

BACK PAPER, No.

of 18

FURTHER PAPER, No.

1626

of 1893

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

ENCLOSURE

CURRENT No.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

PAPER NOT FILLED UP, BEING MEANT FOR DESPATCH
IN ORIGINAL (not paged).

N.B.—

A = Copy in full.
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Q = Copy heading only.

Discontinuance of the grant
of a free return passage from the
Colonies.

From orders.

C.S.

the subject received from ^{the} Mr. W. P. Austin
Protector of Emigrants, Madras, copy of
which is enclosed, that he considers that
it will press very hard on the returning
emigrant ^{have to} pay a lump sum for his
passage out of his ~~hand~~ ^{hand} ~~earned savings~~
either in the shape of a fixed proportion
or of a fixed sum. ^{the Govt.} the Govt. in Council
is inclined to admit that there is some
force in this argument but the fact
that Mr. Austin's alternative suggestion
to make a monthly deduction from the
wages of coolies has already been tried
and ^{has failed} ~~found to fail~~, precludes him from
submitting it for the consideration of
the Governor General in Council.
Mr. Macleod's suggestion that
lump grants equal in amount to the
contributions leviable from immigrants
returning to India towards the cost of
their return passage, might be given to
such of them as are willing to remain in
the Colonies and give up their right to
a free return passage, seems to Mr. P. G. L.
to be worthy of adoption as it would
enable the Colonies to save a considerable
proportion of the cost of return passages
besides retaining the acclimatized cooly
and his family. With reference, however

to his recommendation that returned
emigrants desiring to proceed to the
colonies, should be required to pay the whole
of their ^{cost of their passage back} return passage money, I am
to add, that, as observed by Mr. Austin,
there is a practical difficulty in making
a difference between coolies who have
emigrated but once and returned emigrants.
If however this difficulty can be
overcome, the maintenance of a difference
of the kind mentioned is desirable.

I have &c

P. G. L.
27/5

JP
30/5/93
/ From orders /

I think the difference is desirable, if
the practical difficulty suggested by
Mr Austin can be overcome

U.C.C.

x There would apparently under
the scheme proposed be no
charge for collection, as every
rule of them were they would only
be a mere nothing

I would adopt Dr. Macleod's
recommendation.

J.A.P. U.C.C.

x It may not be necessary
but it would be desirable
as the colonies would send
a considerable proportion
of the cost of return passage
besides returning the
unemployed cooly to
his family

5. It is submitted that there is some
force in Mr. Austin's arguments based
on the difficulty for returning emigrants
to find lump sum of money for their
passage and on the impracticability of
making a difference between coolies
who have ~~once~~ emigrated but once and
returned emigrants. On the other
hand his suggestion to make a monthly
deduction from the wages of coolies has
already been tried and found to fail.

(para 2 of Dr. Comins' note - page 2).

On the whole therefore it seems best to
adopt Dr. Macleod's recommendation

to prescribe a certain proportion of the
cost of the return passage. No difference

can however be made between coolies

who have emigrated but once and returned
emigrants. Nor does it seem necessary
for the colonies to offer lump grants
to emigrants willing to remain in the
colony and give up their right to a
free return passage.

The principle that return emigrants
should be required to pay a part at least
of their passage money seems to be
admitted on all sides.

J.P.
1875/3

The Govt of Bengal generally agrees
with these views and with those expressed
by Dr. Comins & considering it immaterial
how the contribution is fixed provided
the amount is not excessive.

4. The Protector of Emigrants made
(second current read above) agrees

with Dr. Comins and Dr. Macleod
in considering that the colonies should
not undertake to pay in full for the
return passage of emigrants, but in

view of the fact that it would press
very hard on the returning emigrant
to pay a lump sum for his passage

out of his hard earned savings, ^{Mr Austin} is of
opinion that it would be advisable to

compel by law, employers of labour
to remit to the Colonial Emigration
Department a sum of say one anna in

the wages per mensem of the cooly's
wages and deduct the same from
his pay. Any deficiency in the amount

so remitted on account of each cooly
should be made up by the local Govt.

while any surplus should be handed
over to the cooly. No difference should
be made between coolies who have

emigrated but once and returned emigrants
even if such a course were altogether
practicable.

