

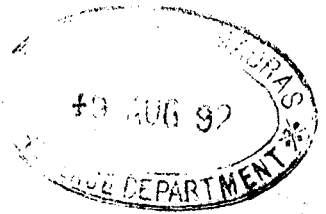
1892.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

EMIGRATION.

File No. 24.

Serial No. 15.



To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF *Madras.*

No. $\frac{1742}{24}$.

Dated Simla, the 29th July 1892.

SUBJECT.

Communicates remarks on the question of the resumption of emigration to the French Colonies of Martinique, Guadeloupe and Réunion.

No. 1742
24

FROM

SIR E. C. BUCK, KT., C.S.I.,
Secretary to the Government of India,

TO

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF *Madras.*

Rev. & Agri. Dept.
Emigration.

Simla, the 29th July 1892.

SIR,

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of *your telegram dated 29th instant*, in which you communicate the views of the Government of *Madras* on the question of the resumption of emigration from India to the French Colonies after consideration of Surgeon-Major Comins' report on the subject, and to forward for information a copy of the opinion which has been received from the *Bengal* Government on the case.

2. The report deals specially with the Colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe, in which Dr. Comins had the opportunity of personally studying the Indian immigration system. Both these Colonies, according to the information of Dr. Comins, are in a state of decadence and no longer occupy the position which they formerly held in the regard of the French nation. The condition of the indentured coolie, and, in the case at least of Guadeloupe, of the time-expired labourer who is nominally free, has deteriorated since the stoppage of emigration in 1888. The resumption of emigration is not desired by the bulk of the inhabitants, and no interest is shown in the welfare of the Indians. The influence of the Negroes, and other coloured residents who are hostile to the Indian cooly, is becoming gradually stronger. Although in Martinique the Indians now remaining occupy a better position than in Guadeloupe, this is mainly due to the fact that they are old residents and free from indenture, or in other words that they have practically ceased to be "immigrants." The introduction under such circumstances of fresh batches of coolies to be placed under indenture for the benefit of a few planters, but against the wishes of the majority of the population, seems to be out of the question. Moreover, the whole of the protective service in this island has been abolished, and its re-establishment would be difficult. In Guadeloupe there is no such thing as the "free" immigrant, and the drastic Ordinance of 1890 has created a condition of scarcely disguised slavery.

So far then as these two Colonies are concerned, I am to say that the Government of India have no hesitation in accepting the recommendation of the Government of *Madras* that the resumption of emigration is not desirable, and they will inform Her Majesty's Secretary of State accordingly.

3. Turning now to the case of Réunion, it is observed that Dr. Comins, in paragraph 23 of his report, expresses the belief that the policy towards the Indian coolie is even less liberal in Réunion than it is in the West Indies. It seems clear, however, that in view of the fact that the unfavourable opinion formed by Dr. Comins regarding Réunion is not, as in the case of the West Indies, based on personal observation and enquiry, the above conclusion cannot, by itself, be accepted as sufficient to justify the rejection of proposals to resume emigration to that colony.

There can be no doubt that the attitude of the creole population in Réunion towards the Indian coolie has been generally deplorable. But there has been no attempt to abolish the whole of the Immigration protective service as in Martinique, nor is there in force any such harsh law as the Decret of 1890 in Guadeloupe. On recent occasions it has been reported by Her Majesty's Consul in Réunion that the agricultural proprietors are disposed to treat their Indian labourers well, and that the Syndics, though needy, are not of the hopeless class found by Dr. Comins to be holding office in Guadeloupe. In Réunion too there is ground for believing that the people, so far from objecting to the introduction of Indian coolies, are even anxious to obtain a reopening of what has hitherto virtually been their sole source of labour supply. The desire of the French Government to renew emigration to Réunion is evidently far stronger than in the case of their other Colonies. They have appointed a French Protector of some influence and authority, and are willing and able to exercise some discipline over the Governor and Assembly; and although one of the worst scandals in Réunion has been delay in repatriation, the French Government have recently shown some anxiety to meet the views of the Government of India in this matter by assenting to Consul Bennett's proposals for enabling time-expired immigrants to be repatriated *via* Mauritius. Finally, while in the French West Indian Colonies the British Consuls have never ceased to deprecate the resumption of emigration, in Réunion it has been advocated by two successive officers of evident judgment and prudence.

4. Taking all these facts into consideration, the Governor General in Council is not disposed summarily to declare it impossible that a *modus vivendi* should be established which will permit of the renewal of emigration to the colony of Réunion. He would be glad, therefore, if the Government of *Madras* would consider whether, by the adoption of some such conditions as those which are suggested by Dr. Comins in page 19 of his report, or in the memorandum of Consul Bennett, forwarded to the Local Government with my letter No. 1392-93 of the 23rd ultimo, the resumption of emigration might not be rendered practicable.

The reforms which have from time to time been advocated for the improvement of the immigration system in Réunion have been mentioned in previous correspondence. For facility of reference they are enumerated below:—

- (1) That the British Consul should have a right to visit and inspect all estates;

- (2) That no re-engagement should be allowed till the expiry of the first contract, and then only subject to confirmation by the British Consul;
- (3) That expenses in connection with the Immigration Service should be obligatory;
- (4) That the Protector should be a French official unconnected with the Creole interest, who would work in harmony with the British Consul;
- (5) That a form of contract should be adopted which would be complete in itself, and such as could be understood by the Indian recruit before he accepts it;
- (6) That the kind of work, the wages, the number of holidays and working days, the hours of work, and the condition that wages specified in the contract are not liable to any local taxation, should all be stated in the contract;
- (7) That the right to a return passage should find a place in the contract, and that it should be distinctly laid down that the conditions of the contract apply to second and other engagements as well as to first engagements;
- (8) That the provisions of Article XV of the present Convention, which prescribes the amount of space to be allowed for the conveyance of emigrants from India to the French Colonies, should be made applicable to the return journey;
- (9) That the Consul should be authorised to visit all depôts where British Indians are lodged;
- (10) That time-expired Indians desiring to be repatriated should be at once sent to the "depôt colonial" at St. Denis;
- (11) That while in the dépôt awaiting repatriation, Indians should not be compelled to work against their will or kept there as prisoners, but allowed reasonable liberty;
- (12) That at all times of the year a vessel should be chartered as soon as 300 are assembled at the "depôt colonial";
- (13) Or in place of the 12th condition that vessels, each capable of carrying 700 passengers, should leave Réunion on fixed dates twice a year; and
- (14) That the *permis de séjour* should not involve forfeiture in any case of the right to repatriation.

5. To the first of the above stipulations the French Government have refused to consent. I am, however, to draw attention to the modified arrangements which

they propose in its place, and which are referred to in Mr. Egerton's letter of the 26th December 1891,* and to suggest that some *via media* might perhaps be found which would sufficiently secure for immi-

* Part of the correspondence forwarded with Government of India letters Nos. 671 and 709, dated 26th March and 12th April 1892, respectively.

grants the protection of the British Consul. It will be noticed that, in paragraph 5 of his report, Dr. Comins does not represent the appointment of an English Protector of Immigrants to be necessary even in the Colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique, and that in the succeeding paragraphs he appears to advocate a consular inspection of estates by invitation from planters. He has not, however, made any very definite proposal on the subject.

6. From a consideration of Dr. Comins' report on the French West Indian Colonies, as well as of the other records before them, the Government of India are convinced that the primary and most essential condition upon which the prosperity of the cooly depends, is that he should be placed after a limited term of indenture in a position to settle in the country on terms of equality with the original colonists.

7. With this object, though not going so far with Dr. Comins as to condemn re-indenture altogether, they would attach special importance to a provision which will guard the cooly against any risk of being re-engaged against his will. It would also be necessary to provide—

- (1) that the Indian immigrant should be expressly protected from all disabilities in acquiring or cultivating land or following any lawful pursuit or trade that he may fancy;
- (2) that for absence from work on the part of the Indian immigrant the employer be allowed to detain the cooly extra days on account of them up to a fixed limit of six months, or say one month for each year of employment;
- (3) that such absences should be proved before unimpeachable authority.

I am to ask whether, in the opinion of the Local Government, a practicable method of ensuring the above conditions might not be discovered, and if so, whether it is considered that an officer should be deputed to Réunion with the object of finally formulating, in consultation with the British Consul, conditions on which the resumption of emigration to that island could be recommended.

8. In conclusion, I am to observe that the Governor General in Council would regard with satisfaction any measure which would serve to prove to the French Government that the objections which the Government of India have been compelled to urge from time to time, and which have culminated in the prohibition of emigration to the French Colonies, have been due to no other reason than their obligation to secure proper protection for their subjects; and that they are desirous of meeting the views of the French authorities to the fullest extent in their power, whenever the conditions requisite to the interests of the Indian immigrant are satisfied.

9. I am finally to request that a very early reply may be sent to this letter.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

E. S. C.

Secretary to the Government of India.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT

INLAND EMIGRATION—No. 154T.—G.

DARJEELING, THE 28TH JUNE 1892.

FROM C. E. BUCKLAND, Esq.,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

WITH reference to the requests made by the Government of India in the letters* noted in the margin, I am directed by the Lieutenant-Governor to submit, for the information of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, the accompanying copies of reports† on the subject of the proposed resumption of emigration from India to the French Colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe, by the Protector of Emigrants, Calcutta, and Surgeon-Major D. W. D. Comins, who visited these Colonies under the orders of the Secretary of State for India. The report of Surgeon-Major Comins shows that the re-opening of emigration to any of the French Colonies would altogether be so undesirable, that it appears to His Honour to be unnecessary to consider whether the counter-proposals made by the French Government, with reference to the conditions insisted upon by the Government of India, should be accepted or not. Sir Charles Elliott would, in addition to the arguments which Dr. Comins has advanced, specially refer to Appendix B of the report, which shows 12,353 *célibataires* and only 104 *marriés*. The extraordinarily small number of Indians shown as married is explained by Surgeon-Major Comins to be due to the fact that the French Colonies only recognize the civil law of France. They take no account of caste marriages or marriages made according to the customs of countries in which "*la famille civile*" is not recognized. Consequently they only recognize those Indians as legally married who have made a declaration before the *Maire*, and whose marriages are registered in the office of the Commune. As this is rarely done except in the case of Christians, the number of Indians who, according to the French ideas, are legally married is extremely small, and all the rest are considered as unmarried, and the children of the unregistered marriages are by the law illegitimate, though they are as a concession allowed to inherit the property of their parents. This, His Honour considers, is a state of things opposed to all principles of morality, and makes it undesirable that any emigration should be permitted to a colony where such a law prevails.

2. The Protector of Emigrants has not as yet been able to furnish the information asked for by the Government of India with respect to the repatriation of time-expired immigrants in the Colony of Martinique, and their treatment on the voyage back to India, as there have been no arrivals at Calcutta since the request was made. Probably the information furnished by Dr. Comins will be deemed sufficient for the purposes of the Government of India.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

C. E. BUCKLAND,

Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

No. 1043E., dated Calcutta, the 19th April 1892.

From—DR. R. MACLEOD, Offg. Protector of Emigrants at Calcutta,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Maude's endorsement No. 965, dated the 2nd instant, received on the 5th idem, forwarding copies of correspondence relating to the resumption of emigration from India to the French Colonies, and desiring an expression of my opinion on the proposals of the French Government.

2. In compliance, and after careful consideration of the contents of Mons. Rebot's note, I beg to submit the following observations on the points raised.

3. *Firstly*, as to the right of the British Consul to visit and inspect all the estates employing Indian labour. The French Government have clearly stated their inability to concede this point, on the ground that so doing would impair the general principles of French legislation, under which the power of inspection of estates is granted only to the agents of the administration and to the judicial authority or its delegates. This ground of objection appears to me to be reasonable; and I think that the requirement might be waived in view of the alternative concession proposed, viz., that the Protector of Immigrants in the French Colonies is to associate himself with the British Consul whenever he has to decide the case of an employé against whom the employer has complained for refusal of work, insubordination, or any other misdeed.

