

(1) Number of pages 14
 (2) Date of repair Feb 1981
 (3) Initials of the Referencer low

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Rule DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1568.	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	18. 11.	1881/19/.

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STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Paper laid before the Legislative Council by Command
of His Excellency the Governor.

TUESDAY, 12TH APRIL, 1881.

Report on Indian Immigration, for the year 1880.

The Protector of Indian Immigrants to the Lieut.-Governor of Penang.

[No. 17.]

INDIAN IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT,
Penang, 3rd March, 1881.

SIR.—I have the honour to submit my Report, for the year 1880, on
Indian Immigration, under section 27 of Ordinance No. I. of 1876.

2. I arrived in Penang in February last year, and after visiting the
estates, and personally ascertaining the state of the Immigrants, and
enquiring into the alleged grievances of the Planters, I submitted to
Government my views as to the amendments required in the Immigration
law.

3. The chief points which required alteration were, I considered:—

1st.—An increased rate of pay for Immigrants on an ascending scale,
so that a man, by good steady work, could obtain, during the
third year of his contract, the pay usually given to resident
coolies, viz., 15 cents per diem.

2nd.—That an Immigrant should have the option of redeeming his
contract after one year's service, on payment of the usual
terms, *vide* section 65.

3rd.—That greater power should be given to the Protector for the
purpose of ascertaining whether an Indian passenger is not
really an Immigrant.

4th.—That all contracts made in the Colony with Natives of India
should be registered, either before the Protector or a Magis-
trate.

5th.—That tasks as the standard for a day's work should be fixed and published in the Tamil language.

4. That the Planter has a grievance in being obliged to prosecute a man for every day's absence, thus wasting time and labour and consequently money, was obvious. To obviate this, I proposed that the Protector should have power to certify, after enquiry during his visits, the number of days a man had absented himself from work, which certificate, whensoever produced before a Magistrate, should be accepted as conclusive proof of such absences, and be recorded by him on the contracts. This will obviate constant attendance at Court, and the Planters accept it as a remedy for their greatest grievance.

5. Much has been said regarding the physical unfitness of the Immigrants who arrived previous to 1880. Though there has been some truth in these complaints, it must be remembered that since the Ordinance came into force, and up to this year, there must have been great difficulty in obtaining able bodied men willing to emigrate, owing to the famine, for those who could maintain themselves during that time were not of the class who emigrate. I do not think there is cause for complaint now, and this is generally admitted by the Planters.

6. I have suggested a considerable reduction in the establishment of the Agent in India, and I think that were his pay reduced to Rs. 150 per mensem, and a fee of one rupee given for every cooly duly passed by a Medical Officer, and placed on board an emigrant vessel, we should find the supply would equal the demand, which must largely increase, if emigration to the Native States is sanctioned.

Arrivals.

7. During the year 1,191 Immigrants arrived—993 men, 198 women, and 107 dependants.

8. In 1879, 13 per cent. of the Immigrants were women, and in 1880 they exceeded 19 per cent. This proportion is undoubtedly still too low, but every endeavour is being made to increase the number of women.

9. I do not think it would be advisable, however, at present to lay down any rule as to the proportion, for it would tie the hands of recruiters in India, and so reduce the number of Emigrants.

10. The disproportion of women, even on the estates, is not so great as would at first appear. There are numbers of Tamil girls born on the estates, and there is a large and increasing Tamil population in these Settlements, from amongst whom Immigrants can and do obtain wives, and the Mahomedans marry the Malay women.

Free Passengers.

11. The statement given below will show a large influx of coolies who are not under the Ordinance. Many of these are not of the usual cooly class, being mostly of the Merican, Rowthan, and Mapillay classes of Mahomedans, and are employed chiefly as boatmen, but many ordinary coolies are brought over, who, under the existing law, have no right to come, except as Immigrants. There are also coolies among them who have been here before, as is evidenced by their talking Malay. It will be seen that the numbers thus arriving are decreasing yearly.

