returns will show that, in April 1868, 231 adults left in the *Arima* for Calcutta, taking with them \$65,585, so that, in the short space of 27 months, the limited labour supply of this Colony has been drained of 670 seasoned adults, whose remitted saving amounted to \$117,369, while, to this serious loss of labour, must be added about \$10,000 for back passage. It is clear that the continuation of this course leaves the Colony but at the commencement of colonization and liable to great commercial and agricultural risk from any casual stoppage or diminution of the stream. The success then of the allotment scheme, as far as it has gone, furnishes important data as to the propriety of its modifications to suit the tastes and temper of the Asiatic, and promote at the same time the true interest of the

Colony. The only grave objection which has been made to its more general adoption is, that a 10-acre lot is more than one man with his family can cultivate unaided, and that, therefore, to make his land available productive, he must, instead of occasionally contributing labour to the estates in his neighbourhood, actually draw on them for his own supply. Although this objection has not been yet realized in the incipient stage of settling these peasant proprietors, there can be no doubt that, as these allotments increase in number and extent among the most suitable localities, they will attract the neighbouring labourers in exact proportion to the industry and ability of their owners. It becomes, therefore, in view of this probability, a question of importance whether it might not be a prudent measure to limit the acreage of land to what a man might be reasonably expected to cultivate with his family's aid, and pay up the balance of the commutation of the return passage in money; at the same time, any modification, to be really useful, should include the women, by the offer of a direct money-payment, based on their age and the number of their children. These useful people might thus be induced to colonize in reality the land which they have as yet selected only as a temporary sojourn.

This last suggestion has been made by gentlemen of experience, not merely capable of viewing the subject from all points, but deeply interested in its success. The chief objection made is that the offer of money-payments would tempt such numbers to claim them that even those who have no present intention of returning to India would appear among the number, and thus embarrass the treasury by the amount of cash claims. This fear is, however, groundless; the number of Indians who can claim this privilege is not large, and if all came forward, the money spent would be well invested in settling them as tax-payers; the expense, under any circumstances, could not amount to more than one-half of a return passage.

The present tendency to accept land instead of repatriation, whatever be its cause, is an exceptional feature in the Indian character, and should be encouraged to the utmost while it lasts; for the Indian, in spite of all belief to the contrary, clings tenaciously, traditionally to his return-passage.

It may be when he knows that he can at any period, however distant, secure a return-passage by paying for it, he may waive the immediate claim, and take land with the ultimate view of selling it when improved, and returning with greater wealth. Should he do so the early impressions of home, although tolerably fixed, will gradually lose their hold of men working on their own land and growing their own rice, betel, &c., surrounded by their children in a favourable climate.

VI.—Increase in available Indian labour on Estates.

The available Indian labour in 1870, as compared with that of 1863, is as follows on estates employing indentured servants:—

1863.—Contract	10,078	
Without contract	2,046	
Total on estates	12,124	resident.
1870.—Contract	10,218	
Without contract	3,946	
	14,164	resident.
	2,500	non-resident.
Total working on estates	16,664	resident and non-resident.

These figures show the gradual but important change in the quality of labour that has developed itself with the increased production of the Colony. While the amount of contract labour, including the voluntary bounty system, has remained almost exactly the same as in 1863, the amount of Indian labour, free from contract of any kind beyond a very loose construction of the master and servants ordinance, has reached nearly the same figure, say 4,000 free and 2,500 non-resident Indians.

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This last is almost entirely an item created within the last few years by the excessive demand for labour immediately after crop, which, of course, raises the rate of wages for all outsiders, and is a powerful inducement to the coolie who has finished his contract to remove from the estate to the nearest roadside where he can have a plot of land for his mud hut.

Hence the villages which have sprung up in so many localities of late, and hence also may be added a sound reason for settling as many as possible of these people on land of their own, held immediately from the Crown.

Any tendency to abuse or undue extension of this privilege can be effectually controlled by requiring in each case a certificate from the Immigration Office, that the applicant for land is fitted for a colonist in respect of age, family, &c. because there are, no doubt, many cases in which it would be to the advantage of Trinidad to give an Indian his return-passages instead of a grant of land.

VII.—Labour Supply from other Colonies.

This has been numerically much the same as during one or two previous years.

Arrivals	2,641
Departures	910
Total	1,731

leaving over 1,700 as a permanent addition to the labour of the Colony. The 910 who have left is much higher than the usual figure, and indicates either less demand for labour during the past year, or that the inducements to go elsewhere are greater. A large proportion, however, of these latter are natives of the neighbouring islands who habitually work here during the crop season and return after harvest, to attend to their own provision grounds. They are an independent and useful body of people, bearing much the same relation to the sugar crop of Trinidad as the Irish reapers formerly bore to the farm work on the west coasts of Britain.