4. I would, however, suggest that the proposed association might, under the regulations, be extended to the visits of inspection of estates by the Protector of Immigrants, in the event of the British Consul desiring to accompany that official on any occasion.

5. *Secondly*, as to no fresh re-engagement being entered into before expiry of the first contract, and without the approval of the British Consul. On this point the French Administration is prepared to issue orders for contracts on re-engagements to be subject to the signature of the British Consul as in Réunion. I presume that by "orders" is meant regulations providing for contracts to be signed by the British Consul in confirmation of the re-engagement.

6. What has been adopted in Réunion since 1877 I am not aware. But if the English Consul is to have no power to send for the labourers executing such contracts before confirming their re-engagements in any cases in which he thinks their attendance necessary, I consider that the proposed legislation would be valueless, because inoperative. It would be impossible for the English Consul to affix his signature to any such contract with doubts in his mind as to the willingness of one of the contracting parties, viz., the labourer, and the inability to satisfy himself in regard to the doubts entertained.

7. If provision were made, as suggested in connection with the first point for the British Consul to accompany, if he so desired, the Protector of Immigrants during his visits of inspection to estates, the contracts executed on re-engagements might often be signed on the estates concerned after direct communication with the contracting parties.

8. *Thirdly*, as to all the expenses attending immigration being obligatory on the local budgets of the colonies importing Indian labour. The Government of the French Republic have intimated their readiness to stipulate, in additional articles of the Franco-English Convention of the 1st July 1861, that the colonies concerned shall take the engagement to include in their budgets a fixed credit to defray, besides the expenses of repatriation already considered as obligatory, the other expenses of immigration. With this provision the requirements will be fully met.

9. *Fourthly*, as to the Protector of Immigrants being a French official having no interest whatever in the colony. This point has been fully conceded, and it will be observed that the French Colonial Administration has already introduced the system of nominating to posts becoming vacant agents that are selected in a special manner and have no interest in the country.

10. *Fifthly*, as to the text of the contracts on re-engagement being modified, and the obligation of the immigrants precisely stated. There appears to be no difficulty on this point, as the French Government are prepared to examine any new formula which may be proposed by the Indian Government.

11. *Sixthly*, as to the coolies being exempted from all taxes whatsoever, and guaranteed to be sent back to India under favourable conditions. The Government of the French Republic appear to have conceded the point in respect of direct taxes, and are willing to stipulate for their exemption from such taxes in an additional article in the Convention of 1861.

12. There is no question as to the reasonableness of Indian immigrants being amenable to the taxes which the French citizens pay as soon as they have worked out their contracts and settled down in the country in preference to returning to India. But, on the other hand, it is equally reasonable, in my opinion, that all coolies imported from India under engagements to be paid at a certain rate of remuneration for their labour should not be subjected to any diminution of their income by taxation in any direct form; and I would suggest that their total exemption from direct taxation should not be lost sight of, but provided for by special regulation.

13. As regards indirect taxation, there is I believe no intention to claim exemption, and, as rightly observed by Mons. Rebot in his note, it would be practically impossible to effect any such exemption in the special case of Indian immigrants.

14. In conclusion, the conditions under which returning emigrants should be sent back to India appear to have been taken already into consideration by the French Government, and doubtless there will be no difficulty in coming to terms on this point and laying down precise requirements.

15. There is evidently a desire on the part of the French Government to meet the demands made by the Government of India with the object of promoting the interest of immigrants; and should the requirements herein suggested be complied with, I have no hesitation in recommending the required sanction for the resumption of emigration to Réunion and other French Colonies requiring Indian labour.

FROM SURGEON-MAJOR D. W. D. COMINS,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL,
GENERAL DEPARTMENT.

Calcutta, the 14th June 1892.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the correspondence on the subject of the resumption of Emigration to the French Colonies which I have recently had the opportunity of studying in the West Indies.

Government of India, Revenue and Agricultural Department, No. 671 of 26th March 1892.
Government of Bengal, General Department, No. 941 of 31st March 1892.
And subsequent papers received in May.

The French Government urge that they have not been given the opportunity of reporting and discussing specific instances and authenticated facts and circumstances which have led the Government of India to the action it has taken in the cessation of emigration to French Colonies. In considering a question of this magnitude, involving as it does several separate administrations, I have avoided, so far as possible, reflections on personal management, and think it useless to notice the faults of individuals.

In every community there will be found bad masters, whose treatment of their dependants is actuated more by self-interest, gain, the accidents of temperament or the helplessness of their servants, rather than by conscientious scruples in fulfilling the original terms of the bargain which has placed them in the position of masters and it is with the object of counteracting, when necessary, tendencies on their part prejudicial to the interests of the immigrants, that the Departments of Emigration in India and the Colonies have been instituted, and it is in the control exercised by them and by the Local and Imperial Governments that the welfare of the coolie depends.

The Government of India is naturally anxious that the position of its subjects in the French colonies should be equal to that enjoyed by them in British colonies, and the treatment of immigrants should be that stipulated for as beneficial to them during their indenture, and preserve to them their rights as a free people after their term of service has expired. It has pointed out to the French Government certain conditions which are essential to the well-being of the coolies and without which they cannot be placed in the position of immigrants.

2. The French Government has now stated how far it is willing to ensure Indifference of the French these conditions, and coming as I do from a study Government. of the two systems, I am much struck by the unimportance of the concessions made, which would leave the position practically unaltered.

The French West India Colonies are no longer the source of revenue they once were to the Imperial Government, and are now often a great trouble and expense, the staple industry itself being only maintained by the aid of a substantial bounty from home. These islands therefore have ceased to occupy their former position in the regard of the French nation, which, when it has to contribute largely from its own resources, besides assuming great responsibilities,

with no adequate return, must be inclined to look upon its needy and clamorous offspring as *enfants terribles*, to whom only a partial hearing need be accorded. I have had considerable opportunities for seeing the correspondence with, and of ascertaining the feelings of the French Government to these colonies, and I am led to believe that it has no great anxiety to burden itself anew with responsibilities it has found so irksome and uncontrollable in the past, and of which it is at present partly relieved.

3. It must also be well aware that to the bulk of the population in these islands the resumption of Indian emigration would be most unpopular.

Unpopularity of Indian immigration to the bulk of the population of French colonies. It has acceded with a good grace to the demands of an influential section of capitalists, and has shown a sufficient interest in forwarding their proposals; but with the knowledge it must possess of the requirements of the Government of India, and how necessary it will be to comply with them fully before a reconsideration of the question of emigration will be made, it appears to me that in promising the grant of these trivial and insufficient concessions it must have been fully aware how totally inadequate they would prove to be.

4. The majority of French planters are ignorant of the conditions of immigration as existing in British colonies, and are firmly persuaded that their system is as nearly perfect as possible, and the planters of Guadeloupe Government, and calculated to give the immigrant any independence of action. They are convinced that the real cause of the stoppage of emigration by the Government of India is that the planters in British colonies are jealous of their success, and wish to obtain a more abundant and therefore cheaper supply of labour. I have tried to convince them, but to no purpose, that the number of Indians which they could import would not affect to any appreciable degree the supply of colonial emigrants from India, and that the British planters have far too much work of their own to do to have the time to be criticizing that of their neighbours.

5. There are, however, many thoughtful and experienced business men, who have large interests at stake, and who from their position should have been able to make their influence felt in the debates and decisions of the French Government, who are well aware that the old order of things must change, and rather than run any risk of failure from half measures, are prepared to adopt *en masse* the system of immigration as in force in British Colonies, including, if insisted upon by the Government of India, the appointment of an English Protector of Immigrants, which however I do not think necessary.

Unless the French Government accepted the responsibility of enforcing them, it would be impossible to accept the proposals of these well-meaning employers, or to have two systems of immigration at the same time, nor would they be allowed to carry on their proposals without opposition from their neighbours.

6. Of the existence of such influential capitalists there can be no doubt; but I see no trace of it in the correspondence from the French Government. From these persons I have never heard a word about the insult of a foreign official entering upon and inspecting estates, or of this being contrary to the spirit of the French law. They well understand that business and sentiment do not go well hand-in-hand, and the British Government, in insisting on the beneficial control of its subjects, is not doing so with a desire to offend susceptibilities, but is only carrying out the precautions it finds necessary even in its own colonies. Although the French are nervously sensitive on these points, they are easily conciliated. I have never had any difficulty on my visits to estates in French Colonies, and although the intention of my coming was not thoroughly understood, I have received much valuable aid from French managers of estates in making the fullest enquiries into any subject connected with the treatment of immigrants on which I desired information. I have occasionally noticed on my first appearance, especially at the first estates I visited in the colony, a

certain amount of suspicious reserve; but as soon as it was seen that my enquiries, however particular, were for the purpose of acquiring information of the benefits and faults of system, and not for the criticism or condemnation of individuals, my advent was always welcomed by those managers who were confident of the regularity of their actions, and who knew that nothing could be revealed to their discredit, and much pointing to good management.

Many not so anxious for light to be thrown on their arrangements which, under the lax supervision of the immigration officials, they can direct very much as they please, would no doubt object to "Foreign inspection," but it is tolerably well understood by most French employers that the Government of India, in considering the re-opening of emigration, would insist on its agents having opportunities for keeping themselves fully acquainted with the condition and treatment of the immigrants on estates, and if departmental supervision were more thorough and the system once acknowledged and established, I believe it would continue without friction if the enquiries were conducted by an official of experience and tact who, while observant of the details of management, showed no desire to find fault, and was ready to give credit for improvements and good management.

7. In Guadeloupe such an official exists in Mr. Japp, Vice-Consul at Point à Pitre, who would be well suited for these enquiries so long as he did not allow them to affect his independent position as British Vice-Consul.

British Vice-Consul Point à-Pitre. Any interference by him in executive details would prejudice him as an impartial representative of his Government. He is most energetic in ascertaining and, as far as possible, improving the condition of immigrants at Point à Pitre and in its neighbourhood, but he is not often able to travel beyond this, and his sphere of usefulness is therefore limited. He has no allowance or means of travelling, and his emoluments are extremely small, and as he is the representative of the British Government, and is the immediate referee in all complaints concerning Indian subjects I would suggest that the Government of India arrange that all travelling expenses incurred by him in connection with immigration be met from Imperial Funds. He has already been invited by some of the planters to visit their estates, and if this were done, I have no doubt the others would make it a point of honour to send similar invitations. This would be of much value, though not so great as if the right of visits to estates, and of enquiring into the work, pay, stoppages, food, lodging, medical care, extending to a scrutiny of all the estate books referring to these subjects by a British official were conceded by the French Government. No objection could, I think, be made if instructions were given to the visiting officers similar to those by Sir H. Barkly to Stipendiary Magistrates in Mauritius in 1865:—

"Stipendiary Magistrates have in some instances gone beyond their instructions.....for obtaining certain statistics connected with each property..... but in their endeavours to obtain the most accurate data on these points, I have to impress upon them the necessity of using both discretion and tact, and of avoiding all semblance of any official demand. His Excellency also apprehends that like caution is necessary for ascertaining the social condition of the Indian immigrant labourers on sugar estates and.....this part of their duty should be performed with calmness and moderation: and further, while it is their duty.....to pay every attention to any complaint.....yet it forms no part of their mission to provoke complaints through unnecessary interference on their part." (Circular to Magistrates by Sir H. Barkly, Governor of Mauritius, 20th September 1865.)

8. The right of the British Consul to receive complaints from immigrants is already secured to him by the terms of the Convention, and condition (I) of Mons. Ribot's letter contains no concession.

