

29/10
ORDINARY MS.

Public DEPARTMENT.
G.O., DATED 28. 10. 90
No. 716.

When given for copying 22/10

[Despatch Abstract].

Re discontinuance of
out of a free return passage
from West Indian Colonies.

File No. 2417

FILE NO. 46.
SERIAL NO. 2.

1890.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

EMIGRATION.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
BENGAL.

Circular No. $\frac{23}{46-2}$ E

RECEIVED
WITH REPLY.

7th Sept 1890

Referred to the Protector
of Emigrants, Madras,
for an expression of
his opinion.

Return requested

Subscribed

Chief Secretary.

Dated Simla, the 6th August 1890.

Recd. 19-8-90

SUBJECT.

Discontinuance of the grant of a free return-passages from the Colonies.

[G. N. K.]

G. C. Press, Simla.—No. 463 R. & A. D.—8-8 90.—158.

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

ENCLOSURES.

CURRENT No. 2417
27/8

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

Letter
ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

App. to Letter No. 2718

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING WANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL (not paged).

N.B.—
A = Copy in full.
B = Not to be copied.
P = Copy abstract only.
Q = Copy heading only.

INDIA OFFICE,
London, 12th June 1890.



Public (Emigration).
No. 70.

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

MY LORD MARQUIS,—I transmit, for the consideration of Your Excellency
in Council, copy of a letter, with its enclosures,
from the Colonial Office, relating to the discontin-
nuance of the practice of providing a return-passage at the expense of the
colony to Indian immigrants in British Guiana and other British colonies.

2. With reference to this matter, I have to inform Your Excellency in
Council that a copy of your Emigration letter No. 2, dated the 25th of March
last, on the question of the extension of the period of residence entitling Indian
immigrants in Surinam to a free return-passage to India, was sent to the
Foreign Office; and I enclose copy of the despatch
addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at the Hague
on the subject.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD MARQUIS,

Your Lordship's most obedient, humble Servant,
CROSS.

No. J. & P. 911, dated Colonial Office, Downing Street, 23rd May 1890.

From—EDWARD WINGFIELD, Esq.,

To—The Under-Secretary of State for India.

I AM directed by Lord Knutsford to transmit to you, to be laid before
Viscount Cross, a copy of a despatch from the
Government of British Guiana forwarding a copy
of a Resolution of the Combined Court recom-
mending the discontinuance of the practice of providing a return-passage,
at the expense of the colony, to Indian immigrants, and a copy of a letter from
the West India Committee supporting the views of the elective members of
the Combined Court.

I am to request that you will move Lord Cross to forward these to the
Government of India, and to enquire whether they see any reason to modify
the conclusion arrived at in 1877 on the subject, which was embodied in para-
graphs 18, &c., of despatch No. 15 of 1877, dated the 3rd May, and which was
forwarded to this Department in your letter of the 28th of June, in that year.

No. 89, dated Georgetown Demerara, the 8th April 1890.

From—The Governor of British Guiana,

To—The Right Honourable Lord Knutsford, G. C. M. G., &c.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for Your Lordship's consideration, a copy of
a Resolution passed by the Combined Court in connexion with the abolition of
the practice of granting back-passages to India to immigrants recruited for
service in this colony.

2. When the Resolution was brought forward I informed the members
of the Court that I was prepared to accept it as an expression of the views of
the Elective Members, and that I would transmit it to Your Lordship, stating

that the settlement of the question largely depended upon the Indian Government, who, in consequence of the large number of immigrants who remained in the colony might be willing to take into consideration.

BRITISH GUIANA.
COMBINED COURT.

SESSION 1890.

RESOLUTION XI.

East Indian Immigration—Abolition of Back-Passage.

