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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

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Extra Office,
London, 25th August, 1881.
No. 99

To His Excellency the Most Honourable the Governor General of India in Council

My Lord MARQUIS, I forward for the information of your Excellency in Council and for communication to the Government of Madras, copy of the report of the Protector of Immigrants in Natal for the year 1880.

A perusal of this report leads me to regard the general condition of the Indians in the colony as satisfactory. I trust that measures will be taken to prevent the pollution of streams, and that, with the advent of the Inspector expected from Madras, further progress will be made in the establishment of schools.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord MARQUIS,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

HARTINGTON.

Dated Natal, 31st March 1881.

From—S. GRAVES, Esq., Protector of Immigrants.

To—The Colonial Secretary, Natal.

I have the honor to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, and for transmission to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, and to the Government of India, the following report for 1880 upon the Indian immigrants in the colony.

Arrivals during the year.

During the past year five ships with emigrants from India have arrived. The numbers embarked and landed, and the deaths which occurred during the voyages are shown by the following table:—

Ship.	Embarked.	Born.	Deaths.	Landed.	Port of Embarkation.
<i>Derwent</i> , Capt. E. J. ...	318	...	...	315	Madras.
<i>Uganda</i> , 5th ...	312	...	...	309	...
<i>Derwent</i> , Capt. J. ...	313	...	...	312	...
<i>Maas</i> ...	332	...	...	332	...
<i>Canada</i> ...	511	...	...	503	Calcutta.
Total	1,686	...	...	1,671	

The above ships were inspected on arrival, and the provisions of the Indian Immigration Act (VII of 1871) found to have been complied with, no complaints being made by the immigrants, excepting by those per *Canada* from Calcutta.

These immigrants complained that an insufficiency of food was supplied them during the voyage, and that of a lower quality. A large quantity of

surplus stores was ascertained by actual survey to have remained on hand since the disembarkation of the immigrants and, with the exception of the price, the quality of the provisions was good. These complaints were enquired into at the time, and the matter fully reported on to the Government.

No change in the management of the Agency was effected during the year, but negotiations have since been entered into with Mr. Firth, Immigration Agent for Demerara, to perform a like duty for Natal at Calcutta, and should the British Guiana authorities have no objection to the performance of the dual duties by that gentleman, I am of opinion that the interests of neither colony will suffer, but on the contrary benefit inasmuch as the close season for the West Indies is the one in which it is most desirable to despatch coolies to Natal. According to present calculations, only two or three shipments from that port will be required annually; it is therefore anticipated that Mr. Firth will be able to furnish these shipments without detriment to the Demerara Agency.

The Calcutta Agent reports that great difficulty in obtaining immigrants has been experienced in consequence of the stringent regulations with regard to the percentage of women which must accompany them.

Births.

Three hundred and thirty-five births have been registered during the year.

Deaths.

Two hundred and eighty-five deaths have been registered during the year, being 18.87 per thousand of the population. I append a return of those which have taken place from other than natural causes.

Marriages.

Ninety-two marriages have been registered during the year, chiefly among newly arrived immigrants.

Increase and decrease of population since 1879.

The following abstract shows the approximate number of Indians now in the colony:—

Estimated number in 1879	19,008
Arrived during 1880	1,073
Born in the colony	335
Deaths during 1880	285
Left the colony	195
	480
Estimated number in the colony, December 31st, 1880	20,536

Health.

I have nothing of importance on this subject to add to my report for 1879. The same complaints are still prevalent, viz., dysentery, diarrhoea, and cutaneous diseases; a low type of fever has not been infrequent owing to an unusually hot and wet season.

Nothing appears to have been done to mitigate the ill effects caused by the pollution of streams in the coast districts.

The medical officers attribute a great portion of the sickness which prevails to this source. The Doctor of the Ayca Circle reports this regarding the condition of one of the streams which flows through a thickly populated district.

The said river (Little Umkianza) "is in an abominable condition, and I hesitate not to say, is quite unfit for man or beast to drink in its present state."