Remarks on condition I of India Office by French Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The following is the text of Article 20 of the International Convention of the 1st July 1861:—

Article 20.—"Les immigrants sujets de sa Majesté Britannique jouiront dans les Colonies Françaises de la faculté d'invoquer l'assistance des Agents Consulaires Britanniques au même titre que tous les autres sujets relevant de la Couronne Britannique, et conformément aux règles ordinaires du droit international et il ne sera apporté aucun obstacle à ce que l'engagé puisse se rendre

chez l'Agent Consulaire, et entrer en rapport avec lui, le tout sans préjudice bien entendu des obligations résultant de l'engagement."

The Consul under this article can make an independent enquiry, and occupies a much more satisfactory and representative position than that now granted as a privilege of accompanying the immigration official, and acting as an advocate of the coolie, but without any right to interfere in the action of the French official. It appears to me equally impossible and undesirable that the Consul should have to attend at the immigration office or at the Magistrate's Court whenever the rights of immigrants are at stake.

9. My remarks on re-engagements refer only to Guadeloupe. In Guadeloupe out of an immigrant population of 16,359, there are 12,309 employed on estates, of which 1,169 are under indenture, and 2,329 under re-indenture. To these last must be added the wives and dependent relations of those heads of families to whom the *prime* of re-engagement has been given. They do not apply to Martinique, in which the Immigration Ordinance and all its works have been abolished for years. There are consequently no immigrants under indenture or contracts of re-engagement in Martinique. There seems to be a misapprehension on this point, as one of the reasons put forward for a greater number of immigrants not having returned to India is that they may not have completed their engagements. The small and diminishing number of East Indians in Martinique is entirely on the same footing as other sections of the population, with this exception, that the Indians being in great request on the estates as labourers, and having always the right of return passage to India, great efforts are made by the planters to keep them contented, so that they may not desire to leave the estates or the colonies. In no French Colony which I have visited are the coolies so happy and unmolested by the labour laws. They are all old immigrants, thoroughly acclimatized and accustomed to the ways of the place. In fact they are the residue of those who for various reasons have left the island or died, and if left alone few of them would wish to return to India; but their only friends are the few white planters who employ them, and the rest of the population are against them as aliens, heathens, and interlopers, who destroy the price of labour and take the bread out of the mouths of the indigenous population. The force of public opinion is too strong for them, and they are gradually being pushed out of the island. As long as their numbers are sufficient to form communities of their own on estates, this is not so noticeable, and they are to a certain extent independent of outside dislike, but scattered as they now are in small parties over the island, they are constantly in contact with the Negro and coloured population, who bear them no good will, and the Negro is always a bully to every helpless creature.

It is quite true that, as compared with Guadeloupe and Cayenne, the Indians in Martinique occupy an exceptionally advantageous position, though very inferior to that in the best managed British Colonies, but this position on which the French Government congratulate themselves and point to as an instance of good management is not due to the beneficial working of the Immigration Ordinances and the special arrangements to which immigrants are subject, but to the abandonment of all such organized control which, owing to the lessened number of Indians, is no longer profitable. The elaborate precautions for keeping the Indian constantly at work and under indenture involve much trouble and expense and the maintenance of a large staff, which only pays when Indians are present in large numbers. Part of this change and also the renewed activity shown last year in repatriation is due to the strong feeling in Martinique against Indian Immigration by the indigenous inhabitants, who viewed with profound satisfaction the abolition of the department, the papers and records of which were stowed away out of sight so successfully that few of them are now forthcoming. If a Martiniquain is asked about immigration, he says with pride there is no immigration and no immigrants, as they are all French subjects. The abolition of the department was looked upon as a proof that no further attempts at introduction were intended. The sight of the back of the last Indian leaving the island would be, except to a few planters, a subject of congratulation, and the resumption of immigration would cause much dissatisfaction. In speaking of the present advantages enjoyed by Indians in Martinique, it must be remembered that new immigrants would not be at all in the same position, and the stringent conditions

of labour, the lower rates of pay, and the rigid control existing in the neighbouring island of Guadeloupe would probably be adopted in all their details.

As the decreasing number year by year of immigrants in Guadeloupe and Martinique rendered the cost of the Immigration Department more disproportionate to the work done, the immigration systems in the two islands were modified with surprisingly different results. Martinique, as shown above, discontinued departmental control, which was included with that of prisons by the decree of 31st December 1887, and which directed that the correspondence and arrangements for return passages and any other unavoidable business should be conducted in the office of the Director of the Interior. No further attempts were to be made to obtain re-engagements, and the *prime* for re-engagement was discontinued, and all immigrants were declared to be subject to the ordinary Civil French laws. Nothing could have been better for the coolies, who suddenly found themselves relieved from the harassing restrictions of the immigration laws, and able to dispose of their labour to the best advantage, and to work when and where they liked.

Guadeloupe, on the contrary, when it found that emigration from India had ceased, and the numbers of immigrants in the colony was diminishing by deaths and return to India, and by the immigrants leaving the sugar estates in Grande-terre, and setting up for themselves as small farmers in the more favourite island of Basse-terre, passed a long cherished Ordinance which had been kept in abeyance so long as emigrants were obtained from India, and which was intended by means of continued reindentures to keep all Indians of whatever standing in a condition of perpetual servitude on the sugar estates and prevent their return to India. This was all the more easy, in that ships for coolies returning to India are provided at long and uncertain intervals, and the date of their departure is not known to the immigrants, so that an immigrant at the end of his indenture finds he has to wait an unknown time on his own resources, or be immured in one of the dépôts which are to all intents and purposes prisons, and in which intending return immigrants are collected prior to their departure. His only other alternative, if he is unable to obtain work as a free coolie, which is not generally encouraged except in the small estates in Basse-terre, especially in the neighbourhood of Capes-terre and Pointe Noire, and on a few estates in Grand-terre and absolutely prohibited by others, is to accept the bounty and enter on another long period of indenture. I shall show later on the difficulties which have been placed in the way of immigrants who, having fulfilled their engagements to the colony and who should be free men desire to settle as colonists, and the pressure brought to bear to make them without delay accept another long engagement. Anticipatory re-engagements, or those made while the coolie is still under the control of the engagiste would be difficult to condemn in too strong terms, and I look upon the whole system of re-engagement as the cause of the greater part of the misery the immigrant suffers in this colony. Having secured the coolie in the colony on the promise of perfect freedom of choice as to his movements after his five years indenture has expired, the full power of the Immigration Ordinances, the Colonial law, and the whole influence of the master, is exercised to retain him and his family with his consent or against his will in a state of continued dependence until he is cast out of the colony as a broken-down and worn-out old man, incapable of any further work and an expense and trouble to his master. In most cases it is only then, as may be seen by watching the debarkation of return coolies from French Colonies, that the restrictions around them are sufficiently relaxed to allow of a return to India. To say that he in agreeing to reindenture as a free agent is an entire misnomer. He has no choice in the matter, and is obliged to yield to the force of circumstances. Unless possessed of independent means sufficient to start an occupation for himself, it would require a person of extraordinary powers to resist the pressure which is brought to bear upon him under the new decree of 1890, and if he is allowed at any time to choose his own line of life, it is probably because he is of no value as a workman. Instead of five years indentured labour, his compulsory service may last a lifetime or until he is of no further use. Previous to the passing of the decree of 1890 there were many immigrants who, having completed their indentures, left the sugar estates and betook themselves to other forms of agriculture or modes of life and are entirely free from the restrictions of the Immigration Ordinances. There are many planters in these colonies who

treat their coolies with liberality and due regard to the terms of the contract made in India, and I recollect a gentleman in Martinique to whom, after I had seen all the excellent arrangements he had made and the kindness with which he treated his dependents, including their education and the importation of vernacular school books from India, I remarked that if all proprietors acted as he did, emigration to Martinique would be continuing at the present time. He entreated me not to talk about it or to mention his name to the other proprietors, as he said his position would be most unpleasant, as having introduced improvements which they might be asked to adopt. In Guadeloupe too there are some planters who employ none but old coolies, not under indenture, whom they pay more than the wages authorized by the Convention, as being old skilled labourers; but taking advantage of clause 40 of decree of 30th June 1890 the majority use their position as masters, and their influence with the local Immigration Department to keep the coolie under a succession of indentures, and prevent him claiming his rights as a free man.

If re-indenture were abolished there would be an immediate and immense improvement in the condition of the coolie. There would no longer be any occasion for the unjustifiable interference with his movements and liberty, which is now called the repression of vagabondage. "A vagabond" is a man who, having completed his five years' service, imagines that he is free to seek service in a part or on an estate which suits him better. If he is more than 30 days without work, he is liable to be charged as a vagabond. There would be no occasion for dépôts which are prisons for such "vagabonds." Nor would it be necessary to endow the immigration officials with the powers of Judicial Police, and of making *proces verbal* which has recently been done, the Judicial Police, being more apt to decide cases according to abstract legal rights rather than to the wishes of the planters. A body of free labourers would arise who would create a standard of the duration of, and wages for, labour which is now fixed to their own benefit by the planters. Task work would be substituted for day work, both in the case of indentured and free labourers, and indentured labourers might expect to get the same wages as free labourers, if they were able to do the same work. Task work is preferred in Martinique, but in Guadeloupe it is rare.

"Le travail à la tâche qui fonctionne avantageusement à la Martinique est peu répandu à la Guadeloupe."—*Annuaire Guadeloupe*, 1891.

The free labourer could take advantage of the departure of return ships to India to go back if he wished to his country, which he is now unable to do, as, unless the ship happen to arrive at the moment of the termination of his indenture, he will probably have been induced to take another labour contract for five years.

The bounty or "prime" promised for taking a five-year contract is from £7 to £12, of which the local Government contributes £3, and is payable in instalments. This seems a large sum to give to a coolie, and at first sight it appears a liberal arrangement, but it is not so, and the advantages he loses are, even from a money point of view, far more valuable. It is impossible to suppose that a labourer, completely under the orders of his employer, is in the same advantageous position for the disposal of his labour for the highest wage as is a free man, who has first to be attracted to the estate, and then satisfied as to the money he is to obtain before he will take up the task. It would be different, too, if he had any legitimate outlet to employ this large sum of money, which generally returns to the estate eventually as payment for rum supplied.

In British colonies a man who, at the end of his indenture, has savings, usually proceeds to invest it in the purchase of a piece of land from the Crown on which he has probably long set his eye as suitable for his purpose. This he can readily acquire in Demerara at one dollar an acre, with all freehold rights. He also purchases a cow or two, but in French Colonies this is not at all what the planters want, and the labourers must remain and work on the estate. Re-indentures are not advantageous to the immigrants or the colony at large, which has to contribute heavily (75 francs for each re-indenture,) and its agriculture is thereby confined to the narrow limits of the planters' estates and no advancement or general development can take place. It is a ruinous arrangement for the coolie, as the sum he gets in no way represents the value to the planter of securing, under the stringent provisions of the Immigration laws, the labour for

5 years of a skilled and acclimatized workman, accustomed to the ways of the colony and of the estate, and to whom he pays no more than to the new immigrant just landed in the colony, and is inadequate as a recompense for the advantage the coolie relinquished as a free man with the right of disposing of his labour to the best advantage. Long before the five years are over the planter has paid himself over and over again for his outlay, without regarding the fact that he has perhaps prevented the coolie from returning to India, which would have cost as much.