Their numbers and value will increase with every additional facility given to inter-communication among the islands.

VIII.—General Conduct and Distribution of Labour on Estates.

The behaviour of the indentured population has been throughout the last year remarkably quiet. Complaints on their part have been fewer than usual, and the jail returns show that the commitments for offences other than breach of contract had fallen from 737 in 1869 to 351 in 1870, or to less than one-half. The only grave exception to the general peace was a savage but unpremeditated murder committed by two indentured immigrants on one of their foremen while on duty.

In other respects, tranquility has been the rule, springing chiefly from the happy balance of the different classes engaged in estates' work. This classification is well illustrated in the important County of Victoria where the ad hoc labour-table is as follows:—

	Males.	Females.
Indentured Indians, resident on estates	2,770	1,191
Non-indentured Indians, resident on estates	1,554	712
Non-indentured „ non-resident on estates	787	329
Creoles, resident on estates	1,020	508
Do. non-resident on estates	879	459
Total	10,209, shipping a crop of 27,000 hds.	

It will be observed from these figures that the non-indentured Indian labourers in this district are nearly equal in number to those under contract, while the total number of non-contract labourers, including creoles of the West Indies, exceed those under contract by more than fifty per-cent.

A very curious feature in these figures is that the number of females in each of the five classes bears a nearly equal ratio to that of the males, whether taken from the Indian or the creole, and

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this, notwithstanding that the last census of the town of Port-of-Spain showed 2,000 more women than men.

IX.—Disqualification Clauses.

The action of Clause LXVII. of the Immigration Ordinance of last year, which disqualifies an estate for receiving coolies when its mortality during the previous year has exceeded seven per cent. on the number actually under their first contract, has been considered by some as too stringent.

Experience so far does not confirm this view. The number of estates which passed the limit in 1869 was 20, out of 120, by no means an excessive check, considering the season. And during 1870 the number has only reached 10, affecting a population of but 600 out of 7,888 adult labourers.

The limit is less stringent in reality than in appearance, because the mortality is rarely over the limit on the same estate for two consecutive years, and as the arrivals are partly during the fall of one year and in the early spring of the next, the chances are, it gets an allotment from one or the other set of arrivals.

Of course, a continuation of mortality over seven per cent., for several consecutive years, would disqualify an estate from receiving new immigrants and leave it to recruit the ranks from the various classes of free labourers already shown to be so much on the increase from various sources. In connexion with this subject, it may be stated that cases sometimes occur of parties being allotted to estates, who, although at the time in tolerable health, yet quickly break down from concealed infirmity and become eventually chargeable on the community or swell the death-rate. Employers complain, and with good reason, that their percentage of death is thus liable to be increased from sources they cannot control.

This is an evil of serious magnitude and difficult to guard against, unless the recruiters could be made answerable for the fitness of those whom they recruit. What they do now is simply to collect people whose external appearance enables them to pass as sufficiently healthy to be embarked without risk of dying on the voyage, but there appears to be no special examination as to professional fitness for field labour. Men are drawn from sedentary classes and shipped as agriculturists who may have afterwards to walk a mile or so to their work.

These people take two years, on an average, as the returns show, before they are seasoned to the climate, or rather to the new kind of work required. It is the same in all countries, and the fact was brought prominently before the Central Relief Committee by Mr. Rawlins, C. E., in his report on the Lancashire operatives during the cotton famine. He says that, of two thousand called able-bodied, not one-fourth per cent. could ever become able-bodied.

If such were the result among comparatively healthy Englishmen in their own country, it is not surprising that the weaker Hindoo mechanic or artisan should require, as we find he does, two years of seasoning before reaching the status of an able-bodied labourer here. Probably the surest check on the recruiters' scheming would be to provide some system of District medical examination before the recruit is attested by the District Magistrate; the expense would be small, compared with any subsequent inspection, and sift out some at least who now reach the Colony without benefit to themselves, after causing a heavy outlay to be followed by no reasonable prospect of a corresponding return. Recruiters should also explain to volunteers that the wages which, in the attesting papers, they state as current in Trinidad, from 8 to 10 Annas up to 1 and 2 Rupees, mean that only the healthy and willing earn the first-mentioned sum while only the willing and able-bodied can earn a rupee—any higher rate is attained exclusively by skilled labourers or headmen, for whose duties new immigrants are rarely competent.

X.—Application for the allotment of Immigrants.

There is yet another point which may be alluded to before closing these remarks and which requires Regulation, viz., the annual applications for Indian immigrants under Clause XII. of

Ordinance No. XXIII. of 1870. At present there is no legal limit to the number for which any individual may apply, provided he comply with existing Rules.