Number of Indian Passengers, not under the Ordinance, who arrived in 1878-1880.

1878.	1879.	1880.
5,148	4,379	3,755

12. There is no doubt, however, that at least one-third of these passengers are virtually Immigrants, but they are so well tutored that it is impossible to obtain a conviction against the importers. I have done my utmost to do so, but have invariably failed. For this reason I have asked for larger powers in my proposed alterations of the law, and my suggestion to invalidate all contracts made with Natives of India that are not registered before me or a Magistrate will be a further check, and prevent coolies from being inveigled into contracts, the terms of which they are ignorant of. No such contracts should be registered for a longer period than one year.

Fees collected in the Protector's Office.

13. For the 1,191 Immigrants who arrived during the year, \$1,191 were collected.

14. Seventy-four contracts with Natives of India were registered, for which \$74 were received.

15. The total actual receipts of this office, therefore, for the year, amounted to \$1,265.

Immigrants returned to India. Sections 34 and 35.

16. Seventy-one Immigrants were sent back to India on account of ill-health. (Section 34.)

17. The condition in which they arrived caused some correspondence with the Madras Government. The men were sent back, because it did not appear probable they would recover here. I do not think it will be necessary, in future, to send so many away, but there can be no doubt that many of those who came over here during the famine years arrived with constitutions weakened by the severe privations they had undergone. I think most, if not all, such men have now been discovered.

18. One of these men has returned as an Immigrant in good health, so it is evident this course is advisable, and rather disproves the assertion that they were ill-treated.

19. Not a man who has obtained his discharge has applied to me for a passage back to India, and from what I have seen of the Indian Natives who settle here and in the Native States, I am convinced they are able to earn a much better livelihood here than they could in India. I have conversed with numbers of them, and it is clear that their condition is materially improved by emigration, either to this Colony or the Native States now under British protection.

Desertions.

20. I append a Statement (A), showing the desertions from each estate.

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21. The total desertions among Immigrant coolies during the year amounted to 319, or 11.38 per cent. of the Immigrant coolies employed.

22. I fear this cause of annoyance and considerable loss to employers must continue so long as the demand for labour so greatly exceeds the supply as it does at present, but should emigration to the Native States, as already recommended by me, be sanctioned, we may shortly look for an improvement in this direction.

23. Coolies have everything to gain and nothing to lose by desertion. Deserters have rarely, if ever, paid up their advances, so if they get safely away they avoid re-payment. They are certain to obtain work at higher wages than they can get on the estates, so the temptation is great.

24. The neighbouring Dutch Settlements, no doubt, attract many coolies, for high pay is offered, but everything that can be done to prevent crimping is done.

25. There are many coolies who declare that they have paid their own passage, and are going to Sumatra in search of work. There is no doubt, however, that their passages have been paid for them, but this it is impossible to prove, and so they cannot be interfered with.

26. One firm in Penang, I am sorry to say, still endeavours to import coolies from India for Sumatra, and I was fortunately able to stop a gang of 26 being thus taken to Sumatra a short time ago.

27. The men were not aware they were being taken to a Dutch Settlement, and on my informing them of the fact, they refused to proceed. Unfortunately I could not prosecute, as they were French subjects, and arrived from a French port.

Births.

28. I have endeavoured to ascertain the birth-rate among Immigrants and the Indian coolies generally who are employed on the estates, but I have been unable to obtain any information on the subject.

29. The Superintendent of Police, to whom I wrote for this information, remarks: "I am afraid there has been considerable slackness in registering births upon estates in Province Wellesley."

30. It is, I think, of importance that births on the estates should be carefully registered, and I am sure the Planters will give any assistance that may be required.

31. It is not merely the births among the Immigrants as standing on the registers of this office that require to be recorded, but I would recommend that the births and deaths among the Indian coolies, not now under the Ordinance, be also reported to me, for it will be of considerable interest to ascertain whether these Settlements are suitable to Indians as Colonists. I believe such statistics would prove it beyond doubt.