Other water is obtainable by the Indians who reside or are located on the banks of this filthy stream, but at inconvenient distances.

The stretch from it at times, during the hot weather is most objectionable.

Fortunately this cannot be said to be the condition of all the other rivers which run through the coast districts, this being by far the worst.

Drink is a fruitful source of trouble, and many evils are traceable to it; but I cannot say that I think it is much on the increase, as more restrictions have been placed on the sale of liquor, and better police supervision is provided in Victoria County where Indians are most numerous.

Hospitals.

The central hospitals, three in number, which have been erected are found to answer their intended purpose admirably, and the planters show every disposition to assist the medical officers in carrying out their instructions with regard to the medical treatment of their Indian labourers.

Estate hospitals do not find favor with the Indians who prefer, as a rule, when suffering from slight ailments, to be treated in their own houses.

Complaints.

Only one case of actual ill-usage has been brought to my notice, and this would not have been considered of much moment were it not that the assault was committed on a woman, viz., by an employer of a few Indians.

The case was duly brought to the notice of His Excellency the Governor, who directed the cancellation of the contract with the employer, which was immediately carried out. No ill has resulted from the effects of this assault, as it was not by any means of a serious character.

Complaints of a trivial nature, more particularly from the up-country districts, are by no means uncommon, but frequently on enquiry are found to be groundless.

These complaints from up-country arise chiefly from a want of supervision by an Inspector, and the difficulty experienced by Indians in bringing their cases before the Magistrates owing to long distances and a lack of interpreters. Consequently desertions from employers take place, and many of the Indians find their way to the Protector to lay their cases before him, which, as I have stated above, are often frivolous and made up to excuse their illegal absences.

These matters have been duly reported to the Government here, but, as yet, beyond the formation of a medical circle and the appointment of a doctor to it, nothing has been done to increase the power of supervision or to remove the causes of dissatisfaction which exist in this respect.

Unless an up-country Inspector is appointed, I would recommend that no more Indians should be indentured to residents in remote districts and which, I may say, are practically beyond the reach of the Protector and magisterial jurisdiction.

Visitation of Estates.

The estates on the coast have been duly visited during the past year, and I am glad to be able to report that the relations between the planters and their Indian laborers are as a rule satisfactory, and the latter, when inclined to work and behave themselves properly, are contented and have little to complain of. Latterly a good number of the recently arrived coolies have showed a great disinclination to work, and desertions have not been rare in consequence.

As regards the visitation of up-country farms, it has been found almost impossible to comply with the conditions in this respect, and only a portion of them has been visited. Those farmers who were fortunate in getting good men speak most highly of their labourers, who in turn appear content with their master; but then again other Indians are frequently very unwilling to remain in isolated places, and positively refuse to return having once made their way back to the coast.

I am pleased to be able to report that progress has been made in the most desirable object. The Superintendent Inspector of Schools reports with the following information:

"During 1880 only eight schools for Indians have been under Government inspection, four during the whole year, two since 1st September, and two since 1st October. The accompanying statement (Annexure B) gives some statistics regarding them."

"Only four of these one hundred and twenty pupils was able to read English narrative containing words of more than two syllables to write a fair round hand, and to write correctly on the first four rules. About sixty Indian children attend the various English classes in the colony, and the superintendent of all the standards with their European schoolfellows."

"The Indian Education Select Board has not been able to expend more than £118-4-3 of the £1000 voted by the Legislative Council for Indian education owing to the fact that the Indian Government has at the end of 1879."

A telegraphic enquiry was made of the Government Secretary, Madras, in December last, and a satisfactory reply was received a month afterwards stating that a selection had been made, and that officials would follow by post.

The Inspector will make a tour through the coast districts immediately after his arrival, with a view to the establishment of schools wherever practicable, and will report thereon for the information and guidance of the Board.

Indian Population.
The Indian population has now attained considerable numbers and forms a very important portion of the community.

The acquisition of land is much desired, and appears to be the great object in view, in fact, that each should have a little independence of his own. A great increase in the acreage farmed by these people on their own account has taken place during the last year or two since the expiry of the five years' indenture under the re-opening of immigration. The gardens and shops kept by them may now be found in many parts of the colony, more particularly in the coast districts.