If the coolie at the end of his five years' indenture wishes to leave the estate and go to another or set up for himself, he first has to get his *livret* and *livre controle*, of the entries in which he is profoundly ignorant, *visé* by his master, who often keeps them, perhaps as a security against the coolie running away. If he is lucky enough to get this done, he goes to the Syndic and asks for his *congé*. The Syndic "from politeness," as it was ingeniously put to me, tells him to get his *congé* from his master. His master can then insist on his working out the number of "lost" days, and offers him a "bounty" if he will take another contract for 5 years. If he is strong enough to decline this, and works out his "lost" days, which it was complained to me were calculated by the master, and not by the immigration officials, though a record in kept in the immigration office, he goes to the Syndic for the endorsement of his *livret* as a free man. I have examined many of these *livrets*, and in most the number of "lost" days, or days on which the immigrant did not do a full day's work, is not so great as might be expected, but considering the impossible number of hours the coolie is supposed to work, but in others the number of days is excessive. This is another fault of the day work system, and could not happen if work was done by the task. I saw one of these *livrets*, and in the same month on which his 5 years' engagement terminated an entry had been made by the Syndic that he was given 10 days to regulate his position and procure an *engagiste*; this is under article 63 of the decree of June 1890. So that the man who had fulfilled all his engagements to the colony, and should be as free as any other member of the population, found that his freedom was to last only 10 days. If an indenture expired coolie wishes to live without engagement in the island, the following obstacles, which are so great as to be almost insuperable, stand in his way:—

1. He must obtain a certificate from the Syndic authorising the demand, and certifying that the applicant is of good moral conduct and industrious. This is according to Article 9 of International Convention, but the Syndic would be more likely to tell him to get a new *engagiste*.
2. An attestation from the Maire stating that he has sufficient means of existence. As the Maires are chosen from among the proprietors and employers of labour, he is not likely to be anxious to grant this.
3. The demand is submitted to the Protector for his advice. The Protector is personally interested in keeping the number of immigrants under the Immigration laws sufficient to justify the existence of himself and his department.
4. It must pass through the hands of the Director of the Interior.
5. Finally, nothing less than the personal consent of the Governor is necessary.

Any one of these may put his veto on the proposal, in which case there is an end to the immigrant's freedom. And, even if successful, the time lost in this circuitous route must be most harassing to the Indian, who does not know whether he will or will not have to take another engagement. "In plain words, the majority of Indians who come out to this colony on a five years' contract are persuaded, if not compelled by a procedure less difficult to divine than define, to renew their frequent engagements and remain on at the grindstone until they become physically powerless, or mentally degraded or wrecked in mind and body both." (Sir F. Goldsmid. Report of British Commissioner, Réunion, paragraph 142).

No material improvement can be expected in the condition of immigrants in Guadeloupe until re-indentures have been done away with.

In British Colonies the system of re-indenture, even for short periods and among free immigrants, has almost ceased, and in British Guiana, a colony having an immigrant population equal to that of all the other British colonies, has entirely died out.

There are contracts in all colonies between free immigrants and employers as "colons," "farmers," cacao planters, &c., but these are, for specific purposes, regulated by the ordinary laws of contract, and have no connection with the Immigration Ordinance.

If permitted at all, which I cannot recommend, re-indentures should only be allowed for a short period with immigrants whose indentures have expired, who are entirely free from the influence or control of the estate, and have obtained their certificate of exemption from labour, and who have had a fair chance of judging for themselves what other opportunities the colony affords them of making a livelihood.

10. In Martinique last year the Conseil-Général voted 150,000 francs for obligatory and facultative expatriation, and at the time of my visit this had all been expended, though only 75,000 francs had actually been paid as an advance on the freight of coolies. Nominally there are 7,800 coolies in Martinique, of whom 99 have, by taking bounty, renounced their right to a free return passage. All the rest are entitled to return to India at the expense of the colony, and is probably much less than 7,800, many having left for other colonies, and the number taken, the number of coolies in Martinique cannot be verified.

No census having been taken, the number of coolies in Martinique cannot be verified. All the rest are entitled to return to India at the expense of the colony, and is probably much less than 7,800, many having left for other colonies, and the number taken, the number of coolies in Martinique cannot be verified. When immigration was stopped the Conseil-Général no longer allowed bounties either in lieu of return passage or for re-engagement. The whole burden of repatriation now lies on the Government, and the planters contribute nothing, though they still continue to have the benefit of the labour of the coolies.

The following table was prepared for me by the Inspector of Penitentiaries in Martinique to show the sums voted for, and actual expenses of return passage—

Year.	Voted by the Conseil-General.	Expended.	Number repatriated.
1885	...	Francs.	
1886	...	260,316-92	818
1887	...	178,159-92	1,791
1888	...	250,127-84	Small-pox none.
1889	...	1,452-86	Ditto.
1890	...	188,691-44	879
1891	...	378-72	Nil.
	...	184,601	509

The details of the expenses for 1891 are given below—

	Francs.
Clothes	...
Food in dépôt	...
Supervision	...
Passage money of 477 adults at 300 francs	...
Probable expenses at Marseilles during detention there	...
Ditto	...
in India	...
	184,601

There is a discrepancy of 175 francs under head passage-money unaccounted for.

The next table was prepared in the office of the Director of the Interior, Martinique, and is more complete in some particulars than the first:—

as more complete in the office of the Director of the Interior than the first:—									
ANNÉES.	CREDITS VOTÉS PAR LE CONSEIL GÉNÉRAL.				DÉPENSES.				
	Personnel.	Matériel.		Personnel.	Rapatriement.	Autres dépenses.		Observations.	
		Rapatriement.	Autres dépenses.			Rapatriement.	Autres dépenses.		
1885		42,234'00							
1886	...	42,234'00							
1887	...	7,800'00							
1888	...	4,800'00							
1889	...	4,773'00							
1890	...	4,773'00							
1891	...	4,773'00							

The following table from the *Annuaire* of Martinique for 1891, and added to by Mons. Maugée, Inspector of Prisons and the nominal head of the Immigration Department, give a good deal of information respecting the immigrant population of Martinique:—

Mouvements de la population Indienne, de 1853 au 31 Décembre 1890.

Mouvements de la population indienne.															
ÉVÉNEMENTS DES IMMIGRANTS. PENDANT L'ANNÉE 1890.	INDIENS.					ANNÉES.	Population au 1 ^{er} janvier.	Introduction pendant l'année.	Naissances.	Total.	Décès.	Rapatriement.	Total.	Reste au 31 décembre.	
	Hommes.	Femmes.	ENFANTS, SEXE.		Total.										
			Masculin.	Féminin.											
Introduction de nouveaux immigrants embarqués...	Néant	.....	.....	.....	.....	1883 et 1854	.....	1,282	7	1,289	41	.....	41	1,248	
						1855	1,248	381	30	1,659	94	.....	94	1,564	
						1856	1,564	1,546	35	3,145	142	.....	142	3,003	
						1857	3,003	1,227	68	4,298	252	.....	252	4,046	
						1858	4,046	1,534	63	5,643	334	18	352	5,291	
						1859	5,291	1,891	68	7,250	422	68	490	6,760	
						1860	6,760	1,078	130	7,968	482	70	532	7,416	
						1861	7,416	1,109	151	8,676	345	245	630	8,046	
						1862	8,046	402	132	8,580	475	.....	475	8,105	
						1863	8,105	.....	153	8,258	372	198	570	7,638	
						1864	7,638	.....	131	7,819	276	276	552	7,267	
						1865	7,267	403	147	7,817	245	431	676	7,141	
						1866	7,141	338	100	7,579	255	.....	255	7,334	
						1867	7,324	2,220	121	9,665	298	286	806	9,081	
						1868	9,081	937	122	10,140	303	603	315	9,602	
						1869	9,334	456	127	9,917	315	.....	315	10,232	
						1870	9,602	937	146	10,685	303	25	480	10,398	
						1871	10,292	463	123	10,878	455	272	749	10,581	
						1872	10,398	788	144	11,338	477	272	749	10,581	
						1873	10,581	.....	128	10,709	363	283	646	10,063	
						1874	10,063	1,407	129	11,599	302	162	464	11,135	
						1875	11,135	766	113	12,012	410	368	778	11,236	
						1876	11,236	953	161	12,350	537	.....	537	11,813	
						1877	11,813	379	172	12,364	487	.....	487	11,877	
						1878	11,877	912	171	12,960	416	.....	416	12,544	
						1879	12,544	908	146	13,598	457	502	659	12,639	
						1880	12,639	893	187	13,719	530	.....	530	13,189	
						1881	13,189	452	192	13,833	664	.....	664	13,169	
						1882	13,169	922	208	14,299	696	552	1,188	13,111	
						1883	13,111	925	216	14,252	599	.....	599	13,653	
						1884	13,453	.....	177	13,890	623	281	904	12,926	
						1885	12,926	.....	185	13,109	382	818	1,200	11,909	
						1886	11,909	.....	204	12,113	267	1,791	2,058	10,055	
						1887	10,055	.....	150	10,205	239	.....	239	9,966	
						1888	9,966	.....	107	10,073	295	.....	295	9,778	
						1889	9,778	.....	120	9,898	307	879	1,186	8,712	
						1890	8,712	.....	100	8,812	381	.....	381	8,431	
						6 months	1891	8,183	25,509	4,862	30,371	13,011	8,029	21,041	8,481
									54	8,237	133		669	702	7,783
								25,509	4,970	30,425	11,044	8,598	22,643	7,783	
migration au 31 Décembre 1889		4,476	2,424	951	861	8,712									
croissements				60	40	100									
						15'04									
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
															
						</									

Some of the totals are I see wrong but I think it better to reproduce them as given to me.

Décès.		Naissances.	
4 dernières années.		4 dernières années.	
1888	2-90 per cent.	1-07 per cent.	
1889	3-00	1-32	
1890	4-10	1-15	
1891	3-20	1-32	

Although in the year 1887, 241,527 francs, and in 1888, 120,000 francs were voted for repatriation, and placed in the column of obligatory expenses, these sums were not used in returning coolies to India. In 1890, 240,000 francs were voted for repatriation, which was also diverted to other purposes. The reason given that there was an epidemic of small-pox is a legitimate one for part of the time, but the money should not have been appropriated for other expenses. In Guadeloupe, in 1890, all the expenses of immigration, except those of return passages, which had hitherto been obligatory, were transferred to the facultative column. The figures are as follows:—

		Obligatory.		Facultative.
		Francs.	Francs.	
1889	...	221,910	40,572	
Total	...	262,482		
1890	...	17,846	220,072	
Total	...	237,918		
1891	...	75,000	239,179	
Total	...	314,179		

The return convoys from Guadeloupe have been despatched every two years as follows:—

	Men.	Women.	Children.
1887	...	...	...
1889	...	485	199
1891	...	452	231
	...	372	176
			113

11. The Protectors of Immigrants

Immigration Department.

Unless some very grave complaint is made, they do not attempt to ascertain the treatment of labourers by their employers, and even then do not take an impartial view of the case. Their inspections are perfunctorily made, and they have no precise ideas of their duties. Since the cessation of emigration it is probable that this and the greater freedom of the planter are more noticeable, and I can hardly expect that these officials, if emigration were reopened, would suddenly assume a position of independence as impartial arbitrators between planters and labourers. The appointment of Syndics seem to have been especially made with the view of placing on irresponsible persons the most important part of the duties of Protector and Inspectors. Of the six Syndics in Guadeloupe two are white men, two are mulattos and two negroes. To suppose that a negro recently emerged from barbarism, with his very hazy ideas of honesty, his marked antipathy to work of any kind, and his racial dislike to the Indian, is a fit person to control the relations of an opulent and influential proprietor and his Indian labourers, is an idea not destitute of humour.

"The Syndics and clerks of the Cantons are still more unsuited for the position they occupy, and as a body may be looked upon as creatures of the planter."—(*Despatch to Lord Derby from Réunion, 78 of 6th December 1875*).

12. The French Colonial Office has in no sense the control of the colonial legislative bodies and the measures passed by them possessed by the British Colonial Office. The interested Conseil-General of the French Colonies is able to prepare and obtain almost without comment, the approval of the French Government to measures which are obviously one-sided and unfair. In the same way abuses exist for years without any notice from the French Government, which at last aroused by some flagrant incident, severely corrects and reprimands the colony for errors which should have been recognised long before. Such warnings are soon forgotten, and these colonies possess a considerable power of action which they use as they can to their own advantage. As an example of the difference of control between the French and English Colonial Offices over the measures proposed and prepared in their interests by the colonies, I may compare the Arrêté of 30th June 1890 for Guadeloupe, by which immigration is still directed, and the draft of the proposals for a new immigration law sent for the approval of the Secretary of State, and embodying the wishes of the Jamaica planters in 1890.