2. In the first current read above the Govt of India now requests that it may be favoured with the opinion of H. E.

the Governor in Council on the proposals made by D^r. Cornius regarding the abolition of return passages to East Indian immigrants from the colonies of Trinidad and British Guiana.

These proposals will be found in paras: 19 (page 12) and 20 (page 14) of D^r. Cornius' printed note which is by no means a clearly written document and are:-

(1) Future contracts made with immigrants in India should contain the stipulation that a return passage would be provided by the Colony if at the time of application for such a passage the immigrant deposited with the Immigration authorities a certain sum towards the expenses of the voyage in addition to the cost of warm clothing. This sum might be fixed at Rs 35 for men and Rs 25 for women, the price of a passage from Mauritius to Bombay or Calcutta. Immigrants already in the Colony should be granted free return passages.

(2) The right to return passage should include that of the children of the immigrant dependent on him and of adopted orphan children but women accustomed to work for wages should pay.

(3) Paupers including the old and infirm, criminals, the maimed or otherwise incapacitated and the incorrigibly idle would be granted free return passages.

(4) The case of lepers should be separately considered in connection with the report of the Leprosy Commⁿ.

3. D^r. Macleod the Superintendent of Immigration Calcutta, whose views on D^r. Cornius' note were invited by the Bengal Govt, considers it preferable to prescribe a certain proportion of the cost of the return passage in view of the amount being variable, such proportion being one third in the case of men and one fourth in that of women. He is also of opinion that the Colonies should offer the like sums to immigrants with a view to remain in the Colony and give up their right to free return passages and that returned immigrants desiring to proceed to the Colonies should be required to pay the whole of their return passage money.

Cus 100811287

For orders

A proposal to discontinue the practice of providing a return passage, at the expense of the Colonies, for Indian immigrants in British Guiana and other British Colonies in the West Indies, was referred to this Govt for remarks in the Hon. W. C. Bennett's circular No. 23. P. read in letter No 716 d/ 28th October 1890 and the Govt of India was then informed that this Govt was not particularly interested in the proposal but that it saw no objection to its adoption. Having however mean- while deputed D. Cornins to visit the Colonies importing Indian labour and instructed him to make this question a special subject of consideration and inquiry, the Govt of India thought that D. Cornins' return to India might be awaited before giving the matter further consideration.

Govt of India letter recorded in
P.O. 1st Feb 2 1892 No 74.

Pub. G.O. No 74 d/ 1-2-92
" " " 716 d/ 28-10-90

From

The Inspector of Immigrants
Madras

To

The Chief Secretary to Govt
Public Department
Stam. P. M. S. B. L.

Dated 1st May 1893

Res

CHIEF SECRETARY
13 MAY 93
No 197

See 1

SA

Subject

Submitting opinion
regarding the abolition
of return passages
to East Indian
Immigrants

For the Hon. Secy of Govt
Please put up opinion of D. Cornins
on the subject of return passages
to East Indian Immigrants. This
is a matter of importance and
it will be well to have the
opinion of the Hon. Secy of Govt
on this subject.

it be that the Colony disapproves of
the return emigrant, and wishes to lessen
his inducements to return. Besides,
it would be extremely difficult
to separate the two classes. The old
hand would naturally make the attempt
to pass himself off as a new comer,
and would, I fancy, in most cases,
succeed in so doing. I am certain
that emigrating coolies would take
no exception to a clause in their
agreement binding them to contribute
at the rate of one anna per rupee of their
wages.

Lastly to those who are inclined to settle
down in the Colony, their contributions should
be handed over at the conclusion of their term
of their service to enable them to make a
start.

All the papers are herewith returned.