Whereas immigration from India to British Guiana has been carried on for about forty years with material advantage to large numbers of Her Majesty's East Indian subjects, many of those who have returned to India after labouring in the colony for ten or twelve years having taken back with them to India great sums of money, a knowledge of the English language, and an acquaintance with English habits of life which was not possessed by them on their arrival in the colony. Further, East Indians coming to the colony no longer find themselves strangers, there being now about one-third of the inhabitants of East Indian Races in British Guiana, furthermore the maintaining of such immigration, including the providing of return-passages to India, is at the cost of British Guiana and of the Planters thereof. And whereas it is expedient that immigrants from India should in future be recruited there without the condition of providing them with return-passages being imposed upon this colony:

Be it therefore resolved,—That this Court respectfully begs Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State to take such steps as to him may seem fit, to obtain from the Government of India such modification of the present system of immigration as will allow of immigrants being henceforth recruited in India without any engagement to provide to them return-passages at the expense of the colony.

Accepted as an expression of opinion from the Elective Members, 12th March 1890.

CHAS. BRUCE,
Secretary.

WEST INDIA COMMITTEE, BILLITER HOUSE, E. C.

30th April 1890.

From—N. LUBBOCK, Esq.,

To—The Right Honourable Lord Knutsford, G. C. M. G., &c., &c.

MY LORD,—At a meeting of the Combined Court of British Guiana held on the 12th March last, a Resolution was passed requesting Your Lordship to take such steps as you may consider fit to obtain from the Government of India such modification of the present system of immigration as will allow of immigrants being henceforth recruited in India without any engagement to provide them with return-passages at the expense of the colony.

His Excellency the Governor stated that he would forward the Resolution to Your Lordship, and we presume that it is now under your consideration.

The preamble to the Resolution contains a number of weighty reasons in favour of this modification. The loss every year of such large numbers of the industrial population is a very serious drawback to the colony, and is certainly no benefit to the immigrants themselves. The sums of money taken by return immigrants show that they could easily pay their own passage should they desire to go back, and among a large proportion of the immigrant population no such desire would exist if it were not for the influence exerted by the right coolies would be quite content to remain in the colony, in which they live under the protection of the British Government which they and their children

born in the colony have made their real home and in which a very large number of them are engaged in profitable occupations apart from agricultural labour. Such industrious and contented citizens the colony would be glad to retain.

All existing engagements would of course be carried out, but we beg respectfully to express our strong opinion that both in British Guiana and Trinidad the time has arrived for a reconsideration of the present system of back-passage in the interest both of colonies and the immigrants, and we would venture to support the request of the Combined Court that Your Lordship would be pleased to bring the matter before the Government of India, and in the meantime perhaps the Immigration Agent General of British Guiana and the Immigration Agents in India might be able to furnish Your Lordship with useful reports upon the subject.

Extract from (Emigration) Despatch to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India No. 15, dated 3rd May 1877.

18. We now come to the consideration of the sixth question—whether the provision of a return-passage should continue to be insisted upon. Your Lordship in paragraph 15 of the despatch of the 24th March states that "while the whole tenor of the despatch will have made it evident that it is rather settlement and colonization than mere temporary labour engagements that you desire to encourage, you see reason to fear that the stipulation for the right to a back-passage from the more distant colonies could not be abandoned without much diminishing the attraction of the system of emigration to the timid and ignorant classes from which Indian emigrants are chiefly supplied, and also without withdrawing what is perhaps the best safe-guard for the kind and considerate treatment of the Indian labourer, viz., the desire to keep him by voluntary arrangement after the term of his compulsory service has expired." You enquire, however, "whether we consider that it could with safety be left open to the emigrant in each case either to stipulate for a back-passage or to accept other terms." With reference to the first portion of the quotation above, Your Lordship will observe that there is a practically unanimous opinion expressed by the authorities consulted, that the withdrawal of the offer of a return-passage would have the effect of stopping the emigration. The Madras Board of Revenue state that "it is unquestionable that the withdrawal of the promise of a return-passage would be followed by an absolute cessation of the emigration." The Madras Government think that "it would be fatal to the continuance of willing emigration to a distant colony." The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is equally clear in his opinion that return-passages should continue to be given. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces considers that "to do away with back-passages of Oudh thinks that "few if any of the people in that part of India would go away on the chance of earning sufficient to pay their passage back again." These are the opinions expressed by the authorities in provinces where emigration is now familiar to the people: it is unnecessary to quote the views held by officers in territories where it is not at present so well known, but Your Lordship will see that they also are of the same tenor.