Deaths.

32. During the year 1880, 65 deaths occurred. The Statement (B) annexed will show the cause of death and the time such men have been in the Colony.

33. The death-rate is highest at Batu Kawan, Byram, and Golden

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Grove estates, but this will, I hope, under the arrangement now made for dieting, soon be reduced.

34. The following statement shows the death-rate for the last three years, from which will be seen how the health of the estates has improved:—

Estates.	1878.		1879.		1880.	
	Deaths.	Percentage.	Deaths.	Percentage.	Deaths.	Percentage.
Alma, ...	9	6.46	11	7.14	2	1.68
Batu Kawan, ...	81	14.26	60	9.00	29	5.02
Byram, ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Caledonia, ...	51	17.63	13	2.13	10	2.09
Golden Grove, ...	9	2.83	10	2.12	10	2.68
Malakoff, ...	43	15.86	30	5.75	6	1.44
Prai, ...	9	4.31	11	1.87	7	1.43
Simpang Ampat, ...	2	6.66	...	...	...	...
Victoria, ...	27	9.36	10	2.74	...	...

35. Batu Kawan, I am sorry to say, still heads the list, but the great decrease in the mortality this year shows that this estate is improving. Much has yet to be done, and I trust the Return for 1881 will remove this estate from the objectionable position it has held with regard to deaths.

36. The death-rate for the whole Province during the year was 2.32 per cent.

Hospitals.

37. Each estate, with the exception of one belonging to Mr. TAN SIM HO, who has lately taken to employing Immigrant coolies, has now got its own hospital. The Medical Officer, however, visits this estate weekly.

38. They are airy buildings with ample accommodation, and each is supervised by a Medical subordinate under the general superintendence of the Assistant Colonial Surgeon, Province Wellesley, who visits them not less than once a week.

39. Statement (A) shows the number of admissions on each estate. All serious cases are transferred to the Government hospitals.

40. The number of admissions seems large, but it must be remembered that men are admitted for the most trivial complaints. If a man has a headache he goes to hospital, and so avoids work that day, but the death-rate is low, except at Batu Kawan, but even there the death-rate is much less than it was in previous years, so there is cause for congratulation on the working of the hospitals.

Sanitation.

41. There is unfortunately no means of punishing coolies wilfully polluting their lines.

42. The Planters complain of this, and it is certainly difficult to enforce even ordinary cleanliness on people who have naturally very filthy habits when no punishment can be inflicted on the offenders.

43. Every care is taken to keep the premises clean. The Managers live close to the cooly lines, so it is to their advantage also to look to sanitation.

Education.

44. Not much has been done in this direction as yet. On one estate a school is fairly attended, but, as a rule, the parents of the children prefer sending them to work.

45. I would suggest that more encouragement be given by Government towards education on estates. At present Government assistance seems to be confined to education in English and Malay, but there is now a large and increasing Tamil population in this Colony, whose wants as to education in their own language may fairly claim consideration.

46. It is next to impossible for the children on most of the estates to attend existing schools, and, I think, that schools on estates could be arranged for, if Government would assist, either by fixed grants or results grants. I consider the former would be preferable until the schools are fairly started.

47. An elementary education is all that is required, but this should be given in Tamil.

48. I would propose that Government pay for the Master, and I am confident the Planters will provide the buildings. Unless there are schools on the estates, I am certain the coolies will not send their children to be educated.

Prosecutions, under section 58, of Estate Tindals.

49. Five Tindals were prosecuted during the year for assaulting coolies. Four of these were convicted, and sentenced to fines of from two to five dollars. Complaints regarding Tindals are now few and far between. The Tindals are well aware that they are certain to be punished, should they maltreat the coolies.

General Remarks.

50. There have been no riots or serious cases of disobedience, and both employers and employed seem to understand each other better, and are consequently becoming more satisfied.