The Guadeloupe decree was prepared ten years ago by locally interested persons, among whom was the Protector of Immigrants; but it was not adopted until emigration being stopped, all appearance of wishing to conform to the wishes of the Indian Government was abandoned, and the decree was sent to France, approved of, and brought into force without delay. Not so the Jamaica ordinance, from which all or most of the objectionable clauses were at once cut out.

Article 40 of the decree of 30th June 1890 contains the key note which dominates the whole and runs as follows:—"Les travailleurs immigrants des deux sexes sont pendant toute la durée de leur séjour dans la colonie soumis à l'obligation de l'engagement." Continued engagements have the effect of keeping down the price of labour most materially and of preventing the immigrant profiting by the skill he has obtained during the five years of indenture to earn higher rates of wages. Under indenture he is only entitled to £12.50=10s. a month, and as interpreted in the colony, this is the maximum he can earn if he works all day and every day, unless he is a sirdar or headman. So that whether he is a raw recruit or a skilled labourer he gets the same. In British colonies a skilled workman obtains, as he is legitimately entitled to, much higher wages. The Convention says that the question of task-work shall be freely discussed, but as

the Convention also says that the labourer shall work the impossible number of nine and-a-half hours a day every day in the year except Sundays, the planters insist on their indentured labourers taking day work. As it is quite impossible for a man to work nine and-a-half hours a day six days in the week in all weathers for five years, the planters profit by this to score up a number of "lost" days against the labourer, which at the end of the five years he has to make good before he is free of his indenture. In this way it is not an unknown thing for a man who should be free to find that he has 1,200, 1,300, 1,400, or even 1,500, days to make up, as I verified in the register of "lost" days in the Immigration Office.

With this amount of back work to wipe off he is unable to leave the estate, and generally accepts the bounty for re-engagement for a further term of five years; but at the end of that time he will find himself in exactly the same position, and will probably be tempted in the same way, and so on until he is unable to work any longer. In this way the planters keep their labourers from leaving the estate and the colony. These lost days should of course be verified by a Magistrate, and the old decrees provided that after three absences the labourer must be brought before the court and his livret endorsed; but this is not done now, and the *engagiste* can claim any number of lost days. Nothing is more calculated to make a man desperate than to find after he imagines he has completed his engagement he is still, owing to some computation he does not believe in, bound down to work on, and knowing there is always a debt of unfinished work mounting up against him. The consequence is there are many deserters, and a *depôt*, as it is called, is provided for their detention, and powers of judicial police are given to the immigration officials. The opinion of the Governor of Guadeloupe on the decree of 30th June 1890 is shown in a note on the subject he sent to the Immigration Office on his arrival in the colony, in which he said: "It was a decree impossible to enforce, and it was of no use to try and keep a free man under engagement against his will, and great measures conceived in so illiberal a spirit could not possibly last." The Convention of 1861, framed on the very

Convention of 1861.

imperfect knowledge of the necessities of immigrants possessed in those times, and containing all the errors and omissions which the work of 30 years of successive Governors, Commissions and Secretaries of State have successfully eliminated in British colonies, is altogether out of date, and is partly responsible for the position in which immigrants now find themselves in French colonies. The Convention with Holland was drawn up on the same lines, but the Dutch of their own accord, as they found the hours of work excessive, reduced them, first to 8½ hours per day, and more recently to 7½ hours per day, and have freely introduced the custom of task work. In British Guiana a man is considered a good worker if he goes to the field five days in the week and works 7½ hours a day, and in Martinique by 1 p.m. many of the Indian labourers have finished their day's task and are returning to their homes. A comparison of the Convention of 1861 with any modern British Immigration Ordinance would show at once how very illiberal and incomplete it is, and how impossible it would be to adopt it in any British Colony.

It would not be sufficient to reframe the contract of the emigrant made in India without a comprehensive revision of the Convention and Immigration Ordinances, and even Text of contracts of agreement. Convention and Immigration Ordinances, and even then, unless the Consul or visiting official had full access to the estates, there would be no guarantee that they would be carried out.

13. In the French West Indies taxes do not press heavily on the indentured cooly, and the import taxes on the articles of food he consumes do not affect him as they do in British colonies, as he is supplied with these by his employer. When he has become a free man and a petty proprietor or shop-keeper, it is only fair that he should contribute to the revenue of the colony in the same measure as the indigenous population. In Guadeloupe the decrees of the 9th March and 30th December 1864 give the right of fixing certain import duties. For 1891 these are for articles consumed by Indians—

	f.	per 100 kil.
Rice	0.75	100 "
Flour	3	100 "
Salt fish	1	100 "
Tobacco in leaf	65	100 "

They pay licenses like the rest of the people for selling spirits and as shop-keepers etc. In Martinique there is no personal tax, "côte personelle," or on cattle, sheep, or poultry reared on the island.

Houses	...	5 per cent. on nett revenue.
Rice per 100 kil.	f.	
Flour barrel of 88 kil.	...	1-20
Butter or oil 100 kil.	...	2-40
Salt fish 100 kil.	...	8-00
Salt 100 kil.	...	4-00
	...	0-25

Repatriation by mail steamers.

14. In my report on Surinam now in the press, I have referred to this point in the following terms:—

"It may be said that there are not sufficient immigrants wishing to return to fill a ship, and therefore the few must wait until others wish to go. This is a familiar argument, and sounds the better in that it assumes there is no very keen desire, except on the part of an insignificant few, to leave the colony. It cannot be expected that a colony will go to the great expense of chartering a ship exclusively for them, or that inducements will be held out to labourers to leave the colony in order to fill the ship. It is very difficult for any one, even the Agent-General, to say how many will decide to return, and it is only on the arrival of the ship at the colony becoming known on the estates that the full number of applications are made, and an estimate can be formed of the number of those who will avail themselves of the opportunity. There are reasons for an immigrant not announcing to his employer, until the last moment, his intention of leaving the estate and returning to India. Many of those who send in applications after all decide to remain; and until the ship is at the point of sailing, it is not known how many will go in her.

"The position of those who, having declined further contracts, leave the estate and wait for the ship is not an easy one, and if this period is prolonged until their means are exhausted and there is still no news of the ship, there is little for them to do but to return to the estate or be sent to the Poor Asylum.

"In Martinique the number of immigrants is now so much reduced that there is no chance of there ever being at one time enough immigrants to fill a ship, and the authorities have adopted the plan of sending them as third class passengers at short intervals, and in small batches, by the Transatlantic mail steamers. Several of these parties of immigrants returning as passengers must have arrived in India, and if on inspection it is found that their condition on board these ships is equal to that of those returning in regularly appointed cooly ships, the system might be extended to other small colonies, and this vexed question of the provision of a ship for return passage for ever laid at rest. Even if, as will probably be found, improvements and precautions are necessary, I would still continue to allow the use of mail steamers as preventing much hardship and injustice to immigrants who wish to return to India.

"In colonies like Cayenne, Martinique, Surinam, St. Lucia, Jamaica, and Guadeloupe employing few immigrants, it must happen that considerable periods will elapse before a sufficient number can be collected who will definitely decide to return, and in the meantime those who are genuinely anxious to go and are so entitled are at a great disadvantage. They cannot go as they were promised they should, and if they go back to the estate they will probably be induced to sign another contract for five years' labour.

"In colonies such as British Guiana and Trinidad, where the immigrant population is large, it will be found better and more economical to charter ships for the return passage; but for smaller colonies some other arrangement must be found, and the best appears to be that described. Whether the return passage is provided in a cooly ship or mail steamer, the colony will always be responsible that reasonable precautions are taken as to the suitability of the ship employed and the provision of food, clothing and medical necessities.

There are advantages in the plan which will do away with many difficulties. These small colonies will not be able to say they are unable to charter a ship or to find a doctor, and the coolies will be able to choose their time for leaving the island, and as the dates of sailing of these steamers is fixed, they will be able to make their arrangements for starting with confidence, and there will be no occasion for them to be kept an indefinite time in the dépôt prison, or to be spending their money waiting in the town with their families.

I intended on my way out to India to visit Marseilles to see what arrangements had been made for the accommodation of coolies changing ships, but the urgency of the telegram recalling me left me no time for this; but I would recommend that some official on his way from Europe should obtain permission to visit the dépôt when the coolies are there, so that the Government of India may be informed of their treatment.

I append a code of rules drawn up for the transport of Indians from Martinique to Pondicherry and Calcutta by this route.

15. The statements made by the coolies recently returned from Martinique are true in so far as they had no opportunity for a long time of returning to India, but it is an exaggeration to say that thousands want to return to India. They are all old colonists, and few would return but for the hostility of the blacks. They would wish to have the opportunity of returning, and if this is not afforded they complain; but if an emigrant ship were sent there to return as many as wished to India, it probably could not be filled, and many who had entered their names would refuse to go at the last moment. This is a reason why the arrangement of returning them by mail steamers is so much more convenient.

This subject is referred to in Lord Lytton's despatch to Her Majesty's Secretary of State, dated 29th May 1890, and the Governor of Réunion states, and it is repeated by M. Ribot, that during the year these lists are constantly open in the Syndic's office to those who wish at the expiration of their indenture to return to India.

Of the two Syndics' offices I inspected in Guadeloupe, in one I found such a list and the names of 50 immigrants inscribed, but in the other there was no list, and on enquiring the cause was told there were no applicants, and I find I have remarked that this and the fact that the Maire who is a large proprietor, and objects strongly to the hiring of free coolies, and employs only those who will take engagements, "must be considered together." There are about 400 immigrants in this Syndicate not engaged.

16. The low caste Madrassi is the type of cooly usually found in the French colonies which import principally pariahs and a few Sudras and Musalmans, and they seem to suit the French planter and the planter them better than any other class.

The pariahs are docile creatures not troubled with too many ideas of caste, and will do anything for drink. Although not physically strong, they are more regular workers, and get through more work in a week than the burly negro, who will not go to the field more than on one or two days in this period. One all-powerful inducement to the "pariah" or Madrassi cooly to remain in the French colonies is the fatal facility with which cheap drink can be obtained. Owing to the imperfect cultivation and machinery of many estates, it does not pay to make sugar, and the canes are only fit for the manufacture of tafia and rum. Tafia is the white spirit before it is coloured by the addition of burnt sugar, and the canes are only fit for the manufacture of coolies. This practice is encouraged by the owners of estates and distilleries, being a considerable source of income to them, and is greatly appreciated by, and adds to the contentment of, the labourers, and by allowing them to spend their wages in drink, there is no chance of their acquiring sufficient independence of position or mind to elevate them from the position of rum-sodden drudges. I believe I am not exaggerating in saying half the wages of coolies in these islands is spent in drink, and when it is remembered how very cheaply liquor can be obtained, it means hard drinking is very prevalent. Besides occasional drinks during the week, Saturday evening is spent in drink. On Sunday there is a general carouse, and the consequences are noticeable in Martinique, where the coolies, being free from the restrictions of the Immigration Ordinance, are able to go to town and return to work as they please.

A great hold is obtained on negroes and coolies of this class by supplying them freely with liquor, and on some estates it is given free of charge in large quantities,—on one estate as much as three ounces of rum daily to both indentured and free labourers. The Indian, so far as I know, never takes liquor with his food or as a dietetic luxury, his sole object being to get drink as rapidly as possible, and with this object he swallows glass after glass of rum as fast as he can drink it.

The habit of drink soon grows upon them, and they become perfect slaves to it and as easy as children to manage by those who supply them. The miserable appearance and wretched poverty of return coolies from French colonies has often attracted attention, and there are several reasons for it, but none more potent than drink. The wages are low, but much, and in many cases all, of what they earn is spent on drink, and they are consequently in poor condition and health, badly dressed, dirty in person, and degraded in type.