19. Our opinion is entirely in accord with that stated in the extracts given in the preceding paragraph; and we would add that it would be equally unavailing, so far as the purpose in view—colonization rather than temporary engagements—is concerned, to offer the emigrant the option of claiming a return-passage or to accept other terms; there can be no doubt that the choice would, save in the most exceptional cases, be for the former alternative: if any were found to prefer the latter, it would probably be because it was an object for them to leave India in avoidance of justice or for some other such reason, which would make their presence in the colony undesirable.

20. But it appears to us that the object aimed at (that is, colonization) is by no means badly served by the existing arrangements. If the choice of claiming or commuting a back-passage were held out to an emigrant before he

left India, he would certainly choose the former; but in the great majority of colonies, this choice is offered to the emigrants, but at a time when they have had full experience of the advantages of a residence in the colony, when they have begun to forget their native country, and when they have gathered together some little capital with which to start themselves as colonists, and can add to it by the acceptance of a bounty or a plot of land on which to settle. In British Guiana the Commission of 1871 found a very large number of Indian immigrants (estimated by them at 20,000) who had been 15 or 20 years in the colony and had not cared to avail themselves of their right to a return-passage; it is stated by the Governor of that colony that of those entitled to a return-passage not more than one-fifth care to assert their right. In Trinidad also, under the excellent system of land grants in force in that colony, the number of settlers is very large; and the same, though in a less degree, is the case in other colonies where land grants or liberal bounties in commutation are given. It appears to us evident that the requirement of a return-passage under these conditions does not operate as an obstacle to colonization, but on the contrary, and more especially when it is commutable for a grant of land, retains in the colony just those immigrants whom it is most desirable to keep. Those will stay who have lost their attachment to their native country, and who are likely to prove the best and most valuable settlers; those, on the other hand, will choose the return-passage who are not so well off, in whom a ten-years' residence has not been able to subdue nostalgia, and of whom the colony is best rid. What have been the effects of the denial of a return-passage in Mauritius is manifest from the report of the late Commission of Enquiry. In paragraph 6 of his despatch commenting on the report of the Commissioners (dated the 11th March 1875) Lord Carnarvon writes—

"In respect to return-passages, Mr. Williamson proposes, but Mr. Frere dissuades, a recurrence to the system. I incline to the former view. The abolition of the return-passage in 1852 was advocated, no doubt, in the expectation that it would induce Indian immigrants to remain in the colony, and at that time the expense of such a passage is said to have been so small that it was felt that no immigrant who was really anxious to return to India would be unable to do so. The retention of the immigrants in the colony has apparently been attained, but not with the results contemplated in 1852. The industrious frugal immigrants, whom the planters would have desired to retain, have been able to go back. The idle vagrant class, who earn nothing, or who spend what they earn recklessly, have been forced to remain."

Circular No. $\frac{23}{46-2}$ E.

FROM

THE HON'BLE W. C. BENETT, C.S.,
Offg. Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
BENGAL.

Rev. & Agri. Dept.
Emigration.

Simla, the 6th August 1890.

SIR,

I AM directed to forward, for the information of *His Ex. the Govr. in Council*, the accompanying copy of a despatch* received from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, and to request that the opinion of the Protector of Emigrants and the Emigration Agents for the Colonies at Madras may be obtained and forwarded to the Government of India, together with the views of His Excellency the Governor in Council on the proposal to discontinue the practice of providing a return-passage at the expense of the Colony for Indian immigrants in British Guiana and other British Colonies in the West Indies.

2. An extract† from the Government of India's despatch No. 15 of the 3rd May 1877, referred to in the Colonial Office letter No. 911, dated the 23rd May last, is enclosed

for information.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

W. Bennett
Offg. Secretary to the Government of India.

to span experiment

No. 692

OFFICE OF THE PROTECTOR OF EMIGRANTS,
Madras, 16th September 1889.