51. The chief diseases the coolies suffer from are Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Ulcers, Ague, and Syphilis.

52. There were a few sporadic cases of Small-pox on the estates in the South of the Province. Twelve persons were attacked, and five died, but there was only one death from this cause among the Immigrants.

53. No coolies were rejected, on arrival, during the year, and they were fair specimens of the Tamil cooly class.

54. It would, I think, be an advantage if the women were properly examined on arrival, for there have been several instances of Syphilis being communicated by new women, but the Medical Officer considers he is not empowered to examine the women, on arrival, for such diseases, and he therefore hesitates to do so.

55. All Immigrants are now brought from, and returned to, by steamer, which is a vast improvement on the old system.

56. It will be seen from Statement (A), that there were 2,265 coolies on the estates not under protection.

57. There is no doubt, I think, that the coolies prefer the tapioca to sugar estates.

58. Alma and Malakoff have the largest number of free coolies, but against this, Malakoff has the largest number of deserters.

59. This may be explained, perhaps, by the proximity of this estate to the boundary between the Province and Kedah territory, for, I have already shown, that an Immigrant has everything to gain by desertion, and I understand that numbers of Indian coolies are employed in that Native State.

60. I had hoped to send this Report in February last, but I have found it impossible to obtain all the information required earlier.

I have, &c.,

A. M. MACGREGOR.

Protector of Indian Immigrants.

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STATEMENT A.
Showing the Number of Indian Coolies employed on each Estate during 1880, Deaths, Desertions, Convictions, &c.

Estate.	No. of Immigrants employed on 1st January, 1880.	Arrivals in 1880.	Total.	Deaths.	Percentage of Deaths.	Desertions.	Deserters Arrested.	Returned to India.	In Gaol on 31st December, 1880.	Discharged on Completion of Contract.	Discharged on Redemption of Contract.	In Hospital on 31st December, 1880.	Remaining on 31st December, 1880.	No. of Admissions into Hospital in 1880.	Percentage of Deaths.	No. of Immigrants Convicted.	No. of Fines Convicted.	No. of Indian Coolies employed not under Protection.
Alma, ..	...	119	119	2	1.68	7	1	...	1	...	4	6	100	259	0.77	15	...	214
Batu Kawan,	316	261	577	20	3.46	29	3	19	21	...	1	41	487	772	2.75	806	...	173
Byram, ..	...	24	24	1	4.16	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	22	17	5.88	...	...	100
Caledonia,	280	188	477	10	2.09	60	27	7	14	...	14	60	349	985	1.06	247	1	291
Golden Grove,	254	119	373	10	2.68	103	78	28	6	...	8	12	277	578	1.73	190	1	159
Malakoff,	317	97	414	6	1.44	84	41	11	6	...	5	24	319	1,296	0.46	38	...	441
Prai,	334	155	489	7	1.43	22	15	6	3	...	1	52	412	1,986	0.25	53	3	259
Simpang Ampat,	...	17	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	16	...	...	...	...	190
Trans-Krian,	...	98	98	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	80	79	...	1	...	98
Victoria,...	100	118	218	...	...	5	3	...	...	...	...	11	200	118	...	29	...	220
	1,010	1,191	2,201	65	2.92	319	174	71	52	...	33	214	2,321	6,051	1.07	898	5	2,265

A. M. MacGREGOR,
Protector of Indian Immigrants.

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STATEMENT B.
Showing the Cause of each Death that occurred during the year 1880.