I have the honor to be
Your most obed^t servant

W. A. Smith
Protector of Emigrants

Compelled by law to permit to the Colonial
Emigration Department, a sum of say one
anna in the rupee per mensem of the cooly's
wages and deduct the same from his pay.
This deduction would be absolutely unfelt
by the cooly. Should it not suffice to pay
the return passage, the local Government
should ^{make} make up the difference.
Should there be a surplus, it would be
handed over to the cooly. On every Estate
where coolies are employed there must be a
writer and it should be part of his duty to
make and permit this deduction from the coolies wages.
I think it would press very hard on the returning
emigrant to be called on to pay out of his hard
earned savings a lump sum down for his return passage.
It would, I think, feel it a very great grievance
and further I think the knowledge that he had
to do this, would act as a strong deterrent
to his consenting to emigrate.
I cannot see why any difference should
be made between coolies who have emigrated
but once and return emigrants, unless
it

No. 197

OFFICE OF THE PROTECTOR OF EMIGRANTS,

Madras, 1st May 1893

From

W. Austin Esq.

PROTECTOR OF EMIGRANTS,
Madras,

To

The Honble J. I. Price

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

SIR,

I have the honor to offer my remarks on Dr. Comins' proposals in connection with the abolition of return passages to East Indian emigrants referred to me under endorsement dated 14th April 1893 No 713.

I do not consider that the Colony should undertake to pay in full for the return passages of these emigrants to India. While in the Colony, the coolies are well paid and with a little care and economy should be in a position to help themselves. I think the difficulty of comprehending the coolies to contribute has been overrated. Emigrant employers and laborers might be compelled

(189...)

Public

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Current Number. 277.

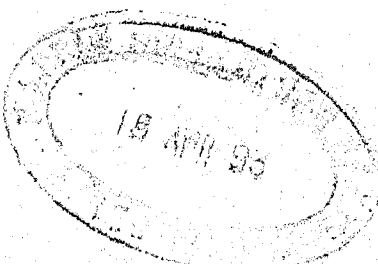
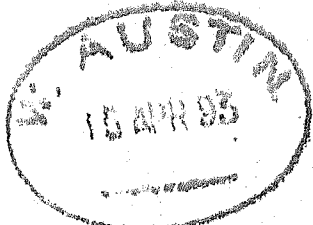
From

The Secretary to
The Govt of India

ABSTRACT.

7th April 1893
Referred to the Protector of Emigrants for early remarks.

By order
H. J. Price
Asst Secretary



Dated 29 March

Received 3 April

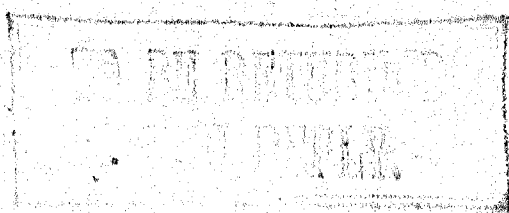
in Pub 5 do
Enclosures 2

3
No. 751
28

287 SUBJECT.

Forwarding copies of Note on the Abolition of return passages to East Indian emigrants by Dr Comins together with the letter from the Govt of Bengal, and requesting to be favoured with the opinion of His Excellency the Governor in Council on the proposals made therein.

with Refce



requisite amount, and most probably decide on not availing themselves of the return passage for the purpose of a pleasure trip.

8. Dr. Comins has observed "that, in the interests of both immigrants and employers, a door should be left open to ensure, on moderately easy terms, the possibility of return to their native land of those who really wish it," and thinks it would be no hardship in requiring emigrants from Trinidad and Demerara to contribute Rs. 25 or Rs. 35 as passage money in view of immigrants returning from Mauritius being able, without difficulty, to pay such amounts—Rs. 25 to be payable by women and Rs. 35 by men, in addition to the cost of warm clothing, as at present supplied. I consider that it would be preferable to prescribe a certain proportion of the cost of the return passage in view of the amount being variable, and would suggest that men be required to pay one-third of the cost and women one-fourth, in addition to cost of warm clothing, the children of the immigrant, whether own or adopted, dependent on him not being chargeable at all as heretofore.