During harvest, when there is exceptionally heavy work to be done, it is a common practice to offer the negro a tot of rum if he will do an extra hour's work, and is perhaps the only way in which he could be got to work with that vicious and spasmodic energy which is his substitute for regular and continuous labour. The custom exists more or less in all colonies, but in none so markedly as in these islands. In British colonies it is comparatively rare, and discouraged as demoralising, besides the laws are different; and all rum has to go through the Customs, but it seems to be part of the French system, and not likely to be discontinued. "As long as the sugarcane is reserved for the manufacture of cheap rum to keep the population in a continual state of intoxication, the falling off in its culture is not to be regretted."—(*Sir Spenser St. John, The Black Republic, 1884.*)

The Immigration Department, Guadeloupe, in answer to my questions on drink as a source of crime, gave me the following information:—"If drunkenness is not the original cause of all the crime committed by the Indians, it is at least one of its principal factors, and very often plays a preponderating part. The Indian who meditates a criminal act always prepares himself during the last instants preceding its execution with copious libations. He finds in alcoholic excitement the audacity and resolution which might be wanting in calmer moments. Nevertheless, he seeks in it a means of defence before the tribunals, and never fails to plead that he was drunk, and therefore incapable of discernment;" but there is nothing in this defence which is peculiar to Guadeloupe.

17. The future of these islands is not promising, and they seem to be slowly but surely drifting into the hands of the blacks. The golden days of their prosperity have passed away, and the few white planters, aided by a heavy subvention, wage a losing war against the low and fluctuating price of sugar depreciated by an increasing beet-root cultivation. Most of them have retired to France and have left the control of their estates to managers, many of whom are coloured men. A few white planters—aristocrats among a herd of republicans—are the only people who desire the introduction and retention of the Indians, who are only tolerated as a bad but necessary substitute for their emancipated slaves. To those who would encourage the introduction of immigrants I must add some mulatto proprietors and managers. The white overseers of former days have become rare, and have been replaced by negroes and mulattos. "Tres peu d'Europeens sont a present employés sur les habitations comme greges ou economies. On prefere generalement les employés du pays qui content moins et qui sont mieux acclimatés." This is not a good change for the Indians, who do not thrive under black or coloured masters. The overseers in British Guiana are appointed from a list always full of the sons of gentlemen educated in public schools in England. It requires a visit to these islands to appreciate the contempt and dislike felt for the Indian by the general population. The hatred of the negro for the East Indian is noticeable everywhere in the West Indies. He adds to his antipathy as a rival labourer and an interloper his contempt for him as a physical inferior. Perhaps this feeling has been fostered by the cessation of immigration and the lessening numbers of the immigrants in which the negro saw the chance they want of commanding the labour market without competition, and of indulging their desire for exorbitant wages, arrogant swagger and idleness varied as want pressed by desultory fits of labour. The numbers of the blacks overwhelm the white and coloured population, and they begin to feel the power which liberty and equality enable them to claim. The recession of the white population and the growing power of the blacks is a most serious question, the gravity of which is accentuated every year and of which further developments may be expected in the near future.

To this class, as well as to the bulk of their political supporters, the mulattos, the introduction of Indians would be most unpopular, and they would have the power of making it felt in many ways.

18. I have more than once referred to the wages of immigrants, but it is necessary to give more detailed information on this important point. The legal wage for indentured immigrants per month for a man is 12.50f., for a woman 10.00f., but these wages are only due if 26 days of 9½ hours each are worked each month. But as the amount of work required is excessive, only a few earn these wages, and then not continuously. In addition they receive rations which may be computed as being worth 40 cents a day, and two changes of clothes yearly of the value of 21 francs. Even if the full wages and rations were received, these benefits would compare unfavourably with those obtained in other colonies.

There is much extra work done in all colonies during crop time, and extra wages per hour are earned during this time, amounting to considerable sums in some colonies. Supplementary labour.

In Guadeloupe, although many extra hours are worked beyond the legal 9½ hours I do not find that there is always a corresponding increase in the wages, while I noticed that rum is often given at such times. The wages of indentured coolies range from 12.50f., the usual rate, to 15f., for good workmen, but these rates are paid only if 26 full days work in the month are given. In addition they are provided with rations and clothes. The wages of free coolies are, as might be expected, for skilled and selected workmen much higher, and range from 1 franc to 1.35f. per day, occasionally reaching 1.50f. In addition they often get rations and rum free. Some liberal minded proprietors give a premium on good and steady work by offering 2 francs per month extra to every one who works 26 days in the month.

Sardars or headmen get 1.50f. to 2.50f. a day.

Free women who are good workers get 1 franc to 1.25f. a day.

This is only on liberally managed estates, and on one such I notice payments of wages are made every week as in British colonies, otherwise wages are paid monthly.

19. Article 72 of decree of 30th June 1890.—"In case of scarcity or the impossibility of procuring the food prescribed by article 71, the ration can, with the consent of the Protector of Immigrants, be replaced for a time and in determined proportion by bread, fresh vegetables, roots, or other food of the country." This is interpreted by the planters in the following way. When the market price of any article of food rises, the planter may give the immigrant money equal to the ordinary value of the article of food and tells the coolie to buy it for himself; or he substitutes unnutritious and indigestible roots for the rice or manioc flour. In the old decree of 1860 some restriction was put on the amount to be substituted, but even this has been omitted in the decree of 1890.

Decree of 18th February 1860.—"fournir dans la proportion de trois kilogrammes pour un litre."

In the contract made with the coolie in India he is promised ghi or oil as part of his ration, but this is omitted in Article 71 of the decree of 1890.

In all colonies the supply of rations by the estate to coolies newly arrived is necessary for a few months to tide them over the period when they are as yet not accustomed to the food of the country, and its price and method of cooking are unknown to them, and from inexperience and unwillingness to work they are not earning sufficient wages to buy enough food to keep them in good health: but after the first few months they learn to prefer to provide for themselves.

The articles of food prescribed in the ration are always procurable, and if planters prefer, for reasons of their own, to supply rations throughout the indenture, which I think is a practice to be condemned, they should not be allowed because prices rise somewhat to substitute inferior food. I think it a distinct grievance that oil or ghi is not provided. Whatever was the intended object in supplying coolies with rations throughout their indenture and reindentures, instead of allowing them to provide for themselves, the effect of this and of the constant opportunities for drinking rum and tafia afforded them is to destroy all

habits of self-reliance and forethought, and is calculated to make the cooly more dependent on the planter. With the ration on some estates rum is given.

20. The estate hospitals are not up to the standard of British colonies, do not always have separate wards for men and women, or the furniture prescribed by the ordinance. An overseer is often the person to whom the compounding of medicine is entrusted, and the absence of uniformity shows a general want of supervision. The houses are generally well built, large and comfortable, but the surroundings dirty and uncared for, and used by pigs and other animals. The colonial hospitals, of which there is usually one in every town of any importance, are admirably managed and well provided in every respect. Like all institutions in which the wants of the inmates are supplied by the Sisters of Charity, there is nothing left to be desired in the way of internal comfort, neatness and cleanliness.

21. There are many schools both in Guadeloupe and Martinique, but few Indians attend them or are encouraged to do so. The parents are indifferent to the advantages of education, and prefer that their children should make a few sous by working in the fields. Out of 2,375 Indian children in Guadeloupe, only 80 go to school, and in Martinique there is the same absence of education. Indian children do not like going to school with negros, who are apt to bully them. In Trinidad there are over 20 cooly schools which have been started by the Canadian Mission.

22. I will now turn to the more pleasing side of the picture, and show how Indians, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which in some cases they labour, contrive to take advantage of their surroundings and lead a life free from want or become the owners of many cattle, houses and shops, occupiers of land, or owners or part owners of crops. Many Indians have an extraordinary faculty for saving or acquiring money by usury, petty trading, &c., and the sums they accumulate are out of all proportion to their apparent opportunities for collection. The Creole Indians, or sons of East Indians born in the colony, are especially acute in this direction, and more thoroughly dislike labour in the field. The wages (12-50f.) for an indentured man and 10f. for a woman are not high, and no one could be found in a British colony who would accept them even with free rations and clothes, but the sums standing to the credit of some of these people in the Colonial banks show that there must be other ways of making money.

106 depositors have in the Guadeloupe Bank	f.
37 depositors have in the Pointe-à-Pitre Bank	...
	110,694.45
	13,675.24
	124,365.69

nearly £5,000, and there are also private accounts of Indians in the Pointe-à-Pitre Bank which I had not the opportunity of seeing. This does not represent the whole of their wealth, and they have large sums out on usury with the shop-keepers or in cattle shops and houses.

The position of the free cooly is a good one and he gets his 1.25f. or 1.50f. a day with often the addition of rations and a tot of rum thrown in, but he has to work harder for it than in any colony I know, and could not do it every day. In Martinique the few coolies who are left lead a life which must seem after indentured labour the blessing of rest. They are well and regularly paid at higher rates and shorter intervals than their less lucky brethren in Guadeloupe. Their masters take care of them, and try to make them comfortable. Skilled workmen get the value of their labour. There is never any cause of complaint between master and servant, and there has not been a case in court for the last five years. They work when and where they like, and an especially prized privilege, they can be drunk two or three days in the week and yet make plenty of money to live upon. The Immigration Department at Guadeloupe informs me that returning immigrants have taken with them to India a sum of 765,472 francs. "Sans compter les bijoux que les femmes portent sur elles et les sommes en or serrés au fond des malles."

I append a census of the East Indian population of Guadeloupe, showing the occupations followed, and prepared at my request during my visit. No such census had ever been taken before, and I apprehend that had time permitted some corrections would have been found necessary.

From Martinique in 1886, 886 immigrants returning to India took with them 38,670 francs; in 1889, 879 took 40,119 francs; and in 1891, 569 took 29,300 francs. In Guadeloupe the information furnished me shows the Indians as possessing—

1,043 cows and bullocks.
286 horses.
21 mules.
53 donkeys.
1,400 pigs.

I was unable to obtain the figures for Martinique, but the coolies have many cattle, &c.

The more skilled of the old and free labourers make much money as "colons" or on the metairie system, by which they get a part of the value of the crop they raise for the owner of the land. The land is ploughed by the estate, which also furnishes half the manure, costing 110 francs per acre, the other half is paid for by the "colon." The estate gives transport for the manure and canes to the factory, and the "colon" and his family do all the rest of the cultivation, and gets half the value of the sugar made. When used to machinery, in Martinique some Indians get high wages up to 4 or 5 francs a day when employed in driving engines, &c. Food is cheap and abundant, and the climate so equable and warm that clothes are almost a superfluous luxury.

23. To resume emigration in Martinique and Guadeloupe, without further and material precautions, would have the effect of placing immigrants in those colonies in a worse position than if immigration had never been stopped. In Martinique it would be necessary to again establish an Immigration Department which the colony can ill afford, and to introduce immigration laws which would be detrimental to the position immigrants now enjoy there; but it is quite possible that this colony would reject the idea of again receiving immigrants, and even if accepted, the small number of coolies which would be indentured for would justify only a similar departmental establishment drawn from local sources, and the result would be imperfect supervision and control, which, as the history of all such attempts has shown, is especially disastrous to newly introduced coolies, who require kind but firm masters, who, while not harassing them by unreasonable demand upon their labour, and mindful of the strangeness of the country, the cultivation, and the use of implements, yet insist on habits of industry.

In Guadeloupe, since the cessation of immigration, the decree of 30th June 1890 has placed indentured and reindentured immigrants in a position the difficulties of which are great and numerous, and to send others to join them would be to authorize a state of things opposed to principles of British emigration, contrary to the letter of the contract made in India, and to the expectations emigrants might reasonably entertain of being free to choose their own line of life after five years of indentured service.

To summarize. The following are the objections to the resumption of emigration to the French West Indian colonies, which pride themselves, and I believe with some justice, on being more liberally managed than Réunion.