Return Passages.
I had occasion to remark in my last annual report on the subject of grants of land in lieu of return passages to time-expired Indians, but nothing so far as I can learn, has been done by the Government to carry out the conditions of section 51 of Law 2 of 1870 since the date of the report in question.

Those Indians who have applied under the conditions of the above-quoted law some forty in number, have now large families consisting of from five to ten persons; it is obvious, therefore, that to return these Indians, say forty families (some two hundred individuals) would be an expensive matter, and it is not at all unlikely that the majority of these people, if they do not get the land assigned to them, will ere long demand their return passages. Under the circumstances I think they should be positively refused the land applied for, or be put in possession of their lots.

Remittances to India.
Remittances by immigrants to their friends and relatives in India, amounted to £230-10 for the year. In addition to this sum, an inconceivable amount of money has been taken by those who paid their fares, and who, previous to the expiry of their ten years' or industrial residence.

Twenty-four such passengers have returned to India during the last year.

It does not appear to call for any consideration, except the obvious one, that the most important question, the law of marriage and divorce, and which should not be lost sight of, as I cannot help being of opinion that the provisions of the law in this respect is responsible for many of the crimes which are not committed were the provisions improved and more wisely framed.

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Interpreters.

Only one additional interpreter has been appointed, a Mr. Doherty, to one of the up-country Magistrate's Courts. I trust that similar appointments will shortly be made in all divisions where Indians are employed, and where there are vacancies.

Conclusion.

A most valuable addition has been made by the appointment of two not official gentlemen to the Indian Trust Board, viz., Messrs. H. Binns and C. Manning, both of whom recently occupied seats in the Legislative Council.

Their experience and knowledge of the various matters affecting the general question of Indian immigration to Natal have been a great assistance to me and will tend in the future to the advantage of all concerned.

It is again my agreeable duty to express for His Excellency's information my indebtedness to the several officers of the department for the zeal and efficiency displayed by them in the performance of their onerous duties, and which leave nothing further to be desired from them.

Return of Deaths of Indian Immigrants from other than natural causes.

Date and place	Name and number	Sex	Cause of death
18th November 1879...	Sydenhams, No. 2741	Female	Born.
Durban Hospital, 28th April 1880	Abdool Gaffoor, No. 13648	Male	Snake-bite.
Abdool Gaffoor, 28th May 1880	Mandoo, No. 16745	Female	Accidental drowning.
Cato-River, 28th January 1880	Thamso, No. 6598	Male	Strangulation.
Natal Hospital, 10th January 1880		Female	Accidental smothering.
Mr. Harvey's estate near Yoko- tan, 18th July 1880	Kamoo, No. 5349	Male	Accidental burning.
Beaver Lake	Not known	Girl	Born.
Indian Estate, 28th April 1879	Mungay, No. 12306	Male	Discovered in a cane-field, 8th April 1879, with marks of violence; evidently met with a violent death.
Chorobana City, 24th August 1880	Chorobana, No. 15339	Male	Supposed to be murdered.
Wahlund River near Eduliffa 28th November 1880	Wahla, No. 21639	Male	Drowning.
Indian Estate, 28th September 1880	Potter, No. 22324	Male	Strangulation; supposed to be suicidal.
Durban, 28th November 1880	Goodman, No. 21105	Male	Accident by the fly-wheel of machinery.
Mount Edgecombe, 28th November 1880	Seetha, No. 21105	Male	Drowned in a stream on Mount Edgecombe Estate during the heavy rains.
Durban, 28th November 1880	Lachman	Male	Internal injuries occasioned by falls from and under a cart.

Public Office
(1881)
Chennai
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL
DEPARTMENT

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EMIGRATION



From Hon. Member, Secretary of State

Letter of

Dated 29th August 1881

Ref. 1841 September 1881

Y. S. S. S.

Order of the Hon. Member, Secretary of State
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Chennai
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to
H. T. S. S. S.
Chennai
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