From

G. McWatters Esqre

PROTECTOR OF EMIGRANTS,
Madras,

To

The Hon'ble J. F. Price,

CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
PUBLIC DEPARTMENT,
Fort St. George.

SIR,

With reference to Government reference on Public C. N^o 2417, I have the honor to state that judging from the statistics of the Natal and Mauritius Emigration operations the guarantee of a return passage after a certain number of years does not seem to govern the number of Emigrants who return to their homes. The Emigrants to Mauritius are not granted a return passage and yet the number who returned during the 10 years between 1880-81 and 1889 was 6823 against 9062 who emigrated during the same period; while, in regard to Emigrants to Natal who are granted a return passage, the number who returned in the above decade

was only a suggestion and I believe that there is a strong possibility of success of such a system. I think that the majority of the best emigrants prefer to stay in their own homes. If the initial difficulty can be got over, that is, if Cooks are found willing to emigrate to the distant West India Colonies without a return passage being guaranteed to them I think the system should be tried. Especially as the Colonies are under British Administration and the Cooks deserve to be well looked after. I doubt, however, if the result will be what the Colonial authorities anticipate.

The Enclosures are returned.

I have the honor to be,

Sir

Your most obedient servant
G. W. Watters
Protector of Emigrants

(EMIGRATION.)

To
THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC DEPARTMENT
Fort S.

No.

Dated

Despatched

Received

ENCLOSURES.

No. 692
Subject.

Submitting remarks
expressing the sentiment of
free return passage
the Colonies.

brought up that there
was no vest Indian here
had no more

the gov. is not much
interested in the question
of robbing the

the weight and
the weather. I think the

that the
the abolition of the system
may not likely to
be brought

164/60/90

Public
Administration C. 2417 & 2718.

note

The Govt: of India asks for the opinions of the Govt:; the Protector of Emigrants and Emigration Agents concerned on a proposal to discourage the practice of providing return passage at the expense of the colony for Indian immigrants in British Guiana and other British Colonies in the West Indies.

There has been no
Emigration from Ma-
ras to the West Indies
for some years.

The Protector thinks that the system of not granting return passages should be tried but doubts if the results will be what the colonial authorities anticipate. There are no Emigration Agents for the West Indies in Madras to consult.

16/60/90

29 15710

It will be seen from the extract despatch forwarded by India that in 1877 - at which time emigration to some of the West Indian colonies was being carried on from Madras - when a similar proposal was made the Board of Revenue said "it is unquestionable that the withdrawal of the promise of a return passage would be followed by an absolute cessation of the emigration" and the Govt of Madras thought that "it would be fatal to the continuance of willing emigration to a distant colony".

The opinion of the local Govt. on the proposal is now required and the papers are accordingly submitted for orders.

The reasons advanced do not appear to be very cogent but if the Govt. Indian in Madras wish the experiment tried with regard to future emigrants there seems no reason why it should not be. The

which however appears as it is to be practically defunct - It is of no moment to India whether Cortis go to the West Indies or not as there are ample & highly remunerative fields for the spare labour of the country which need never be sent

J. B. S.

* vide para. 3 of G.O. No. 263 d/14.3.76.

DESTROYED

23 OCT 99

U. S.

29/1/10
29/1/12
282 Oct 190. No. 716.
Public Dept.

To the Secy to the G. of India
Rev. & Agri. Dept

Sir,
With refce to your
Circular N^o. ²³/₄₆₋₂ d. date
6.8.90, I am directed to
forward copy of a letter
from the Protector of Em-
igrants, Madras, & to say
that there are no Emig-
ration Agents for the
West Indian Colonies in
Madras to consult.

2. As there ^{is at present}
^{and for some time past has been}
no Emigration to the
West Indies ^{from}
^{for some years} this Govt
is not particularly in-
terested in the proposal to
withdraw the grant of
return passages to Em-
igrants but ^{the adoption of the}
jection to ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~being~~ ^{the}
~~ried out~~. There can be
no doubt, however, that
the abolition of the system
of granting return pass-
ages is not likely to stimu-
late emigration from the
East to the West Indies.

2.692 d/16.9.90

Free & Co. Co.