The reasons which necessitated the stoppage of emigration in 1888 may well be urged at the present time, but with greater cogency. The position of the indentured and also of the labourer who should be free, instead of improving has deteriorated since that time, and the bonds of the labour laws are more tightly fastened round them; nor do I think that the French have the slightest intention of making any material improvement in their condition or of altering their traditional attitude to these labourers.

To allow emigration now would be to recognize and sanction a state of things entirely opposed to the principles which are insisted on as necessary in British colonies, and to countenance proceedings most obviously harsh, unjustifiable, and unfair.

Indian immigration is not desired by the bulk of the inhabitants, who would resent, covertly if not openly, the reintroduction, and who have the power of making the position of immigrants undesirable, if not untenable. Neither the French Colonial Office have the power, or at all events do not exercise it, in seeing that the arrangements agreed upon with the Indian Government are fairly carried out, nor apparently is the Imperial Government deeply interested in the matter.

Short of the right of inspection of estates by a British official, there is no guarantee which the French Government can give which would ensure that the immigrants are being properly treated.

The recession of the white population has deprived the immigrants of the better class of master, and they do not thrive under black or coloured masters. I would go so far as to say that no negro in any colony should have immigrants allotted to him.

To reintroduce immigrants might retard, but would not permanently arrest, the downward progress of the prosperity of these islands, and the position and treatment of the immigrants would be progressively worse as the cultivation fell more and more into the hands of the blacks, which for many years it has been continuously doing.

No interest is shown in the social welfare of the Indians, and the effect of the treatment adopted is not to elevate or improve them in habits of self-reliance and independent industry, but is calculated to degrade them, both morally and physically, to the state of permanent drudges.

The encouragement and opportunities given for drink ruin the Indians in pocket, body, and mind. The Convention of 1861 is out of date, and was never one on which immigration could be satisfactorily conducted.

The immigration ordinances are framed so as to keep the immigrants in a state of perpetual servitude on the planters' estates and to deprive them of the chances they might legitimately expect of being free to choose their own line of life on the expiration of their indentures, and unjustifiably interfere with the liberty of people who should be free from the restrictions of special labour laws.

The education of children, the importance of which was insisted on by Lord Carnarvon, as well as the raising of the status of the immigrant population generally, is almost unknown, and would not be encouraged by employers who make the children work on the estates.

There is no proper departmental supervision to control the action of arbitrary and interested planters,—in fact the Immigration Department is rather used to throw the immigrants more completely into their power.

The following faults of system are sufficient in themselves to make these colonies most undesirable places for Indian immigrants:—

Compulsory day-work is most unsuitable and unfair for experienced and skilled labourers. Reindentures destroy the labourer's chance of benefiting by his skilled labour, and keep him permanently in the colony in a state of rigorously controlled servitude.

The number of hours' work insisted on is excessive even for a short time, and impossible for six days in the week for five years. The number of "lost days" on which employers declare the labourer not to have done a full day's work, and therefore not entitled to wages, but obliged to give another day's work, is excessive and unfairly controlled. Work on Sundays especially by indentured labourers, except "corvée," is opposed to the Convention and ordinances.

The imprisoning powers of the immigration authorities are used carelessly and inequitably, and depôts as prisons are unnecessary and unjustifiable. The harassing of the immigrants found away from estates by the gendarmes encouraged and paid for by the colony, and the *livret*, which is too often an engine of oppression by the employer, and has no advantage for the immigrant, should be abolished.

Wages, though sufficient if given in full, are less than obtained in British colonies, and many do not receive the wages promised them, and it is almost impossible for a man to earn full wages for any lengthened time. Wages are

paid at too long intervals. Supplementary labour is not regularly or sufficiently paid for, and there are unauthorised stoppages.

The continuous supply of rations and consequent reduction in wages, as well as the substitutes given for wholesome food, and the omission of a portion of the ration promised, are to be condemned.

The herding of men and women together in one hospital ward is most objectionable, likewise the imperfect arrangements for the supply of medicines, and their compounding and distribution in estate hospitals. There is no system of medical inspection, and consequent neglect and evasion of rules.

Sufficient opportunities are not given for repatriation, and many obstacles are put in the way of immigrants obtaining this. Ships are only provided at long intervals. The funds set apart are diverted to other uses. And the arrangements for the accommodation and food in return ships are of the most wretched description, and such as would most unhesitatingly be condemned in any British colony. The disposal of deceased immigrants' estates is unsatisfactorily conducted.

Apart from the question of the renewal of emigration, a line of treatment more in accordance with that insisted on in British colonies might be demanded, and if it has been approved of and amended by the Colonial Office, I would suggest a consideration and comparison with the French decrees of the Immigration Ordinance for British Guiana submitted to the Secretary of State last year, and which I recently had the honour of discussing with His Lordship. It might be necessary to modify it in some particulars to suit small colonies, but it should form the basis of future immigration laws as embodying the great principles of:—

Colonization and settlement instead of prolonged engagements for labour. Illegality of re-indenture.

Task work instead of day work except in special cases alike beneficial to employer and labourer. A task to be what a man of average strength can do without extraordinary exertion in 7½ hours, and a day's work to be of the same duration.

Rates of wages equal to those obtained by indigenous labourers, especially as regards skilled and experienced workmen. "Le salaire ordinaire des journaliers est de 1 fr. 50 cent."—(*Annuaire de Guadeloupe*, 1891, page 57.)

Wages to be paid regularly and at short intervals. No stoppages or reductions except those by a court of law for offences duly proved.

Days of absence without leave, "lost days," by indentured immigrants only to be recovered before the Magistrate and within a short time of the offence.

Abolition of *livret* and harassing by the police, and rewards for apprehension of immigrants alleged to be deserters. Illegality of sale of drink and other articles by the estate to the labourer. The limitation of supply of rations to six months after introduction, and period to be shortened if the coolie can show he is earning sufficient wages to support himself.

An uniform system of sanitation and medical care and inspection. An independent and impartial supervision supported and controlled by the Local Government and the Imperial Colonial Office.

Freedom after the expiration of indenture equal to that enjoyed by other sections of the population.

The following remarks allude, I suppose, to the emancipated slaves:—"Les travailleurs indigènes débarrassés des entraves administratives qui s'opposent à la spontanéité de leurs mouvements se portèrent vers les occupations qui convenaient le plus à leur goûts ou à leur intérêts."—(*Annuaire Guadeloupe*, 1891.) And I think that the Indians at the end of their indenture might fairly expect to find themselves in a similar position.

24. To re-open emigration to the French colonies under existing circumstances would be especially unfortunate as regards Surinam, the only other foreign colony receiving Indian immigrants, and in which arrangements and improvements in accordance with those in British colonies are contemplated and, I may say, in progress. The difference in the manner suggestions are received by the French and Dutch is very marked, the latter being always ready to adopt the improvements which the greater experience of British colonies has found profitable.

25. On my visit to the Hague in February last, Baron van Deden, the Dutch Minister for the Colonies, who honoured me by asking my opinion, not only promised to give the necessary orders for the improvements I proposed, but said he would depute an official to British Guiana to study the system there. The condition of immigrants in Surinam is already better than in Guadeloupe, but improvements are very necessary in both, and these cannot be expected if the present arrangements are recognized as satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

D. W. D. COMINS, *Surgeon-Major*.

APPENDIX A.

DIRECTION DE L'INTÉRIEUR.

IMMIGRATION.

Cahier des charges pour le transport dans l'Inde de cinq cents indiens environ à rapatrier.

ARTICLE PREMIER.

Le présent cahier des charges a pour objet le transport de la Martinique dans l'Inde à Pondichéry et à Calcutta d'un contingent d'indiens adultes et autres aux conditions suivantes :
Les indiens seront embarqués chaque mois par le courrier de la ligne de Marseille à partir du mois de juin.
Les convois mensuels ne pourront se composer de plus de cent cinquante à deux cents indiens, sans que toutefois l'administration prenne l'engagement de fournir ce nombre.

ART. 2.

Les indiens arrivés à Marseille seront, par les soins de la Compagnie générale transatlantique, transbordés sur les paquebots des Messageries maritimes, suivant convention intervenue entre les deux compagnies.

ART. 3.

L'arrivée à Marseille du courrier de la Compagnie générale transatlantique ne coïncidant pas avec le départ de celui de la Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes, la Compagnie générale transatlantique se chargera de procurer le logement et la nourriture aux indiens pendant leur séjour à Marseille moyennant une indemnité journalière de un franc cinquante centimes par adulte ou équivalent.

ART. 4.

A bord des paquebots, comme à Marseille, les immigrants recevront la ration de vivres réglementaires conformément aux fixations déterminées dans le tableau qui fait suite au présent cahier des charges.
Les enfants de cinq à dix ans auront droit à la moitié des prestations attribuées aux adultes.

Ceux au-dessous de l'âge de cinq ans ne recevront aucune prestation personnelle, mais la ration journalière de leurs parents sera augmentée de 25 centilitres de riz pour chacun d'eux.

ART. 5.

Il leur sera donné à bord tous les soins hygiéniques et autres prévus par les règlements ou qui seront prescrits par le médecin. Il est spécialement recommandé aux officiers du bord de les traiter avec douceur et bienveillance et d'empêcher les hommes de l'équipage de les maltraiter.

ART. 6.

Une commission spéciale procédera avec le plus grand soin à la visite des immigrants avant leur embarquement. Elle admettra les immigrants atteints d'affections susceptibles de guérison ou d'amélioration pendant la traversée et refusera l'embarquement de ceux qui seront atteints de maladies contagieuses. L'agent de la Compagnie générale transatlantique à Fort-de-France pourra assister ou se faire représenter à cette visite avec droit d'observations. Elle sera faite en présence du médecin du bord qui, comme l'agent, aura le droit de faire les éliminations qu'il jugera convenables.

ART. 7.

L'embarquement des indiens aura lieu aux jour et heure fixés par l'agence.

ART. 8.

Le débarquement dans la colonie destinataire devra être effectué sur les ordres de l'administration de cette colonie et de concert avec le capitaine du paquebot et aux frais de ce dernier.

Le débarquement à Pondichéry devra être fait pendant la durée normale du stationnement du paquebot annexe, faute de quoi, le capitaine prendrait d'office les mesures nécessaires pour assurer la mise à terre dans les délais voulus.

ART. 9.

Le paiement du fret n'aura lieu qu'après l'arrivée et le débarquement des immigrants à destination. Le décompte des passages se fera d'après le nombre d'immigrants constaté à l'embarquement et il sera acquis aux transporteurs à tout événement.

Les enfants de huit à douze ans ne payeront que la moitié du prix de passage demandé pour les adultes.

Ceux de trois à huit ans, le quart ;
Ceux de moins de trois ans, au moment de l'embarquement, seront transportés gratuitement, mais seulement pour un enfant. Une famille qui aurait plusieurs enfants au-dessous de trois ans n'aurait la gratuité que pour un seul, les autres payeraient quart de place.

ART. 10.

Le paiement des sommes dues à la Compagnie aura lieu à Paris, sur la production d'états accompagnés des réquisitions de passage et d'une facture avec certificat du Gouverneur de Pondichéry, constatant que le transport a été convenablement effectué.

ART. 11.

Toutes les contestations relatives à l'exécution des présentes conditions seront jugées administrativement.

ART. 12.

Les frais de timbre et d'enregistrement ainsi que les frais d'impression à cinquante exemplaires du présent cahier des charges seront supportés par la Compagnie générale transatlantique.

Le Directeur de l'intérieur,

P. FAWTIER.

Le Gouverneur,

MORACCHINI.

Fait à Fort-de-France, le 28 mai 1891.

Approuvé en conseil privé, séance du 29 mai 1891.

Tableau de la ration journalière des adultes.