No.	Name.	Estate.	Date of Agreement.	Date of Death.	Cause of Death.
				1880.	
1	Kamachee,	Caledonia.	8 Oct., 1879.	June 4.	Debility.
2	Kurpen,	"	22 Aug., 1878.	Aug. 14.	Do.
3	Coopoo Govinden,	"	25 Nov., 1879.	Aug. 6.	Diarrhoea.
4	Appasamy,	"	8 Oct., 1879.	Jan. 8.	Disease of the Lungs.
5	Soobba Naiken,	"	25 Nov., 1879.	June 5.	Diarrhoea.
6	Veeramalay,	"	25 Sept., 1878.	June 25.	Small-pox.
7	Comarappen,	"	25 Nov., 1879.	June 20.	Disease of the Lungs.
8	Palauce,	"	16 Sept., 1880.	Nov. 1.	Dysentery.
9	Pitchamootoo,	"	17 Aug., 1880.	Dec. 6.	Do.
10	Vallayan,	"	26 Nov., 1879.	Oct. 5.	Do.
11	Carpanan,	Prai.	24 Aug., 1878.	April 7.	General Dropsy.
12	Menachee,	"	24 Aug., 1878.	May 4.	Do.
13	Vereppen,	"	24 Aug., 1878.	June 23.	Dysentery.
14	Moonian,	"	24 Sept., 1878.	Sept. 21.	Do.
15	Soobiah,	"	16 Oct., 1880.	Nov. 3.	Do.
16	Candasamy,	"	24 Sept., 1878.	Dec. 27.	Debility.
17	Nagamootoo,	"	10 Nov., 1879.	Aug. 14.	Diarrhoea.
18	Moothana,	Golden Grove	16 July, 1878.	Feb. 4.	Dropsy of the Heart.
19	Attap Covinden,	"	25 Nov., 1879.	April 14.	Diarrhoea.
20	Paveya Carpen,	"	25 Aug., 1878.	June 29.	Dysentery.
21	Savoogan,	"	14 Mar., 1880.	Sept. 20.	Debility.
22	Shunmooogan,	"	14 Nov., 1879.	Nov. 2.	Dysentery.
23	Nallapad,	"	16 Sept., 1879.	Dec. 5.	Diarrhoea.
24	Chinasamy,	"	26 Sept., 1880.	Dec. 21.	Do.
25	Carpen,	"	25 Aug., 1878.	Oct. 11.	Debility.
26	Kondandy,	"	25 Nov., 1879.	April 19.	Heart Disease.
27	Shengalingum,	"	23 Sept., 1879.	Sept. 9.	Died in Gaol.*
28	Venkata Chellenia,	Malakoff.	24 June, 1879.	June 11.	Debility.
29	Letchmy (female),	"	28 May, 1878.	Aug. 31.	Diarrhoea.
30	Drina (female),	"	28 May, 1878.	Oct. 5.	Do.
31	Raman,	"	28 May, 1878.	Oct. 3.	Debility.
32	Supramaneyan,	"	28 June, 1878.	Nov. 12.	Diarrhoea.
33	Raman,	"	...	Nov. 20.	Do.
34	Kathan,	Alma.	4 June, 1880.	Nov. 7.	Debility.
35	Carpanen,	"	4 June, 1880.	Nov. 22.	Diarrhoea.
36	Arnoothum,	Byram.	4 June, 1880.	April 27.	Disease of the Lungs.
37	Karopanan,	Batu Kawan.	31 May, 1878.	Jan. 8.	Debility.
38	Ramsamy,	"	1 Dec., 1877.	Jan. 12.	Diarrhoea.
39	Narainasami,	"	5 Sept., 1878.	Feb. 27.	Conjestion of Liver.
40	Meenachee,	"	5 Sept., 1878.	April 17.	Diarrhoea.
41	Palany,	"	9 June, 1879.	May 18.	Died in Gaol.*
42	Narayana,	"	26 May, 1879.	May 23.	Debility.
43	Valaythum,	"	14 Oct., 1878.	June 9.	Lock Jaw.
44	Mootoosamy,	"	27 Feb., 1880.	June 11.	Suicide.
45	Ramsamy,	"	3 June, 1878.	June 13.	Debility.
46	Challen,	"	22 Jan., 1880.	July 14.	Dysentery.
47	Chinnah,	"	14 June, 1878.	July 26.	Do.
48	Goornvan,	"	11 June, 1878.	Aug. 3.	Diarrhoea.
49	Sawmy,	"	3 Sept., 1878.	Aug. 7.	Do.
50	Angapen,	"	13 April, 1880.	Aug. 7.	Debility.
51	Raman,	"	11 June, 1878.	Aug. 11.	Do.
52	Verapen,	"	8 May, 1880.	Aug. 15.	Fever.
53	Theyee,	"	26 April, 1880.	Aug. 28.	Debility.
54	Rangasamy,	"	9 June, 1879.	Sept. 27.	Do.
55	Meenachee (female),	"	16 Sept., 1878.	Oct. 5.	Child-birth and Dy-
56	Shellappen,	"	11 June, 1878.	Nov. 17.	Debility.
57	Paramanathan,	"	9 June, 1879.	Nov. 18.	Do.
58	Allagaree,	"	14 Sept., 1878.	Nov. 18.	Do.
59	Permal Chetty,	"	14 Mar., 1879.	Nov. 25.	Do.
60	Arnasheilan,	"	11 Jun., 1878.	Nov. 15.	Do.
61	Kupeo Alambalam,	"	20 April, 1880.	Dec. 13.	Do.
62	Madan,	"	22 Dec., 1879.	Dec. 17.	Albumenuria.
63	Kadersaw,	"	15 Nov., 1880.	Dec. 25.	Abscess.
64	Parasooraman,	"	...	July 30.	Debility.
65	Mootoosamy,	"	4 Jun., 1880.	Oct. 23.	Do.