But the number ordered from India is fixed by Council. Hence the applications generally reach a much higher figure than the corresponding shipments from India. Take for instance last year; the number applied for by employer was over 3,000 adults, while the number fixed by Council was 2,000, from which, after deducting children under age and deaths at sea, there will usually remain under 1,900 for distribution in the Colony, or less than two-thirds of the demand. The result of this state of matters is that those who ask simply for the number calculated to meet their wants are disappointed and dissatisfied. While others, to ensure their supply, ask for 50 or 100 per cent. more than they wish for or require. It is most desirable that this uncertain demand should be replaced by some formula based on the real wants of each estate, say its average crop, or other data to be decided on by the proprietary members of the Immigration Committee; to such a method there does not appear any grave objections; and any exceptionally high demands might be referred on their own merits to His Excellency the Governor.

From Sir T. W. C. MURDOCH, Chairman of the Emigration Board, to Mr. HERBERT, dated Emigration Board, the 23rd June 1871.

I have to acknowledge your letter of 19th instant, with a Despatch from the Governor of Trinidad, enclosing the report of the Immigration Agent for the year 1870.

2. The number of emigrants despatched from Calcutta to Trinidad in the season 1869-70 was 2,933, of whom 52 died at sea—a mortality equal to 1.7 per cent. This is an unusually small mortality, owing, no doubt, to a careful selection of the emigrants; to the good sanitary condition of Calcutta at the time of the emigration; and to favourable circumstances on the voyage. Dr. Mitchell anticipated the probability that future seasons may not be so fortunate, and experience shows that the mortality on the voyage varies largely in different years. There has, however, been a gradual improvement for several years past, due in great measure to the greater attention paid to sanitary arrangements in the depôts and the more careful examination and selection of the people before they are embarked.

3. Dr. Mitchell next proceeds to state and analyze the mortality among immigrants in the Colony. There are some apparent inaccuracies in his figures which I am unable to explain; but they are not sufficient to affect his conclusions.

4. First, as to the mortality of new immigrants. Dr. Mitchell gives the number of deaths in each year among 1,952 immigrants who have arrived since 1866. The striking fact in this table is the large mortality, down to 1869, of the first two years after the immigrants' arrival compared with subsequent years. During those two years the average mortality was nearly 7 per cent.; during the three following, it was rather less than 2½. In 1869 an Ordinance requiring employers to ration their immigrants for a year after arrival, came into force, and the mortality among the new arrivals of that year fell to 4.1 per cent. But in the second year, when the same people rationed themselves, the mortality among them rose to 10.7 per cent.; thus making their mortality in two years rather more than the mortality in the same period of those who arrived before 1869. An Ordinance (No. III. of 1870) has been since passed to require employers to ration their immigrants for two years after arrival. There has not been time to ascertain its results, but if a judgment may be formed from the table before us, it may be expected to have very beneficial effects. After the second year the people appear to be acclimatized.

5. The number of coolies under indenture in 1870 was 8,236, among whom there were 359 deaths, equal to a mortality of 4.3 per cent. But of these deaths, 239 occurred among 3,953 immigrants who were in their first or second years, being equal to 6 per cent., while in the remaining 4,281 immigrants there were only 120 deaths, equal to 2.80 per cent. Even among the newly-arrived immigrants, therefore, the death-rate of 1870 was not so high as

before 1869, notwithstanding that it is swelled by the excessive mortality in their second year of the immigrants who arrived in 1869, to which I have before referred. The death-rate among new arrivals in 1870 was only 3.4 per cent., less than half the average mortality of new arrivals in the four previous years. If any justification were required for maintaining the Rationing Ordinance, notwithstanding its want of popularity with both employers and immigrants, it is to be found in these facts. No doubt some of the immigrants do not work out the value of their rations, but these Dr. Mitchell says are principally the delicate and weakly, who, if they had not been rationed, would have perished: while the returns show in many instances that the rationed immigrants work better than the unrationed. The objections of employers to the system may reasonably be expected soon to pass away. Apart from all question of humanity towards the immigrant, they must feel that the preservation of the lives and health of the labourers whom it has cost them so much to introduce, is commercially of much greater importance to them than any small loss they may incur from the inefficiency of some of those labourers during their first two years.

6. In addition to the 8,236 immigrants working out their industrial residence, there were 9,020 others, including those working on bounty, the free, and children, among whom there had been during the year 160 deaths, equal to a rate of 1.74 per cent. The deaths among the whole number of Indians on estates, 17,256 in number, were 519, equal to a rate of three per cent.

7. The number of absentees, the Agent says, is considerably smaller in proportion than in former years, another beneficial effect which he attributes to the Rationing Ordinance.