Tous les jours :				
Riz	...	...	...	0 ^k 672
Beurre, mantèque ou saindoux	...	...	...	0 025
Piment, cari, etc	...	...	...	0 025
Sel	...	...	...	0 020
Tamarin	...	...	...	0 025
Oignons	...	...	...	0 025
Eau douce	...	...	...	4 500
Lundi, mercredi, vendredi et samedi :				
Poissons salés ou morue	...	...	...	0 200
Légumes secs	...	...	...	0 120
Mardi :				
Lard salé	...	...	...	0 200
Biscuit	...	...	...	0 800
Dimanche et jeudi :				
Mouton, cabri, volaille	...	...	...	0 200
Giraumonts, pommes de terre ou patate	...	...	...	0 500

Le Directeur de l'intérieur,

P. FAWTIER.

Le Gouverneur,

MORACCHINI.

Fort-de-France, le 28 mai 1891.

Approuvé en conseil privé, séance du 29 mai 1891.

APPENDIX B.

Census of the East Indian population of Guadeloupe, showing the various occupations followed, prepared during my visit by the Immigration Department, Guadeloupe.

1. Paysans, propriétaires	...	...	...	269
2. Géreurs, économes, conducteurs	...	...	...	195
3. Agriculteurs	...	...	...	5,842
4. Bergers et attachés aux paturages	...	...	...	515
5. Journaliers	...	...	...	4,544
6. Travailleurs sur les chemins de fer, sur les routes ou rues	...	...	...	115
7. Conducteurs de machines agricoles ou de locomotives	...	...	...	61
8. Gardes de chemin de fer, marqueurs, surveillants des portes et signaux	...	...	...	23
9. Marchands, agents ou détaillants	...	...	...	29
10. Boutiquiers	...	...	...	10
11. Colporteurs	...	...	...	85
12. Boutiquiers employés ou Commis	...	...	...	46
13. Vendeurs de lait	...	...	...	2
14. Vendeurs d'herbes	...	...	...	20
15. Charbonniers ou vendeurs de charbon	...	...	...	187
16. Maraîchers	...	...	...	190
17. Domestiques de maisons	...	...	...	7
18. Domestiques, garçons d'écurie, cochers ou jardiniers	...	...	...	9
19. Blanchisseurs	...	...	...	5
20. Interprètes, plantons de tribunal, messagers du Gouvernement	...	...	...	9
21. Instituteurs	...	...	...	11
22. Prêtres et mendiants	...	...	...	2
23. Infirmiers, pharmaciens, accoucheurs	...	...	...	2
24. Orfèvres et joailliers	...	...	...	1
25. Barbiers	...	...	...	83
26. Boulangers et pâtisseries	...	...	...	40
27. Pêcheurs	...	...	...	...
28. Propriétaires de maisons	...	...	...	177
29. Propriétaires de voitures	...	...	...	...
30. Rentiers	...	...	...	...
31. Femmes, servantes de maisons	...	...	...	12,479
Total	...	...	...	...

33. Catholiques romains	...	...	...	...
34. de l'Eglise d'Angleterre	...	...	...	...
35. Wesleyens	...	...	...	...
36. Presbytériens	...	...	...	...
37. Baptistes	...	...	...	...
38. Autres dénominations	...	...	...	...
39. Ministres chrétiens et catéchistes	...	...	...	...
40. Total des chrétiens	...	...	...	...
41. Hindous	...	...	...	...
42. Mahométants	...	...	...	...
43. Autres	...	...	...	...
44. Total des infidèles	...	...	...	86
45. Allant à l'école	...	...	...	2,294
46. N'allant pas à l'école	...	...	...	2,380
47. Total des enfants	...	...	...	104
48. Mariés	...	...	...	23
49. Veufs	...	...	...	12,352
50. Célibataires	...	...	...	14,859
Total	...	...	...	...

52.	Au-dessous d'un an	...	...	...	...	477
	" de 5 ans	...	...	...	...	793
53,	" de 10 "	...	...	...	..	1,018
	" de 15 "	...	...	...	...	1,348
	" de 20 "	...	...	...	...	2,259
	" de 30 "	...	...	...	...	4,443
	" de 40 "	...	...	...	...	3,374
	" de 50 "	...	...	...	...	963
54.	" de 60 "	...	...	...	...	174
55.	" de 80 "	...	...	...	...	10
Total						14,859

A AJOUTER.

Gardiens de nuit	...	...	...	...
Bûcherons	...	...	...	...
Agents de police	...	...	...	...
Adultes et enfants sans emploi	...	...	...	2,294
Immigrants versés dans le droit commun, 1,524.				

Basse Terre, le 13 Octobre 1891.

Le Protecteur, Chef du Service de l'Immigration,
DAVERS.

CURRENT No.

8100

Public DEPARTMENT.

[9]

5/7/92 No 469
27/7/92 No 579
8/8/92 No 546

From

The Govt of India,
Rev and Agnil
Dept.

No. $\frac{1742}{24}$

Dated 29 July
Received 10 Aug } 1892.

Enc 4 and 50 copies of the
current.

SUBJECT.

remarks on the question
sumption of emigration
French Colonies of
Guadeloupe and
Martinique.



GOTACAMUND.

Aug. 18th 1892.

My Dear Isaac Carter

H. E. saw the
papers in GO No. 464 dated 5.7.92.
India in reply to the telegram sent
writing regarding renewal of migration
to Reunion. I send Indian letter to
enclosure in case that H. E. might
wish to see them. It is as you will
see from the Note for orders a piece
as to what should be done. All
these letters to be seen in the file.

5/7/92 4066 as the placed
22/9/00 22/9/00 22/9/00 22/9/00
as the placed in P.O. 4066

Jeux d'enfants
Benedictine

Измаи Рий

Thanks to the *Reun*

papers which I have shown
to H. B. He concurs with
H. B. entirely

Yours

conduct

19. VIII
92

to do what is best for the
only complaint by me

FOR ORDERS.

I quite agree with the view taken by
my hon. colleagues. he shall be let in - unless
we have a report first to guide us. *W. Aug.*

Pressure is apparently being put

I do not think that the *French* Government as to *emigration* from home on the Govt. of India for, though

protection of the immigrants can be *both the Lt. Governor of Bengal and this Govt.* have expressed opinions most strongly op-

erated as at all satisfactory or *posed to the renewal of emigration to the*

sufficient, and it is not likely that *French Colonies, the subject is ~~renewed~~ with*

the extension of the consular services *reference to Reunion. It is true that Dr.*

suggested by Mr. Brumitt in para 2 *Spains did not visit Reunion but if any*

of his memorandum in respect of *weight to be given to his report it must be*

complaints by *as observed by Dr. Comins* inferred that the remarks which he makes

even then *inspection of estates by a British* with regard to that Colony are not without

an opportunity to *official there is no guarantee* reasonable foundation.

which the French Govt. can give *Judging from the papers in G.O.No.546*

which would ensure that the *dated 8th August 1892, which however do not*

immigrants are being *refer to indentured emigrants, the French*

tried? *in on 1.18. Mr. Brumitt* there are as high handed with the natives

sufficiency find no place in the *of India as they are in the West Indies.*

of the Govt of India in the present *In para 7 of his letter Sir E Buck*

letter, dated 1.19.07 *suggests for the consideration of this Govt*

12/10/07. I do not think that the *the question of deputing an officer to Re*

consideration stated in para 3 *union with the object of formulating n*

in E.C. Buck's letter should include *consultation with the British Consul corp*

the Govt of India to lay in the *tions on which the resumption of emigra*

its demands in regard to the *to that island could be recommended".*

protection of its subjects. *It is submitted that this is the*

I am not advising India in this *plan by which the real condition of the*

to suggest the deputation of *coolies and their treatment by their*

to Reunion with instructions to *with view to formulate arrangements*

report on the condition & prospects of *which the resumption of emigra*

to
to
24/1

Mr 2
24/1

This is
going forth
for my
24/1

17/8/92

100.
be ascertained in a settlement of the
basis upon which emigration should be
renewed ^{if it is to be resumed at all} can be arrived at.

Apparently it is the White French
portion of the people of Reunion which
is anxious that Emigration should be
resumed for Sir E Buck admits that
"the attitude of the Creole population
in Reunion towards the Indian Cooly has
generally been deplorable". If this
latter class predominates amongst the
planters of Reunion no amount of agree-
ments by the French Government are
ever likely to make the lot of the
Indian Cooly there anything approaching
a happy one.

24
15 Oct.

Emigration to Reunion.

Hon'ble. Sir H. E. Stokes, K.C.S.I.
Hon'ble. Mr. Garstin, C.S.I.

5/7/92

C. 158.

C. No. 2100.

No. 582 of 24th Aug. 92

To

The Secretary to the Govt. of India.

Rev. & Agri. Dept.

Sir,
I am directed to acknowledge the
receipt of your letter No. 1742/24 dated
29th July last asking this Govt. to consi-
-der whether by the adoption of conditions
of the nature suggested by Dr. Comins in
his report to the Govt. of Bengal on the
subject of the renewal of emigration to
the French Colonies and by Mr. Bennett
British Consul at Reunion in a memorandum
submitted to the Secretary of State for
Foreign Affairs copy of which was previ-
-ously forwarded by you, it would not be
possible to render the resumption of emi-
-gration to Reunion practicable, and re-
-questing the opinion of the Governor
Council as to the advisability in the
event of a modus vivendi in the matter
reestablishing emigration to Reunion
found, of deputing an officer to that
in view to finally formulating, in con-
-sultation with the British Consul, the
on which the resumption of emigration
Reunion could be recommended.
2. In reply I am to say that the
does not consider that the proposal
the French Govt. as to consular

14/1
23 Aug 92

5/7/92 2066

Q100110

be ascertained if it is not likely that the extension of the Consuls powers suggested in para 20 of Mr. Bennett's memorandum which accompanied Mr. Muir Mackenzie's letter No. 1398/24 dated 23rd June 1893 in respect of complaints by coolies will be conceded, that even if they were they do not go far enough and that as observed by Dr. Comins at page 18 (para 28) of his report above referred to "Short of inspection of estates by a British official there is no guarantee which the French Govt. can give which ensure that the emigrants are being properly treated".

a has 3. I am to point out that the suggestions of Consul Bennett are in no way alluded to either in your letter ^{as to complaints by coolies} ~~place in para 4 of your letter~~ under reply ~~or in the suggestions~~ ^{made} at page 19 of Dr. Comins's report, and I am to express the opinion that the ^{considerations} ~~conditions~~ stated in para 8 of our letter ~~alluded to above~~ are not such as should induce the Govt. of Reunion to relax in the least degree its demands ^{regard} ~~reference~~ to the measures necessary for the full protection of these subjects emigrating to Reunion. In conclusion I am to state this Govt. would suggest that

* This follows Mr. H's note.
 Mr. Bennett's memorandum is dated 27th April. The sketch forwarding it to the C of I is dated 19th May. It was not sent to us until the 23rd June. Dr. Co's report is dated 14th June. As he visited the French W. Indian Colonies alone and as his report bears only on those it seems highly probable that he neither met Mr. Bennett nor saw his memorandum and that this is the reason why he does not refer to it.
 The C of I had certainly seen the memorandum before the letter under reply was written.
 22/8

Dr. Comins should be deputed to visit Reunion with orders to carefully enquire into and report upon the condition and prospects of the coolie immigrants there but ~~that no instructions to formulate any~~ ^{not with the object of} conditions on which the resumption of immigration to that Colony should be given to him. *allowed.*

22 Aug

FURTHER PAPER, No. 2922/92 80478 of 18

2662 of 93

READ AGAIN ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, DATED
18, No. MISCELLANEOUS.

ENCLOSURES.

CURRENT No.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT.

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPERS NOT FILED UP, BEING MEANT 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.

Emigration to Reunion.

Hon. Sir H. E. Stokes. K. C. S. I.

ORDINARY, MS.

Public DEPARTMENT.
G.O., DATED 24-8-92
No. 582

When given for copying.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Addressing the Govt.
of India on the sub-
ject of the renewal
of emigration to the
French colonies.

5/7/92
Rd 83
29/8
15-2
27-1-15
23-9-20