9. With reference to returned emigrants, however, the reasons for providing free return passages do not hold good in my opinion, and I would recommend therefore that in the case of returned emigrants re-engaging to proceed to the Colony under a five-years' contract for labour, the right to a free return passage should not be entered in the contract as one of the terms of re-engagement. If returned emigrants elect to go back to the Colony, they do so with a full knowledge of the country and of their prospects therein, and do not stand in need of the concession of a free return passage that is reasonably made in favour of inexperienced and ignorant immigrants imported for the benefit of the Colony.

10. For a Colony to be deprived of immigrants that are acclimatized and accustomed to the ways of the place, it must be admitted, is a great drawback to its development. But the remedy, it seems to me, is in the hands of the Colonies, and only needs to be diligently applied to be effective. In 1882, Sir Henry Irving, Governor of British Guiana, pointed to it in the following terms:—"There are two ways by which a tendency on the part of the emigrants to return to India may be counteracted. The one is by offering them inducements in the shape of grants of land or of money to sell or commute their right to back passage; the other is by rendering them so satisfied with their position in the Colony as to remove any inclination on their part to exercise their right,.....and although the cooly who buys his land does not surrender his right to return passage, there is little danger of the right being claimed by a man who has established himself with his wife and family in a homestead on his own freehold."

11. The contributing of one-third or one-fourth, as the case may be, of the cost of the return passage will act to some extent as a discouragement to the tendency to return to India, especially in cases of not over-willing emigrants; but if the Colony were to offer, in the furtherance of its own interests, the like sums to immigrants that were willing to remain on in the Colony, and give up their right to a return passage, besides adopting the policy of the grant of freehold titles to land, I believe a serious deathblow will be dealt to the desire on the part of immigrant labourers to claim their right to a return passage to India.

12. By the return of emigrants to India the Colony not only suffers the loss of valuable labour, which can be ill-spared, but also, as remarked by Sir Charles Bruce, Governor of British Guiana, is deprived of all the advantages which follow the progressive accumulation of wealth in other countries by the withdrawal from the Colony of the interest of capital and the gains of labour as soon as realized. It is for the Colony therefore to consider whether it is not worthwhile, in the protection and furtherance of its own interests, to put forward every possible inducement for Indian immigrants to proceed to, and settle permanently in, the country.

13. There is no doubt that, by the Colonies continuing the offer of a free return passage with the suggested modification, the influx of emigrant labourers from India would be much encouraged: and that by conferring on them substantial benefits, such as are suggested, during residence in the Colony; by kind and considerate treatment of them; by providing for their reasonable wants and desires; and by rendering their life in the colonies far more attractive in every respect than that in India, the settlement and colonization of the immigrant labourers would to a very appreciable extent be ensured.

No. 421, dated Calcutta, the 18th February 1893.

From—R. MACLEOD, Esq., M.D., Protector of Emigrants,
To—The Secretary to the Government of Bengal, General Department.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Richardson's letter No. 460, dated the 6th instant, forwarding copy of note by Dr. Comins on the abolition of return passages to East Indian immigrants from the Colonies of Trinidad and British Guiana, and desiring an expression of my opinion on the suggestions offered therein.

2. In compliance, I beg to submit, for the consideration of Government, the following observations with reference to the proposed abolition of return passages.

3. The question of disallowing in future the free return passage hitherto granted to emigrants imported from India is clearly based on the desire to promote the interests of the Colonies concerned. Financially considered, the non-provision of free return passages would certainly prove to be a great saving of the expenditure annually incurred at present by the Colonies, and commercially considered, it would doubtless help, by promoting permanent settlement of emigrants in the Colonies, to increase the local labour supply, and thus reduce the cost of manufacturing sugar, an industry on the successful and economical working of which the prosperity of the Colonies is mainly dependent.

4. But the interests of the emigrant labourers have to be taken into consideration also, and the question arises as to how far their interests will suffer by the proposed abolition of the return passage at the expense of the Colonies.

5. It appears that, in connection with the importation of labour from India, the offer of a free return passage has been made almost from the commencement of emigration as an inducement to the natives of India, who are naturally loth to leave their native country, to emigrate for a period to a distant foreign country for the purpose of gaining a livelihood. That this concession has been mainly instrumental in encouraging emigration cannot be disputed. Homes and relatives are left behind in this country by intending emigrants on the hope of being able to come back again to them after the lapse of a few years, whether they are successful or not in realizing the fair prospects held out to them in the Colonies; and this compensating privilege has consequently never been withdrawn.