8. On the 26th August the *Atalanta* sailed with 401 return emigrants for Calcutta. Of these, 214 adults, described as "ordinary labourers," deposited for transmission to India 6,830*l.*, or nearly 32*l.* a-piece, while the deposits of the remaining fourteen amounted to 3,309*l.*, or more than 236*l.* a-piece. The latter were no doubt tradesmen, and, as may be inferred from the Agent's observations, men who had made their money by speculation.

9. During the year 120 immigrants commuted their right to return-passage for grants of land of 10 acres each under the system recently established. It has, it appears, been objected to this system that 10 acres exceeds what a man can cultivate himself, and that, as these settlements increase, the settlers will be likely to come into the labour market as competitors for labourers with the planters. To obviate this objection, the Immigration Agent suggests that the lots might be reduced in size, and the difference made up to the immigrant by a money-payment. The system has been too short a time in operation to show exactly how it will work; but the Governor's Despatch of 15th April last, enclosing the report of the Superintendent of Crown Lands, described the effect of the Indian Settlements on the supply of labour to plantations as the reverse of what the Immigration Agent attributes to it. Experience will show which is correct, as the system develops itself.

10. The conduct of the people is said to have been very good, the only serious offence having been the unpremeditated murder of a foreman by two immigrants. The commitments for offences, other than breach of contract, had fallen from 737 in 1869 to 351 in 1870.

11. The restriction placed by the Immigration Ordinance on the allotment of new immigrants to an estate where the mortality of the preceding year had exceeded seven per cent. appears to be producing its effect. The number of estates that came within its operation in 1869 was twenty; in 1870 the number was reduced to ten. The whole number of immigrants on these estates was 600.

12. Among the labourers on estates are a certain number who come from other Colonies, having there worked out their industrial residence. Some of these have applied to the Governor to know whether Trinidad would provide them with a return-passage on their undertaking to work for a certain number of years under indenture. The Governor requests instructions on this point, explaining at the same time why he thinks an indenture of four or five years would be sufficient in their case. The conclusion to which he comes is, that a four years' indenture would probably be sufficient. In this I agree. It is clear that not only would the Colony incur no expense for the introduction of the immigrant, but, as an acclimatized and instructed labourer, his

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
25th October 1871.*

four years' service would be more valuable than the five years' indenture of any new immigrant that could be procured. It is, therefore, a matter of policy to offer such terms as will tempt immigrants who have completed their industrial residence elsewhere, and are dissatisfied with their position to come to Trinidad; and there is always a probability that men sufficiently independent and self-reliant to change their Colony in the hope of bettering their position, might eventually accept the advantages offered by the Indian Settlements to those who prefer to become settlers, instead of returning to India.

Endorsed by the Home Department, dated 19th September 1871, No. 4325.

Transferred, together with a sealed packet containing the enclosures, to the Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce, for disposal.

No. 141. ORDER THEREON, 25th October 1871, No. 1619.

Communicated to the Protector of Emigrants, whose attention is drawn to the point specially referred to in Mr. Secretary Hume's letter.

(True Extract.)

Under Secretary to Government.

To the Protector of Emigrants.

Boht. of 1871 3000000

PUBLIC.

To
THE PROTECTOR OF EMIGRANTS.

Dated October, 25th.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 25th October 1871, No. 1619.

UCFVB:R.

Nos. 140-141.

Communicating letter from Government of India, forwarding copy of a Despatch received from the Secretary of State, with enclosures, and inviting attention to the remarks made by the Agent-General of Immigrants in Trinidad in his report for 1870, regarding the want of care displayed by recruiters in selecting men really accustomed to agricultural work, and the want of clear understanding on the part of intending laborers as to the rate of wages to be received by them.

(8)
No.

FROM

A. O. HUME, Esq., C. F.

Secretary to the Government of India,

To *The Secretary to the Government of Madras.*

Dept. of Agriculture,
Revenue, and Commerce.

(Emigration.)

SIMLA, the 13 October 1871.

S I R,

I AM directed to forward herewith copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State, No. 61, dated 15th August last, with enclosures, and to invite attention to the remarks made by the Agent-General of Immigrants in Trinidad in the 9th section of his report, regarding the want of care displayed by recruiters in selecting men really accustomed to agricultural work, and the want of clear understanding on the part of intending laborers as to the rate of wages to be received by them.

I have the honor to be,

S I R,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. O. Hume

Secretary to the Govt. of India.

1871.

Department of Agriculture,
Revenue, and Commerce.

[Emigration.]

To

No. 58

Dated 18 October 1871.

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Cotacaimund. 25 Oct.
1871. No 1619. 5

Communicated to the
Protector of Emigrants. His
attention is drawn to the fact
specifically reported in the
Annual Letter W.K.