* The cause of death of Nos. 37 and 41, who died in Gaol, has not been reported.

A. M. MacGREGOR,
Protector of Indian Immigrants.

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CURRENT NO. 2104

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Colonial Secretary's Office,

Singapore, 20th September 1881.

It is requested that
the following number be
quoted in the reply to
this letter.

India 5757

Sir,

With reference to your letter No.
1026 of the 29th July, I am directed to
transmit to you 6 copies of the report
of the Protector of Immigrant for the
year 1880, and to express regret
that, through an oversight, they
should not have been forwarded
sooner.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your most Obedt. Servant

The Honble

The Chief Secretary to the
Government of

Madras.

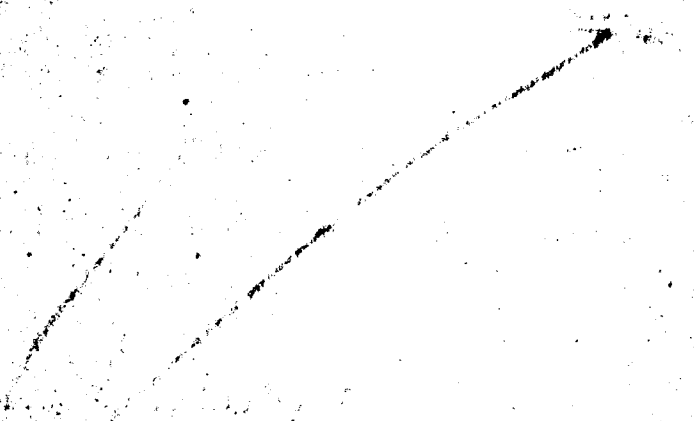
Assistant
Colonial Secretary
S.O.

Ind 2104/81

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1887

Public Dept
Immigration

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10 NOV 81

BY G. O. NO. 1568 TR. D.
3 OCT 81

Govt of Straits Settlements

no 579
87

Y. 8 Oct 27 87
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CURRENT No. 2104

Report of the Protector
of Emigrants for 80.

~~These~~
~~The P. of India asked on to send~~
~~a copy of this report on receipt~~
~~please put up Bureau letter~~
~~1887~~

~~It appears to have~~
~~been sent to India~~
~~M. 18 Nov 1881, no 1568~~

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J. R. 1887

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