6. In view of the principle as recognized by the Home Government, immigrants have at times been called upon to contribute towards their return passage; but proposals for the abolition of the privilege of being returned to India by the Colonial Governments after a definite period of residence in the Colonies have invariably met with disapproval in India. In 1875, Sir Richard Temple, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, made the following remarks on the subject of passage money being no longer allowed to emigrants who return to India:—"To withhold it altogether would be doubtful justice, inasmuch as an emigrant who had emigrated on imperfect information, or who found his expectations disappointed, might reasonably wish to return; and in regard to the poverty and ignorance of these classes, it is but fair and reasonable that some door for escape, if such were desired, should be left open." These remarks, I am inclined to think, apply with equal force at the present day. The condition of a return passage is a binding link to India, and to sever the only remaining link would, indeed, be inflicting unjustifiable hardship on the emigrant, who may be compelled by unavoidable circumstances to leave his home and country for labour in a distant Colony.

7. On the other hand it is held that a large number of the emigrants, who return to India at the expense of the Colony, have no intention of remaining here; or, if they do so intend, soon find occasion to return to the Colonies. This tendency must necessarily be prejudicial to the interests of the Colonies, and I agree with Dr. Comins that it should be discouraged by acting on the principle above referred to of requiring emigrants to contribute towards their return passage. Those preferring to settle in their native country will make an effort to save such proportion of the cost of the return passage as they may be called upon to pay when the opportunity for leaving the Colony offers, while those not intending to remain in India will hesitate to spend the

GENERAL DEPARTMENT.

EMIGRATION—No. 948.

CALCUTTA, THE 9TH MARCH 1893.

FROM H. H. RISLEY, Esq., C.I.E.,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal,

TO THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
REVENUE AND AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

IN continuation of this Government's letter No. 62, dated the 7th February 1891, and with reference to the correspondence forwarded with your office letter No. ⁵²/₃₅, dated the 11th January 1892, I am directed to submit the enclosed copy of a "Note on the abolition of return passages to East Indian immigrants from the colonies of Trinidad and British Guiana," received from Dr. Comins, together with a copy of a letter, No. 421, dated the 18th February 1893, from the Superintendent of Emigration, Calcutta, reporting on the subject.

2. The suggestions made by Dr. Comins and Dr. McLeod for the modification of the present system of granting free return passages to all immigrants are approved generally by the Lieutenant-Governor, and His Honour desires to recommend them to the favourable consideration of the Government of India. Briefly stated, the proposals are that returned immigrants who re-engage to proceed to the colonies should lose all further right to a free passage back to India, and that new immigrants (by which is meant those who have never returned from the colonies to India) should, if they desire to return, contribute a fixed sum or a fixed proportion of the passage-money. It seems to His Honour immaterial how the contribution is fixed, provided the amount is not excessive.

Dependent children and disabled and invalid immigrants should continue to have the right to a free return passage as heretofore.

3. The Lieutenant-Governor desires also to commend the proposal made by Dr. McLeod in paragraph 11 of his letter that the Colonial Government should pay a bonus equivalent to the amount saved in return passages to those immigrants who desire to settle down in the colony.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

H. H. RISLEY,

Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

No. 751
28

FROM

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

TO

The Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Calcutta, the 29th March 1893.

Revenue and Agricultural
Department.

(Emigration) SIR,

With reference to my letter No. 51/54 of the
11th January 1892, I am directed to forward copy of
a "Note on the abolition of return passages to East
Indian immigrants from the Colonies of Trinidad and
British Guiana" by Dr. Comins together with a letter
from the Government of Bengal on the same subject
and to request that the Government of India may be
favored with the opinion of His Excellency the
Governor in Council on the proposals made by Dr.
Comins.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

your most obedient servant,

James Mackenzie

For-Secretary.



J.S.C.

10 copies by
Book post

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Ind. Secy
Int. Secy
5/4/93 -
Recd.